

# Putin Links Ecology to Growth

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Experts estimate that about 15 percent of the country is in critical environmental condition, and further neglect may have an irreversible impact, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said Wednesday. ☒

"Yearly reports indicate that the man-made impact on ecological systems is not abating and is only increasing. Air and water pollution in virtually all Russian regions remains at a high level," Putin said at a meeting on ways to improve the environmental situation in the country.

Companies must be forced to implement new environmental technologies, otherwise the country is doomed "to trail behind," Putin said.

"I am perfectly aware of the concerns of those specialists who are thinking about the need to increase labor productivity and about the state of our competition. But we all understand that the lack of stimulus is helping preserve old production facilities and old technologies, leading to an extensive approach to growth that will always leave us lagging behind,"

the prime minister said.

In this case, Russia "will always be behind on new technologies, never catch up with competitors, and we will always trail behind," he said. "We will trail not only in solutions to environmental problems, but also on economic growth. We will always be trying to catch up. This is a wrong path that will not allow us to lead either in environmental protection or economic development — and therefore, in tackling social problems," Putin said.

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