

WWF Identifies Threatened Areas

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Ecologists worry that Zhupanova River could be polluted if small hydroelectric plants are built on it as planned. **A. Pletnov**

Ten ecologically pristine zones in Russia are at risk of becoming polluted, according to a report that the World Wildlife Fund released Wednesday, as the nation celebrates ecologist day.

Krasnodar, Irkutsk and Kamchatka regions lead the list with two endangered areas each.

The paper mill at Baikalsk on Lake Baikal is the well-known culprit in the Irkutsk region where its waste discharges are polluting the southern portion of the world's largest freshwater lake. The Angara River, which flows out of Baikal, is also in danger from excessive waste dumping.

In the Krasnodar region, Olympic construction is threatening the Mzymta River that flows through Sochi while poaching, pesticides and gas and oil exploration are endangering the natural habitat in the delta of the Kuban River.

Local fauna is also under threat on the Starichkov Island of the Kamchatka region due to

overfishing and dumping of ammunitions by nearby Russian naval bases. Another area, around the Zhupanova River, could suffer if plans to build multiple small hydroelectric plants go ahead, according to WWF.

Other sites on the list include the Komi republic where a modern gold rush, complete with drilling and explosions, is endangering a UNESCO World Heritage forest; a wooded area in the Arkhangelsk region that is being razed; and an offshore reserve in Nenets autonomous district that Gazprom Neft has identified as a location for an oil drilling platform.

The Moscow region also made the list due to a decline in its forest area.

The full list in Russian can be found at the [WWF website](#).

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