

EDN: LOQQQE  
УДК 572.9(571.56)+УДК 553(571.56)

## Historical and Socio-Cultural Basis of Yakutia (the Russian Federation) Ethnological Expertise and Subsoil Use Problems

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Received 18.02.2024, received in revised form 26.02.2024, accepted 24.06.2024

**Abstract.** The subject of the study is the content of ethnological expertise during the industrial development of the ancestral territories of the local indigenous population of Yakutia. In the Republic of Yakutia the law on ethnological examination was first adopted, which also becomes the subject of interdisciplinary scientific research. The research subject is the study of problems that arise during the difficult situation of industrial development and subsoil development. The specific problem that is discussed concerns the main aspects of ethnological expertise, such as the features of the historical development of the local population, its legal status, the position of the territories, the characteristics of traditional management and the interests of local administrations.

**Keywords:** Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), territory, subsoil use, ethnological examination.

Research area: Theory and History of Culture and Art (Cultural Studies).

Citation: Borisova I. Z. Historical and Socio-Cultural Basis of Yakutia (the Russian Federation) Ethnological Examination and Subsoil Use Problems. *J. Sib. Fed. Univ. Humanit. Soc. Sci.*, 2024, 17(8), 1422–1433. EDN: LOQQQE



## Исторический и социокультурный базис этнологической экспертизы Якутии (Российская Федерация) и проблемы недропользования

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**Аннотация.** В статье речь идет об историческом, социокультурном аспектах Якутии. Предметом исследования стало содержание этнологической экспертизы при промышленном освоении исконных территорий местного коренного населения. В Республике Саха (Якутия) впервые принят закон об этнологической экспертизе, которая становится также предметом междисциплинарного научного исследования. Тема затрагивает особенности, интересы локального населения в условиях интенсивного освоения территорий их проживания и хозяйствования. Проблема касается основных аспектов этнологической экспертизы, таких как особенности исторического развития местного населения, его правового статуса, положения территорий, особенностей традиционного хозяйствования, интересов местных администраций.

**Ключевые слова:** Республика Саха (Якутия), территория, недропользование, этнологическая экспертиза.

Научная специальность: 5.10.1. Теория и история культуры, искусства (культурология).

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Цитирование: Борисова И.З. Исторический и социокультурный базис этнологической экспертизы Якутии (Российская Федерация) и проблемы недропользования. *Журн. Сиб. федер. ун-та. Гуманитарные науки*, 2024, 17(8), 1422–1433. EDN: LOQQQE

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### Introduction

The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is a unique subject of the Russian Federation, which occupies 1/6 of Russia. The Yakuts like to repeat that on the territory of Yakutia you can fit 5.5 Frances, 10 Italys, 13 Englands. Yakutia not only has a huge territory, on the vast territory of Yakutia of 3103.2 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, there is the entire periodic table. “The territory of the Republic is unique not only in Russia, but also on a global scale in terms of the diversity and size of mineral deposits. There are known deposits of oil, gas, coal, ores of ferrous, non-ferrous, rare and precious metals, diamonds, various mining and mining chemical raw materials and building materials. To date, about 1,500 deposits of various types of mineral raw materials have been identified, including 150 kimberlite pipes. Deposits

and prospects for expanding the raw material base of the oil and gas industry are associated with the western and central parts of Yakutia (Nepa-Botuobinsky uplift, Vilyui syncline)<sup>1</sup>.” The republic has unique socio-cultural characteristics. This multinational region of Russia has regional and ethnic characteristics. The territory of modern Yakutia is home to more than 100 ethnic communities that have found themselves hostage to the region’s countless natural resources. In recent decades, there has been intensive development of the territory of Yakutia. There are large industrial complexes that extract and process mineral resources. The vulnerable northern nature is suffering due to the intensive development of natural resources by large mining companies. Not only nature

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.nftn.ru/oilfields/russian\\_oilfields/jakutija\\_sakha\\_respublika/21](http://www.nftn.ru/oilfields/russian_oilfields/jakutija_sakha_respublika/21) Date de référence 21.01.2024

itself suffers, but also the people who live in the areas of rich deposits, the original places of residence of local residents. The peoples living in the northern territories still lead traditional economies. In the conditions of the North, this is simply necessary. However, due to the small local population, problems associated with subsoil use seem insignificant to many companies.

### **Statement of the problem**

The specific problem that is discussed in the article concerns the main aspects of ethnological expertise as features of the historical development of the local population, its legal status, the position of the territories of traditional management of the local population, the characteristics of traditional management, and the interests of local administrations. The problem of ethnological expertise in the development of ancestral territories of compact residence of the local population is one of the key ones in modern society. The Republic of Yakutia is a subject of the Russian Federation; a law on ethnological examination was first adopted here, which also becomes the subject of interdisciplinary scientific research.

### **Materials and methods**

During the study, methods of analysis and study of scientific literature, questionnaires, focus groups, study of reports of mining companies, and analysis of publications on social networks were used.

For ethnological examination of subsoil use territories, it is necessary, first of all, to study the population and ethnic communities living in this territory. Statistical data from the population census of different years, the status of ethnic communities, the presence of places of compact residence, and the features of traditional economic management can become the necessary information for this.

### **Conceptological basis of the study (theoretical framework)**

The conceptual basis of the study is the philosophy of cultural pluralism. In the period from the beginning of the 19th century to the 20th century and later, the theory of plurality in philosophical positions became widespread

and developed in Western Europe and North America. The philosophy of cultural pluralism underlies the concept of a multicultural state, which is the Russian Federation. It was in Yakutia, a subject of the Russian Federation, that the law on ethnological examination was first adopted, which is based on the legal status of ethnic communities living on the territory of Yakutia and shows the features of the traditional way of life, ethnic self-identification, and cultural identity. "Ethnological examination is "a scientific study of the influence of changes in the ancestral habitat of small peoples and the socio-cultural situation on the development of an ethnic group." The formulation is given within the framework of federal law No. 82 "On guarantees of the rights of indigenous peoples of the Russian Federation" of 1999" (Ethnological examination, 2023). According to its status, ethnocultural examination can be a scientific, independent examination carried out both by authorized government bodies and public organizations. The main idea or goal of the ethnocultural examination of bills, in particular subsoil use, is to assess and predict the impact of the normative act on the rights of the local small population and its interests.

### **Results and discussion**

In the territories of traditional nature management, indigenous peoples of the North have been operating for centuries, who, due to the countless natural resources of their lands, found themselves in the zone of environmental and economic risks. The ancestors of the Evenks and Evens have lived in this northern territory since the 1st millennium. In the 13th century, the tribes of the Tungus people lived throughout the Middle Lena, on the Olekma and Vilyui rivers. The process of resettlement of Turkic tribes – the ancestors of the Yakuts to the Lena region forced the aboriginal peoples to move to the north, west and east of the Lena. According to researchers, the Turkic-speaking ancestors of modern Yakuts settled new territories in several stages, in the 14th-15th centuries. The last wave of resettlement occurred. The Yakuts (self-name Sakha, uraanghai Sakha) as a united people began to form precisely on the territory of the Middle Lena. In the formation of the

northern Turkic-speaking Sakha and their formation, the newcomer Mongol-speaking Horos (Khorins) and autochthonous Paleo-Asian tribes played a large role.

The first general population census of the Russian Empire was carried out on January 28, 1897. The Yakut regional census commission was created on January 17, 1896 under the chairmanship of the governor of the Yakut region V.N. Skripitsina. According to the first general census of 1897, the current population of the Yakut region was 269,880 people. It is difficult to judge the national composition of the population of Yakutia from these data, since there was no direct question about nationality in the census, and the national composition was determined indirectly, based on the question about the native language.

In total, during the final processing of the population census materials, 46 separate adverbs (dialects) were identified: Yakuts (82.1 %); Great Russians with Little Russians and Belarusians (11.4 %); Tungus (4.3 %); Tatars (0.5 %); Chukchi (0.6 %); Yukaghirs (0.4 %). According to the 2010 All-Russian Population Census, the permanent population of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) was 958.5 thousand people. Sakha – 466,492 (49.9 %), Dolgans – 1906 (1.4 %), Evenks – 21,008 (2.2 %), Evens – 15,071 (1.6 %), Yukaghirs – 1,281 (0.1 %), Russians – 353,649 (37.8 %), Ukrainians – 20,341 (2.2 %), Tatars – 8,122 (0.9 %), others – 46,124 (4.9 %) [9]

The first population census in Soviet Russia began in 1926. The population of the Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, according to the census, amounted to 289.1 thousand people. The national composition of this census was studied on the basis of people's self-determination, i.e. What nationality did the person consider himself to be? The most numerous were the following nationalities: Russians (10.4 %); Yakuts (81.6 %); Tungus (4.5 %), Tatars (0.6 %); Chukchi (0.4 %), etc.

The next population censuses took place in 1937, 1959, 1970, 1989, 2002, 2010, 2021, 2023. According to the All-Russian Population Census of 2021, the permanent population of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) was 995,686 thousand people, of which 469,348 were Ya-

kuts (Sakha) (47.17 %), 24,334 Evenks (2.44 %), 13,233 Evens (1.33 %), 2,147 Dolgans (0.22 %), 1,510 Yukaghirs (0.15 %).

Intensive development of the subsoil of Yakutia and industrialization lead to an expansion of interaction between cultures and peoples, which makes the issue of preserving cultural identity especially relevant today. This issue can be considered an acute problem in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), where five national-ethnic communities of small peoples live: Evenks, Evens, Dolgans, Yukaghirs and Chukchis. If we focus on quantitative data on the number of peoples of Yakutia, we can focus on population census data.

*What is the connection between centralization, intensive industrialization, mineral development and the transformation of the ethnic identity of the local population?*

The ethnic composition and transformation of the ethnic identity of the local population have always been associated with the development of the subsoil and natural resources of Yakutia. The development of territories attracted a flow of migration and contributed to a change in the number of the local population, its assimilation, transformation of culture and identity. If during the era of tsarism, newcomers were attracted only by furs, then since the 19th century, gold deposits have been discovered in Bodaibo. And the 20th century was marked by the discovery of diamond deposits, gas, oil, coal, etc. Due to the fact that the Yakuts turned out to be the most numerous in number, they remained the unifying and identifying ethnic group of the region. The history of intensive development of the territory of Yakutia during the years of Soviet power was carried out without taking into account the interests of the local population. In the 90s, ideas began to be put forward to conduct an ethnological examination when extracting the natural resources of the territories inhabited by ethnic communities.

*What are the legal basis for the status of the local population and the problems of terminology?*

First of all, about the legal status of the region itself – the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) as a subject of the Russian Federation. The legis-

lation of Russia enshrines the legal aspects of the region based on cultural and national characteristics: “Federal Law of June 17, 1996; No. 74-FZ “On National-Cultural Autonomy” is intended to provide conditions for the realization of the rights of minorities to preserve cultural identity and participate in society. The law defines national-cultural autonomy in the Russian Federation. According to Article 1, national-cultural autonomy is a form of national-cultural self-determination, which is an association of citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to be a certain ethnic community, located in the situation of a national minority in the relevant territory, on the basis of their voluntary self-organization in order to independently resolve issues of preservation identity, language development, education, national culture. National-cultural autonomy is a type of public association. The organizational and legal form of national-cultural autonomy is a public organization” (Rights, 2016).

*And now about the legal status of the local population and the terms that define this status.* Region and regional identity are closely associated with minorities, since in a multicultural nation-state, a region is usually home to ethnic minorities. In today’s world, there are many terms and legally recognized groups, communities into which an individual can join in the process of his identification, among them minorities can be called. V. A. Tishkov and Y. P. Shabaev write that “the majority of minority groups belong to cultural minorities (ethnic, linguistic, racial, religious). In the terminology of ethnic groups related to the status of minorities, there is great diversity, according to V. Mukomel: “The legislation of the subjects of the Federation uses the definitions enshrined in the Constitution of the Russian Federation (national minorities, indigenous peoples, small ethnic communities) and in federal laws (small peoples, indigenous (aboriginal) peoples, small peoples of the North, indigenous small peoples of the North (Far North), national groups and communities, ethnic communities, small ethnic communities of the North, cultural and ethnic communities)” (Minority Rights, 2016). In ethnic regions there are also various terms at the regional level: “In addition, in the legis-

lation of the constituent entities there are definitions that are not used at the federal level: ethnic minorities (Tatarstan, Khakassia), ethnically dispersed minorities (Tomsk region), indigenous national minorities (Buryatia), national communities (Sverdlovsk region), small national communities (Krasnoyarsk Territory), small ethnic groups, indigenous peoples of the North (Yakutia), indigenous nation (Kalmykia), indigenous peoples of this region (Kabardino-Balkaria, Kalmykia, Tatarstan, Khakassia, Altai, Primorsky Territories, Sverdlovsk region), indigenous ethnic group (Khakassia), titular indigenous people (Karelia), indigenous population of the territory (Dagestan, Khakassia, Irkutsk, Tomsk regions), ethnic groups (Komi, Dagestan, Yakutia), ethnic communities (Adygea), ethno-confessional and ethno-cultural groups (Buryatia). Such a variety of definitions in the regions is the result not only of taking into account local characteristics, but also of the lack of clear regulation of the conceptual apparatus in federal legislation” (Mukomel, 2017).

In international law, the system of protecting the rights of minorities originated within the framework of the League of Nations that operated after the First World War and was formalized in 1948, when the UN adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. In subsequent years, the problem of minorities was reflected in a number of international legal documents. The most significant of them is the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, adopted in 1992” (Tishkov, 2019: 407).

The term *national minorities* came out of the terminological circulation of the USSR in 1960. In this regard, the term *national minorities* itself is not defined in Russian legislation. Signs of minorities: numbers, non-dominant position, desire to preserve their differences. There is a definition of national minorities, which appears in dictionaries: “A national minority is an ethnic community, the number of which is significantly smaller than the size of the main population, occupying a non-dominant position in the country; preserving its specific ethnic, national, cultural, linguistic

and religious features that distinguish it from the rest of the population; living in the country for a relatively long time; in need of protection; usually consisting of citizens of the state. National minorities are distinguished from indigenous peoples: the latter live in their ancestral territory for many generations” (Silantieva, 2016: 29–42). In the amendments made to the Constitution of the Russian Federation in 2020, there are amendments regarding indigenous small peoples, which will be described below (Amendments, 2020).

The Constitution of the Russian Federation recognizes *minorities* as subjects of state law. Minorities and other groups in the modern Constitution of new Russia have rights that are associated with their original habitat, traditional way of life, and are protected by law: “Chapter 2 of the Constitution guarantees respect for human rights. In particular, Article 19 prohibits any form of restriction of the rights of citizens on the basis of social, racial, national, linguistic or religious affiliation. Article 26 gives everyone the right to freely determine and indicate their nationality. Paragraph 2 of this article establishes the right of everyone to use their native language and freely choose the language of communication, learning and creativity. Articles 71 and 72 relate to the protection of human and civil rights and freedoms, and the protection of the rights of national minorities, and the protection of the original habitat and traditional way of life of small ethnic groups; to the competence of government bodies of the Russian Federation and constituent entities” (Constitution of the Russian Federation, 1993). The rights of indigenous small peoples in the amendments to Article 69 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation are stated as follows: “1. The Russian Federation guarantees the rights of indigenous peoples in accordance with generally accepted principles and norms of international law, and international treaties of the Russian Federation. 2. The state protects the cultural identity of all peoples and ethnic communities of the Russian Federation, guarantees the preservation of ethnocultural and linguistic diversity...” (Amendments, 2020).

The status of *indigenous peoples* in the Russian Federation applies to an ethnic group

that numbers no more than 50,000 representatives on the territory of the state: The northern peoples of Yakutia have the status of indigenous peoples, which is established by Federal Law No. 82-FZ “On Guarantees of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Federation” dated 30 April 1999, No. 104-FZ of July 20, 2000 Republic Law No. 133-Z; No. 269-III dated April 15, 2004 allows us to consider the Russian pioneers (Russko-Ustyinty and Pokhodchane) as the indigenous peoples of Yakutia.

The concept of “*indigenous peoples*” was introduced by the International Labor Organization Convention, which is recorded as Convention No. 107 of 1957: “For the Protection and Integration of Indigenous and Other Tribal or Semi-Tribal Populations in Independent States” (1957). (Since 1989 – Convention No. 169 “On Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries”) The following communities are considered indigenous peoples: “a) <...> tribal peoples in independent countries, social, cultural and economic whose conditions distinguish them from other groups of the national community and whose situation is regulated wholly or partly by their own customs or traditions, or by special legislation; b) <...> peoples in independent countries who are considered to be indigenous because they are descendants of those who inhabited the country or geographical area of which that country is a part, at the time of its conquest or colonization or at the time of the establishment of existing national boundaries, and which, regardless of their legal status, retain some or all of their social, economic, cultural and political institutions” (Indigenous, 2012).

The Yakuts do not qualify as small peoples, but are recognized as indigenous. In Yakutia, it was recognized that the Yakuts can also be considered an indigenous people under paragraph B of Convention No. 169 “On Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries,” and the Constitutional Court of the Republic, by its decision No. 4-P of October 21, 2016, recognized Yakuts are an indigenous people, and Yakutia is “the native land and historical homeland of the Yakut people, the source of their economic well-being, unique cultural

and linguistic identity” (Yakutia recognized, 2016). If the starting point is the formation of the USSR in 1922 and the Russian Federation in 1991, in both cases the position of Yakutia at that time coincides with the requirements of paragraph B of the Convention.

The Yakuts sought the status of “*indigenous people*” primarily due to the fact that they are not recognized as an indigenous people in Russian legislation. The status is also attractive because, within the framework of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted on September 13, 2007 by the UN General Assembly, a real opportunity arises to participate in the development of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: “Russia motivated its refusal to support the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by two main reasons. Firstly, in connection with the disagreement with the text of Article 3 of the Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples to Self-Determination. Secondly, due to disagreement with the texts of articles 26 and 27 of the Declaration on the right of indigenous peoples to lands, territories and natural resources and the right of compensation for the use of resources or seizure (withdrawal) of territories” (In Yakutia, 2016).

Despite the fact that the Russian Federation has not ratified this convention, there is provision No. 224 of February 10, 2016, which states that if international legal acts “have not been signed and ratified by the Russian Federation, it does not exclude the possibility of taking into account and using their provisions when formation of Russian legislation” (Indigenous Peoples, 2012). In other words, in Russia the provisions of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples are indirectly recognized, which is also set out in the amendments to the Constitution in 2020 (Amendments, 2020). However, ethnological examination does not directly concern the Yakut population, since the law deals with small indigenous peoples.

At the same time, in cyberspace and on social networks, pressing issues of environmental disasters related to the activities of large federal-regional companies, such as ALROSA, are discussed. The pollution of the Vilyuy River in 2018 was perceived as damage to the re-

gional ethnic culture and ecology of the large northern region: “The level of pollution of the Vilyuy River in the area of the village of Suntar is twenty times higher than the norm, the Rospotrebnadzor department for Yakutia said on Wednesday. On August 29, 12 samples were examined for sanitary and chemical indicators. “Based on the results of laboratory tests, the level of suspended substances in the village of Suntar was found to be 20 times higher than the natural background,” says a message from the network (Yakovleva, 2018). On August 17, four dams on the Irelyakh reservoir burst in the Mirny district. As a result, clay particles ended up in the Malaya Botuobuya and Vilyuy rivers” (Pollution, 2018). The disaster led to comments and discussions on social networks, open sanctioned and unsanctioned speeches, collective letters, and collections of signatures in defense of the regional ecology. The consequences of the activities of the diamond mining company still cause concern among the population; condemnations, disputes, and accusations do not subside on social networks (Stop, 2018). They write in the forums: “The subject of the offense is the ALROSA company, and not the Ministry of Environment. The company needs to explain itself to people, meet with residents of villages affected by pollution, and give an intelligible answer about the situation. They should also help the Vilyui group of uluses with water treatment facilities, voluntarily compensate for the damage caused to water resources and aquatic biological resources, because this damage is credited to local budgets” (From social networks, 2018). Cultural figures conduct flash mobs about the “disease” of the Vilyuy River, about the grief that befell the people (Makarova I., 2018). This event caused a surge of emotions of an ethnocultural and social nature and influenced the attitude of the population of the Vilyui group of uluses to the general policy of the Russian state. According to surveys conducted over the years, local residents try not to eat fish and game, which is caught at the sites of work on the development of the subsoil of ancestral territories.

What is the position of indigenous peoples, indigenous peoples of the North in the process of developing the subsoil of ancestral territories of traditional environmental management?

In recent years, the problems of interaction between indigenous peoples of the North and mining companies in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) have been studied by a number of research teams and individual researchers of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and the Russian Federation as a whole. One of the interesting studies is the project within the framework of the Russian Humanitarian Foundation grant No. 17-02-00214-a “Development of a methodology for damage to indigenous peoples of the North during the industrial development of territories of traditional environmental management” under the scientific supervision of Samsonova I. V., Doctor of Economics, chief researcher of the Academy Sciences of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). “In recent years, various practices of interaction between indigenous peoples and subsoil users have emerged – economic, political, legal and cultural. Mining companies declare policies aimed at preserving the original habitat, traditional environmental management and improving the quality of life of indigenous people. However, it must be stated that the development and development of fuel and energy, mineral raw materials, forest and water resources in the Arctic and northern regions has a negative impact on the way of life of the indigenous peoples of the North, the economic base of which is renewable natural resources” (Samsonova, 2017: 21–37).

Many researchers have analyzed the state of the mining industry in the places of traditional management of indigenous peoples of the North and stated that “in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) there are valid licenses for the use of subsoil (geological survey, prospecting and evaluation, exploration and production of diamonds, placer gold, ore gold, hydrocarbon raw materials, rare earth metals, silver, etc.) in the territories of residence, traditional nature management and traditional economic activities of indigenous peoples of the North, there are 179 enterprises on 381 sites in 20 municipal districts of the republic (Report on the observance of rights and legitimate interests, 2015). The territories of five regions of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) are subject to the most intensive industrial development: Mirninsky and Olekminsky districts, located in western

Yakutia; Aldansky and Neryungri districts in southern Yakutia; Ust-Maysky district in eastern Yakutia. In these areas, there are such large mineral extraction corporations, forestry and mining enterprises as AK ALROSA (PJSC), AK Transneft, OJSC Mining and Metallurgical Company “Timir”, OJSC “Surgutneftegas”, OJSC “Vostok Engineering”, OJSC NK Rosneft, PJSC Gazprom, etc. Among the industrial projects being implemented in the territory inhabited by indigenous peoples of the North are such large projects as the construction of the Eastern Siberia – Pacific Ocean (ESPO) oil pipeline, the Power of Siberia main gas pipeline, the Tommot-Nizhny Bestyakh railway, the development of the Taazhnoe iron ore deposit, the Gross gold deposit, etc.

Of course, in recent years the number of companies that are developing the subsoil of Yakutia has increased significantly. The activities of all forms of territorial development are based on the legislative framework in force to regulate relationships at the sites of development of territories where indigenous peoples of the North live. “Today in the Russian Federation a legislative framework has been formed that ensures and guarantees the rights of indigenous peoples, which is a complex of legislation at the federal and regional levels. Taken together, these legal acts make it possible to regulate the life activities of the indigenous peoples of the North; they guarantee the rights of the indigenous peoples of the North to preserve and develop their culture, preserve the basic elements of their identity, such as language, traditions and cultural heritage; preservation and promotion of traditional ways of using land and biological resources in accordance with established cultural customs, etc. Regional legislation of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) as a subject of the Russian Federation reflects many aspects of the life of the indigenous peoples of the North. It is aimed at comprehensively solving the problems of socio-economic and ethnocultural development of indigenous ethnic groups. In total, the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) has adopted 10 laws relating to indigenous peoples of the North. Availability of regional legislation regulating the process of interaction between indigenous people and subsoil



users; regional regulatory documents defining the environmental management regime in a given territory make it possible to assess the impact on the original habitat and traditional way of life of indigenous peoples in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). Among the significant achievements of the republican legislation, it should be noted the Law of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) “On ethnological examination in places of traditional residence and traditional economic activities of indigenous peoples of the North of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)” dated April 14, 2010 820-Z No. 537-IV (Law, 2023). This is a fundamental republican law aimed at implementing the powers of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation in terms of protecting the rights of indigenous peoples of the North, defined by the federal law “On Subsoil”. The law regulates relations in the field of ethnological expertise for the purpose of socio-economic and cultural development of indigenous peoples of the North of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), protection of their ancestral habitat, traditional way of life, farming and crafts. It should be noted that in Russia the law on ethnological examination was adopted only in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). Today, the experience of conducting ethnological examinations in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is being studied by other constituent entities of the Russian Federation and at the federal level with the aim of normatively establishing mandatory ethnological examination in the Russian Federation. Relations between indigenous peoples and industrial corporations in Russia are regulated by the Federal Law “On Territories of Traditional Natural Resources 2017–927 of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation” No. 49-FZ dated 05/07/2001 (Law of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), 2019). Its basic premise is that although indigenous peoples have exclusive rights to these territories, the land itself and its resources belong to the state. According to Art. 14 of the law, in case of seizure of these lands, a commercial company is obliged to pay compensation to local residents” (Samsonova, 2017: 21–37). However, many researchers, including the group led by Samsonova I. V. note that “federal and regional legislation in relation to the

indigenous peoples of the North is currently contradictory and contains many gaps, which impedes the possibility of its implementation and prevents effective interaction between the indigenous peoples of the North and large corporations.” As is known, the indigenous people of the North, including the indigenous peoples of the North, continue to conduct traditional types of farming such as cattle breeding, horse breeding, reindeer herding, collecting wild plants, hunting, fishing, processing and selling fishing and hunting products

Based on the results of many studies, it is stated that “Most hunters noted the negative impact of oil producing companies, the increase in industrial facilities such as drilling rigs, quarries, roads, wells, profiles, survey and exploration work, etc. as the main reason for the decrease in natural resources. (61.9 %). In second place, 35.7 % of hunters named a large number of forest fires that have occurred in recent years <..> reasons such as deforestation, massive cutting of glades by subsoil users, reduction of animal feed, drought, poaching and poor ecology” (Samsonova, 2017: 21–37). “Indigenous indigenous communities have licenses for the long-term right to use wildlife objects – this is the only legal mechanism for influencing large corporations. According to Art. 40 of the Federal Law “On Wildlife”, users of wildlife have the right to bring claims for damage caused to them by unlawful actions of legal entities and citizens, resulting in the death of animals, deterioration of their habitat, and violation of legal rights related to the use of wildlife” (On Animal World, 1995).

Hunting and fishing in traditional hunting and fishing areas cannot be carried out, because along with the pollution of natural resources, violation of silence, deforestation, game, large and small animals are leaving, the centuries-old fishing route is changing, unpunished poaching of industrialists, their theft of prey from nets, traps, destruction of hunting lodges. Such cases go unpunished.

“Hunters are raising questions about new changes in legislation that allow forestry and mining activities on fishing grounds. Now, according to the new law, three organizations are allowed to operate on the same site, i.e. hunt-

ing, oil development and timber industry – on the same site. I prove to them: “Oil production and logging can be combined, but how can this be combined with hunting? The beast runs away, leaves – that’s it.” Powerlessness before public and private companies is often discussed during meetings of representatives of indigenous communities. If in relation to private companies it is still possible to go to court or try to come to an agreement with them, then by state-owned companies attempts to conduct such negotiations are suppressed – with a comment about activities “in the interests of the state...> 73.9 % of respondents noted the real influence of industrial facilities for their hunting, gathering, fishing and haymaking” (Samsonova, 2017: 21–37).

### Conclusion

Thus, it can be stated that the activities of public and private companies generally lead to the degradation of traditional economic management and generally have a negative impact on the preservation of the ethnic identity of the indigenous population, including the small peoples of the North. “There are barriers to effective interaction between indigenous peoples of the North in the extractive sector: contradictions and difficulties in the current legislation, undeveloped systems for submitting statements to the public and irresponsible industrial policy. In addition, in Russia there are no important international documents (such as the ILO Convention 169, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of 2007) that could improve relations between indigenous peoples and mining companies” (Samsonova, 2017: 21–37).

The researchers note that despite the existing problems in the relationship between local authorities of the indigenous peoples of the North and large mining companies, there are positive initiatives and activities that are already being successfully practiced: “Large companies declare a policy aimed at preserving the original habitat, traditional use of natural resources and increasing quality of life of indigenous residents of Yakutia. Extractive enterprises operating in the territories inhabited by indigenous peoples establish their contractual relations with them, taking into account their

interests. Bilateral (between the enterprise and the government of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), (between the subsoil user, the municipal administration) socio-economic agreements are concluded. With the participation of regional authorities, public hearings, meetings, round tables, conferences with subsoil users of the Republic are held with the mandatory participation of representatives of the Association of Indigenous Peoples small-numbered peoples of the North. In the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) as a subject of the Russian Federation, processes of interaction between state authorities, local governments and public associations of indigenous peoples to protect their constitutional rights, ancestral habitat and traditional way of life are being significantly increased thanks to the activities of mining companies. revenues to the budget of the municipality. The main budget-forming enterprise not only of the district, but of the entire republic is the joint-stock company ALROSA (AK ALROSA), in addition to the required tax (in the form of personal income tax) and non-tax (dividends on shares, rental). payment for land) payments to the budget of the municipal district, AK ALROSA provides assistance within the framework of separate agreements on socio-economic cooperation. Based on signed agreements, the company annually transfers funds for capital and current repairs of educational and cultural institutions, for the development of physical culture and sports, recreation and health improvement for children, and for career guidance activities” (Samsonova, 2017: 21–37).

But subsoil use is associated with serious problems that lead to the degradation of nature, human resources, health problems, loss and transformation of traditional culture, and the disappearance of languages. In this regard, it is necessary: 1. To improve the regulatory system and the basis of relationships between subsoil users and the local population. 2. Improve legislation in the field of subsoil use to preserve the traditional culture of management, unacceptable for the northern territories, necessary for the further development of the unique culture and originality of the northern civilization of the indigenous peoples of the North. 3. “Pay attention to reforming both federal and region-

al legislation concerning indigenous peoples of the North and strengthen the regulatory implementation of assessments of the impact of industrial development on traditional environmental management (ethnological expertise). 4. Strengthen state and public control. 5. In the event of damage to the conditions for the development of traditional types of economic activity, companies must compensate financially for the damage caused to both individuals and herds, municipal organizations in areas of compact residence of indigenous peoples, and tribal communities of small-numbered peoples of the North. 6. Practice the construction of various facilities that will reduce the negative impact of the consequences of subsoil use. 7. Allocate new areas to fishermen by creating untouchable areas for traditional fisheries. 8. Build healthcare facilities due to the fact that the environmental situation is deteriorating and, as a result of increased background radiation, the number of cancer diseases among the local population is increasing. 9. Conduct regular monitoring of the environmental situation and practice compensation for the harmful effects of environmental destruction on the health of the population and the gene pool of the indigenous peoples of the North. 10. Ensure the participation of local municipalities and communities of small peoples of the North in the work of regulatory authorities. 11. Improve the contractual system with mining companies with local authorities and self-government. 12. Mining companies should develop and improve the system of construction of social facilities to maintain health, education and preserve tra-

ditional culture and languages. 13. Contribute to the creation of jobs and training of indigenous residents of Yakutia in the specialties necessary to obtain jobs. 14. Provide effective assistance to educational structures from kindergartens to higher education institutions. 15. Stop the practice of dominance of mining companies in resolving conflict situations and one-sided relationships in favor of local residents. 16. Strengthen the work of local governments and the public in accurately expressing the interests of the local community to mining companies. 17. Conduct sustainable monitoring and dissemination of positive and negative experiences in the relationship between mining companies and the local indigenous population. 18. Regional authorities should develop strategies for conducting impact assessments, identifying mechanisms for determining compensation for negative environmental impacts and benefits. 19. An increased role for municipal governments in indigenous territories needs further exploration to ensure that indigenous peoples have a strong presence in the political, administrative and territorial structure and contribute to effective decision-making regarding the use of natural resources. 20. Develop a policy of responsibility of managers and employees for the impact of subsoil use activities on the ecology of the North, way of life, preservation of the vulnerable traditional culture of the indigenous peoples of the North from the thoughtless and destructive activities of companies by improving the professional training of workers in the mining sector. 21. Increase the degree of transparency of the activities of mining companies.

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