

Forester helper

There is a popular joke about forest protection: "fanning away the mosquitoes the forester cut out 40 ha of forest with his axe". Formerly such infringements and illegal logging could be concealed, but nowadays RS data-based GIS is actively applied in Russia for forest protection, as well as interactive Internet-maps.

A view of the forest from space

Not long ago a GIS, created by ScanEx company together with Roslesinforg, started to be applied in Russia. This solution enables to spot violations in forestry, using annual 2-10 m resolution imagery of intensive forest use territories as input data.

IRS-1D, IRS-P5/P6, SPOT 4/5 and Formosat-2 satellites are used for data collection. Near real-time space data is being acquired by UniScan ground stations, interpreted and distributed through regional centers of Roslesinforg for change detection in forests. The solution, in particular, enabled to reveal the 444 cases of violations of Article 260 of the RF Criminal Code "Illegal trees and bushes felling" in Krasnoyarsk Territory. Application of space imagery in achieving goals of the forestry industry complex is especially efficient in monitoring areas being large in size and hard to access.

Map of violations and alerted citizens

From now on each Russian citizen can put any location of forestry violations on the map of lesnazor.ru/map web-site. To report an illegal logging, waste or construction, one should fill in the form indicating the location of the suspected infringement. Photos with detailed explanations can be also added as a backup. The map forest violation is a joint product of Greenpeace-Russia, NGO Transparent World and the non-profit association of specialists in sphere of geoinformation systems GIS-Lab.

In most cases our conscientious citizens report about forest wastes, illegal loggings, land misappropriation and forest fires. Nowadays, the maps illustrate data about hundreds of different complaints, mostly from Moscow and Moscow Region (almost 40%), St-Petersburg and the suburbs (over 10%), as well as from Western Siberia, South of Russia and the Baikal region. In the future the information collected will be submitted to President Medvedev with a request to restore the forest protection practice, discontinued in 2007.

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