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**Fish Communities of Russian North –
Civil Society Development**

In this presentation I will analyse the forms and the context of civil society development in fish rural communities on Russian North. I will speak about Onejsky Isthmus case study, where I made research in 2005 together with my colleagues. These communities are small old Pomor's villages with several hundred citizens in each. It is difficult to reach the villages because no roads. The traditional nature use is preserved in the villages: coastal fishing as the main form, the others are agriculture, hunting, forest using. Before revolutions there were communities consisted with fish artels. In soviet period they were united in fish kolkhozes. This form survives till our days. Because of that we can say that we have communities where the kolkhoz chairs, elected by the members, represent the main part of the citizens.

According to the citizens discourse analyses the kolkhoz's chairs are perceived as more powerful and respected as the local community administration.

Thus we can identify modern kolkhozes as the form of civil society development. The kolkhoz's chairs became the community representatives and defend the interests of the local citizens on district and regional level with help of deputies, mass media, regional NGOs. But local NGOs are not created.

The local citizen's interests are connected with possibilities of traditional nature use. There is conflict of interests between local communities and federal state policy in coastal fishing, sea biorecource and forest using. First, the federal practice of fishing quota distribution supporting big fish industry. Fish kholhozes can not compete with big companies and the state push kholhozes to the border of surviving.

Second, payment for sea biorecources, with started several years ago make fishing from the cost are not profitable for local people. But this tip of fishing is very important for kolkhoz teams and for local people for winter profit and as souse for meal. Third, state support of extensive logging in old growth forests and bureaucracy practice lead to the conflict situation, when the territory of planning national park was cut, because of current logging. Thus traditional places of forest using and hunting were logged or planning for logging. Also the part of very valuable spawning forest rivers were disrupts.

These problems could not be solved only by kolkhoz leaders. Because of that we can see the other form of civil society development – creating of several new regional Pomor's organizations, who try to defend the rights of local citizens. After many attempts to prove Pomor's rights for traditional nature use, they understand that the only way is to receive the status of indigenes people. Now Pomor's NGO's working to receive this status. This NGO's started to maintain close relations with regional environmental NGO's to accept their experience. But in some cases Pomor's organizations have opposite interests with international ecoNGOs. For example, Greenpeace is against trapping of white coat, but it was traditional for Pomor's nature use. The other mechanism of civil society development is a public participation in forest management, which provided by FSC international certification process. This process took Onejsky Isthmus, because Onegales, the forest company logging there, received FSC certificate. The local citizens were not informed about certification and were not accounted as stakeholders in audit process. But now the kolkhozez, Pomor's NGOs and regional ecoNGOs expressed their will to participate in stakeholder's negotiations with Onegales before next audit. They want to defend the traditional nature use places.