



Lead Author e-mail: [valeria.zamorshchikova@gmail.com](mailto:valeria.zamorshchikova@gmail.com)

**Title:** *Natural Resources Exploitation: Opportunities and Challenges for Northern people in Republic Sakha (Yakutia)*

**Valeria ZAMORSHCHIKOVA<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*North-eastern federal university, Yakutsk, Russia*

The work concerns the assessment of intensive industrial development impacts on indigenous peoples of Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and environment in the context of broader economic changes. The republic is the most remote and largest region of Russia with richest raw material base. Natural resources exploitation and industrial activities have significant consequences for the environment and indigenous people who lead traditional way of life and have deep ties into the land and environment.

Traditional land use areas are mainly located within zones of political and economic interest, particularly those concerning oil, mineral, and timber production. Overgrazing of tundra and taiga-tundra pastures due to development mining and petroleum industries disrupts the reindeer herding which is the main subsistence activity of indigenous people. Changes to the range, number and health of animals, fish and plant species will ultimately affect the quality of life of indigenous people. This may lead to changes in hunting and harvesting practices, and may threaten traditional food.

Consequently, a model of sustainable development in the Russian North should be considered in two aspects – in regard to the indigenous population, its traditional economy, biological resources and territories, and in regard to newcomers, employed in modern industries, which use primarily fossil natural resources and provoke environmental pollution supplies.