



This programme is the first such comprehensive joint endeavour between the Academy of Sciences and a Russian mining and metals company and a serious undertaking for scientists, who are tasked with evaluating the effects of human activities in the Arctic.



Nornickel and the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences have agreed to implement a joint long-term programme to decontaminate and restore the natural sites affected by a May 2020 fuel spill in Norilsk, as well as to develop rules for sustainable industrial activities in the Russian Arctic.

The agreement was signed in Novosibirsk on Tuesday by Nornickel's VP for Federal and Regional Programmes, Andrey Grachev, and the Chairman of the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Valentin Parmon, in the presence of presidential envoy Sergey Menyailo.

"Inviting scientists from the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences to study the state of the environment on the Taimyr Peninsula is good example for everyone, including Russian companies, of what it means to be environmentally responsible. The objectives and interests of the [Great Norilsk Expedition](#) extend far beyond evaluating the causes and the consequences of the May 2020 diesel fuel spill in Norilsk. The expedition will produce a large-scale and comprehensive study of the Taimyr and paint an objective picture of its current ecosystem. The expedition's conclusions and recommendations will be necessary for achieving the goals set by Russia's president for the development of the Arctic," said presidential envoy Sergey Menyailo at the signing ceremony.

Nornickel is a responsible and transparent producer of non-ferrous and precious metals with key production sites beyond the Arctic Circle and thus is interested in monitoring the state of the Russian Arctic on a regular basis. Nornickel is invested in determining the potential breadth of the consequences of climate change in the Far North and evaluating the threat posed by thawing permafrost.

Scientists from 14 institutions associated with the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences completed the fieldwork stage of the Great Norilsk Expedition in early September following over a month collecting samples across the Taimyr Peninsula. The scientists are now evaluating these samples in laboratories and analysing data. Over the course of fieldwork, they collected several thousand samples of water, soil, plants, and bottom sediments.

"We are grateful to Sergey Menyailo for taking an active part in these negotiations and making both Nornickel's cooperation with the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Great Norilsk Expedition possible. Nornickel has invested enormous resources

in decontamination efforts and each of the responders participating in this effort has worked steadfastly and ahead of schedule. The results of the Great Norilsk Expedition will provide Nornickel with a clear picture of the consequences of the [diesel fuel spill] at Norilsk's combined heat and power plant 3 and will equip us with a scientific understanding of how to restore the environment to what it should naturally be. The strategic objective is to develop new management principles for the Russian Arctic," said Nornickel VP Andrey Grachev.

The Great Norilsk Expedition has now moved into the laboratories of the academic institutions in Novosibirsk, Tomsk, Barnaul, Yakutsk, and Norilsk. The laboratory work will take at least 2-3 months and will be a challenge for scientists as they try to determine the precise extent of contamination that resulted from the May diesel fuel spill, investigate the chronology of anthropogenic and technogenic changes to the Taimyr Peninsula, and evaluate the state of permafrost. The expedition will produce a comprehensive report that is scheduled for release at the end of 2020.

"There is a great potential in the cooperation between the scientific community and business and a common understanding that neither scientific research nor business will get very far in our changing world without joining hand in hand and working together. Trust is fundamental here: trust between scientists, business, and the government," said the Chairman of the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences Valentin Parmon.

Click [here](#) to learn more about the Great Norilsk Expedition.

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