

Dr. Ludmila Zhirina, VIOLA, Bryansk, Russia

I am Dr. Ludmila Zhirina, the leader of the Russian environmental NGO VIOLA. It is the third COP conference in which the representative of our organization participates. I think that participation of NGOs in COP process is an important and necessary element of protection and conservation of a biodiversity on our planet. NGOs are one of stakeholders which influence on conservation of biodiversity, therefore it is important if NGOs participate in the international conferences and discussions and also if they participate in discussion of the important international documents. Most importantly, NGOs are active supporters of the COP process in the one's own countries. After participation in the COP, when everyone has finished talking about biodiversity, NGOs, like Viola work on implementation.

I participate in these conferences, because, I want to inform participants of the COP conference about opinion of NGOs from NIS countries. I personally participated in several meetings and discussions. I am sure, that my opinion has been heard, and it will be taken in attention. Furthermore, my participation allows me to create new international connections on levels of NGOs. It is very important for the COP process and also for ecological activity of NGOs in Russia and other countries of NIS region, who are not as connected to the international community.

My participation in the COP conferences was useful for me, and for my organization NGO VIOLA. It has strengthened our organization through an establishment of new contacts and reception of the information on activity of others international and national NGOs. When I arrived home, our organization lead a series of seminars and round tables for representatives of the scientific, governmental and non-governmental organizations with similar concerns about biodiversity protection. I have told about key questions which have been discussed on the COP conferences. We emphasized questions of climate changing. This theme is very important in our activity. NGO VIOLA has the program designed to activate local NGOs, the governmental and scientific organizations to develop renewable energy sources and prevention of global warming of the climate. Thus, my participation in the COP conferences became good base for development of our local program.

After my participation in COP 7, new ideas for our programs were born. For example, our organization Viola are beginning new project with support of the EECONET Action Fund (the Netherlands). We are planning to rent the territory (130 hectares) of the forest near clean river and to make the management recommendations, to study the biodiversity and to make this territory like the part of European Ecology Net. On COP conference I received much information and literature for this project.

I would like to thank donors who have helped me to cover my transport and accommodation expenses. It allowed me to participate in this international conference. Thank you very much! I would like to thank Jessica Dempsey for good work too. She has made all for creation of good conditions of our work.

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