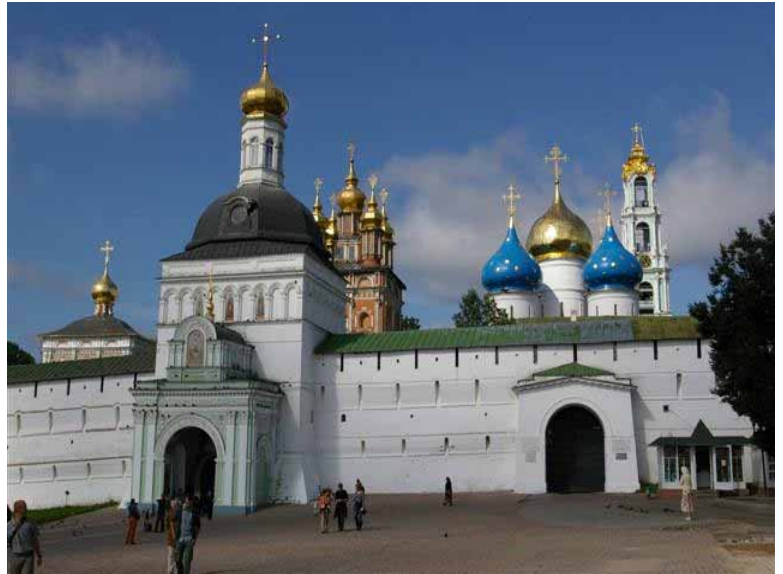


# Summer schools in Siberia and the Altai mountains

When thinking of „Siberia“, most people imagine bitter cold weather, endless forests and banishment. But Siberia is much more than that. Banishment has become history, and the Siberian climate ranges from arctic to desert conditions. In fact, the summers are sunnier and, at comparable latitudes, even warmer than in Germany. The winters, however, are extremely cold.

These contrasts of the continental climate lead to a unique diversity of landscapes that is still largely unknown. Combined with Siberia's special history, a rich local culture, and a strong economic growth (about 10% per year), this variety creates ideal conditions for interdisciplinary education and research.



Extreme natural eutrophy in Salair mountains

Each year (July and August), the Weihenstephan University of Applied Sciences in cooperation with the Technical University Berlin offers summer schools in Siberia, supported by the best scientific traditions of Russia and the warm hospitality of the Siberian people. The excellent didactics, high language skills and outstanding professional competence of the scientific guides provide deep insights into the different landscapes, covering all climatic zones from tundra to semi-desert. Well trained staff with over 12 years of experience guarantees the best individual service even under field conditions. Our summer schools comply with international standards in teaching and enable you to make exceptional personal experiences

with a healthy and intact nature. A rising number of highly qualified participants from industrially developed countries are attracted by these inimitable excursions every year.

The primary goal of the summer schools is to make learning easy and to develop the cooperation of environmental research groups. We hope to support a better understanding of the interrelations between climate, geology, vegetation and landscape evolution for a sustainable development by showing landscapes undisturbed by human activities. Such an approach usually induces new ideas for nature protection, climate research and landscape planning. Furthermore, seeing the consequences of rapid economic growth and the specific resource wastage in this area stimulates the participants to individual reflections about global challenges and motivates them to find practical solutions for a common future.





Each excursion will take approximately three weeks. Scientists, social scientists, students and teachers of environmental fields of studies as well as employees of authorities and environmental related firms are invited to participate. The summer schools correspond to the general practice at German universities. The transport during the excursions is organized by several busses and trucks. All participants should be equipped with their own tents and camping gear. The scientific sites are located in the vicinity of the campgrounds or can be reached by short hiking tours without luggage. Conversation during the expedition

will be in English. In some cases a simultaneous translation from Russian or German will be supplied. The summer schools are an official course of the Weihenstephan University of Applied Sciences (course number LA 709) and Technical University of Berlin (course number 0730 L 130).

### Main topics:

- the worldwide biggest peat bog ecosystem (Vasjugan bog) and the dark coniferous forest of the southern taiga
- the extreme biodiversity of forests undisturbed by human activities, meadows, steppes, dry steppes, and semi-deserts with intact hot-spots of biodiversity showing more than 120 species per m<sup>2</sup>
- the extreme natural eutrophy and gigantism of herbal vegetation (with inflorescences of more than 3.5 m!)
- the wonderful aesthetics of park-like forest steppes and steppes
- the imposing dynamics of huge Siberian rivers such as the Ob and the Katun
- the impressive glacial series without vegetation cover in very dry weather conditions
- the Altai mountains ("golden mountains" in translation), famous for their beauty but still barely accessible
- the plant communities of the Mongolian desert "Gobi" and the "painted deserts"
- the thermocarst phenomena and other processes of permafrost, including the "drunken forests" and Pingo (Palsa)
- the effects of big earthquakes on landscape formations with on-site examples
- the cultural and social aspects of regional development processes
- the challenges of sustainable environmental research and development in different urban and rural regions
- the prospects of congested areas with high resource supply



**More information available in the Internet at:** <http://sibirien.csiewert.de> (in German), [www.siberian-expedition.de](http://www.siberian-expedition.de) (in English), <http://bilder.bodenkunde.info> (pictures).

**Registration:** Please send an e-mail to [fhw@siberia-eco.org](mailto:fhw@siberia-eco.org) with your name, surname, e-mail address, postal address, telephone and preferred time (August or July)

**Deadlines and fees:** **October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006** for participants from partner universities and institutions, expedition fee approx. € 1500,-. **March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007** for all other participants, expedition fee up to US \$ 5000,-.