

Text B Forest Death

In the late seventies and early eighties, areas of central Europe were observed to be suffering extreme forest death. The hardest hit areas in Bavaria had up to 40 percent sick and dying trees. A group of German scientists predicted that Europe's forests were threatened by acid rain and 10 percent of all trees were at risk. Despite fierce criticism from other scientists, the images of the sick and dying trees reached all round the world, sowing anxiety both in other European countries and in the US.

The fear of and assertions about acid rain led to numerous scientific investigations. The official American acid rain project, the National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program (NAPAP), became the world's biggest, longest and most expensive; it spanned most of a decade, involved about 700 scientists, and cost half a billion dollars. A whole series of questions were looked into in order to expose links between acid rain and forests, lakes and buildings.

We examine the results of one of NAPAP's long-term controlled experiments, in which seedlings from three species of trees were exposed to various concentrations of acid rain over a period of almost three years. The trees were cultivated in relatively poor soil in order to maximize any negative effects of the acid rain. No acid rain effect was detected on any of the three species of tree. Even with precipitation almost ten times as acidic as the average acid rain in the eastern US (pH 4.2) the trees grew just as fast. In fact many of the NAPAP's studies showed that trees exposed to moderate acid rain grew faster. Some even longer controlled experiments were carried out in Norway, and here too the conclusion was that the predicted negative effects of acid rain "could not be demonstrated." For this reason NAPAP's conclusion was that "the vast majority of forests in the U.S. and Canada are not effected by decline... Moreover there is no case of forest decline in which acidic deposition is known to be a predominant cause."

VOCABULARY:

Hit	Известный	To detect	Обнаруживать
To predict	Предсказывать	Precipitation	Выпадение осадков
Fierce	Жесткий, лютый	Moderate	Умеренный

criticism	Критика	Seedling	Саженец
To sow	Сеять	Decline	Упадок, гибель
Assertion	Утверждение	Deposition	Осадок
To span	Длиться, простираться	Predominant	Преобладающий
To expose	Подвергать воздействию	Vast majority	Подавляющее большинство

EXERCISE 1

Расскажите об экологической программе NAPAP. Кто принимал в ней участие? На какой период времени она была рассчитана? Какие денежные средства были затрачены на ее реализацию? Проводились эксперименты по изучению вредного воздействия чего? Какова была их продолжительность? Проводилось изучение воздействия осадков какой концентрации?

EXERCISE 2

Ответьте на следующие вопросы: 1. Когда опасность кислотных дождей стала восприниматься как первостепенная угроза лесам? 3. В каких странах проводились исследования по изучению вредного воздействия кислотных дождей? 4. Выскажите свою точку зрения о воздействии кислотных дождей на леса, используя факты из текста.

EXERCISE 3

Найдите эквиваленты: умеренный кислотный дождь, в начале 70-х годов, подвергаться риску, нет ни одного случая, быть основной причиной, в конце 60-х годов, продолжаться более одного десятилетия, сеющий страх.

EXERCISE 4

Составьте фразы, соответствующие содержанию текста:

1. The National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program (NAPAP) became	the world's biggest, longest and most expensive.
	the world's smallest, shortest and cheapest.
	the world's biggest and cheapest.

2. The National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program (NAPAP) spanned	most of a decade.
	most of the century.

	most of the month.
--	--------------------

3. The National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program (NAPAP)	involved about 700 scientists and cost one thousand dollars.
	involved about 700 scientists and cost half a billion dollars.
	involved about 100 scientists and cost half a billion dollars.

4. The trees were cultivated in relatively	poor soil	in order to maximize any negative effects of the acid rain.
	rich soil	
	average soil	

5. The seedlings from three species	of trees	were exposed to various concentrations of acid rain over a period of almost three years.
	of animals	
	of flowers	

EXECISE 5

Согласны ли вы с краткими выводами по содержанию предыдущего текста:

- Unfortunately, the myth of forests killed by acid rains lives in many places.
- It is stated quite casually how personal health problems are turning into public environment issues.
- It is simple to write ‘ Sulfur in the atmosphere produces acid rain. Acid rain kills forests. But not borne out by the evidence’.