



**Snowchange Cooperative Discussion Paper 4:
Photo Essay on the Snowchange Visit to the International *Oblas* Dug-Out Canoe Competition, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Region – Jugra, Western Siberia, Russia, 3rd – 7th July, 2014**

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1. Introduction and Context

Since 2012, Snowchange Co-op and the Northern Forum have explored ways of revitalising Northern traditional fisheries. Starting in Spring 2014 the Government of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Region – Jugra, Russia joined in the talks. The idea is to host an international *“Festival of Northern Fishing Traditions”* in Finland in September 2014.

To foster a deeper dialogue, Snowchange was invited to take part in the International *Oblas Dug-Out Canoe Competition* in Western Siberia to meet with the local Indigenous representatives and discuss the fisheries cooperation for 2014 and 2015.

This small photo essay documents the trip to Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Region – Jugra, Russia in July 2014. Thank you to all sponsors and organisers, especially President Vladimir Vasiliev from Northern Forum.



Surgut International Airport, 4 am.

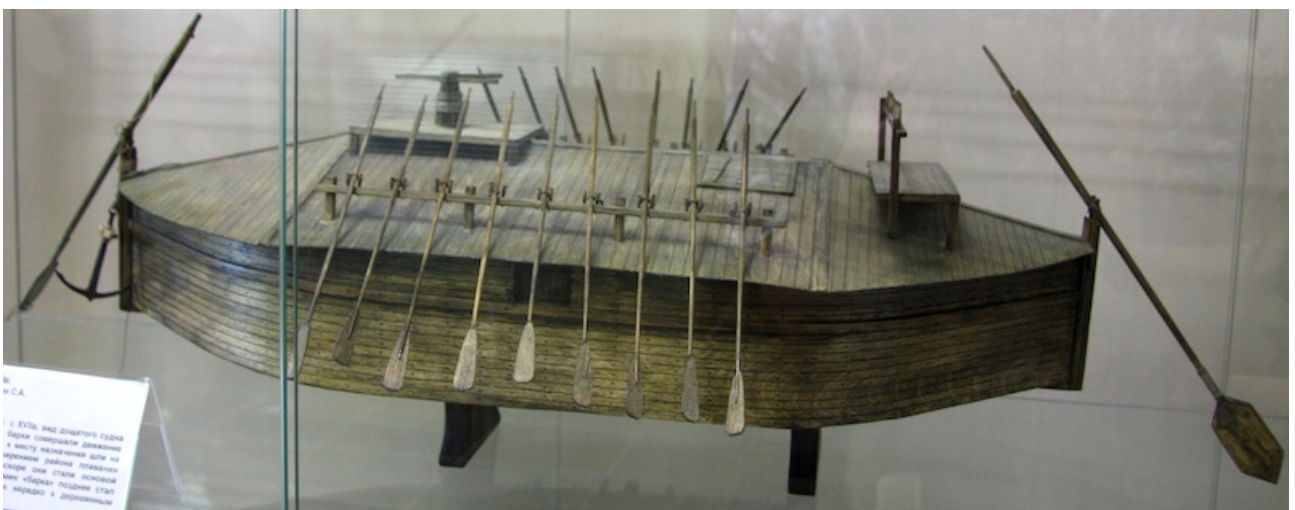
2. The Land: Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Region – Jugra



*River Ob and its tributaries are
the life-blood of the Indigenous Khanty and Mansi.*

The region of Khanty-Mansi (Jugra) is the traditional homeland of the Finno-Ugric Khanty and Mansi peoples. An English-language overview of the region can be seen here:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khanty-Mansi_Autonomous_Okrug



*Russians started to visit, tax and settle in the region and
on the great Siberian rivers in 1500s, using such unique boats as this model.*

The games were held close to Surgut, in the territory of the Neftejugansk municipality. The region produces almost 50 % of Russian oil and gas so it has strategic importance to the whole country. This has caused the loss of reindeer herding and fisheries for the Indigenous communities.



Taiga forest is the home of the boreal Khanty.



Historical re-creation of a Russian log cabin in the downtown of Neftejugansk city.



City of Neftejugansk



Khanty-Mansi region is one of the richest in Russia due to oil and gas, with a lot of new construction of infrastructure, housing and skyscrapers.



A Transneft oil supply base.



Gas burns all night, all day in the taiga.



Rosneft base.

3. The Khanty at the Festival



Traditional Khanty log-house had been constructed at the boreal forest.



*Khanty stored food in these storage shelters in the taiga in traditional times.
The oblas canoes, dug out, can be seen stored under the shelter.*



Skaska, the location of the Festival, had a historical shelter, which had been moved from taiga and reconstructed at the canoe camp.



Historical dug outs in display.



Khanty oven inside the log-house.



Outdoor oven for traditional bread.



Model of a long-time ago Khanty dwelling, in traditional times, at the Museum of "Ob River", Neftejugansk town.



Khanty kids welcomed all the visitors Skaska.



Khanty mothers carrying their children to camp.



Khanty handicraft masters.



Child and grandmother at the oblas canoe.



Vasili Mihailovich, Khanty master of the dug-out canoes



Khanty ladies observing the canoes at the festival.



Detail of a canoe head.

4. International *Oblas* Dug-Out Canoe Competition

The event had the following aims:

- *Promote Indigenous peoples' culture, traditions and unique way of life*
- *Revive Indigenous ethno-cultural traditional games*
- *Cultivate cultural and spiritual values in youth based on ethno-cultural traditions*
- *Develop and popularize ethno-sport*



The Festival got to a flying start on Saturday, 5th July.





Many Khanty paddlers trained all week for the races.



Many Khanty from the different municipalities, such as the Beloyarsii Raion here, participated in the opening of the festival on Saturday morning.



Governor Natalya Komarova meets with the children at the opening.



Larissa Sarman (left), from Estonia, with the President of the Dug Out Canoe Association of Russia, Vladlen Mikhalev, the Vice Head of the Neftejugansk region, and a local participant.



Tero Mustonen, Larissa, Governor Komarova and a specialist from the regional administration.



Smoked Northern Pike and traditional foods for sale.



Canoes at launch.



The 18-35-years start at 10.30.



The race was approximately 0,6 kms.



The Finnish delegation beat four of the locals at the start, finishing 22nd of 27.