The Eighth Congress of the Hydrobiological Society of the Russian Academy of Sciences (HBS RAS) was held in Svetlogorsk (Kaliningrad Province) in September 16–23, 2001. There were 286 participants including 236 delegates from 24 regional departments of HBS RAS, representatives from all parts of Russia, from Kaliningrad to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskii and from Murmansk to Rostov-na-Donu. The largest delegations, except the organizers from Kaliningrad and traditionally large delegations from Moscow and St.-Petersburg have arrived from Rostov-na-Donu, Krasnoyarsk, and Kazan. The Congress also had participants from Byelorussia, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Poland.

The Congress was opened by the President of HBS, Academician A.F. Alimov. The following speakers mentioned the loss of prestige of hydrobiology due to financial cuts in basic investigations and overall collapse in expeditions and experimental studies. However, despite these problems, during the five years since the seventh congress, much new scientific data have been obtained and more monographs and collections of papers dealing with certain water bodies were published. The participants of the congress have risen in memory of Academicians G.I. Galazii, A.V. Zhirmunskii, and O.G. Kusakin, who have passed away during the few last years.

Three volumes of report abstracts were published by the beginning of the congress. The congress was comprised of a plenary session and eight sections; altogether, 260 reports were presented and discussed; one-third of these reports was produced by marine biologists.

The reports of the plenary session mostly dealt with problems of marine and freshwater hydrobiology. The session was opened by a report from A.F. Alimov (Zoological Institute, RAS) discussing the theory of functioning of water ecosystems. Great interest has been demonstrated in the report of Yu.Yu. Dgebuadze with coauthors (Institute of Ecology and Evolution, RAS) about the invasion of certain species beyond the limits of their natural geographical ranges, where the speaker mentioned that no simple correlation exists between the biological diversity of communities and their resistance against invaders. V.V. Khlebovich (Zoological Institute, RAS) presented a comprehensive idea of autoecology, whose problems are distributed between different biological sciences. The reports of A.P. Kuznetsov (Institute of Oceanology, RAS) and A.I. Kopylov (Institute of Biology of Inland Water Bodies, RAS) were devoted to the analysis of the fluxes of organic carbon in ecosystems. A.P. Alekseev (Inter-Departmental Ichthyological Commission) mentioned that the exploitation of objects traditional for fisheries exceeded the maximum permissible level, while less expensive but not less valuable objects with respect to their food quality are still little used. He also mentioned that aquaculture is still developing throughout the world, whereas in Russia many of the aquacultural farms have been closed. A.I. Startseva (All-Russian Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography) has characterized bioassays as being an efficient and cheaper control over the conditions of water resources compared with chemical analyses.

Most reports of the session “Biological Resources of the Open Ocean, Shelf, and Estuaries and Their Rational Management” discussed applied problems in the studies of hydrobionts. B.G. Ivanov (All-Russian Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography) reported that the total actual catches of marine hydrobionts in Russia are several times greater than earlier and, therefore, due to high profits of the export of marine hydrobionts, poaching appears to be an especially vexing problem. In this connection, reports of P.A. Bukatin and L.N. Domanevskii (Atlantic Institute of Scientific Fisheries and Oceanography), Yu.M. Maksimov et al. (Laboratory of Scientific Fisheries, Lithuania) and others, discussing the condition of biological resources in certain water bodies, were of particular importance. V.P. Ponomarenko (Inter-Departmental Ichthyological Commission) has calculated that the consumption of capelin by cod in the Barents Sea is directly proportional to the reserves of the capelin. O.N. Susloparova and others (State Institute of Lake and River Fisheries) have determined the areas most favorable for the foraging and spawning of fish in eastern Finskii Bay (Gulf of Finland), where new harbors are actively developed. The trophological characteristics of commercially important objects were presented in the reports of M.I. Tariverdieva (All-Russian Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography) and K. Matsievskaya and coauthors (Marine Institute of Fisheries, Poland). The morphology of the reproductive system in cephalopod mollusks has been discussed by A.V. Bespyatykh, R.M. Sabirov, and R.Yu. Osin (State University, Kazan).
Some of the reports presented at the section discussed theoretical problems. For example, K.N. Nesis (Institute of Oceanology, RAS) showed that the characteristics of life cycle in large taxons allow us to analyze the evolution of life forms against the background of the evolution in the studied taxon. A scheme of the development of bipolar geographical ranges in pelagic ocean fish species has been advanced by E.I. Kukuev (Atlantic Institute of Scientific Fisheries and Oceanography).

At the section “Structural and Functional Organization of Populations, Communities, and Ecosystems,” particular interest has been drawn to reports on integrated studies including some long-term observations. O.I. Zezina (Institute of Oceanology, RAS) has emphasized that the condition of brachiopod communities might be used as an index of change in the hydrological regime, as well as in the eutrophication and anthropogenic pollution of the shelf zone, and that the role of brachiopods in deep-sea biofilters is comparable with that of bivalve mollusks in shallow-water zones. I.A. Olenina (Center of Marine Studies, Lithuania) showed a correlation between poisonous phytoplankton blooms in the Baltic Sea and anthropogenic eutrophication. P.R. Makarevich et al. (Murman Marine Biological Institute) studied under-ice planktonic communities of the Pechora and Kara seas. E.E. Ezhova and M.V. Pavlenko (Atlantic Branch of the Institute of Oceanology, RAS) have demonstrated that the changes in zoobenthos communities of Vislinskii Bay of the Baltic Sea are due to increased salinity; the reasons for the depletion of the fauna and naturalization of new non-indigenous species are eutrophication and pollution of water in that area.

At the section “Host-Parasite Relationships in Hydrobionts,” a report by O.A. Shukhgalter (Atlantic Institute of Scientific Fisheries and Oceanography) aroused considerable interest, showing that the percentage of parasite invasion of sardine and anchovy in the Central-Eastern Atlantic decreases from north to south. Attention has been drawn to a report of I.G. Syasina (Institute of Marine Biology, FEB RAS), where the histopathological indices of health in fish (in example of flounders) were recommended for ecological monitoring in the marine environment.

Most reports presented at the section “Theoretical Backgrounds of Aquaculture and Acclimation of Hydrobionts,” a report by A.O. Shukhgalter (Atlantic Institute of Scientific Fisheries and Oceanography) aroused considerable interest, showing that the percentage of parasite invasion of sardine and anchovy in the Central-Eastern Atlantic decreases from north to south. Attention has been drawn to a report of I.G. Syasina (Institute of Marine Biology, FEB RAS), where the histopathological indices of health in fish (in example of flounders) were recommended for ecological monitoring in the marine environment.

Particular credit goes to the Organizing Committee for organization of the Youth Section, where 54 posters were presented at 6 subsections, including 33 posters dealing with problems of marine biology.

Young scientists from the Atlantic Institute of Scientific Fisheries and Oceanography demonstrated their activities in the studies of commercially important objects of the Atlantic. T.A. Golubkova has studied the feeding in the sea zander. I.V. Karpushevskii has described the situation around the fishery for cod. V.M. Kurov et al. told about the ichthyofauna of coastal

2 Eastern part of the Barents Sea, around the mouth of the Pechora River (translator’s note).