**Protection of Environment in the UK**

Protection of environment is a major issue in Great Britain. Global warming, ozone layer problem, air and water pollution, industrial wastes are in the centre of different state and public actions. Great Britain maintains careful checks on use of dangerous chemicals and collects information about new ones. Acid rains that kill enormous amounts of fish in Great Britain are also in the centre of attention. They are caused by smoke from factories and power stations and exhaust fumes from transport. It is produced when coal and oil are burnt. The government provides smoke control programmes. New power plants will have to meet very tight limits on emission of chemical gases. Britain works with Scandinavian countries in a project on the problem of acid rains. Over the last years local authorities are carrying on tests of drinking water in England and Wales. Nuclear waste from nuclear plants is discharged into the Irish Sea, making it one of the most radioactive seas in the world. There also have been numerous leaks of radioactive matter to the atmosphere. Water pollution from shipping and oil platforms, mostly in the North Atlantic, is great.

Water pollution programmes are being worked out in Great Britain nowadays. Ten National parks have been established in England and Wales, four — in Scotland. Their aims are to conserve the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. Each park is administered by an independent National Park Authority. Trees Preservation Orders enable local authorities to protect trees and woodlands. Once a tree is protected it is, in general, an offence to cut it down without permission. Responsibility for pollution control is divided between local authorities and central government. Local authorities are responsible for collection and disposal of wastes, keeping the streets clear of litter, control of air pollution. It is a criminal offence to leave litter in any public place in the open air except in designated places. The fines for it vary from 25 up to 2500 pounds.