



On the 2 of May, 2018, Professor Aleksakhin, member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, passed away at the age of 82.

Rudolf Aleksakhin was a brilliant scientist, Doctor of Biological Sciences (1974), Professor (1985), Member of the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences (1992) and Russian Academy of Sciences (2013), was involved in post-accident cleanup activities at the Southern Urals (1957) and Chernobyl NPP (1986), awarded with the USSR State Prize (1974), State Prize of the Russian Federation (2002), titled as Honored Scientist of Russia (1997), considered as a leading radioecologist in Russia.

Great merits of this man of science and his blistering carrier (Moscow State University, Pilot Station at PA Mayak (East Urals Radioactive Trace), Laboratory of Forestry of the USSR Academy of Sciences (1961–1966), Scientific and Technical Council at the USSR Ministry of Medium Machine Building (1966–1975), the All-Russia Research Institute of Radiology and Agroecology (director and supervisor)) in radiobiology are well known. Professor Aleksakhin was the author of over 900 scientific papers, including 22 monographs, editorial board member of 11 scientific journals, member of Rosatom's Scientific and Technical Council and the Public Council, deputy chairman of the Russian Scientific Commission on Radiological Protection, member of the Scientific Council of the Russian Academy of Sciences on Radiobiology, member of the National Academy of Agrarian Sciences of Ukraine, member of the Executive Committee and Vice-President of the International Union of Radioecology, member of the British Society of Radiologists. His international scientific expertise, knowledge and experience prompted his active engagement in leading international organizations such as IAEA, ICRP, UNSCEAR.

In recognition of his merits, Professor Aleksakhin was awarded with Order of Peoples' Friendship (1987), Order of Honor (2007); won several prizes including the Sukachev Prize, Klechkovsky Golden Medal, Timofeev-Resovskii, Williams, Vavilov, Ramzaev medals and prizes, was awarded by the Slavsky departmental order of the State Corporation Rosatom, and the Vernadsky medal from the International Union of Radioecologists. Rudolf Mikhaylovich generously shared his knowledge and experience with his colleagues, his students featured 27 candidates and 19 doctors of science.

It was a set of papers focused on the cleanup activities performed in the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident that initiated the fruitful collaboration of IBRAE RAN with Professor Aleksakhin. This cooperation was further continued resulting in a series of National Reports of the Russian Federation on Chernobyl accident (1996, 2006, 2016), a monograph Major Radiation Accidents, IAEA documents (10 Years After Chernobyl: Environmental Implications), Franco-German Chernobyl initiative. Then followed the development of the Environmental Policy of Minatom of Russia (2004) and lots of other joint initiatives, including those associated with radioactive waste management.

We believe it to be of great importance that technical experts engaged in RW management could follow Professor Aleksakhin's key takeaways in the field of radioecology. Firstly, in 1986–1988 he was running a project aiming to prevent the generation of large RW streams resulting from contaminated soil cleanup. Various types of agricultural technologies developed under his leadership enabled the reuse of hundreds of thousands of tons of agricultural products and hundreds of thousands of hectares of farmlands. Decisions made regarding the further use of the resulting material provided a most effective solution of this problem. Secondly, Professor Aleksakhin and the teams working under his leadership received an unprecedented set of data enabling to evaluate radiation impact of contaminated areas on biota. Thirdly, Professor Aleksakhin was actively engaged in demonstrating the feasibility and ecological safety of promising technologies ensuring the closed nuclear fuel cycle and radiation-equivalent RW disposal, being the chief ecologist of PRORYV Project implemented by SC Rosatom.

The bright and kind image of this outstanding man of science and wise mentor will remain in our hearts for a long time.

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