

in memoriam

Professor Jaan-Mati Punning
(1940–2009)



A member of the editorial board of the journal *Oil Shale*, one of the most remarkable natural scientists and science managers in the Baltic States, Tallinn University's professor of geoecology Jaan-Mati Punning passed away on November 21, 2009.

Jaan-Mati Punning was born in Mooste in SE Estonia and graduated from Tartu State University, earning a speciality in chemistry. He started to work at the Institute of Zoology and Botany of the Academy of Sciences, followed by working in the Geological Survey and the Institute of Geology of the Academy of Sciences, where he participated in developing several dating methods. In 1969 J.-M. Punning received a candidate of sciences (PhD) degree in the field of geology and mineralogy, and shortly thereafter he established one of the leading isotope laboratories in the world at the Institute of Geology. He investigated the dynamics of glaciers in Svalbard and Pamir and Ural mountains. His doctoral dissertation on the dynamics of glaciation processes during the Late-Pleistocene in Northern Eurasia was presented in 1982, and J.-M. Punning received a doctor's degree in the field of natural geography.

One of the most important accomplishments of J.-M. Punning's career was the establishment of the Institute of Ecology which he headed between 1992 and 2005. Prof. Punning was a generalist in many fields of bio-geo-sciences and environment researches, he published more than 500 scientific papers altogether. Shortly before his death he published, together with Anto

Raukas, a paper “Environmental problems in the Estonian oil shale industry” in the Journal Energy&Environment (2009, 2, 723–728).

He was the president of the Estonian Geographical Society since 1985. J.-M. Punning played an active role in the formation of scientific, educational and environmental policies in the Baltic States. He has earned a number of awards, including the White Star Order. J.-M. Punning was an honorary member of Estonian and Russian geographical societies.

His uncompromised science-based thinking, organizing and executing scientific work while neglecting personal interests were all conducted with an intense internal flare, which illuminated several generations of scientists and allowed them to set their own paths. We have lost one of our great natural scientists.

Editorial Board and Editorial Office