

PREFACE



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Minister for Environmental
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We live in times of great changes in Ukraine when the creation of really independent Ukrainian State is going on. It is very important for our citizens and authorities to be aware of the responsibility to contemporary and future generations regarding conservation of our natural heritage created during centuries of evolution on the Earth.

That is why the development of the Strategy of Biodiversity Conservation, now proposed to your attention, was inaugurated not only due to international obligations of Ukraine but due to the demands of time as well. At last a simple and very important truth that only mutual efforts can solve the global problem of Biodiversity Conservation became obvious at the level of state authorities as well. There is no doubt that former unreasonable economical policy is the cause of our ecological misfortunes, since the great value of our natural resources was not taken into account and the policy did not stimulate careful utilization and conservation of them. Such policy resulted in decline of populations and species of flora and fauna, their ecosystems, excessive ploughing of lands, land pollution and destruction, extinction of unique and ecologically valuable wetlands after their meliorative drainage, the extinction of some rivers in result of their over regulation, depletion of natural resources and in many regions of Ukraine nature lost its ability to recover and rehabilitate itself.

The Strategy outlines the aims of Biodiversity Conservation, its major objectives in this sphere and the instruments for their realization. It is significant that the whole totality of wild animals, plants and their natural habitats have been accepted to be the objects of Biodiversity Conservation. The instruments for the program realization are grouped in five trends (legal, financial, administrative, scientific-methodical and informational-educational). Major priority issues include the development of system on conservation of biodiversity populations, species and various ecosystems, as well as the development of general national ecological net.

Besides, the Strategy outlines the main objectives of future national program of biological and landscape diversity, which will include the implementation of a number of programs regarding forestry, agriculture complexes, restoration of rural life, protection of lands, development of tourism etc. To provide the coordination and unification of efforts of governmental and non-governmental enterprises and organizations, regional and local public, the program will include the strengthening of influence of ecological guidelines in all fields of social production, as well as the activation of public participation in environmental activity, growth of public awareness and feeling of responsibility to nature.

The Strategy anticipates the participation of governmental structures, scientific communities, non-governmental organizations, all citizens of the state in the realization of its considerations. Conservation, improvement and restoration of balanced and not exhausting utilization of biodiversity are impossible without their assistance.

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted the decision « On Strategy of Biodiversity Conservation». The adoption testifies the significance of the issues for our state, so far as biodiversity was recognized to be one of priority of the «Trends of State ecological Policy of Ukraine in the sphere of environment protection, utilization of natural resources and guaranty of ecological safety», which were approved by Verhovna Rada of Ukraine on March 5, 1998.

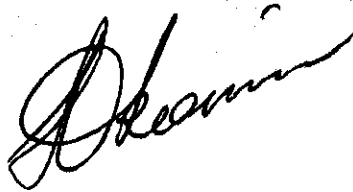
It is very complicated to implement the considerations of the Strategy at present financial situation and under non-effective economical system. However, non of these arguments can cause postponing of the implementation of national strategies and programs on Biodiversity Conservation. The mentioned processes of decline are becoming nonconvertible, therefore counter measures must be extremely urgent. The terms for solution of these problems are crucially limited. The delay in their realization will aggravate the situation in many regions of the state: at the South of Ukraine the threat of desertification increases; in par-

tially-wooded steppe humus is on verge of depletion ; in industry regions mutation processes are going on and the problems with health are growing; in mountain regions ecosystems are very sensitive to anthropogenic stress, etc.

Beyond any doubt, the realization of the «Strategy of Biodiversity Conservation» will create the possibility to decrease above mentioned threats and will facilitate not the rehabilitation and recovery of natural resources only, but the growth of socio-economic welfare of the population in the process of balanced development of our country and its regions.

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The Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of the Strategy is as follows:

preservation the preservation and improvement of the state, of natural, semi-natural and disturbed ecosystems, habitats of individual species, and components of landscapes;

promoting the transition to sustainable use of natural resources;

keeping the population ever more informed on the issues of biological diversity, as well as involving an ever greater number of people in the activity relating to the conservation of biological diversity;

enhancing the responsibility for preservation of biological diversity of enterprises, organizations and establishments whose activity is linked with the utilization of natural resources and affects the environment.

Objects of the Strategy

The objects of the Strategy are the diversity of all plants, animals and microorganisms (together with their habitats) in the wild, in captivity or semi-captivity, on the land, in the waters, on the ground and in the air, which permanently or temporarily inhabit the territory, territorial sea, continental shelf and exceptional (marine) economic zone of Ukraine. The conservation of biological diversity presupposes the protection of both separate individuals and their groups within the limits of a certain territory and entire ecosystems together with their habitat of existence.



Instruments for Implementation of the Strategy

Legal Instruments

To achieve the purpose of the Strategy, a further development is contemplated of the system of legislation on nature conservation and use of resources. Specifically, it is necessary to elaborate and adopt laws on the plant world, and fishery, a national program for land protection, regulations and legal acts regarding the improvement of the system of payments and fees for utilization of mineral wealth, water and other natural resources, ensuring the use of natural resources on the basis of international ecological legislation. In this connection, changes and additions to the land, forestry and water legislation have been proposed as well as to the legislation on mineral wealth, animal world and nature reserve fund.

Financial Instruments

Financing of biodiversity conservation measures is to be effected at the expense of the funds of enterprises, establishments and organizations, Ukraine's state budget, budget of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, local budgetary funds and other sources.

Financing of the proposed measures at the expense of Ukraine's state budget is to be carried out taking into account the actual economic possibilities of the state. The main source for covering expenditures on nature conservation is payments for utilization of natural resources.

On the basis of mobilizing financial resources, the Strategy provides for improving the state of biodiversity conservation, including the protection and rational utilization of land, water and forest resources, the animal and plant world. In addition, financial resources will be used for creating an ecological network, carrying out scientific research and monitoring, training and ecological education, implementing concrete projects for biodiversity conservation in regions that are of special national and international conservation importance.

Institutional Arrangements

Organizational backing and coordination of activity relating to Strategy implementation is to be provided by the Ministry for Environmental Protection and Nuclear Safety with the participation of other concerned central and local bodies of executive power. Resolving of scientific, technical and other issues in the sphere of biodiversity conservation will be promoted by the creation of a consultative body that will include officials from concerned central and local bodies of executive power, leading scientists and representatives of public organizations.

Scientific and Methodological Instruments

In order to conserve biological diversity, research work will be undertaken to ensure its protection, restoration and rational utilization. The methodological basis for these investigations will be an improved system of monitoring, including inventory of natural resources, keeping cadastres on the basis of creating data banks and geoinformation biodiversity systems.

Informational and Educational Instruments

In order to improve ecological education, the creation of information and education centers is contemplated on the basis of territories of the nature reserve fund. Publication of popular scientific and other kinds of literature will be increased, a series of relevant popular scientific TV- and radio programs will be initiated. Revision of curricula and training programs is to be carried out at pre-school institutions, secondary and higher educational establishments in order to broaden the knowledge of biodiversity, improve training and upgrading of skills of specialists in the sphere of biodiversity conservation, taking into account the international experience. Ecological knowledge must become a mandatory qualification requirement for all officials whose activity is linked to utilization of natural resources, or influences the state of environment.



The Main Lines of Activity in Biodiversity Conservation

The main lines of activity relating to biodiversity conservation are as follows:

conservation of coastal, marine, river, wetland, lacustrine and marshland, meadow and steppe, woodland and highland ecosystems;

ecological of agricultural landscapes and other territories of intensive economic activity;

conservation of species and populations;

creation of a national ecological network.

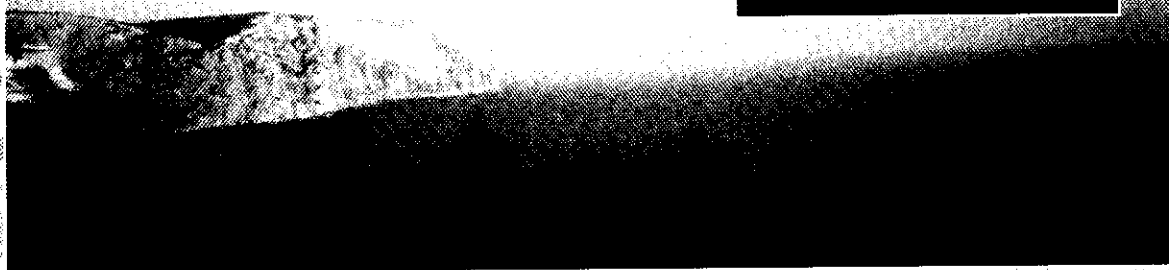
Coastal and Marine Ecosystems

In order to avoid negative effects of contamination, recreation pressing, diminishing of fresh water drainage, destruction of sea bottom ecosystems (as a result of oil and gas extraction, construction in coastal regions), it is necessary to:

create and improve the coastal protection zones;

improve the ecological conditions of coastal and marine ecosystems by implementing measures aimed at reducing their contamination and destruction;

work out and implement measures to ensure the protection of biodiversity of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, taking account of the relevant international agreements.



River and Floodplain Ecosystems

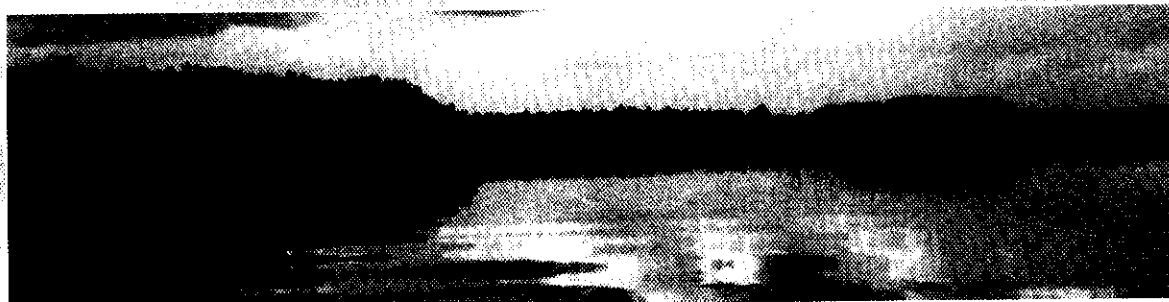
In order to improve the conditions of river and floodplain ecosystems, to reduce the negative effects of water-development works, agricultural activity, imperfect sewage and purification facilities, it is necessary to:

implement measures stipulated by the National Program of ecological improvement of the Dnipro River basin and upgrading the quality of potable water as part of the program for conservation of river and floodplain ecosystems, work out measures aimed at protecting the basins of the Dniester, Pivdennyi Bug, Siverskyi Donets rivers, small rivers, restoring and improving wetland ecosystems, and also participate in international programs for protecting the river basins of the Danube, Zakhidny Bug, Prypyat and Desna;

create and improve the protection riverside zones;

enlarge areas of water protection plantations;

take steps to protect and restore fish and other living water resources, in particular, certain species of the local fauna.



Lacustrine and Marshland Ecosystems

In order to solve the problems relating to negative effects for the flora and fauna, of marsh drainage, peatery, regulation of watercourses, flooding of adjacent territories, contamination of water, it is necessary to:

conduct inventory of water and marsh areas of national, regional and local importance, work out and implement measures to ensure their protection and restoration;

prepare a list of lakes that require special protection;

take steps to protect valuable marshland areas, first and foremost in the Polissya region;

ensure broad participation of establishments and organizations in the implementation of international agreements under Ramsar and Bonn Conventions and other international programs aimed at conserving lake and marshland ecosystems;

work out and implement measures to ensure protection of water and marshland areas of international importance.

Meadow and Steppe Ecosystems

With the aim of protecting and rationally utilizing meadow and steppe ecosystems, optimizing the degree of ploughing up certain territories and reducing the negative effect of agricultural activity, it is necessary to:

map and conduct cartographic inventory of meadow and steppe areas that have been preserved in their natural state;

work out and implement measures to restore and improve meadow and steppe ecosystems;

implement measures to preserve habitats for the existence of birds, first and foremost, the bustard and other rare species;

elaborate scientifically substantiated recommendations for ecologically balanced utilization of land in steppe and forest-steppe zones;

work out and implement measures to optimize the utilization of slope lands which are of special importance as habitats of rare and endemic species;

create or restore model areas of steppe plant communities for each geobotanical province of the forest-steppe and steppe zones.



Preservation of Species and Populations

In order to preserve the geno- and cenofund of the plant and animal world, first and foremost rare and endangered species, it is necessary to:

develop and implement programs and measures aimed at preserving certain species of plants and animals or their groups, including those listed in the Red Data Book of Ukraine and international lists of rare species, and those threatened with extinction;

create in zoological gardens, on breeding-grounds, botanical gardens and dendrological parks the centers and laboratories for cultivation breeding in captivity and re-acclimatization of rare and endangered species of plants and animals;

organize constant monitoring of the state of species and populations;

develop information systems, first and foremost regarding species of plants and animals listed in the Red Data Book of Ukraine and plant communities listed in the Green Data Book of Ukraine;

conduct inventory of genetic diversity of animals and plants;

prepare and publish reference books, encyclopedias, popular scientific literature and other materials on Ukraine's biodiversity.

Creating of a National Ecological Network

To provide an adequate national ecological network aimed at restoration of natural habitats for the existence of wild flora and fauna, improvement of the state of conservation of individual components of biological diversity, strengthening ecological contacts and the integrity of ecosystems, it is necessary to:

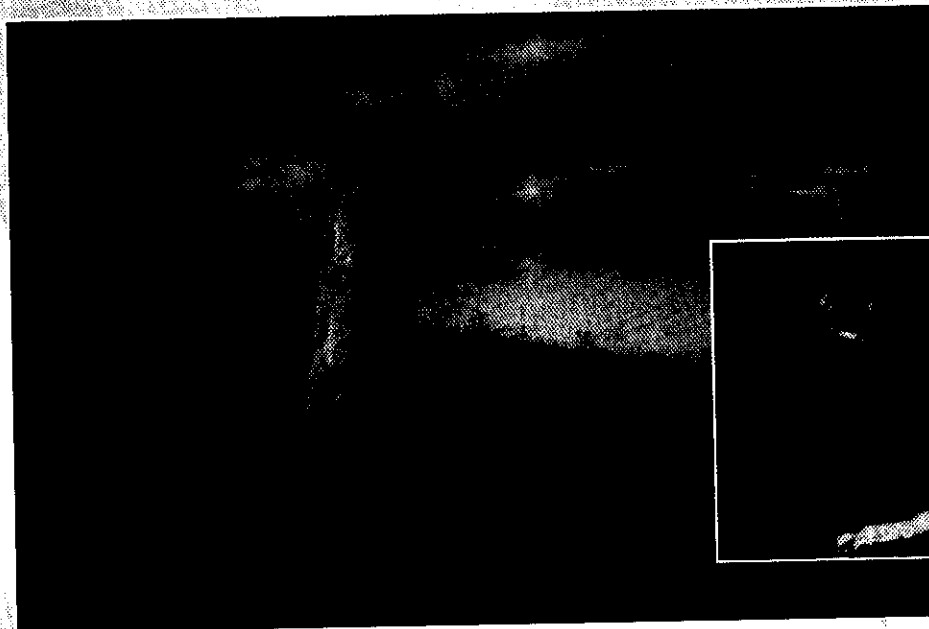
develop ecological criteria and recommendations as a basis for development of the ecological network;

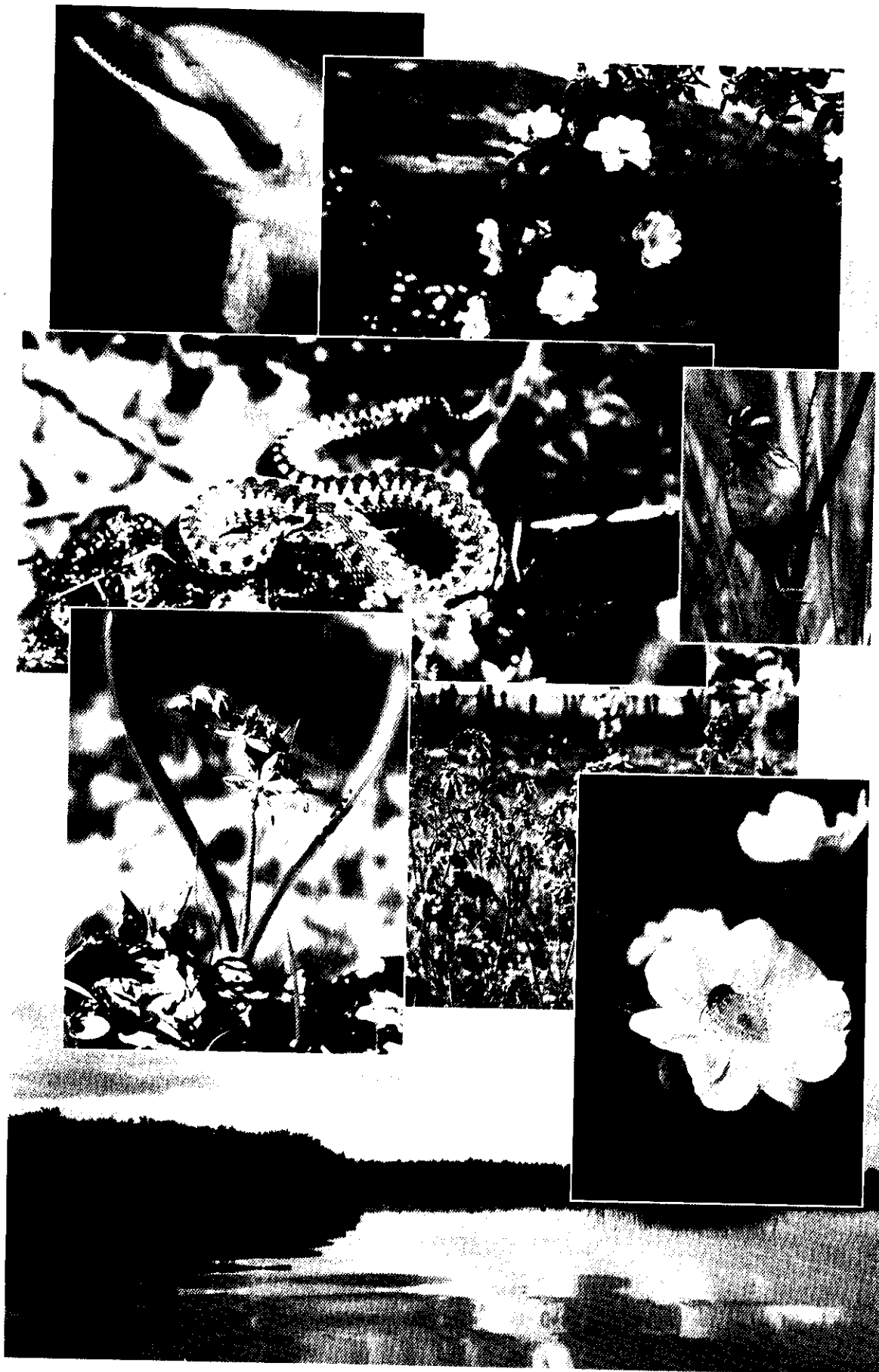
create a national ecological network, following international requirements, and ensure its compatibility with similar networks of adjacent countries;

optimize the network of territories and objects of the nature reserve fund as basic key elements of the ecological network;

create regional ecological networks, first and foremost in the Black Sea and Sea-of-Azov coastal areas, Polissya, Crimea and Carpathians.

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