

PROTOCOL

Of the first meeting of the Working Group on Ecosystems and Biodiversity under the Commission on Sustainable Use and Protection of the Dniester River Basin

National Nature Park

“The Dniester Canyon”, Ukraine

23-24 July 2019

- I. The first meeting of the Working Group on Ecosystems and Biodiversity under the Commission on Sustainable Use and Protection of the Dniester River Basin (further – Working group) took place on 23-24 of July 2019 in tourist complex “Mishin-City”, Dobrivlyany village, Zaleschitsky area, Ternopil region, Ukraine, National Nature Park “The Dniester Canyon”.
- II. The Working Group examined the following questions:
 1. Preparation of proposals to preserve the biodiversity of aquatic organisms, including control measures for invasive alien species of aquatic organisms.
 2. Preparation of proposals for the coordination of fish stocking, implementation of measures for the restoration, maintenance and protection of natural spawning grounds. Measures to increase the forest cover and preserve biodiversity in river basins and expand the network of nature protection zones.
 3. Preparation of proposals on joint projects towards preservation of biodiversity in the Dniester River basin.
 4. Preparation of joint actions on fisheries control and anti-poaching.
- III. The working group has decided the following:
 - 1. Preparation of proposals to preserve the biodiversity of aquatic organisms, including control measures for invasive alien species of aquatic types.**

The Working Group listened to presentations of Ms. Lyudmyla Shevcova, the Professor of Ecology at the Faculty of Natural Sciences of the National University of “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy” and Ms. Elena Zubkov, corresponding member, Head of the Laboratory of Hydrobiology and Ecotoxicology of Institute of Zoology.

The Working Group identified the priority issues of preservation of biodiversity of aquatic organisms in the Dniester River:

- invasive alien species;
- the ratio of species is violated – limnophyll species prevail over rheophilous;
- anthropogenic transformation of the river beds;
- drainage of wetlands;
- intensive farming on banks;
- fragmentation of the Dniester river and its tributaries by hydraulic structures, including those caused by the construction and operation of hydropower plant;

- violation of the dynamics of the hydrological annual runoff.

The Working Group identified the following first steps to solve the main issues of preserving the biodiversity of the aquatic organisms of the Dniester River:

1. To prepare an agreed list of invasive alien species of aquatic organisms and submit it for consideration/approval by the Commission on sustainable use and protection of the Dniester river (further – the Commission).

To this end, the Institute of Zoology of the Republic of Moldova together with the Institute of Hydrobiology of the NAS of Ukraine will prepare an agreed list of invasive alien species of aquatic organisms by September 21st, 2019.

2. Identify areas for possible restoration of old river beds.

To this end, the national natural parks of Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Ternopol regions will draw up a description of the sites for the possible restoration of old river beds and a general list of measures for such restoration until September 1, 2019.

3. To analyse a draft of the first part of the Dniester Transboundary River Basin Management Plan prepared by the UNDP / GEF / OSCE / UNECE project “Enabling of transboundary co-operation and integrated water resources management in the Dniester River Basin” and provide, if necessary, comments and suggestions to it.

To this end, the co-chair of the Working Group from Ukraine will send the meeting participants an electronic version of the project by September 01, 2019. The date of receipt of proposals is expected until August 15, 2019

4. To prepare proposals for possible activities aimed at solving the other above-mentioned issues for consideration at the second meeting of the Working Group.

2. Preparation of proposals for the coordination of fish stocking activities, implementation of activities to restore, maintain and protect natural spawning grounds. Measures to increase forest cover and preserve biodiversity in river basins and increase the network of nature protection zones.

The Working Group listened to presentations by Mr. Volodymyr Domashlinetc, Head of the Wildlife Protection Section / Biodiversity and Biosafety Department of the Ministry of Natural Resources of Ukraine; by Mr. Vasyl Plichka, Deputy Head of the Department for Organization of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Scientific Support of the Industry / Head of the Section for Organization of Industrial Fisheries of the State Fisheries Agency of Ukraine; and by Mr. Dimitri Sobolev, Deputy Head of the Natural Resources Monitoring Department in the Environmental Agency of the Republic of Moldova; Mr. Petru Rotaru, Head of the Forest Fund and Environmental Management Department in the Forestry Agency of the Republic of Moldova; and Mr. Alecu Renita, President of the NGO “Ecological Movement of Moldova”.

The Moldovan side has proposed introduction of a ban on industrial fishing in the Lower Dniester in response to its ban on industrial fishing in the Dniester 4 years ago.

The Ukrainian side will present its proposals at the next meeting of the Commission.

The working group identified the following steps to address the above issues:

1. To continue the practice of fishery stocking of indigenous species in the Dniester basin and creating artificial spawning grounds for them.

2. To prepare proposals for the restoration of the native fish fauna, including species listed in the Red Book, implementation of a range of activities for stocking indigenous species, creation of modern complexes for restoration of aquatic biological resources, and submit these proposals to the Commission.

To this end, the State Fisheries Agency of Ukraine, together with the national nature parks “Galysky” and “Khotynsky”, will develop agreed proposals by September 30, 2019. The Environmental Agency of the Republic of Moldova will prepare proposals for the restoration of native fish fauna, including rare species listed in the Red Book, for the next meeting of the Working Group.

3. Submit for consideration by the Commission the question of the possibility of financing the activities referred to in paragraph 2 of the present Protocol, at the expense of the UkrHydroEnergo.

4. Identify areas for afforestation and reforestation, taking into account the need to preserve and renew the steppe areas in the Dniester river basin.

To this end, the State Forest Agency of Ukraine and the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment of the Republic of Moldova will prepare a list of sites for afforestation and reforestation before the next meeting of the Working Group.

5. Consider forest management in the Dniester river basin on the next meeting of the Working Group.

To this end, invite representatives of the Institute of Ecology of the Carpathians of NAS Ukraine.

6. Request the Working Group to analyse and prepare proposals on possible forms of cooperation and interaction between the national nature parks in the Dniester river basin.

7. To continue cooperation on the creation and management of the Emerald network of Europe in the Dniester river basin.

8. To consider creation of transboundary environmental territories in the Dniester river basin at the next meeting of the Working Group.

3. Preparation of proposals for joint projects to protect biodiversity in the Dniester River basin.

The Working Group listened to presentations by Ms. Galyna Protsiv, Head of the Board of the Ternopil regional division of the National Ecological Centre of Ukraine (NECU), Ms. Elena Zubkov, corresponding member, Head of the Laboratory of Hydrobiology and Ecotoxicology of Institute of Zoology, Mr. Alecu Renita, president of the NGO “Ecological Movement of Moldova”, Mr. Gorelko Dmitry, Head of the Biodiversity Policy Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and the Environment of the Republic of Moldova.

1. The Working Group has identified for preparation and implementation of joint projects within the framework of the programme: HORIZON 2020, HORIZON-EUROPA, EPA-HORIZON, BLACK SEA, GEF, RO-MD, UA-MD, RO-UA, etc. on the issues of invasive hydrobionts, aboriginal species of ichthyofaunal, migration of avifauna, places of concentration of migratory species, assessment of ecosystem services, management of ecosystems and biodiversity, biotechnology and methodology in ecology.

For the purpose, the co-chairman of the Working Group from the Republic of Moldova will prepare detailed information on the possibilities of financing the Working Group's priorities through the above mentioned programme as soon as the information from the programme becomes available.

2. The Working group identified new ways for joint projects in the field of biodiversity conservation in the Dniester River basin:
 - development and implementation of general plans to combat invasive alien species of hydrobionts in the Dniester River;
 - development and implementation of a set of measures for the restoration of the indigenous ichthyofaunal, including “Red Book” species in the Dniester;
 - identification and assessment of migratory routes of birds and their concentration in the Dniester basin;
 - afforestation and reforestation in the Dniester River basin, especially in water protection zones;
 - initiation of alternative gentle methods of natural resource use in the Dniester basin.

4. Preparation of joint fisheries control and anti-poaching activities.

The Working Group heard a presentation by Mr. Marine Bulicanu, Head of the Department for Control of Hunting, Fish Resources / Environmental Protection Agency of the Republic of Moldova.

The Working Group will propose for consideration by the Commission a draft plan of cooperation of the Environmental Inspectorate of the Republic of Moldova and State Agency

of Fisheries of Ukraine for 2019-2020 on ensuring state control over the protection and rational use of aquatic biological resources in transboundary natural fishery water bodies.

The Working Group expresses its appreciation to the UNDP / GEF / OSCE / UNECE project prepared under the project “Enabling of transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the Dniester River Basin”.

The Working Group agreed to hold the next meeting on the territory of the Republic of Moldova until May 2020.

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