

EEF.DEL/39/15
15 September 2015

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

**PRESENTATION BY MS. TATSIANA MINZHURAVA,
CHIEF EXPERT OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR PROTECTION AND
USE OF WATER RESOURCES, DIRECTORATE OF AIR AND WATER
RESOURCE IMPACT REGULATION, MINISTRY OF NATURAL
RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF
THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS, AT THE CONCLUDING
MEETING OF THE 23rd OSCE ECONOMIC AND
ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

Prague, 14 to 16 September 2015

**Water governance in the OSCE area – increasing security and stability
through co-operation**

**Session II: Water governance at national level – best practices and new approaches
in the OSCE region**

Distinguished participants,

On behalf of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus, allow me to welcome all the participants and express our sincere gratitude for the invitation to participate in such an important event.

The theme of this Forum is in line with the current global trends to determine our future action, in which water resources should be a keyword.

Our country's water resources are sufficient to meet its current and prospective needs and Belarus is taking all possible measures to ensure rational use and protection of its water resources.

The use and protection of water resources in Belarus are based on the following principles:

- Preserving the stable status of water resources and their integrated use;
- Priority use of groundwater sources for drinking water above other uses;
- Preventing pollution, fouling and depletion of waterbodies.

Improvements in governance and advances in science and education promote the development of state-of-the-art technologies, the building up of scientific, technical and professional capacity, the study and implementation of the latest approaches to water governance, use and protection, and the strengthening of the framework for international co-operation in water use.

A very important event took place on 21 May 2015 in Belarus: the new Water Code came into force. It was drawn up on the basis of approaches taken by countries with which Belarus has concluded Intergovernmental Agreements on Rational Use and Protection of Transboundary Waters (Russia and Ukraine) and also the requirements of the European Union Water Framework Directive through the introduction of the basin principle for water governance, which provides for:

- Establishment of basin councils (consisting of representatives of interested government bodies, water users, voluntary associations and scientific institutions);
- Development of plans for river basin management;
- Improvement of the ecological condition (status) of surface waterbodies.

A number of State programmes have been developed to ensure sustainable development and international security of freshwater sources in Belarus:

- Programme for the Social and Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus from 2011 to 2015, approved by Decree No. 136 of the President of the Republic of Belarus of 11 April 2011;
- Water Strategy of the Republic of Belarus for the Period to 2020;
- National Strategy for Sustainable Development until 2030;
- “Clean Water” State Programme for Water Supply and Waste Water Disposal from 2011 to 2015.

Each programme includes a list of performance targets, measures with which to achieve them and the amount of funding.

Measures provided for by State programmes are financed primarily through the national and local budgets. Credit resources (loans) and grants from international financial institutions (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Nordic Investment Bank, etc.) and water users’ associations own funds are also involved.

The list of environmental protection measures to be financed through the national budget is drawn up by the Government of the Republic of Belarus.

Through the national budget, on the orders of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus, research is conducted on the protection and rational use of water resources.

Work carried out as part of international technical assistance projects is no less important. A plan for managing the Dnieper river basin is currently being developed as part of the Environmental Protection of International River Basins international technical assistance project.

During a relatively short period of time, Belarus has made and is continuing to make a consistent effort to encourage the widespread introduction of cutting-edge energy- and resource-saving technological processes, which ensure a reduction in per capita water consumption and a transition to less water-intensive or dry production technologies.

Over the past decade, water and energy meters have been introduced on a massive scale, which promotes rational use of existing water resources.

Implementing measures aimed at rationalization and integrated water use makes it possible to reduce water consumption and waste water disposal in industry, guarantee drinking water supply for the population and create reliable conditions for the development of industry, energy, water transport and agriculture through the effective use of our country's water resource capacity.

Thank you for your attention.