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UA REVIEW

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HIGHLIGHTS

2020: WILL UKRAINE REACH 10,4% OF PROTECTED AREAS SHARE?

On April 11, 2019, the President of Ukraine signed eleven decrees increasing nature protection areas by more than 80,000 ha, that equals to 0,13% of the total state area. Due to increase, nature protected areas now cover 6,73% of the state territory. This included creation of 3 new national nature parks ("Boykivshchyna", "Nobelsky", "Kamianska Sich") and 3 new nature reserves ("Prymorsky" hydrological reserve, "Zholoby" and "Bazavlutsky" landscape reserves), increasing of area of 6 current national nature parks, and revision of the "Nizhnednistrovsky" national nature park area. On April 17, 2019, the President approved the decree changing the boundaries of the national nature park "Dnistrovsky Canyon" by including additionally 901,1 ha.

Thus, the April of 2019 was a remarkable month of an unprecedented number of decrees increasing nature protected area.

A year ago, on April 26, 2018, the Chernobyl Radiation and Ecological Biosphere Reserve was created and due to this the nature protected area was extended by 226,964.7 ha.

According to the Law of Ukraine on National Environmental Strategy up to 2030, the nature protected area should cover 10,4% of the total area of Ukraine by 2020. Despite the progress made in April 2019, there is a need to increase efforts to timely achieve this indicator at the state level.

WASTE MANAGEMENT: TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN STANDARDS

On April 19th the Ministry of Environment presented draft framework law on waste management which should be a starting point for the implementation of European approaches and standards in this field. Separate sectoral laws will be developed on its basis. They will set up legal, organizational and economic framework for management of each waste stream. The draft law has been already forwarded to the secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers.

The draft law was developed under the implementation of the EU-UA Association Agreement and the National Waste Management Strategy till 2030. It sets up overall framework for the state regulation in the waste management area. In particular, it introduces principles and provisions for waste management hierarchy (aimed at maximizing wastes' life cycle), extended producer responsibility, consumer obligations, a system of long-term management planning, powers

of central and local authorities. The draft law introduces new European classification of wastes, defines the conditions for obtaining licensing documents, and strengthens the responsibility for improper management of waste.

Public and professional associations presented their comments over the draft. They relate, in particular, to the risks of administrative burden, declarative provisions, no target criteria, the uncertainty of the mandate at the transition period, etc.

In Ukraine, according to the State Statistics Service, in 2017 only 27% of wastes were recycled and 46% were disposed in specially designated places. In the field of municipal wastes, according to the Ministry of Regional Development, in 2018 only 2% of such wastes were incinerated and 4.2% went to the storage centres of secondary resources and waste recycling plants. By contrast, in 2016 53.5% of all waste in the European Union were recovered.

NUMBER OF THE MONTH

83,9

**thousand ha
added to the nature
protected area of Ukraine**

IS THE PRESIDENT ZELENSKY GREEN?



What are the Volodymyr Zelensky' environmental views? What were his election promises? Can they be compared to the ideas of Emmanuel Macron? Do green colors of the candidate's campaign mean he is a green politician? What, if anything, can the environmentalists expect from the newly elected President of Ukraine? We propose an environmental portrait of the next President Volodymyr Zelensky.

In general, 2019 presidential elections discourse ignored environmental issues, while the president should demonstrate leadership on the strategic vision of the country's development in all fields, including the environment. For example, French President E. Macron, recently addressing the citizens of the EU, talked about climate change as one of three major challenges for Europe and about the obligation to "clear our climate debt" to children.

The environmental positions of Volodymyr Zelensky, in a way, resonate with E. Macron's thoughts about the debt to children: his elections program twice recalls the environmental problems in the context of future generations. The first such provision is that the ecology of the country is an investment in future generations (although such clumsy use of the term "ecology" does not fit a modern political leader). The second is that the overcoming of environmental problems is a contribution to the country's future.

Volodymyr Zelensky focuses on preservation of the Carpathian forests, rivers protection from pollution, sorting and recycling of wastes as well as stopping use of plastic (yes, that's correct "stopping") as his environmental priorities. Through the whole election campaign V. Zelensky team confronted environmental questions only once (by an ICTV journalist), which related to his vision of waste sector reform. Unfortunately, the answer to this question was limited to the neces-

sity of the announcement of "the year without waste" and awareness raising work among the population. This may indicate the lack of a concrete vision of the reform in this sphere by Volodymyr Zelensky.

V. Zelensky also mentions in his program that Ukraine should become the world's eco-food supermarket. We can only make guesses what it means in practice – perhaps, this is about promoting organic production (which would be a logical interpretation in the context of his position on the depletion of agricultural lands).

At the same time, many relevant environmental issues remain the "unknown features" of the environmental portrait of the future president. We have not found any references to the climate change (key focus of E. Macron), or the wildlife conservation, or protected areas development, or the development of green energy and transport.

Therefore, there is no reason to expect understanding of environmental issues "at the Macron level" from the upcoming head of the state.

Yet, the environmental portrait of President Zelensky is still being drawn.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The Chernobyl accident was a challenge of the global scale and a stern warning to the whole present civilization"

Petro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine

EVENT OF THE MONTH

April 26, 2019

33th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear accident