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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

31st meeting
Strasbourg, 29 November – 2 December 2011

Complaint in stand-by

**Threats to natural habitats and species
in Dniester River Delta
(Ukraine)**

REPORT BY THE GOVERNMENT

*Document prepared by:
the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Ukraine*

**INFORMATION OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF UKRAINE
CONCERNING POSSIBLE ECOLOGICAL CHANGES OF THE RAMSAR SITES ‘TENDRIVSKA BAY’,
‘YAGORLYTSKA BAY’ AND ‘NORTHERN PART OF THE DNIESTER LIMAN’**

The wetlands of international importance ‘Tendrivska Bay’, ‘Yagorlytska Bay’ and ‘Northern Part of the Dniester Liman’ meet the Ramsar criteria for designation of wetlands of international importance as it mentioned in their RISes.

The site ‘Tendrivska Bay’ is part of the Black Sea Biosphere Reserve. The site ‘Yagorlytska Bay’ belongs partly to the Black Sea Biosphere Reserve and Regional Landscape Park ‘Kinburnska Spit’, which territory entered into the National Nature Park ‘Biloberezhzhya Sviatoslava’ according to the Decree of the President of Ukraine from 16.12.2009 No. 1056/2009. The site ‘Northern Part of the Dniester Liman’ belongs to the territory of the Lower Dniester National Nature Park.

According to information of the Administration of the Black Sea Biosphere Reserve, the current state of natural ecosystems of the reserve is determined mainly by natural abiotic and biotic factors, the state of shallow bays was improved.

In 2010, according to results of scientific research in the reserve, more than 100,000 pairs of waterfowls made their nests on islands of Tendrivska and Yagorlytska bays. The Great White Pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) renewed its nesting here (about 500 nests); Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) had successfully nested on the Island Krugly (Yagorlytska Bay, about 600 nests).

The Black Sea Biosphere Reserve determined the impact of anthropogenic factors on the wetland. Amount of irrigation and drainage discharges reduced almost 10 times in recent years (according to the Prymorske Water Management Department). There is a hope that the ecological situation in the marine wetlands area will be improved.

The administration of the Black Sea Biosphere Reserve regularly carried out activities to protect and preserve the Ramsar sites ‘Yagorlytska Bay’ and ‘Tendrivska Bay’:

- The wetlands are under protection of the state guard of the Black Sea Biosphere Reserve;
- Regular inspection raids to protect the sites are conducted; 6 gamekeepers of the Black Sea Biosphere Reserve regularly take care on observation regime of wetlands. When waterbirds breed on islands of the bays, twenty-four-hour duty is organised around the islands to prevent the disturbance of birds and other violations of protected regime.

In 2009, the scientific staff of the Black Sea Biosphere Reserve started a study ‘Dynamics of Natural Complexes of Black Sea Biosphere Reserve in Conditions of Anthropogenic Transformation of Adjacent Areas’ (2009-2011). A study ‘Monitoring of Natural Complexes of the Black Sea Biosphere Reserve (Chronicles of Nature)’ is conducted for a long time. The inventory of flora and fauna of the region and inventory of rare species are conducted.

Articles on findings and status of populations of animal and plant species (reptiles, birds and mammals listed in the Red Data Book of Ukraine) are regularly published in the Collection of scientific papers ‘Discoveries of Animals Listed into the Red Data Book of Ukraine’ and other Ukrainian scientific publications.

Natural resources including water resources are not commercially used in the Reserve. According to information of the Administration of the Regional Landscape Park ‘Kinburnska Spit’, park employees discovered several facts of illegal shrimp catching at the territory of the Ramsar site ‘Yagorlytska Bay’. Information about these violations was sent to the State Ecological Inspection of the North-West Black Sea Region to take appropriate actions.

Regarding the state of the wetland of international importance ‘Northern Part of the Dniester Liman’ we provide the following information.

In order to maintain and ensure adequate protection, the wetland was included in the Lower Dniester National Nature Park with a total area of 21,311.1 ha by the Decree of the President of Ukraine from 11.13.2008 No. 1033/2008. A passport of the wetland was passed to the scientific division of the National Nature Park to ensure its updating.

The site is in line with the Ramsar criteria. It maintains high levels of biodiversity, namely:

- it has the necessary conditions for breeding a variety of waterbirds and stop during migration and wintering representatives of *Anseriformes*, *Gruiformes* and *Pelecaniformes*;
- During a year, it regularly holds more than 20,000 waterbirds;
- During all seasons, it provides habitats for representatives of *Anseriformes*, *Charadriiformes*, *Ciconiiformes*, which are the indicator groups in determining the ecological state of the wetland.

Vegetation of the site is represented by forest, shrub, meadow, halophyte, marsh species, aquatic vegetation and vegetation of limestone hills bare. It comprises more than 750 species of vascular plants; most of which are characterized by Eurasian, Plurizonal and European types of habitats. Flora of this area includes more than 10 endemic species that represent psammophyte-littoral and petrophyte-steppe endemic complex of the Black Sea Region.

The fauna of wetland has a large number of migratory and local birds, including rare and endangered species listed in the Red Data Book of Ukraine and international Red Lists. During migrations, Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*), Yellow Heron (*Ardeola ralloides*), Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*), Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*) occur here. The area retains an important role for migratory birds during spring and autumn migrations as a place of rest of Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*) and Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*), Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*), Wild duck (*Anas platyrhynchos*), Garganey (*Anas querquedula*), Eurasian Teal (*Anas crecca*) and many other species of sandpipers. In conditions of a non-permanent hydrologic regime of the Dniester delta, especially in the reproductive period, shallow coastal waters of the liman are a key habitat for phytophilous fish during spawning.

The area is partly in state and collective ownership. The main types of use of natural resources are hunting, fishing, reed harvesting, recreation, water consumption for agricultural and household needs, etc., which are regulated under the laws and under the control of the relevant services. Lands adjacent to the protected area are in state, collective and private ownership. Besides the abovementioned activity, there are all types of nature and traditional farming (cattle grazing, viticulture, irrigation, etc.).

According to amendments to the Law of Ukraine 'On Nature Conservation Fund of Ukraine' from 01.21.2010, No. 1826-VI, hunting in areas, which are part of national parks is prohibited.

To ensure wise use of natural resources within the wetland, scientifically based limits are annually calculated. The relevant permits for the harvesting of reeds, eco-tourism, etc. are issued.

The World Wetland Day is celebrated annually; the environmental educational activities for the conservation of natural wetland are conducted.

Regarding the construction on the banks of the Dniester River: it is worth to note that the two sites are under construction within the wetland – the Privately Owned Enterprise 'First Dniester Fish Plant' for fishery activities (at 49 km of the motorway Odessa-Reni) and reconstruction of the hunting item of Biliayivka Rayon Organization 'Hatky' (47 km of the motorway Odessa-Reni). Construction is based on approved project documentation.

The State Ecological Inspection in Odessa Oblast provided information according to which when verifying compliance with environmental legislation during the construction, violation of environmental laws by the private enterprise 'First Dniester fish factory' was fixed. Namely, the area of construction is polluted by waste, project environmental measures are not implemented – the damage done is assessed in the amount of 3264.02 UAH.