

Media Advisory

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Strasbourg, 03.08.2009

Belarus: Launch of joint programme on biodiversity

Date: 5-6 August 2009

Location: Minsk, Belarus

Organised by the Council of Europe and the European Commission in cooperation with Belarus' Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and the Belarusian NGO "Ecological Initiative"

Description: The programme, which runs until the end of 2011, aims at identifying and protecting natural habitats to be part of the Emerald Network. The Emerald Network was set up under the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and facilitates the establishment of national networks of protected areas. It concerns all contracting parties and observer states to the Convention.

Countries involved in the establishment of the network under the joint programme include Belarus, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

The objective set for Belarus is to select areas representative of the country's species and habitat types, in line with the relevant recommendations and resolutions of the Bern Convention. Belarus should identify 50% of the potential areas by the end of the project. The first national workshop, in the form of a scientific meeting, will take place from 5-6 August.

The programme is funded by the European Union and implemented by the Council of Europe.

For further information see www.coe.int/biodiversity/emerald

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