

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

**ON FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION ON THE
PROTECTION OF THE DNIPRO RIVER BASIN**

The Ministers for Environmental Protection of Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus;

PROCEEDING from the resolutions passed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 with the aim of achieving the Millennium Goals and in particular the development of integrated water resource management,

RELYING upon the relevant provisions of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Convention “On the Protection and Use of Transboundary Waters and International Lakes” of March 17, 1992,

REAFFIRMING the provisions of the Declaration by the Ministers for Environmental Protection on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Rehabilitation of the Dnipro River Basin, signed in Kyiv on May 22, 2003 during the 5th Pan-European Conference of European Environment Ministers “Environment for Europe”,

PROCEEDING from the provisions of existing bilateral agreements between the Governments of the Republic of Belarus and Ukraine on cooperation in the field of environmental protection and joint management/protection of transboundary water bodies,

RECOGNIZING the positive results of cooperation achieved in the area of environmental rehabilitation of the Dnipro River Basin, and

POSITIVELY EVALUATING the support provided by various international organisations within the United Nations system, the Global Environment Facility and other international agencies to facilitate this work,

INVITING the Russian Federation to renew trilateral international co-operation in the Dnipro Basin,

POSSESSING THE INTENTION of establishing explicit short-term objectives and activities on the protection of the Dnipro Basin environment and measures for their practical implementation,

HEREBY DECLARE:

- Their concern about continued:
 - Chemical pollution of industrial origin,
 - Unsustainable management of natural resources,
 - Loss of biodiversity in the Dnipro Basin,And also
 - Insufficiency of existing agreed upon joint efforts to prevent and/or minimize the degradation of the Dnipro River ecosystem;
- The necessity of endorsing and jointly implementing an agreed upon strategy for protecting the Dnipro Basin environment with the aim of achieving:
 - sustainable management of natural resources and protection of the Dnipro Basin environment,
 - a natural environment that is safe for human health,
 - conservation of biological and landscape diversity;
- Their political will and commitment to support cooperation in the field of environmental protection in the Dnipro Basin, to be governed by the following principles and provisions:
 - The preventative principle,
 - The “polluter pay” principle,
 - The participatory approach that encourages public participation and stakeholder involvement,
 - Integrated planning and management of natural resources,
 - The systemic and programme approach to river basin management,
 - The eco-systemic and interdisciplinary approach.

IN THIS REGARD THE PARTIES HEREBY:

1. Approve the Strategic Action Programme for the Dnipro Basin and Implementation Mechanisms (SAP) as a joint document developed by the Republic of Belarus and Ukraine embodying a common strategy regarding priority measures to rehabilitate the Dnipro River Basin environment.
2. Foresee all necessary steps to finalise and adopt in 2007–2008, and subsequently implement the Action Plans (Programmes) on Environmental Rehabilitation of the Dnipro Basin designed to implement key provisions of the SAP.
3. Take all necessary steps to prepare and sign the Agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Belarus, Russian Federation and Ukraine “On Cooperation in the Field of Management and Protection of the Dnipro River

Basin” as the main legal mechanism for creating the institutional mechanisms for trilateral cooperation in the Dnipro River Basin.

4. Ensure the approval at an appropriate level of the Dnipro Basin Transboundary Monitoring Programme and regulations for the operation of the Dnipro Basin Interstate Environmental Data Base in order to ensure their successful implementation.
5. Support efforts taken by UNDP-GEF in the preparation of a Full-Sized Investment Project Proposal aiming to support the implementation of priority measures identified in the SAP (the reduction of transboundary industrial chemical pollution, and establishment of common institutional and management structures), and express their readiness to commit necessary national resources to implement the same.
6. Foresee the convening of regular meetings with the aim of reviewing interim progress and identifying additional actions that may be required to achieve the environmental goals and objectives at the Basin level.

Executed on June ___2007 in two copies, Russian and Ukrainian, with all copies being equally valid. In the event of a dispute as to interpretation the Russian text shall prevail.

<p>Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus</p> <p>L. Khorouzhek</p>	<p>Minister of Environmental Protection of Ukraine</p> <p>V. Dzharty</p>
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