

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2020

State:	Republic of Belarus
Name of the area:	<u>Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve</u>
Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:	Year 10 after renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas in 2010 (until 2020)

Central authority concerned:

Name:	State Nature Protection Institution "Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve"
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Authority responsible for its management:

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1. Conditions:

- 1. The protection regime and ownership of the land should be kept unchanged.*

Ownership of the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve remained unchanged and thus, there were no changes in the Reserve's current protection status. Protection regime of the reserved area is carried out in accordance with the new Law of the Republic of Belarus "On Specially Protected Natural Areas", which was put in force on June 16, 2019.

2. Recommendations:

- 1. Sufficient resources need to be generated both by the government and by the Reserve to protect effectively the biodiversity resources and to continue scientific research. In addition to extra-budgetary sources of income, other sources should be tapped especially in co-operation with NGOs such as Akhova Ptushak Batskaushchyny (APB-Birdlife Belarus), and the WWF.*

In order to increase efficiency of protection of the natural systems and to conduct the scientific research, a full range of activities scheduled for 2020 has been performed in accordance with the State program "Environment protection and sustainable use of nature resources for the years 2016-2020":

information and indication signs have been constructed and installed along the boundaries of the Reserve; the areas of ecological systems (grasslands, fens, islands) have been cleared out from tree and shrubbery vegetation and reeds; a number of measures aimed at control the invasive alien species of the wild plants has been implemented; 10 artificial nests for birds belonging to the species included in the Red Data Book of the Republic of Belarus have been created; a multi-operation device for determining water quality was purchased.

Proposals for the new State Program "Environment protection and sustainable use of nature resources for the years 2021-2025" have been developed.

On the basis of the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve, a seminar was held on the identification and preservation of primeval forests within the framework of the "Polesia - Wilderness without Borders: Protecting one of Europe's largest natural landscapes" project, which is implemented in Belarus by the public organization APB-Birdlife Belarus. Within the framework of the protection of the globally vulnerable species the Greater Spotted Eagle in Belarus, the work on census the diurnal birds of prey, searching for nests and ringing chicks in the Berezinsky Reserve was continued.

Employees of the State Research and Production Association "Scientific and Practical Center of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus for Bioresources" carried out the research work within the framework of a three-year (2019-2021) project on the topic "Updating data on the fauna of spiders and hay-makers (Arachnida: Aranei, Opiliones) of the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve with the preparation of an electronic catalog" at the expense of the Belarusian Republican Foundation for Fundamental Research.

2. *Further efforts should be taken to prevent negative effects from the fragmentation of the Reserve by the M3 road, and to preserve the integrity of the core area.*

Monitoring is continued to assess the impact of the M3 road on death of large mammals (registration of cases, places and time of death) and the effectiveness of the existing crossings for amphibians. Designing of environmental actions on the highway M3 has been started during documentation development on justification of investments in the site «Highway M-3 Minsk-Vitebsk» renovation.

3. *Further study of the dynamics of the mammal populations, animal movements and fauna migration between the core and the buffer zones should be carried out in order to follow the progress of the effects of hunting on the current situation and manage the populations accordingly.*

Implementation of the following parts of scientific and research work has been completed in 2020: “Analysis of modern state and perspectives of development the theriocomplexes of the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve”, “Analysis of modern state of diurnal birds of prey on the territory of the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve”. Measures for feeding and evaluation of state of the free-living herd of bison have been realized in accordance with the Action plan for the conservation and sustainable use of bison’s micropopulation in the Republic of Belarus for the years 2015-2019. The network of photo-traps (20 photo-traps in total) continues to be actively used in the places of big mammals’ (ungulates and predators) migration. The quadcopter DJI Phantom 4 Pro is used for the research works as well.

4. *Continue with the efforts between the appropriate ministries to ensure that the development of tourism is well controlled.*

Tourism development is controlled effectively on the basis of scientific research. One-day weekend excursions into the wildlife of the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve are regularly conducted. Primary emphasis is put on environmental awareness of the youth. Adequate information policy (advertising on the Internet and in the media) is being implemented to attract visitors for the purpose of their environmental education and upbringing.

A new ornithological route «Nesting Path» has been developed.

5. *In order to mitigate possible risks and hazards connected with climatic changes and possible large-scale disturbances on the reserve, the study programme on these topics should be continued.*

Realization of the research subject “Complex analysis of state and dynamics of nature ecosystems of the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve, scientific support to its protection and sustainable use” in the frame of the state program “Biological diversity, biological and forest resources in terms of climate change and development of innovative environmental technology for the years 2016-2020” has been completed. In accordance with this recommendation, the studies are conducted on the partitions: “Dynamics of structure of the forest ecosystems of the Reserve in the conditions of long-term regime of strict protection” and “Dynamics of phenomena and processes at the natural complexes of the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve. “Nature records”.

3. Site Management

After annual audit conducted by the stuff of the certificated organization FSC, the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve has confirmed the certificate for the system of forest management and supply chain of FSC™ valid until the year 2021.

In the current moment 432 employees work in the Reserve, 252 of them are financed from the state budget. Compared to the last year, there was an increase in staff by 7 people. Since the beginning of 2020 year 19 young specialists have been hired to work in the Reserve after graduation.

A single-family cottage type house has been built in Domzheritsy for the employees.

Financing from the state budget is 3.9 million Belarusian rubles in the yearly balance of the Reserve. A part of the monetary funds comes from tourism and other economic activities on the territories outside the Reserve.

Development of a comprehensive ten-year management plan for the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve has been started, including its directive part for the years 2021-2025.

4. Boundaries

There has been a change of the boundaries of the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve in the last year, as a result the Reserve's area has been increased by 880 ha and stands at 86 072,8 ha. This year the boundaries of the reserve have not changed.

5. Other information

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, employees of the Berezinsky Reserve did not take part in any international conferences and seminars.

Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve extensively uses the logo of the European diploma. At the official website <http://www.berezinsky.by/> in the sections "About the Reserve" and "Our partners" a logo and brief information on European Diploma award is given, as well as a link to the Council of Europe website. It is possible to acquaint oneself with the original document of the European Diploma awarded to the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve in 1995 in the Museum of nature conservation history.

Director of the Berezinsky
Biosphere Reserve

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke, enclosed within an oval shape.

Andrej M. Prokoshin