

APPROVED BY

Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the
Republic of Belarus No. 361 of 29.04.2015

Strategy of Implementation of the United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification in Those
Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or
Desertification, Particularly in Africa

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL

Land and soil, as its essential component, is the key national natural resource of Belarus; its efficient management and protection form the keystones of the social and economic well-being and environmental situation in the country.

The land is a unique natural asset due to its multi-functionality. Land performs environment-forming and nature-protection functions in the biosphere; it constitutes an integral part of natural systems; it is the universal and indispensable material pre-requisite for production; it serves as a spacial basis for business facilities, settlements and infrastructure; it is the main means of production in agriculture and forestry; it is the object of land relations. The soils comprising it possess the unique feature of fertility – the ability to produce biomass.

Land (and soil) preservation and efficient/sustainable management are a priority of the national policy of sustainable development and environmental security.

Edict of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 575 of November 9, 2010 “On Approval of the Concept of National Security of the Republic of Belarus” (National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus”, 2010, No. 276, 1/12080) recognizes degradation of land, forests and natural complexes, as well as radioactive, chemical and biological contamination of soils are key threats to the national security.

The relevance of the issues of land degradation is mentioned in the National Strategy of Sustainable Social and Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus until 2030, approved by the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on February 10, 2015.

Land degradation and droughts are pressing problems for all regions of the world. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (hereinafter, the Convention) was signed in Paris on June 17, 1994 in an effort to take joint action of the international community to resolve these problems.

So far, 195 parties have acceded to the Convention – the absolute majority of the countries of the world.

The Republic of Belarus acceded to the Convention in accordance with Edict of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 393 of July 17, 2001 “On Accession of the Republic of Belarus to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus”, 2001, No. 68, 1/2855).

The Belarus natural conditions (the amount and distribution of precipitation, close-to-surface location of groundwater, considerable area of environment-stabilizing land types) at the present exclude development of desertification in its extreme form. However, a number of countries of the Central and Western European region (Annex 5 to the Convention), including the Republic of Belarus, are particularly sensitive to the processes of desertification.

The activity on implementation of the Convention in the Republic of Belarus is aimed at providing for a systematic land inventorying and monitoring, measures to prevent land (and soil) degradation and avoid losses in soil fertility and productivity.

In accordance with Articles 5 and 10 of the Convention, the affected countries undertake to develop relevant strategies and action plans, establish national priorities of prevention of land degradation.

According to Article 1 of the Convention, land degradation means reduction or loss, in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, of the biological or economic productivity and complexity of cropland, pastures and forests resulting from land uses or from a process or combination of processes, including processes arising from human activities, such as:

erosion caused by wind and/or water;

deterioration of the physical, chemical and biological or economic properties of soil;

long-term loss of natural vegetation.

The 2008-2018 Strategic Plan and Framework to Enhance the Implementation of the Convention, approved by the Eighth Conference of the Parties (2007, Madrid) provides for development of national strategies and plans by the parties in implementation of the Convention.

The Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (2012, Rio de Janeiro) recognized the need for immediate measures for reversing land degradation trends and concerted efforts for eliminating this phenomenon within the framework of implementation of Target 15.3 of the Sustainable Development Goal 15, as defined by the above Conference (“by 2020, combat desertification, and restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world.” Neutral (zero net land) degradation) was recognized as the determining factor of food security and access to energy and water resources.

This Strategy has been developed in fulfillment of the commitment of the Republic of Belarus under the Convention, and prevention of land and soil degradation.

This Strategy has been reconciled with a relevant integrated financial strategy; it is based on a synergetic approach to the implementation of the Convention and other international treaties of the Republic of Belarus.

CHAPTER 2

THE CURRENT CONDITION OF LAND (AND SOIL), AND PROBLEMS WITH PREVENTION OF DEGRADATION THEREOF

As of January 1, 2015, the Belarus land resources comprised 43.9 agricultural land, 45 per cent forest fund land, 1.5 per cent reserve land, 2.3 per cent water fund land, 5.1 per cent – nature protecting, health-improving, recreational, historical and cultural land.

The share of plow land in the structure of agricultural land is 65.6 per cent, meadows take 32.9 per cent, permanent structures occupy 1.4 per cent.

Belarus is in the top 20 countries of the world by the per capita share of arable land, which is 0.60 ha. The per capita share of agricultural land in general is 0.91 ha.

The area of environment-stabilizing land types (natural meadows, forest land, woodlands and forest plantations, bogs and land of water bodies), forming the natural frame of the country, is 11,621,400 ha, or 56 per cent of the national territory.

The share of forests in the Republic of Belarus is 39.5 per cent.

The share of natural territories subject to special and/or designated protection is more than 4.7 mln ha, or over 22 per cent of the national territory.

The drained land area is 3,410,400 ha, or 16.4 per cent of the national territory, including 2,880,400 ha of agricultural land and 311,200 ha of forest land.

Drained agricultural land with peat soils includes 1,068,200 ha, or 36.7 per cent, including 122,200 ha of land transferred to agriculture after recultivation of peat lands with less than 50 cm layer of peat, which had been withdrawn from commercial use.

The key factors of prevention of land and soil degradation, affecting their ecological condition, are human activities: unbalanced intensive land use, incompliance with legal provisions on land protection and use.

The land and soil degradation trends are also aggravated by climate extremes (droughts, frosts, et cetera). Although the territory of the Republic of Belarus is in the zone of sufficient moistening, the problems of droughts and arid phenomena leading to losses in the yield of main crops, and sometimes to land and soil degradation and negative landscape changes, remain highly topical. During the last decades the probability of droughts and their duration increased both due to the global climate changes (warming) and human impact on the environment (land reclamation, disturbance of natural vegetation). This gives top priority to the issues of prompt drought monitoring.

More than 20 types and forms of land and soil degradations have been identified in Belarus; the most important are the following

water and wind erosion of land (and soils);

soil dehumification, consolidation, local salinization, land waterlogging as resulting from inefficient business practices;

organic-matter degradation of peat;

technogenic pollution of land (and soil), inter alia, with radionuclides;

fires on drained land with peat soils, fires on land of the forest fund;

land disturbance through extraction of minerals and construction.

Specific types and forms of land and soil degradation, such as waterlogging of land resulting from inefficient business practices, land disturbance through extraction of minerals and construction, etc., are inventoried as part of the cadastral land inventory of the Republic of Belarus.

However, some types and forms of land degradation, including water and wind erosion of land, soil dehumification, land contamination with chemicals, are not registered in a systemic manner.

In 2011-2013, organizational and technological measures aimed to protect land from degradation and provide for its efficient use, protection and rehabilitation comprised development of land tenure plans in 43 regions, including 8 in the Brest Oblast, 10 in the Vitebsk Oblast, 8 in the Gomel Oblast, 4 in the Grodno Oblast, 7 in the Minsk Oblast, 6 in the Mogilev Oblast.

In 2011-2013, low productive and severely eroded land with an area of 15,500 ha was withdrawn from agricultural use; 800 ha of disturbed and unused land were recultivated; 100 ha of forest fund blown sands, slopes and ravines were stabilized.

37,200 ha of land were transferred to the forest fund. Forests were restored and planted on an area of 82,300. Forest fun was inventoried with the water-body buffer zone limits, and measures on prevention and restoration of water-protection forests were developed in an area of 614,900 ha.

Reclamation systems were rebuilt in an area of 162,100 ha; agricultural reclamation operations were carried out in an area of 106,900 ha.

By 2015, ecological rehabilitation/restoration of degraded or transformed marsh ecological systems was carried out in an area of about 51,000 ha.

Efforts are made to raise public awareness and level of education in the field of land protection.

However, despite the progress, the issues of prevention of land and soil degradation are still highly relevant.

Year 2000 soil surveys established that peat soils have lost their genetic properties and moved to the anthropogenically transformed category in an area of 258,800 ha, or 7.6 per cent of drained land, including 190,200 ha, or 5.6 per cent of drained land that has been moved into the category of degraded peat soils. Preliminary figures indicated that by now the area of degraded land with peat soils has increased by 12 per cent.

In 2015, the area of other degraded (disturbed and unused) was 416,700 ha.

Manifestation of the land degradation processes became possible due to existence of ecologically unstable land and soils in the country. 10.9 per cent of the total area of arable land is occupied by loose sand, and 4.8 per cent – by drained peat and bog soils. 16.3 per cent of arable land has low natural fertility.

Erosion causes major damage to soils. According to the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, more than 500,000 ha of land are exposed to water and/or wind erosion processes, amounting to over 5 per cent of the agricultural land area; soils of about 30 per cent of arable land are at risk of deflation. Annual losses per hectare of erosion-exposed arable land may amount to 16-18 tons of the solid matter, exceeding the permissible level (2 t/ha). The yield of crops on eroded land is then reduced by 5-60 per cent.

There is a sustainable humus content reduction in arable soils (2.28 per cent in 1996, 2.23 per cent in 2010).

According to the Land Resource Register of the Republic of Belarus, the area of land contaminated with radionuclides and withdrawn from agricultural use amounts to 246,700 ha (1.2 per cent). A major part of the above-mentioned land cannot be used for production of standard pure agricultural crops, wherefore it is advisable to consider reclassifying it as land of the forest fund.

29 regions throughout the country belong to the group of ecologically unfavorable land, 62 regions are considered as unfavorable for production of crops.

A number of organizational issues remain outstanding for a long time, such as:

inadequate level of legal regulation in part of identification of land degradation types and forms of relevance for the Republic of Belarus, as well as criteria of their classification as such;

inadequate information on land subjected to degradation, precluding their independent assessment, examination of the degradation trends and adoption of prompt measures to neutralize/mitigate negative impacts of the process;

incompliance with requirements to balanced crop rotation and best agricultural technologies, causing development of erosive processes;

unsatisfactory condition of some reclamation systems, primarily on the forest fund land, entailing disturbance of the condition of natural environmental systems and land degradation;

inefficient use of a part of reclaimed land, causing reduction of the humus content in soil, as well organic matter in peat;

absence of a package of measures on adaptation of agriculture and forestry to climate changes.

CHAPTER 3

GOVERNMENT POLICY IN THE FIELD OF PREVENTION OF LAND AND SOIL DEGRADATION

The public administration in the field of land protection and efficient management, including prevention of land and soil degradation is performed in accordance with the Code of the Republic of Belarus on Land, the Law of the Republic of Belarus of November 26, 1996 “On Environmental Protection” (Vedamastsi Vyarhounaha Saveta Respubliki Belarus, 1993, No. 1, Art.1; National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus, 2002, No. 85, 2/875), Law of the Republic of Belarus of July 23, 2008 “On Land Reclamation” (National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus, 2008, No. 184, 2/1520).

The public policy on land protection and efficient management, including prevention of land and soil degradation, is enforced by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, the State Property Committee, other national government authorities, local executive and administrative bodies, and other public organizations.

The following government programs are targeted at prevention of land and soil degradation:

The 2010–2015 State Program of Social and Economic Development and Integrated Use of the Natural Resources of the Pripyat Polesye, approved by Edict of the President of the Republic of Belarus” No. 161 of March 29, 2010 “On the State Program of Social and Economic Development and Integrated Use of the Natural Resources of the Pripyat Polesye in 2010–2015” (National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus, 2010, No. 80, 1/11503), containing measures on improvement of the efficiency of use of reclaimed land, prevention of land degradation in agricultural landscapes of the Pripyat Polesye – a unique area, where the issues of preservation and efficient management of both natural systems with minor changes, and large drained areas are of high relevance;

The 2011–2015 Program of Social and Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus, approved by Edict of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 136 of April 11, 2011 (National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus, 2011, No. 43, 1/12462), that defines further greening of the agricultural sector through introduction of progressive soil treatment methods and technologies, land and soil cover protection from degradation, water and wind erosion as a key area of arrangement of efficient management and protection of land resources;

The 2011–2015 State Program of Sustainable Development of the Countryside, approved by Edict of the President of the Republic of Belarus” No. 342 of August 1, 2011 “On the 2011–2015 National Program of Sustainable Development of the Countryside” (National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus, 2011, No. 88, 1/12739), providing for implementation of measures against soil degradation and chemical contamination, including development (based on examples from the European Union) of agricultural land use regulations to ensure preservation of soil fertility and prevention of erosion from water and wind;

The State “Peat” Program for 2008-2010 and until 2020, approved by Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 94 of January 23, 2008 (National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus, 2008, No. 29, 5/26698), providing for measures to raise the tolerance of agricultural landscapes and soils to degradation, development and introduction of a resource-saving framework of adapted agricultural use and prevention from degradation of peat soil;

The main objectives of the 2011-2015 State Program of Preservation and Use of Reclaimed Soils, approved by Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 1262 of August 31, 2010 (National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus, 2010, No. 214, 5/32430) in the field of soil and land protection are protection from erosion, flooding and waterlogging, pollution with livestock waste, restoration and increase of the previous capacity of drained land, increase of the productivity of reclaimed land and its tolerance to unfavorable environmental factors;

The State Program of Overcoming the Consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster for 2011-2015 and until 2020, approved by Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 1922 of December 31, 2010 (National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus, 2011, No. 10, 5/33118), providing for implementation of a package of protective measures in the agriculture to secure production of products meeting the domestic and international standards of radionuclide content, as well as measures in forestry on efficient management of forest resources in contaminated areas, protection of forests from fires;

The Program of Development of the Industrial Complex of the Republic of Belarus for the period until the year 2020, approved by Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 622 of July 5, 2012 (National Legal Internet Portal of the Republic of Belarus, 25.07.2012, 5/35993), providing for improvement of the economic mechanism of incentives for introduction of soil contamination and agricultural land degradation preventing technologies by industrial organizations;

The 2013-2020 State Program of Measures on Mitigation of Climate Change Effects, approved by resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 510 of June 21, 2013 (National Legal Internet Portal of the Republic of Belarus, 27.06.2013, 5/37447), that provides for development of a package of measures mitigating impact on climate, as well as effect of climate extremes (droughts, frost, et cetera) on the condition of reclaimed land.

The strategic issues of protection and efficient use of natural environmental systems, an integral component of which is land (and soils), are set forth in the following instruments:

The Strategy of Implementation of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, approved by Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 177 of February 10, 2009 (National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus, 2009, No. 44, 5/29297);

The 2011-2020 Strategy of Preservation and Sustainable Management of the Biological Diversity, approved by Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 1707 of November 19, 2010 “On Issues of Preservation and Sustainable Management of Biological Diversity” (National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus, 2010, No. 287, 5/32887);

The National Strategy of Development of a System of Specially Protected Natural Territories until January 1, 2030, approved by Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 649 of July 2, 2014 “On Development of a System of Specially Protected Natural Territories” (National Legal Internet Portal of the Republic of Belarus, 11.07.2014, 5/39101).

CHAPTER 4

THE STRATEGY GOALS AND KEY AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION; PRIORITIES IN THE FIELD OF PREVENTION OF LAND DEGRADATION

The targets of implementation of this Strategy are preservation and efficient/sustainable management, prevention of their degradation, and increase of the productivity of land (and soils), providing for the national security and improvement of the public lifestyle.

These targets can be achieved through integrated implementation of measures in the following key areas:

- improvement legal regulation in the field of prevention of land and soil degradation, economic mechanisms in this area;

- improvement of the system of inventorying land subjected to degradation, taking into account biophysical and socioeconomic indicators harmonized with the strategic objectives of the Convention as per the Annex; regular updating of information on the amount, condition and distribution of land subjected to degradation, land degradation and rehabilitation trends, operation of the land monitoring system;

- preservation, improvement of the condition and efficient management of natural ecological system, rehabilitation of degraded and transformed ecological systems;

- preservation and reinforcement of the natural capacity of soil resources: efficient operation of reclamation systems; improvement of the use of agricultural land; implementation of agricultural and forest reclamation, anti-erosion and other activities aimed at protection of land from degradation;

- development and introduction of innovative agricultural technologies; development of a system of organic farming; adaptation of agricultural production on land contaminated with radionuclides;

- reduction of the share of land subjected to degradation; recultivation of disturbed land; rehabilitation of territories subjected to chemical contamination;

- improvement of the level of scientific and technical knowledge and awareness of general public about the issues of efficient management of land resources, and prevention of land and soil degradation; reinforcement of the human and institutional capacity in this area; conduct of international and regional cooperation, inter alia, by raising international technical assistance.

The priorities of the Republic of Belarus in the field of prevention of land and soil degradation are as follows:

- achievement of neutral (zero net) degradation of land and soil;

- restoration of degraded and transformed ecological systems;

- compliance with agricultural technologies providing for preservation and improvement of the natural soil fertility, development and introduction of innovative agricultural technologies;

- mitigation of organic-matter degradation of peat soils;

- development of organic farming meeting the principles of green economy;

- improvement of the academic capacity in the field of land (and soil) protection and efficient management.

The above goals, key areas and priorities are determining in development of national action plans on prevention of land and soil degradation for relevant five-year periods.

The implementation of this Strategy will facilitate achievement of the following operational objectives of the Convention:

to actively influence relevant international, national and local processes and actors inadequately addressing desertification/land degradation and drought-related issues.

to support the creation of enabling environments for promoting solutions to combat desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought.

to become a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge pertaining to desertification/land degradation and mitigation of the effects of drought.

to identify and address capacity building needs to prevent and reverse desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought.

to mobilize and improve the targeting and coordination of national, bilateral and multilateral financial and technological resources in order to increase their impact and effectiveness.

CHAPTER 5

EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND MECHANISM OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS STRATEGY

The following indicators will be achieved upon implementation of this Strategy:

area of land subjected to water and/or wind erosion: no more than 550,000 ha by 2020; no more than 550,000 by 2030;

area of degraded drained land with peat soils: no more than 200,000 ha by 2020; no more than 190,000 ha by 2030;

area of radioactively hazardous land: no more than 150,000 ha by 2020; no more than 100,000 ha by 2030;

number of settlements in radioactive contamination zones: no more than 2190 by 2020; no more than 1770 by 2030;

share of environment-stabilizing land types (natural meadows, forest land, woodlands and forest plantations, bogs and land of water bodies): at least 57 per cent of the national territory by 2020; at least 60 per cent of the national territory by 2030;

area of ecologically rehabilitated depleted peat fields and disturbed bogs: at least 55,000 ha by 2020; at least 60,000 ha by 2030;

average level of humus content in arable soils: at least 2.23 per cent by 2020; at least 2.23 per cent by 2030;

overall pesticide load on soils: no more than 2.7 kg of pesticides per hectare of arable land by 2020; no more than 2.5 kg of pesticides per hectare of arable land by 2030.

The accomplishment of these targets will help achieve zero net degradation of land and soils

Biophysical and socioeconomic indicators reconciled with the Convention strategic objectives, as per the annex to this Strategy, are used for the purposes of reporting on implementation of the Convention.

This Strategy will be implemented through activities corresponding to the five-year national action plans on prevention of land and soil degradation with the funds allocated for implementation of state programs in the field of natural protection and efficient management of natural resources, such as land (and soils), international technical assistance funds, as well as other legitimate sources.

Annex to the Strategy of Implementation of the
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought
and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Biophysical and socioeconomic indicators harmonized with
the strategic objectives of the Convention

1. Strategic objective “To improve the living conditions of affected populations”:
 volume of fresh water produced/extracted (in cubic meters per capita per annum);
 specific water consumption for domestic/drinking needs (in liters per capita per day);
 area and share of environment-stabilizing land types (natural meadows, forest land,
 woodlands and forest plantations, bogs and land of water bodies) (in thousand ha and share of the
 national territory);
 share of population in rural settlements, whose average per capita available resources are below the
 minimum subsistence budget (percentage).
2. Strategic objective “To improve the condition of affected ecosystems”:
 area and share of agricultural land (thousand ha and share of the national territory);
 area and share of natural meadow land (thousand ha and share of the national territory);
 area and share of improved meadow land and land under permanent crops (thousand ha and
 share of the national territory);
 area and share of forest land (thousand ha and share of the national territory);
 area and share of woodland/plantations (thousand ha and share of the national territory);
 area and share of land under bogs (thousand ha and share of the national territory);
 area and share of land under bodies of water (thousand ha and share of the national
 territory);
 area and share of disturbed land (thousand ha and share of the national territory);
 area and share of land subjected to erosion from water (thousand ha and share of the national
 territory);
 area and share of land subjected to erosion from wind (thousand ha and share of the national
 territory);
 area and share of drained land with degraded peat soils (thousand ha and share of the
 national territory);
 area and share of land contaminated with chemicals (thousand ha and share of the national
 territory);
 area and share of radioactive contamination territories (thousand ha and share of the national
 territory);
 average level of humus content in soil of arable land (percentage);

biological diversity index (units);

Selyaninov's hydrothermal coefficient (units);

normalized difference vegetation index (units).

3. Strategic objective “To generate global benefits through effective implementation of the Convention”:

carbon stock in forest ecosystems (mln tons);

carbon stock in marsh ecosystems (mln tons);

carbon stock in agricultural ecosystems, including soils (mln tons);

area and share of rehabilitated marsh ecosystems (thousand ha and share of the national territory);

area and share of biosphere reserves (thousand ha and share of the national territory);

area and share of land used in organic farming (thousand ha and share of agricultural land area).

4. Strategic objective “To mobilize resources to support implementation of the Convention through building effective partnerships between national and international actors”:

ratio of the amount funds allocated for implementation of land protection and efficient management activities, and the gross domestic product (percentage);

amount of international technical assistance funds appropriated for implementation of land protection and efficient management activities (US Dollars);

number of completed and pending synergetic projects of international technical assistance in implementation of the Convention and other international treaties of the Republic of Belarus.

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2016-2020 National Action Plan for the Prevention of
 Land (and Soil) Degradation

Actions	Timeframe (years)	Agencies in charge	Operational objectives of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa ⁱ
1	2	3	4

<p>Improvement of the national policy on prevention of land (and soil) degradation</p> <p>1. Enhance legislation on prevention of land (and soil) degradation (definition of the land degradation types and forms and criteria for referring to them as such; improvement of the framework of assessment of environmental damage caused by various types of land degradation, et cetera)</p>	2016 – 2020	<p>Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, State Property Committee, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Taxes and Duties, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Oblast Executive Committees</p>	<p>Paragraphs two and three of the footnote</p>
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2. Enhance the systems of inventorying and monitoring lands (and soils) exposed to degradation (taking into account the outcomes of implementation of Clause 1 of this National Plan)	2017 – 2020	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, State Property Committee, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Emergencies, Oblast Executive Committees	-”-
3. Enhance technical regulations on management of agricultural lands (with various soil types, kinds and varieties) providing for natural soil fertility preservation, prevention of water and wind erosion, organic mineral degradation of peat soils	2016 – 2020	National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, State Property Committee, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection	Paragraph two of the footnote

4. Enhance forest shelter belt design standards	2017 – 2018	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Forestry, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus	Paragraphs two and three of the footnote
5. Improve geographic information systems to ensure compliance with restrictions and prohibitions on the use of lands, inter alia, situated within special areas under special and/or designated protection	2016 – 2020	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, State Property Committee, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Emergencies, Oblast Executive Committees	Paragraphs three and four of the footnote

6. Improve the automated operational drought assessment system with an option of assessing crop fertility reduction through droughts	2016 – 2017	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, State Institution “Republican Center for Radiation Control and Environmental Monitoring”	Paragraphs two-five of the footnote
Development and implementation of practical measures to prevent degradation and restore degraded land (and soil)			
7. Develop a package of measures providing for mitigation of impact on climate, as well as effects of climate extreme (droughts, frost, et cetera) on the condition of reclaimed land (within the framework of implementation of the 2013-2010 National Action Program on Mitigation of the Climate Change Effects, approved by Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 510 of June 21, 2013 (National Legal Internet Portal of the Republic of Belarus, 27.06.2013, 5/37447)	2016 – 2020	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection	Paragraphs two-five of the footnote
8. Develop a list of land plots subjected to degradation (through water erosion, wind erosion, peat mineralization, dehumification, chemical contamination, salinization) for subsequent rehabilitation (at least 2 land plots in each oblast and in the city of Minsk), and develop recommendations on rehabilitation of these land plots	2016 – 2017	National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Oblast Executive Committees, Minsk City Executive Committee	Paragraphs two-five of the footnote
9. Rehabilitate land plots subjected to degradation according to recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (based on the outcomes of implementation of Clause 8 of this National Plan)	2018 – 2020	Oblast Executive Committees, Minsk City Executive Committee	Paragraphs two and six of the footnote

10. Carry out surveys, develop schedules and phased reclassification of degraded and severely eroded land, as well as land withdrawn from agricultural use as a result of the Chernobyl disaster, that are appropriate for forest cultivation, as forest fund land	2016 – 2020	Oblast Executive Committees, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Emergencies, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus	-”-
11. Inventory forest shelter belt land and carry out measures to rehabilitation and develop it (taking into account the outcomes of implementation of Clause 4 of this National Plan)	2019 – 2020	Oblast Executive Committees	Paragraphs two-six of the footnote
12. Recultivate quarries of common minerals	2016 – 2020	-”-	Paragraphs two and six of the footnote
13. Carry out environmental rehabilitation of depleted peat land and disturbed bog areas	2016 – 2020	-”-	-”-
14. Post-fire rehabilitation within the forest fund limits	2016 – 2020	Ministry of Forestry	-”-
15. Forest cultivation on blown sands, slopes and ravines within the forest fund limits	2016 – 2020	-”-	-”-
16. Provide for application of optimal doses of organic and mineral fertilizers for the purposes of soil fertility restoration	2016 – 2020	Oblast Executive Committees, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus	-”-
17. Develop organic farming in various natural climatic conditions and by various business forms	2016 – 2020	Oblast Executive Committees	Paragraphs two, three and six of the footnote
18. Reduce the overall pesticide load on soil through agricultural operations to 2.7 kg per hectare of arable land	2016 – 2020	-”-	Paragraphs two and three of the footnote

19. Inventory reclamation systems and standalone waterworks on reclaimed agricultural land	2016 – 2020	-”-	Paragraphs two and six of the footnote
20. Carry out measures to prevent land (and soil) degradation at reconstruction and rehabilitation of reclamation systems	2016 – 2020	-”-	-”-
21. Carry out a package of cultural and technical amelioration operations on drained agricultural land	2016 – 2020	-”-	-”-
22. Inventory reclamation systems in the forest fund, and develop a package of measures to improve their ecological condition	2019 – 2020	Oblast Executive Committees, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus	Paragraphs two-five of the footnote
23. Inventory radioactively hazardous land	2016 – 2019	Oblast Executive Committees, Ministry of Emergencies	Paragraphs three of the footnote
Raising the level of scientific and technical knowledge, capacity building, information support			
24. Develop innovative agricultural technologies and introduce them into agricultural practices	2016 – 2020	National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Oblast Executive Committees	Paragraphs two-six of the footnote

25. Build up scientific capacity in the field of prevention of land (and soil) degradation, inter alia, based on the Global Soil Partnership, International Foundation for Science, Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and other platforms	2016 – 2020	National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Ministry of Education	Paragraphs four, five and six of the footnote
26. Develop the competence of managers and specialists of public agencies and organizations on prevention of land (and soil) degradation	2016 – 2020	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, State Property Committee, Oblast Executive Committees	Paragraph five of the footnote
27. Carry out measures to engage nongovernmental organizations and business community in activities on prevention of land (and soil) degradation	2016 – 2020	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection	Paragraphs two, three and five of the footnote
28. Develop a section in the web-site with information on the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (hereinafter, the Convention), and its implementation in the Republic of Belarus	2016	-”-	Paragraphs three and five of the footnote
29. Develop and publish brochures and other information materials on the issues of land protection and efficient management within the framework of the Convention provisions by the Republic of Belarus	2016 – 2020	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Ministry of Education	-”-

30. Arrangement of presentations and programs on radio and television, and disseminate visual materials on land protection and efficient management, measures on prevention of land (and soil) degradation	2016 – 2020	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, State Property Committee, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Education, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Oblast Executive Committees	-”-
31. Prepare a national report on land condition and management in the Republic of Belarus for 2010-2020	2020	State Property Committee	Paragraphs three and four of the footnote

Reinforcement of international cooperation

32. Raise international technical assistance for implementation of measures on prevention of land (and soil) degradation, inter alia, develop synergetic projects (providing for discharge of commitments simultaneously under a number of international treaties of the Republic of Belarus)	2016 – 2020	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Paragraph six of the footnote
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33. Provide for participation of representatives of the Republic of Belarus in sessions and conferences of parties to the Convention, as well as in other activities carried out within the framework of its implementation	2016 – 2020	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Paragraph five of the footnote
34. Prepare a report on implementation of the Convention provisions by the Republic of Belarus	2016	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection	Paragraphs three-five of the footnote
35. Develop the 2011-2025 National Action Plan for the Prevention of Land (and Soil) Degradation	2020	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus	Paragraphs two-six of the footnote

ⁱ The operational objectives of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, are as follows:

To actively influence relevant international, national and local processes and actors inadequately addressing desertification/land degradation and drought-related issues.

To support the creation of enabling environments for promoting solutions to combat desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought.

To become a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge pertaining to desertification/land degradation and mitigation of the effects of drought.

To identify and address capacity building needs to prevent and reverse desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought.

To mobilize and improve the targeting and coordination of national, bilateral and multilateral financial and technological resources in order to increase their impact and effectiveness.