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**POLICY AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT  
OF THE FORESTS IN BELARUS**

In connection with the introduction of a strategic plan for the development of the forestry sector in Belarus for the period 2015 to 2030, the article focuses on the policy issues, strategies, and methods of forest management and forest sector of the state on the basis of the criteria of sustainable management, in accordance with the national strategy of sustainable socio-economic development of Belarus until 2020. The priorities of achieving public interest use and reproduction of forest resources are the main points of the policy and strategy of increasing the efficient use of forest resources, land use, and natural resource management. The author gives a gap analysis of species composition, age structure, forest road network, and the use of forest resources. The main concepts are the forest sector, agricultural, and forestry land use. The efficiency of the forestry sector, strategic management decisions are in the implementation of the criteria for sustainable management, the network of model forests of Belarus, forestry financing, investment strategy, biofuels, and personnel policy.

**Key words:** forest, policy, strategy, sector, land management, forest management, criteria, efficiency, fertility, management, sustainability.

**Introduction.** Each generation of the Belarusians is essentially not the absolute master of the forest resources but only a temporary user obliged to forward them to their descendants in not a worse condition compared with the received legacy. Consequently, the forest should be considered as one of the most important national treasures of Belarus comprising the environmental capital of the nation.

The state policy in the forestry sector of the economy consists of two parts:

- to create an effective mechanism for cooperation between all the state agencies of the forest sector to maximize economic and environmental benefits at the national level;

- to ensure a control over the balance of the interests of current and potential needs of future generations in respect of forests and other natural usefulness of forests. This goal can be achieved by providing a state guarantee of sustainable forest management.

The experience has shown that the problem of sustainable forest management to conserve forest ecosystems can not be solved by the restrictions and tightening of forest management, as far as exclusion of use (conservation areas). It is necessary to develop new ways of the forest management that would cover the whole range of issues: land use planning; forest conservation; the volume of forest management per felling; make available to assess the costs of sustainable management to be included in the decision-making procedure by calculation their compensation. Consequently, the economic activity in the forestry sector should be aimed at the meeting the interests of the timber industry and the welfare of forest ecosystems, the efficiency of the forestry sector of the national economy is based on this.

**Main part.** Forest policy in the sustainable forest management should be the product of social consensus. It is necessary to achieve the balance of production, economic, environmental and social aspects in the forest sector. Such a policy will allow us to carry out the management of the forest sector of the economy and the use of forest resources in the context of biodiversity conservation and economic efficiency for a long period. To achieve the maximum effect in this direction is only possible by uniting the efforts of all the sectors of the economy related to forest resources, and other usefulness of forest, on the basis of the balance of their the public interest. Sustainable management and development of forests is possible under the four aspects: political, economic, environmental and social.

At present, the increasing demand for forest resources, as well as the national interests of the wise use and reproduction of forests require funding of forestry not being limited only by the income from the forest, but also involving accumulation from the branches of production that are associated with the utilization of forest. However, the most reliable guarantor of preserving and increasing the public forest resources should be state and a partial budget form of financing.

A strategy for sustainable development of the state, adopted in 2000, provides the improvement of policy instruments of sustainable forest management. The timely update of the national strategy and the plan is carried out at the same time. The disadvantages of the strategic objectives of the previous period are shown below: setting goals of each sector of industrial activity and evaluation of the results were made separately, and the state effect of the joint achievements of allied industries of the forestry sector has not been assessed; a low

level of technology and the development of industries, being the consumers of forest benefits do not allow an efficient and full use of timber resources; forestry production and forest inventory design focus on forest management activities, material and financial resources are allocated for their volumes [1]. The question whether targeted species and age structure of forest stands as part of the natural environment are achieved through these measures, is without control (for the period 01.01.1994 to 01.01.2011 the area of coniferous forests has increased by 110,000 hectares, and that of softwood (birch, alder, aspen) – 630,000 hectares) [2].

With the purpose of forming a new government policy in the forestry sector of the economy of Belarus it is necessary to clarify the concepts that are its foundation.

1. The forest policy of Belarus is a system of concepts, legislation, administrative decisions, economic and industrial relations based on the criteria of sustainable forest management in the long term (20 years or more).

2. The forest sector of the economy is the ministries and other central bodies of state administration related to forest resources, namely the Ministry of Forestry; Concern “Bellesbumprom” and other consumers of forest resources of various forms of ownership; the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection; the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. All these agencies determine the scale, structure, quality and efficiency of the overall level of the state forest sector and its role in the standard of living of the population.

3. Sustainable management of forests and other lands of the state forest sector is the use of forests, forest land and agricultural land in the overall land use plan in order to maximize the benefits of soil fertility in the

4. Sustainable economic development of the forest sector is determined indirectly through the enterprises and technologies that provide a production output with a high added value.

With the purpose of the practical implementation of the concept of sustainable forest management for the nearest period (15–20 years) it is necessary to obtain an understanding of the needs for consistent implementation of the following management decisions: to approve and implement criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management at the enterprises and forest management (forest inventory design standards); to develop and approve a long-term state policy of sustainable management of the forest sector on the basis of cooperation between public authorities, including the regional executive committees and executive committees, as well as with the private sector, with

mandatory compliance with the interests of local people.

The basis for formation a profitable part of the budget of the forestry sector, not only at the level of self-sufficiency, but also expanded reproduction should be: the state budget (the management, maintenance of forest protection, fire protection work); mobilization of own funds; forest revenue from the sale of standing timber; deduction from the profits of enterprises that use forest resources.

In the efficient use of the entire range of usefulness of forest a big role belongs to the road network (forest road network). It is necessary to give preference to the pulp and paper industry and the system of enterprises for the production of furniture, plywood, wallpaper, cardboard and paper products in the investment process. As a result, the investment in their development will increase the economic efficiency of the entire forest sector.

The increase in logging of small-scale and low-grade wood is possible on condition that it is used as a biofuel in rural areas (schools, hospitals, public institutions) and agriculture (dairy farms, etc.). To do this, it is necessary to create private enterprises in the system of public utility areas and work out a sustainable and mutually-responsible system of production and financial relations: forestry enterprise – work on procurement of raw materials, private enterprise – preparation and delivery of wood chips, public utility areas – customers, banks – loans to private enterprises, individual entrepreneur (IE), control over the calculations. This will create thousand workplaces in the countryside.

It is necessary to unite the efforts of the institutions of the NAS of Belarus and Belarusian State Technological University on the development of applied topics aimed at improving the productivity of forests and their quality (technique, selection). The forestry enterprises must create timber cutting sections (TCS), introduce an electronic registration of timber and gradually move from forestry management to forest management [3, 4].

**Conclusion.** Gradual elimination of existing shortcomings, the introduction of the proposed solutions for improvement and a shift from forestry management to forest management will allow: to form highly productive stands of a given species composition and age structure; improve the use of all the usefulness of the forest; increase the volume of high-quality raw for the pulp and paper industry and the biofuel (2.0–2.5 mln. m<sup>3</sup>); modernize and reconstruct the timber industry, which will provide the use of wood; improve the socio-ecological and economic conditions of the population; ensure sustainable management of the forest sector, the ba-

lanced development of all its branches, and the operational implementation of long-term objectives of the national economy; create favorable condi-

tions to improve the environmental situation and to ensure the rational use of forests for the benefit of present and future generations.

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