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BELARUS PRESENTS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AT UN SESSION



UN headquarters in New York, BelTA learned from the press service of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry.

The Belarusian delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister Valentin Rybakov takes part in the session of the UN Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals held at the

can rely on such premium milestones of global development as liquidation of poverty and hunger, improvement of health and education, promotion of economic growth and employment, industrial development, universal access to water and energy resources, preservation of the natural diversity on the planet. It would be also good to promote gender equality, create the family-friendly environment and prevent violence," the ministry added.

The group will continue its work till 20 June. Another session will take place in July 2014.

Founded in 2013, the working group elaborates sustainable development goals. The draft list of goals will be submitted to the UN General Assembly and will be used to work out a new sustainable development agenda. The project will be approved at the UN summit in September 2015.

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"Valentin Rybakov delivered a speech at the session of the working group and communicated Belarus' proposals regarding the list of goals which is currently discussed by the working group," the Foreign Ministry explained. The proposals of Belarus include clear-cut and simple goals for sustainable development in the economic and social sectors, environmental protection.

BELNPP EIA PROCEDURES IN COMPLIANCE WITH ESPOO CONVENTION

There are no discrepancies between the environmental impact assessment procedures related to the Belarusian nuclear power plant and the Espoo Convention, First Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus Iya Malkina told a press conference on 9 June, BelTA has learnt.

analysis has revealed no discrepancies between the official environmental impact assessment procedures related to the Belarusian nuclear power plant and the Espoo Convention," Iya Malkina said.

According to her, Belarus has been taking legislative, administrative

and other measures of the parties to the Convention to ensure efficient environmental impact assessment only signatories to the Convention, but procedures since also observers (countries outside the 2001, the year when United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, international and public party to the Espoo observers). The parties discussed the Convention yet. impact of hydropower and wind energy "Considering its own on the environment and the application of the Espoo Convention in various energy projects, including nuclear energy projects.

ing of the parties to the Convention took place in Geneva on 2-5 June. Taking part in the meeting were not only signatories to the Convention, but also observers (countries outside the 2001, the year when United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, international and public party to the Espoo observers). The parties discussed the Convention yet. impact of hydropower and wind energy "Considering its own on the environment and the application of the Espoo Convention in various energy projects, including nuclear energy projects.

The 6th session of the meeting of the parties to the Convention took place in Geneva on 2-5 June. Taking part in the meeting were not only signatories to the Convention, but also observers (countries outside the 2001, the year when United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, international and public party to the Espoo observers). The parties discussed the Convention yet. impact of hydropower and wind energy "Considering its own on the environment and the application of the Espoo Convention in various energy projects, including nuclear energy projects.

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"During the 6th session of the meeting of the parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, the implementation committee analyzed Belarus' practices on implementing the Convention national legislation in the field of environmental impact assessment. The legislation in 2009-2010. The recent



An information center on nuclear power will be set up in Belarus. The relevant memorandum was signed by Education Minister of Belarus Sergei Maskevich and Rosatom Director General Sergei Kiriyenko at the 6th international forum Atomexpo 2014 in Moscow on 9 June, BelTA has learnt.

It is expected that the information center will open in 2014.

Sergei Maskevich views as important that the information center on nuclear power will be housed at the national center of students' technical creativity. "It will help involve the Belarusian youth more in technical creativity. I am confident that the center on nuclear power in Minsk will be the best one," he noted.

According to the minister, the opening of the center is important for Belarus at the current stage. "Increased interest in paid in our country to the NPP project. The work on the nuclear power plant involves many companies, re-

INFORMATION CENTER ON NUCLEAR POWER TO BE SET UP IN MINSK IN 2014

search laboratories and institutes, and universities of Belarus. We are satisfied with the level of cooperation between both scientists and specialists. I would like to take a special note on the interuniversity cooperation in personnel training," he said.

Sergei Maskevich stressed that Rosatom State Corporation monitors the issues of training Belarusian atomic specialists. "The Belarusian NPP project has become a youth project of the Union State. Student teams are actively involved in the work on the future plant," he added.

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BELARUSIAN SCIENTISTS ENCOURAGED TOWARDS SMALL-SCALE BIOTECHNOLOGIES



Belarusian scientists should work in the sphere of small-scale biotechnologies, BelTA learned from Igor Volotovskiy, academic secretary of the Biological Sciences Department of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, on 17 June.

In his words, scientists are busy developing the concept to advance the biological industry. The concept envisages changes in relations between the production sector and science and modernization of the former. "Scientists are shaping the research field, carry out the tasks they are assigned but it is not enough. It is necessary for researches to be carried out in tight association with the production sector. With this in mind the concept provides for the customer of a research, in other words, the production sector to be responsible for results," said the scientist.

The academician remarked that using biotechnologies to make products with a high added value is a global trend. "Those are modern small-scale biotechnologies that need work right now and the concept to develop the

biological industry provides for it," explained Igor Volotovskiy.

Small-scale biotechnologies rely on genetic engineering to make microorganisms that follow a certain program to synthesize biologically active compounds. The price for such compounds is very high yet it is possible to start making them in a lab. "The veterinary institute is busy carrying out such researches. The end product is supposed to be ready by the end of 2015," added Igor Volotovskiy. "It will not be dangerous for human health and will be used as a vaccine for animals".

The academician remarked that the development of the concept to advance the biological industry is supposed to be completed by the end of the year. The implementation of the concept is supposed to start in the next five-year term.

The Biophysics and Cell Engineering Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus in association with the Belarusian State University is hosting an international science and practice conference on 17-20 June. The conference is dedicated to molecular, membrane, and cell foundations of biosystem operation. Over 250 prominent scientists from Belarus, Germany, Italy, Russia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Poland are taking part in the conference.

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FOUR COUNTRIES PARTAKING IN ENERGY WEEK IN POLOTSK

Representatives of Belarus, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Germany will take part in the Energy Week that will be held in Polotsk on 23-29 June, BelTA learnt from the Polotsk District Executive Committee. The highlight of the event will be the exhibition-seminar "Renewable energy in the energy conservation system" and the international conference "Covenant of Mayors as an innovative approach to energy management".

Invitations to take part in the events were sent to heads of district executive committees, representatives of regional departments for monitoring the rational use of energy resources, other organizations of Vitebsk Oblast and Polotsk District. Taking part in the Energy Week will be foreign energy specialists, investors, advisors, manufacturers and exporters of energy-efficient equipment, experts in alternative energy. The participants of the exhibition-seminar will share their practices in energy conservation and present new market products related to energy conservation and renewable energy. The conference that will last for several hours will cover multiple issues, including Belarus' efforts to raise energy efficiency and promote renewable energy, and the world's best practices in this field. The project "Promotion of energy-saving technologies and renewable energy on the local level" will be presented during the conference. A series of other events will be held during the Energy Week in Polotsk. They include the Car-Free Day campaign, the Western Dvina clean-up campaign, a cycling campaign for the clean air, a performance of a comedy club and a



contest of flash mobs "The future generation for reasonable consumption" among educational institutions of Polotsk and the district. Five retail outlets of Polotsk will take part in the Family Moneybox campaign – customers buying household appliances with the energy efficiency class A and higher will be rewarded by a gift made by children. The Energy Week will conclude with the Green Light campaign during which Chinese lanterns will be sent flying into the sky to symbolize the community's commitment to addressing energy-conservation issues. The Energy Week will help specialists establish new contacts, study the best practices of other countries, attract investors, sign cooperation agreements, raise awareness of the energy conservation and energy efficiency issues and study the achievements of the cities that signed the Covenant of Mayors. The Energy Week in Polotsk is organized by the economy department of the Polotsk District Executive Committee and the Business Promotion Center of Polotsk. Polotsk was the first town in Belarus to sign the Covenant of Mayors in September 2011 as part of the international technical aid project "SURE – Sustainable Urban Energy in the ENPI Region – Towards the Covenant of Mayors". The town undertook to reduce energy consumption by 20%, increase the use of renewable energy sources by 20% and cut down on carbon gas emissions by 20% by 2020 ("20-20-20"). All in all, €9.9 million will be spent on the project during ten years. The expected economic effect of the project is €56.9 million.

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IAEA: BELARUS' NATIONAL NUCLEAR PROGRAM IS OPEN, TRANSPARENT

Belarus works openly and transparently as regards its national nuclear program, Deputy Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Alexander Bychkov said during an online press conference hosted by BelTA.

When asked on how to dispel the unfounded fears of people in relation to peaceful nuclear energy, Alexander Bychkov stressed: "The recipe is one: openness, transparency and easy access to information. Here I want to thank colleagues from Belarus. Together with invited experts from Belarus IAEA did a number of studies for Belarus to assess the national nuclear program: energy planning, study of the sustainability of the nuclear power system for a longer period, the analysis of the infrastructure for the construction of the first nuclear power plant. We gave a number of recommendations. All of this information is open to the

public, NGOs and politicians! All data are available on the Internet, and this is very important."

According to Alexander Bychkov, explanatory work with the younger generation, people from different segments of the society is needed in any country which is starting on its first nuclear power plant project. "All of this must be part of government policy. By the way, the decision to open an information center in Minsk was a very important step. I think it will help ease some biases and fears of people," he added.

The atomic energy information center in Minsk will be set up at the National Art Center for Students. A corresponding memorandum was signed by Belarusian Education Minister Sergei Maskevich and head of Rosatom Sergei Kiriyenko during the 6th Atomexpo 2014 expo in Moscow on 9 June. The information center will open before the end of 2014.



The atomic energy information centers are multipurpose communications platforms whose purpose is to inform the public about peaceful atomic energy. Centers operate under the auspices of Rosatom in the capitals of the regions where nuclear facilities are built or operated. Each information center is a modern multimedia theater combining panoramic 3D-projection, computer graphics and animation, stereo sound, interactive consoles and personal monitors.

There are 16 centers in Russia. They have already hosted more than 280,000 visitors. There are also similar centers in Hanoi (Vietnam) and Mersin (Turkey)

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CLARK PRAISES BELARUS' EFFORTS TO RESTORE CHERNOBYL REGIONS

UNDP Administrator Helen Clark took note Belarus' high interest in restoring the Chernobyl-hit regions, BeTA has learned.

According to Helen Clark, the UN ministerial working group on Chernobyl issues met on 30 May. It was the first meeting of the group outside New York. Last year we issued a resolution on Chernobyl which calls for a dialogue after 2016, the the social and economic development time the decade dedicated to the of the Chernobyl regions onto a new mitigation of the accident aftermath level.

completes, the UNDP Administrator said. Helen Clark emphasized the need to share the relevant experience. According to her, in Belarus she saw a high interest in restoring the Chernobyl-hit territories. In her words, next year Belarus will have a great opportunity to gather all the experience gained in the accident response efforts



and share it with the world community.

According to Helen Clark, the UNDP, in cooperation with the European Union, will provide necessary assistance to local communities, starting from Gomel Oblast. In her words, these efforts will take

Helen Clark paid a visit to Gomel Oblast and the exclusion zone around the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. The program of Helen Clark's visit also included meetings with Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko and ministers.

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Belarus, Austria show interest in nuclear, radiation safety cooperation

Belarus and Austria are interested in developing cooperation in the nuclear and radiation safety. The statement was made at the third bilateral meeting held in Minsk on 16-17 June as part of the intergovernmental agreement on sharing nuclear and radiation safety information, BeTA learnt from Spokesman for the Emergencies Ministry of Belarus Vitaly Novitsky.



The main issues for discussion included legislation development, radiation monitoring, emergency preparedness and planning, radioactive waste management, the use of nuclear research installations and the progress made in the Belarusian nuclear energy program.

Partaking in the meeting on Belarus' behalf were specialists of the Emergencies Ministry, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, the Foreign Ministry, the Healthcare Ministry, the United Energy and Nuclear Research Institute Sosny. The Austrian delegation which comprised 11 representatives of official structures was led by Counselor at the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs Georg Oberreiter.

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NUMBER OF ECO-TOURISTS IN BELARUS UP BY 22% IN 2013

The number of people who vacationed at Belarusian rural tourism estates in 2013 increased by 22.1% over 2012, Vadim Karmazin, the Director of the Tourism Department of the Belarusian Sports and Tourism Ministry, told reporters at the international business forum on rural tourism on 4 June, BeTA has learnt.

According to him, the increase is due to Decree No. 372 that allowed rural tourism estates to rent up to ten rooms since 2011. "An important role in promoting rural tourism is attributed to the use of modern technologies in advertising, which gave potential customers an opportunity to get all the necessary information from the Internet, to use online booking and other solutions," Vadim Karmazin said.

The average period of stay at rural tourism estates was 4.5 days. Most of the vacationers were Belarusians, Russians, Ukrainians, Poles and Lithuanians.

Despite the increasing popularity of rural tourism, the number of estates rose insignificantly. "In 2013 the number of rural tourism facilities increased by merely 6% compared to 2012. As of 1 January 2014, there were 1,881 rural tourism



estates in Belarus," Vadim Karmazin said.

Most of the rural tourism estates - 482 - are located in Minsk Oblast. It is followed by Vittebsk Oblast (449), Gomel Oblast (289), Brest Oblast (253), Grodno Oblast (246), and Mogilev Oblast (162).

Belarus does not take full advantage of its rural tourism potential, Vadim Karmazin believes.

The international business forum on rural tourism was organized as part of the international technical assistance action entitled The establish-

ment of the United Entrepreneurship Support and Networking System for the Sustainable Latvia, Lithuania and Belarus Cross Border Cooperation. Taking part in the forum were representatives of business communities of Belarus, Latvia and Lithuania. The participants of the forum discussed rural -eco-tourism development prospects in the cross border area.

The international technical assistance action "The establishment of the United Entrepreneurship Support and Networking System for the Sustainable Latvia, Lithuania and Belarus Cross Border Cooperation" is part of the Cross Border Cooperation Programme "Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus". The objectives of the project is to contribute to long-term cross border cooperation and joint innovative entrepreneurship, equilibration of regional general conditions of business development, promotion of cross border competency exchange, and the growth in the movement of goods and services. The project envisages the creation of the united entrepreneurship support system in Belarus, Latvia and Lithuania.

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A tourism forum of the Union State students will take place on Shvakshty Lake in Myadel District to mark the 70th anniversary of Belarus' liberation from the Nazis and the 70th anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War on 25 June-1 July, BeTA learnt from the Union State Permanent Committee.

Partaking in the meeting will be about 600 people: 34 teams from the Russian regions and eight teams from Belarus.

The main objective of the forum is to strengthen friendly relations between young tourists of Belarus and Russia, hone the skills of young tourists, study and popularize the positive experience of work with students, the use of tourism for health promotion among students.

On 25 June the Victory Square of Minsk will host a patriotic campaign with the participation of the youth. The official opening of the forum will take place in Myadel on 26 June. The event envisages a sport program which in-

Tourism forum to gather Union State students in Myadel District on 25 June-1 July

cludes competitions in orienteering, tourism combined events, mountain hiking tourism and a competition program.

The closing ceremony on 1 July will comprise a visit to the Stalin Line historical and cultural complex.

The forum is an initiative of the Education Ministry of Belarus and the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia with the financial and organizational support of the Union State Permanent Committee. In line with the resolution of the Supreme State Council of the Union State the forum has been included into the events celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War and the 70th anniversary of Belarus' liberation from the Nazis.

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BELARUS JOINS INTERNATIONAL STORK CENSUS

Belarus has joined the 7th International Stork Census held under the auspices of BirdLife International, BelTA learned from Belarus' bird protection organization.

The campaign aims to get information about the population of white and black storks. The census will count birds in the entire breeding area in European countries, the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia.

"The census will take into account the number of nests occupied by birds, the number of nestlings and the number of nests where nestlings did not grow up. The information regarding the number of white storks is important to control the population figures and develop measures to protect this species," the bird protection organization explained.

All people can take part in the census. The period from the end of June till the end of July is the best time for the research because it is possible to count the number of adult storks and nestlings. The detailed information about the census will be available at the website of the Belarusian bird protection

organization. The website will also provide necessary instructions.

The stork census in Belarus is organized by the NASB scientific research center for bioresources and an official partner of BirdLife International in Belarus – the Belarusian bird protection organization.

The monitoring of the stork population can give detailed information about the environmental condition and will help promptly react on ecological changes. Therefore, the international stork censuses have been conducted since 1934. Such campaigns are held once in ten years.

The first national census of white and black storks in Belarus was conducted in late

1950s. According to the previous census, in 2004 there were about 21,500 pairs of white storks in Belarus, or 9% of the world population, and more than 1,000 pairs of black storks. Belarus had the fourth-largest population of white storks after Poland, Spain and Ukraine.

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Belarus, Russia, Ukraine to exchange Antarctic research data

Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine will organize exchanges of the Antarctic researchers, BelTA learned from Deputy Head of the National Center for Polar Research of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, head of the Belarusian Antarctic expedition Aleksei Gaidashov after the first international science-to-practice conference dedi-

cated to the monitoring of the Antarctic environment and support for national expeditions held in Naroch (Minsk Oblast).

"During the meeting it was decided that the scientific organizations and Antarctic expeditions of the three countries will hold regular exchanges of young

and promising scientists," Aleksei Gaidashov said.

The head of the Belarusian Antarctic expedition believes that such exchange of experience will promote the development of the Belarusian, Russian, and Ukrainian science and will strengthen cooperation between the three states in other areas.

Partaking in the conference were 60 scientists from 22 organizations. Aleksei Gaidashov noted that the scientific reports presented at the meeting covered a vast variety of issues connected with the exploration of the Antarctic including the construction of the Belarusian Antarctic station. "Other countries' experience has shown that only with the construction of its own station Belarus will be able to actively

participate in the exploration and utilization of the natural resources of the Antarctic," the scientist specified. The conference also discussed the utilization and preservation of the biological resources of the Antarctic and the creation and development of the legal framework of the scientific work.

The participants of the conference praised the great contribution of the Belarusian scientists to the exploration of the Antarctic.

The Belarusian, Russian, and Ukrainian scientists agreed to strengthen cooperation in different research areas and to use the positive experience of the organization of Antarctic expeditions and scientific research.

There are plans to make a science-to-practice conference dedicated to the Antarctic a regular biennial event.

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Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan to hold cleanup day on 5 June

International Environmental Cleanup Day will be held in Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan on 5 June, First Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Protection of Belarus Iya Malkina told reporters during a Minsk-Moscow-Almaty video link, BelTA has learned.

According to Iya Malkina, the main events in Belarus will be held on 5 June but some work will continue until the end of the weekend. "The World Environment Day is marked on 5 Jun. This is our professional holiday, and therefore we decided to draw the attention of people to their local environment," she said.

Taking part in the cleanup day will be professional ecologists: specialists of regional and district environment protection inspectorates and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, and also the Forestry Ministry and the Ministry of Housing and Utilities. It is planned that various industrial enterprises and the BRSM Youth Union will also volunteer.

"The ministry's specialists will be working in the Botanical Gardens where, depending on the weather, they will help uproot cow parsnip or will work the greenhouse," added Iya Malkina.

The International Cleanup Day in Belarus will be held under the slogan "Three states, one solution."

Representatives of the environmental agencies of Russia and Kazakhstan spoke about the activities planned in their countries. More than 130,000 people will take part in the event in Kazakhstan. In Russia all regions will be involved in the campaign. "The international cleanup day is one of the ways to draw attention to general environmental issues. It will also help create a common normative framework to address environmental problems in our countries," said Russian Minister of Natural Resources and Ecology Sergei Donskoy.



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