Republic of Belarus in the System

of the Antarctic Treaty.

Justification of the status of the Consultative Party of the Antarctic Treaty

English version provided by the author

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***Information paper presented by the Republic of Belarus***

***Summary***

In 2019, the Government of the Republic of Belarus sent an application to the United States, the depositary country of the 1959 Antarctic Treaty, for the status of a Consultative Party to the Antarctic Treaty. This Information Paper contains information on the rationale for the compliance of the activities of the Republic of Belarus in the Antarctic Treaty System with the requirements for this status with an additional information for the period from 2020 to early 2023.

The status of an Antarctic Treaty Consultative Party and the requirements for its submission are defined by Article IX of the 1959 Antarctic Treaty and Decision 2 (2017) XL of the ATCM (Beijing, China). The activities of the Republic of Belarus in the Antarctic Treaty system fully comply with the existing legal provisions of this status.

***Participation in the bodies of the Antarctic Treaty System***

The Republic of Belarus joined the Antarctic Treaty on 27 December 2006 and the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty on 15 August 2008. From 2006 (ATCM XXIX) to 2022 (ATCM XLIV), the Government Delegation of the Republic of Belarus participated in the work of 13 ATCM and CEP meetings as an observer (in 2021 and 2022 - in distant format), where it submitted 27 information documents for discussion.

The Republic of Belarus has been a permanent member of the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs (COMNAP) since 2015 and an associate member of the Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research (SCAR) since 2018. The delegation of the Republic of Belarus took part in eleven meetings of the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs, at which 9 working papers and 8 presentations were presented, as well as in four SCAR sessions, at which our country presented 2 reports, 4 messages and 3 presentations.

***National legislation regulating activities in Antarctica***

Starting from 2006 till 2022, 17 normative legal acts were adopted in the Republic of Belarus in relation to Antarctica: 1 Republican Law “On Joining the Republic of Belarus to the Antarctic Treaty” dated July 19, 2006 No 157-З, 1 Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus “On Joining the Republic of Belarus to the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty” No 200 dated 10 April 2008, 7 Decisions of the Government of the Republic of Belarus, including the Decisions of the Government of the Republic of Belarus “On Review and Granting Permits to Legal Entities and Individual Entrepreneurs within the Antarctic Treaty Area” adopted in 2020 and “On approval of Measure *16 “Amendments to Annex II to the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty “Conservation of Antarctic Fauna and Flora””* and also 4 Decisions of Ministries and 4 bilateral international agreements on cooperation in the Antarctic. In addition, the draft Decree of the Government of the Republic of Belarus “On approval of Measure 1 (2005) *“Annex VI to the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty “Material Liability arising from environmental emergencies”* is under consideration by Ministries and Departments of the Republic of Belarus.

***Expedition activity and creation of the Belarusian scientific station in Antarctica***

From 2007 to 2023 with the transport and logistical support of the Russian Federation, 15 Belarusian seasonal Antarctic expeditions were organized and conducted, in which more than 90 Belarusian and 6 foreign scientists and specialists took part.

Since 2015, in East Antarctica, Enderby Land near Vechernyaya Mount, a Belarusian research station has been built based on domestic design developments. The start of construction was carried out after agreement with the CEP in 2015 (ATCM XXXVIII) of the Final Comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment of this project. For the 2020-2021 season the creation of its first stage was completed. At present, the formation of its second stage is being carried out with a possible transition of the station’s operation to a year-round mode in the coming years. Separate plant facilities are shown in Annex A (Figures A.1 - A.9).

In January 2020, the Australian Government conducted an inspection of the Belarusian seasonal Antarctic station “Mountain Evening/Vechernyaya” in accordance with the provisions of the Antarctic Treaty and the Protocol on Environmental Protection.

The final inspection report noted that the members of the inspection team were impressed by the high level of design and construction of the plant, its minimal impact on the landscape, the efficient use of solar energy and water, and the commitment to scientific research. The inspection team found the modular and efficient design of the plant to be a good example of a modern facility and noted that all existing new facilities were fully commissioned and operating efficiently. The inspection group of Australia highly assessed the rational use of available buildings and the work on clearing the territory at the site of the former field base of the Soviet Antarctic Expedition “Vechernyaya Mount” in cooperation with the Russian Federation, and also noted that construction and operation of the station was carried out in accordance with the final EIA prepared by Belarus. The inspection group noted that the plans of the Republic of Belarus for transition of operation of the station to year-round mode are at a high level.

In 2021 - 2023 in accordance with the Final EIA submitted by the Republic of Belarus to ATCM XXXVIII - CEP XVIII in Sofia (Bulgaria) under No. IP39 *Construction and operation of the Belarusian Antarctic Station on Vechernyaya Mount, Enderby Land - Final Comprehensive Environmental Assessment*, and taking into account the recommendations of the Australian inspection team the Belarusian Antarctic station was equipped with a new environmental and technological equipment - a press for the disposal of barrels and metal waste, an incinerator and a stationary oil storage facility with environmentally friendly double-shell isotainers (Annex A, Figures A.10 - A.12).

The plans of environmental protection activities of the Republic of Belarus in Antarctica for the period up to 2025 provide for equipping the station with domestic wastewater treatment system and other, environmental and technological equipment.

Transport operations for the delivery and removal of personnel and cargo of the Belarusian Antarctic Expedition to the seasonal station “Mountain Evening/Vechernyaya” are carried out by sea vessels and helicopters of the Russian Antarctic Expedition, as well as by aircraft of the DROMLAN International Corporate Aviation Program, of which the Republic of Belarus has become a member since 2020.

***Scientific activity and participation in the development of international scientific cooperation in Antarctica***

Currently, the research of the Republic of Belarus in the Antarctic is carried out in accordance with the subprogram “Development of the Belarusian Antarctic Station” of the State Program “Scientific and Innovative Activities of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus” for 2021–2025. The responsible customer of the program is the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NAS of Belarus), the customer is the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus.

Scientific programs in the Antarctic are carried out with the participation of research institutes of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (Institute of Physics, Institute of Nature Management, Scientific and Practical Center for Bioresources, Institute of Physiology, Institute of Microbiology, etc.) and the Belarusian State University. Scientific organizations, scientists and specialists from other countries participating in the Antarctic Treaty also take part in the research.

Long-term goals and plans for research work include the following set of research and monitoring of the state of the Antarctic environment:

- studies of atmospheric aerosol parameters and reflection spectra of the underlying surface;

- aerospace research of natural objects;

- studies of the state of the ozonosphere and the components of the radiation balance;

- production of standard meteorological observations and climate research;

- geological, geophysical research;

- seismological monitoring;

- glaciological and paleogeographic studies;

- integrated field studies of biological diversity and monitoring of natural ecosystems, as well as microbiological studies;

- carrying out ecological and microbiological monitoring of key environmental parameters in the area of work of the Belarusian Antarctic Expedition;

- biomedical research and problems of prevention of diseases of polar explorers.

Research in all areas is provided with modern scientific equipment and instruments. Their photographs and a partial list are shown in Annex B (Figures B.1 - B.15). There are separate specialized laboratories (biological, atmospheric physics, meteorological bureau, etc.). Photos of scientific laboratories and premises of individual services are shown in Annex C (Figures C.1 - C.8).

The Republic of Belarus and Belarusian research organizations have 14 agreements on scientific and technical cooperation in Antarctica with the Governments and organizations from 9 countries participating in the Antarctic Treaty (Russia, Bulgaria, Republic of Turkey, New Zealand, Great Britain, France, Finland, Germany, Ukraine).

The results of the Belarusian Antarctic research were summed up at four international scientific conferences “The natural environment of the Antarctic: interdisciplinary approaches to the study”.

The results of the scientific activity of Belarusian scientists in the Antarctic for the period from 2007 to 2022 published in 4 separate monographs (books), 35 articles in high-ranking scientific journals (impact factor over 1.3), 107 articles and abstracts published in proceedings of international scientific conferences held in different countries, of which 84 publications were published in English. The number of publications co-authored with specialists from other countries is 62. Eight data sets have been created and are available to the scientific community. More than 70 public lectures on Antarctic topics have been read. Six national exhibitions about the activities of the Republic of Belarus in the Antarctic have been held. Eight documentaries have been created covering the activities of the Republic of Belarus and international scientific cooperation in Antarctica.

***Final provisions***

The Republic of Belarus fully supports all the provisions of the Antarctic Treaty dated December 1, 1959, the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty dated October 4, 1991 with five Annexes, and the Recommendations and Measures of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings that have come into force and expresses willingness, as before, to follow such basic principles of the Antarctic Treaty of 1959 and the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty of 1991 as the preservation of Antarctica as a region of the world, the development of international cooperation based on freedom of scientific research and the comprehensive protection of the Antarctic environment.

Based on the above, we believe that the current activities of our government in Antarctica meet the necessary criteria for the Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty.

We express confidence that in assessing the activity of our country in the Antarctic, the Consultative Parties will demonstrate a constructive approach and objectivity in accordance with the spirit and principles of the Antarctic Treaty.

***Annex A***

**Separate objects of the Belarusian Antarctic station** *Mountain Evening/Vechernyaya*

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| I:\БАЭ_14\Фото БАЭ 14\ЯНВАРЬ 2022\Станция_сооружения\IMG_1025.JPG  **Figure A.1** – General view of the station | H:\Фото_Позиционный\IMG_8511.JPG  **Figure A.2** – Laboratory-residential module | I:\БАЭ_14\Фото БАЭ 14\ЯНВАРЬ 2022\Станция_сооружения\IMG_1078.JPG  **Figure A.3 –** Control, communication and navigation module | |
| D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\IMG_5760.JPG  **Figure A.4** – VSAT satellite dish | D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\IMG_2185.JPG  **Figure A.5 –** UPONOR heated water supply system | *D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\IMG_0994.JPG* | G:\Копия информации NEW БАЭ от 16.02.2011\БАЭ NEW 2\ФОТО АРХИВ БАЭ NEW\ФОТО декабрь 2010\Молодежная Вечерняя\Вечерняя\Техника\DSC02618.JPG |
| *G:\БАЭ 2007-2008\ФОТО КОНТИНЕНТ 53\Линкс\DSC00662.JPG* | *G:\Копия информации NEW БАЭ от 16.02.2011\БАЭ NEW 2\ФОТО АРХИВ БАЭ NEW\ФОТО декабрь 2010\Молодежная Вечерняя\Вечерняя\Техника\DSC02547.JPG* |
| **Figure A.6** – Motor vehicles | |
| D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\гаражный бокс.jpg  **Figure A.7** **–** Garage box for snowmobiles | I:\ФОТО_ВИДЕО_БАЭ 12\CANON_BAE 12\ФОТО_CANON_февраль\Станция, объекты_03.02.2020\IMG_5945.JPG  **Figure A.8 –** Complex of diesel power plants | H:\Фото_Позиционный\IMG_5903.JPG  **Figure A.9 –** Refrigerated container | |

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| D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\IMG_1320.JPG  **Figure A.10 –** Double-shell isotainer fuel storage | *Una cama con una maleta de viaje  Descripción generada automáticamente con confianza media*  **Figure A.11 –** IU-32 incinerator | D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\Screenshot_2023-03-30-18-06-20-913_com.miui.videoplayer.jpg  **Figure A.12 –**  Barrel press  HSM FP 3000 |

***Annex B***

**Instruments and equipment for scientific research at the Belarusian Antarctic station** *Mountain Evening/Vechernyaya*

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| **D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\лидар.jpg** | **D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\Люк_Лидар.jpg**  **D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\IMG-20230329-WA0000.jpg** | D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\DSC09900.JPG  **Figure B.2 –** Automatic weather station Vaisala AWS 310 | D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\IMG_2095.JPG  **Figure B.3 –** Automatic scanning photometer CIMEL CE 318N-EBM9 |
| **Figure B.1 –** Multivolume polarizing lidar “Pole” | |
| **H:\Фото_Позиционный\IMG_20210306_072633.jpg**  **Figure B.4 –** Two-channel photometer PION-FN | | **H:\Фото_Позиционный\IMG_20210305_234302.jpg**  **Figure B.5 –** PION-PO ground level ozone meter | **D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\пеленг 2.jpg**  **Figure B.6 –** Automatic actinometric station СF-16 |
| *Imagen que contiene roca, montaña, pequeño, tablero  Descripción generada automáticamente*  **Figure B.7 –** GNOM unmanned underwater vehicle | | **D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\IMG_20230330_200039.jpg**  **Figure B.8 –** DJI mini quadcopter | **D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\IMG_4653.JPG**  **Figure B.9 –** A20-X unmanned aircraft complex |
| D:\12 БАЭ\12 БАЭ_дорога обратно\Работа_Инспекция\SIMBA.JPG  **Figure B.10 –** SIMBA hydrological thermal mower | | D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\IMG_2916.JPG  **Figure B.11 –** Soil temperature monitoring system LCD-1 | D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\IMG_3204.JPG  **Figure B.12 –** Digital temperature monitoring loggers |
| F:\Фото БАЭ 15\Февраль 2023\Наука\Геофизика\IMG_5065.JPG  **Figure B.13 –** Mobile SRP radiometer | | D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\MMPOS-2.jpg  **Figure B.14 –** MMPOS-1  geophysical monitoring station | D:\15 БАЭ\ATCM_Хельсинки\ПОДГОТОВКА ДОКА В ХЕЛЬСИНКИ\Работа над IP_Хельсинки\Актуальные фото для IP\IMG_2862.JPG **Figure B.15 –** Seismological monitoring station |

***Annex C***

**Scientific laboratories and separate premises of the Belarusian Antarctic Station**

*Mountain Evening/Vechernyaya*

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| H:\Фото_Позиционный\GP__6612.JPG  **Figure C.1 –** Meteorological bureau | H:\Фото_Позиционный\GP__6638.JPG  **Figure C.2** **–** Atmospheric Physics Laboratory |
| H:\Фото_Позиционный\GP__6733.JPG  **Figure C.3 –** Biological laboratory | *J:\DCIM\100CANON\IMG_6069.JPG*  **Figure C.4 –** Control, communication and  navigation point |
| H:\Фото_Позиционный\GP__6542.JPG  **Figure C.5 –** Operational-surgical unit | H:\Фото_Позиционный\GP__6682.JPG  **Figure C.6 –** Cabin-campaign |
| *H:\Фото_Позиционный\GP__6652.JPG*  **Figure C.7 –** Living cabin | H:\Фото_Позиционный\GP__6592.JPG  **Figure C.8 –** Sanitary section |