On the Permit to carry out activities in the area of the Antarctic Treaty to the State Institution “Republican Center for Polar Research” during the period 2021-2026

**On the Permit**

**to carry out activities in the area of the Antarctic Treaty to the State Institution “Republican Center for Polar Research” during the period 2021-2026**

**Information Paper submitted by Belarus**

In order to fulfill the provisions of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty dated October 4, 1991 (hereinafter referred to as the Protocol) and the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus dated April 10, 2008 No. 200 “On Accession of the Republic of Belarus to the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty”, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus adopted the Resolution dated September 23, 2019 No. 649 (hereinafter referred to as the Resolution of the Council of Ministers) on approval of the Regulations “On the Procedure of Issuing a Permit to Carry out Activities in the Antarctic Treaty Area” (hereinafter referred to as the Regulation). These Regulations establish the content, procedure for issuing, suspending, limiting, renewing permits, terminating or revoking them, making changes and (or) additions, extending the period of validity, issuing duplicates of permits.

According to Clause 2 of the above-mentioned Regulations, its requirements apply to legal entities and individual entrepreneurs of the Republic of Belarus, carrying out activities in the Antarctic Treaty Area. Permission to carry out activities in the Antarctic Treaty Area shall be issued by an authorized state body of the Republic of Belarus. According to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus “On Accession of the Republic of Belarus to the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty” No. 200 dated April 10, 2008 (in edition dated 04.01.2021), such body is the National Academy of Science of Belarus (hereinafter referred to as the NAS of Belarus).

Permits for activity in the Antarctic are issued by the NAS of Belarus on the basis of applications from Belarusian legal entities and individual entrepreneurs and submission of a package of necessary documents, the main of which are Initial or Comprehensive (depending on the nature of the declared activity) Environmental Assessments, Contingency Action Plan, as well as documents confirming the financial security of the applicant's civil liability for the implementation of the planned activity and the possibility of liquidating emergency situations that arose during the implementation of such activities. The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus within 15 days from the date of registration of the submitted documents considers them for compliance with the requirements of the present Regulations and draws up a conclusion.

The State Institution “Republican Center for Polar Research” (hereinafter referred to as SI RCPR) was established by the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 1211 dated September 25, 2007. The SI RCPR is a state operator of the Republic of Belarus in the Antarctic and, as a Belarusian legal entity, is obliged to obtain a permit for its activity in the Antarctic. In the framework of meeting the requirements of the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus, in September 2021 the SI RCPR prepared the necessary package of documents for obtaining a permit to operate in the Antarctic in the period from 2021 to 2026. Such a permit was issued to the NAS of Belarus on November 2, 2021 with a deadline of May 30, 2026.

This permit was issued for organization and carrying out scientific research in the Antarctic, monitoring and protection of the Antarctic environment, development and maintenance of the activity of the Belarusian Antarctic Station in the form of wintering and seasonal expeditions of the Belarusian Antarctic Expedition.

Activities are carried out in the following areas:

* organization and carrying out scientific research in the Antarctic;
* logistical activity connected with delivery of personnel, equipment, food, fuel and other necessary cargo to the place of work, accommodation and work of the personnel, as well as with construction, modernization, repair and maintenance of the station infrastructure for fulfillment of the assigned tasks;
* environmental measures in accordance with the requirements of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty of 1991;
* ensuring the safety of activities in Antarctic.

According to the Permit dated November 02, 2022, the activity is carried out in the form of seasonal and wintering expeditions of the Belarusian Antarctic Expedition in East Antarctic, Enderby Land, as well as in other Antarctic regions during joint scientific projects concluded with other national programs and Antarctic Treaty organizations.

Method of delivery to Antarctica - sea and air vessels.

Means of transportation used in Antarctica - sea and air ships, land transport.

The number of personnel of the Belarusian Antarctic Expedition in 2021-2026 is from 11 to 14 persons and is determined by the measures of Subprogram 2 “Development of activity of the Belarusian Antarctic station” of the State Program “Scientific and innovative activity of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus for 2021-2025”, approved by the Regulation of the Council of Ministers No. 238 of 22.04.2021.