

# A Sustainable Biodiversity Management Plan as a Tool for Conservation of the River Kalanchak, Ukraine

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## Executive Summary

The Kherson region is one of the driest regions of Ukraine, which can be explained by its location in the steppe zone of the East European Plain and downstream of the Dnipro River. Due to anthropogenic effects during Soviet times and nowadays, the current state of the region's water resources is close to catastrophic. The river Kalanchak is a visual illustration of this unsustainable use of the river ecosystem's water resources by local authorities and communities of Kalanchak district. The river is part of the Ramsar wetland complex "Karkinitzky and Dzharlygatsky Bay" and at the same time it is the only freshwater source for several villages along the river 'shores in Kalanchak district.

The current state demonstrates the need for management plans, especially on the regional level, for sustainable use of natural resources, to apply new environmental approaches in agriculture, and to solve the local problems in efficient way. Ukraine is now on the way of understanding and elaborating such plans for protected areas, and the next step will be the elaboration and improvement of management plans at the regional level. The sustainable biodiversity management plan is an environment-oriented official document for conservation of the River Kalanchak and improvement the state of Kalanchak district. For building an effective strategy, it is important to involve the conservation projects in partnership with stakeholders for the improvement of the river ecosystem and its biodiversity. This is aimed at achieving ***the goal that by 2020, the Kalanchak river-ecosystem will be restored and the number of species diversity increased with involvement of environmental tools at the regional level.***

For turning this goal into reality, the sustainable biodiversity management plan was elaborated and includes the following information: a description of the current state of the river, a future vision of the river ecosystem and of the whole Kalanchak district; an action plan (with long-term and short-term conservation activities) with clear understanding of the current state and what happens to the ecosystem and its biodiversity now, as well as future prognoses after restoration activities and possible scenarios for the ecosystem for reaching the long-term goal in the near future; and the main steps that should be taken for the successful implementation of the SBMP.

During summer 2016, some rehabilitation activities of the SBMP were carried out for conserving the River Kalanchak. The activities that were implemented are under monitoring: providing flow to the river, replenishment through the restoration of the abandoned water boreholes, and planting native species of trees and shrubs for strengthening the river-banks.

The river ecosystem is still not fully functional, but the first steps were made for improvement of the current situation, as well as to bring into life the vision of the River Kalanchak as a part of the National Nature Park "Dzharylgatskiy".