

POST-WAR RESTORATION OF THE RECREATIONAL POTENTIAL OF UKRAINIAN FORESTS

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The total area of the forest fund in Ukraine is 10.4 million hectares, which is 17.2% of its territory. Ukraine's forest cover affects the climate of the whole of Europe. It is proposed to use the Vyzhnytsia National Park as an experimental base and to involve scientists from Europe and the United States to find the best solution to the main issue of our time - the impact of the war on the climate and mitigation of the consequences. The Ukrainian government is going to launch a program to rejuvenate forests, i.e. remove diseased trees and plant new ones.

One of the problems with forests is fires. According to the Ministry of Environmental Protection, 7.5 thousand hectares of forest have already burned down, which is almost the size of the city of Cherkasy in square kilometers. How serious is the danger? For example, in the Kherson region, where there were fires in national parks because of shelling, Ukrainian firefighters had no access to these areas. A similar story happened in Chornobyl when this territory was occupied. The fire could not be extinguished for several days. It takes about ten years to restore forests. If protected areas burn out, it will probably take about 20 to 30 years for them to return to their previous state and for the animal population to recover.

Many bird migration routes pass through Ukraine, and many animals from the Red Data Book live in these protected areas. The fires could kill them. Some experts believe that after the war, some part of Ukraine's territories will have to be left to nature to regenerate itself. In fact, the soil is harmed by all this. But in different regions or cities, the impact and its scale will differ: somewhere there was a fire, somewhere there was a leak and pollution with oil products. But since we cannot conduct analyzes, there is no clear understanding of the scale of the disaster.

There is a general approach that needs to be followed in the process of adapting to climate change and preserving the ecological potential of Ukraine's forests. There is a need for constant monitoring of the impact of climate change and the adoption of preventive post-war measures. It is necessary to establish a scientific center on the territory of the Vyzhnytsia National Park in order to develop a comprehensive solution to the problems acquired during the war. Utilize best practices in national parks in Europe and the United States by establishing partnerships.

Among the tools and mechanisms that can ensure the processes of restoring the natural potential of forests after the war are: gradual restoration of natural objects affected by the war; increasing the area of forests, forest belts and green spaces, optimizing the structure of land use; restoring and modernizing the forest inventory and monitoring program (ground and remote observations); promoting sustainable forest management and forest use; and implementing best practices, including adaptive forest management, close-to-nature silviculture, scenario analysis, GIS support; support for climate change research and improvement of international cooperation in this area.