**PROTOCOL**

**on Cooperation between Pridnestrovie and the Republic of Moldova in Fishery Management and Rational Use of Aquatic Biological Resources of the Dniester River**

Authorized structures of Pridnestrovie and the Republic of Moldova, hereinafter referred to as the Authorized Structures,

Building on the provisions of the Protocol Decision on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection and Natural Resource Management of October 30, 2015,

Based on the principle of promoting interaction in the field of fishery management, protection and rational use of aquatic biological resources of the Dniester River,

Seeking to achieve the rational use and proper protection of water resources, prevent the degradation of ecosystems and restore them,

Based on the understanding of the need to foster cooperation in fishing activities control and to achieve greater efficiency of the measures for the use and conservation of biological resources,

Determined to build cooperation in the field of fisheries on a mutually beneficial and parity basis,

have entered into this Protocol as follows:

1. The Authorized Structures undertake to:

1) annually exchange information and scientific and methodological documentation:

a) in the field of conservation, increase, rational use and protection of aquatic bioresources;

b) on issues related to anti-poaching and the use of prohibited fishing gears and fishing methods;

c) on aquatic bioresources monitoring;

d) on ichthyologic studies;

e) on implementation of fish-breeding and melioration activities;

f) on the results of scientific research on aquatic biological resources, including scientific catches to assess the state of aquatic biological resources and to ensure control over their natural reproduction;

2) agree on the terms, areas and places that are not allowed for fishing;

3) attend international seminars and conferences on fishery problems and to encourage the participation of the representatives of the Authorized Structures in such events;

4) refrain from using the obtained information for commercial purposes, as well as in innovative and international projects without mutual agreement.

2. In fishery management and the rational use of aquatic biological resources of the Dniester River, the Authorized Structures shall cooperate in the following areas:

*1)* *interaction in the field of conservation, maintenance and rational use of aquatic biological resources:*

a) development and implementation of sectoral programs in the field of fisheries;

b) reviewing the list of fish species and other aquatic biological resources, the catch volumes of which are subject to agreement;

c) mutual approval of permanent and temporary sites with a special protection regime marked by distinctive signs;

*2) drafting joint proposals for their further implementation on the following issues:*

a) fish stocking and acclimatization of hydrobionts in natural fishery reservoirs conjointly with relevant scientific institutions;

b) implementation of fish-breeding and melioration activities aimed at restoration and maintenance of natural spawning grounds;

c) setting the start dates and duration of the fishery ban and, where appropriate, adopting measures to introduce joint bans on catching certain fish species, prohibited fishing gears and methods;

d) changing the fishery ban timeframe in selected river stretches, with due account for the specificity of the fish stock formation and exploitation in various sections of the Dniester River isolated by hydraulic facilities;

e) ensuring the ecological water release regime from the Dniester basin reservoirs optimal for aquatic biological resources;

3) *cooperation in the field of poaching control and suppression:*

a) development of the systems of fishery control, including prevention, suppression and elimination of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and compliance with fishing rules and regulations in the Dniester River basin;

b) exchange of information on identified violations of fishing regulations of the Authorized Structures:

- monthly – on a full-time basis;

- weekly – during the spawning ban;

c) cases of a detected violation or punishable act by persons whose activity is within the area of responsibility of another Authorized Structure shall be reported and relevant materials shall be submitted to this Authorized Structure with a view to further investigation and judgement;

d) illegal or marked fishing gear installed in trawls and detected in the opposite part of the waters should be removed from the water body for their subsequent transfer to another Authorized Structure with a view to taking measures to identify the perpetrator;

e) the authorized agencies of the Structures shall cooperate to ensure proper implementation of this provision.

1. *international cooperation:*

The Authorized Structures of the parties shall facilitate the involvement of international donors to ensure the conservation of fish stocks and other bioresources in the Dniester River basin.

1. **Final Provisions**

The Authorized Structures may supplement the present Protocol with separate bilateral annexes.

Where one of the Authorized Structures fails to comply in full with its obligations, the other Authorized Structure shall have the right, upon notice, to suspend part or all of its obligations provided for in this Protocol.

The present Protocol may be terminated ahead of schedule upon agreement of the Authorized Structures or unilaterally in case of systematic failure of the other Authorized Structure to fulfill its obligations.

The present Protocol shall be concluded for a period of 2 years from the date of its signing.

Unless any of the Authorized Structures declares its withdrawal from the present Protocol one month prior to its termination, it shall be deemed extended for the next year.

Once a year, the Authorized Structures shall review the implementation of this Protocol.

Head of the Working Group

from the Republic of Moldova

(signed)

Head of the Authorized Structure

from Pridnestrovie

(signed)

*15/06/2016*