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“Green economy” in the Republic of Belarus

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Green economy is the economy that increases people's well-being and reduces environmental risks, relying on resource-saving and environmentally friendly production. *The concept of green economy* is the model that leads to improved health and social justice, as well as reduced environmental impact. Thus, green economy can be a low-carbon, resource-saving and socially inclusive economic model.

Green energy comes from natural sources such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides, plants and geothermal heat. These energy resources are renewable. Renewable energy sources have also a much smaller impact on the environment than fossil fuels, which produce pollutants such as greenhouse gases as a by-product, contributing to climate change.

There is a potential of renewable energy sources in Belarus. All types of renewable energy technologies function in the Republic today. It is safe to say that the greatest prospect in the Republic is represented by hydro and wind power.

Priority environmental instruments of *green growth* are the following:

- sustainable consumption and production,
- *greening* of businesses and markets,
- sustainable infrastructure,
- *green* tax and fiscal reform,
- investing in natural capital,
- indicators of environmental effects.

Electric energy prime cost is influenced by:

- fuel prime cost ,
- depreciation charges,
- expenses for maintenance and operation of power equipment,
- cost of electricity losses,
- cost of compensation for uneven generation and consumption of electricity and so on.

In Belarus about 97 % of electricity is produced by burning natural gas. Only one Minsk thermal power plant burns about 250 thousand cubic meters of natural gas per hour and emits the same amount of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

The commissioning of a nuclear power plant will reduce natural gas imports by 5 billion cubic meters and thus reduce the generation of electricity from natural gas by 9 %, decommission and preserve some of the outdated facilities. According to many experts, the use of atomic energy, along with the energy generated from renewable sources, can reduce the cost of electricity.

Pros and cons of a nuclear power plant are the following:

pros – recyclable, emits nothing in environment except hot water; cons – running low, requires proper handling and geographical dispersion.

Belarus is planning to launch the first power unit of the Belarusian nuclear power plant in 2019. According to the energy security concept of the Republic of Belarus there going to be built a nuclear power plant with the capacity of about 2,4. Many researchers emphasize that the balanced combination of different types of power plants, for example wind, solar, thermal, hydroelectric power plants, will not require special reservation of electrical capacity, which significantly reduces the cost of electricity generated.

Belarus follows such principles of green economy as:

1) further development of environmental legislation and application of the most successful experience in air, water, soil and waste management;

2) expansion of the organic agriculture sector, introduction of a certificate for organic products in the country and an increase in the production of organic products;

3) promotion of eco-innovation solutions based on high research potential of the Republic of Belarus;

4) use of legal and economic tools to mitigate climate change and support adaptation measures;

5) introduction of energy efficiency measures in the cities of the Republic of Belarus;

6) attraction of foreign direct investment and creation of green jobs [1].

References:

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