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**Legislative regulation and institutional provision  
of water management in Ukraine**

During many years the natural water quality in Ukraine gradually deteriorated. In the middle of the XX century the water quality of heavily polluted rivers and lakes in the average stabilized. Later on, up to the middle of seventies years, a considerable decrease of the pollution level was observed, especially on the most polluted water bodies. It may be explained by the noticeable splash of the water protection activity in that period in Ukraine, as it generally was in the USSR. There was passed a progressive environmental legislation, created state water protection institutions occupied with its implementation and provided a substantial financing of the environmentally oriented measures.

In the course of last thirty years the average level of fluctuating water quality indices in water bodies has a tendency towards stabilization. The water quality monitoring results are evidence of absence a total progressive water quality deterioration, as well as its visible improvement for the water bodies considered as a whole. In cases of the low level of chemical pollution the value of the pollutants concentration in water is equal to 1 – 2 maximum acceptable concentrations (MAC), set as norms of the ecological safety for fish. In cases of high level of chemical pollution this value is equal 10 – 30 MAC, as average for the year. But some separate measurements are indicating such values as 70 – 100 MAC. It relates to such chemicals as oil products, nitrite (N), copper, zinc, manganese and chromium compounds. On the whole the modern status of Ukrainian waters is assessed as crisis, when the velocity of anthropogenic violations exceeds the natural sustainability rate, but the fundamental changes of the natural systems are not yet occur.

In Ukrainian society the necessity of the waters status improvement is widely realized. At the same time it is obvious that existing environmental legislation and regulating institutions are not able to do it. They cannot organize an effective water management system in the country. So cardinal changes are needed.

In this paper the most important features of Ukrainian state environmental water policy and legislation are discussed, as well as the regulating institutions activity in connection with the water management. The shortcomings in these fields are exposed. The main of them are:

- The environmental problems in reality are not the first priority of the state policy;
- Environmental water policy and legislation have predominantly a declarative character;
- The development of the majority legislative norms are delegated to the executive authorities, which can lead to the deformation of these norms;
- In legislative acts are not determined the priority targets with the terms of their achievement;
- There is no clear distinction between environmental and economical regulation in the sphere of water management, this inspires a tendency to keep the reins of management in the hands of water economy agencies;
- The legislative activity is not sufficiently transparent, the role of public in the decision making process is rather restricted;
- There is no any efficient economic motivation of the enterprises environmental performance improvement;
- There are not organized the state agencies responsible for the water basin environmental management, which have an appropriate economic mechanisms in their hands.

In the paper are outlined a proposals for elimination of these shortcomings on the basis of approximation to the EU environmental legislation, its implementation and enforcement methods.