

WATER RESOURCES

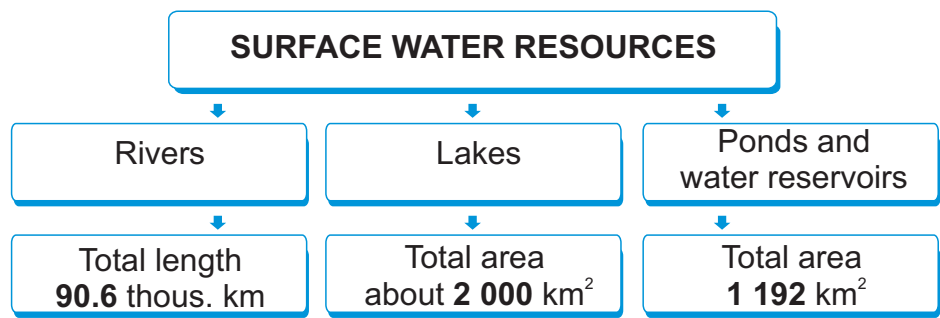
*We never know the worth of water
till the well is dry.*

Thomas Fuller
(English historian, 1608-1661)

Nature has generously endowed Belarus with surface and ground water resources, that is why Belarus is called “blue-eyed”.

The main source of surface water resources in Belarus is rivers.

As much as 20.8 thousand rivers of the total length of 90.6 thousand kilometers flow over the land of our country.



MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF LARGEST RIVERS

River	Length, km	
	total	within country area
Dnieper	2 145	700
Western Dvina	1 020	338
Neman	914	436
Western Bug	772	169
Pripyat	761	495
Sozh	648	493
Berezina	561	561
Viliya	510	276
Ptich	421	421
Shchara	300	300

The longest river in the world is the Amazon with the Marañon (South America) – over 7 000 km.

The shortest river in the world is the Raptar (Abkhazia) – 18 m.

The shortest river in Belarus is the Skema – 200 m.

The lands of Belarus are ornamented with about 10.8 thousand lakes. Most lakes are located to the north and north-west of the country, in the so-called Belarusian Poozerye.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF LARGEST LAKES

Lake	Area, km ²	Depth, m		Location (region, district)
		maximum	average	
Naroch	79.6	24.8	8.9	Minsk, Myadel
Osveyskoye	52.8	7.5	2.0	Vitebsk, Verkhnedvinsk
Chervonoye	40.8	2.9	0.7	Gomel, Zhitkovichi
Lukomskoye	37.7	11.5	6.6	Vitebsk, Chashniki
Drivyaty	36.1	12.0	6.1	Vitebsk, Braslav
Vygonoshchanskoye	26.0	2.3	1.2	Brest, Ivatsevichi
Neshcherdo	24.6	8.1	3.4	Vitebsk, Rossony
Svir	22.3	8.7	4.7	Minsk, Myadel
Snudy	22.0	16.5	4.9	Vitebsk, Braslav
Chernoye	17.3	3.0	1.3	Brest, Bereza
Ezerishche	16.8	11.5	4.4	Vitebsk, Gorodok
Myadel	16.2	24.6	6.3	Minsk, Myadel

*The Caspian Sea is the largest lake in the world (371 thous. km²).
Lake Naroch could stretch on its surface 4 661 times.*

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF LARGEST WATER RESERVOIRS

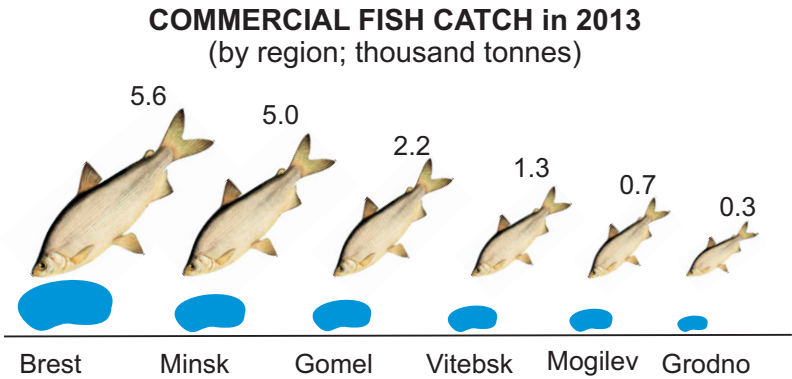
Water reservoir	Area, km ²	Location (region, district)
Western Dvina basin		
Khorobrovka	31.97	Vitebsk, Miory
Ezerishchenskoye	16.90	Vitebsk, Gorodok
Western Bug basin		
Belavezhskaya Pushcha	3.32	Brest, Kamenets
Lukovskoye	5.40	Brest, Malorita
Neman basin		
Vileyskoye	63.80	Minsk, Vileyka
Zelvenskoye	11.90	Grodno, Zelva
Dnieper basin		
Zaslavskoye	26.86	Minsk, Minsk
Osipovichskoye	11.87	Mogilev, Osipovich
Svetlogorskoye	14.10	Gomel, Svetlogorsk
Chigirinskoye	21.19	Mogilev, Kirovsk
Pripyat basin		
Krasnoslobodskoye	23.65	Minsk, Soligorsk
Lubanskoye	22.50	Minsk, Lyuban and Starye Dorogi
Pogost	16.16	Brest, Pinsk
Selets	20.70	Brest, Bereza
Soligorskoye	23.10	Minsk, Soligorsk

Water covers 71% of the Earth surface. Fresh water makes up only 2.5% of the total water on the planet. Forty-four countries, including Belarus, are land-locked.

Belarusian water bodies are perfectly suited for fishing. More than 60 species of the fish kingdom – carp, crucian carp, perch, silver carp, rudd, bream, grass carp, goby, catfish, pike, tench, rainbow trout, eel – inhabit the clearest water.

The following species are listed in the Red Book: grayling, common nase, brown trout, sterlet, Atlantic salmon, brown trout, European smelt, European cisco, common barbel, vimba, and river lamprey.

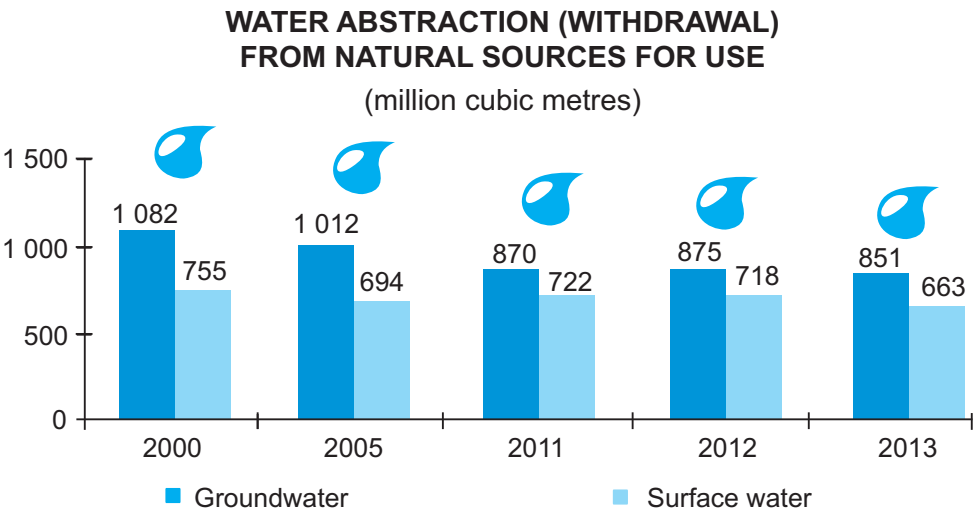
In 2013 commercial fish catch was 15 thousand tonnes. The fish catch of amateur fishermen is estimated at 8 thousand tonnes.



Belarus is rich in ground fresh water resources. Their stocks are estimated at 18 km³ per year. Our country takes one of the leading positions in Europe for this indicator.

There are 6.1 thous. m³ of water resources per inhabitant of Belarus.

*The indicator that shows the volume of water withdrawn from groundwater sources and surface water bodies to be used for various purposes is called **water abstraction (withdrawal) from natural sources for use**.*



Water abstracted in 2013 was used for various purposes:



56.7% – industrial needs;

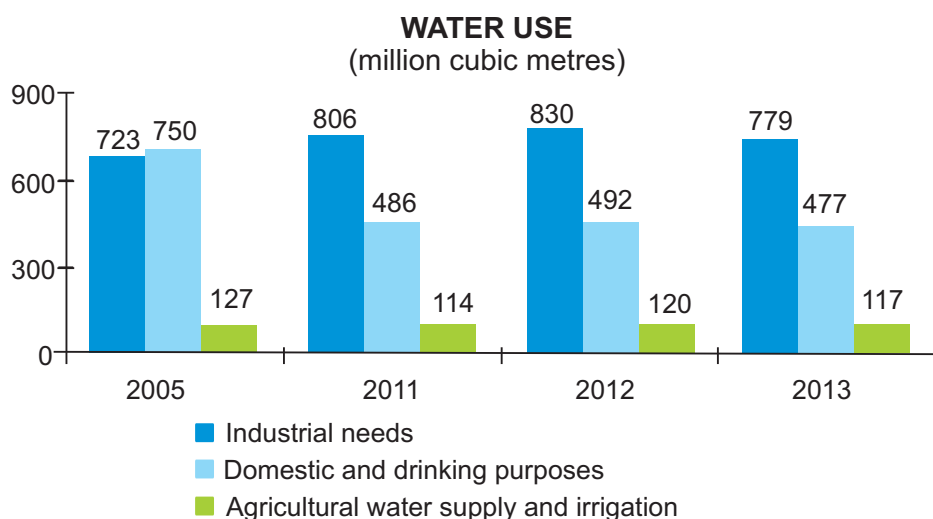


34.8% – domestic and drinking purposes (to meet domestic and drinking needs of households and employees);



8.5% – agricultural water supply (industrial needs of livestock farms, repair shops, field and grassland water supply) and land irrigation

Natural groundwater resources are the main source of domestic and drinking water supply.



*Rational water consumption for domestic and drinking needs is measured with such indicator as **water use for domestic and drinking needs per inhabitant of Belarus**.*

It is calculated as a ratio of the annual water use for domestic and drinking needs to the average annual population.

WATER USE FOR DOMESTIC AND DRINKING NEEDS PER CAPITA FOR CITIES WITH POPULATION 150,000 AND OVER

(cubic metres per inhabitant)

City	1990	2000	2011	2012	2013
Belarus	67	78	51	52	50
Baranovichi	94	102	47	55	56
Bobruysk	99	114	73	67	60
Brest	99	126	49	57	56
Vitebsk	88	100	59	55	54
Gomel	104	100	53	51	49
Grodno	105	122	65	63	58
Minsk	137	133	71	67	66
Mogilev	116	113	49	59	61

Over 60% of water from natural sources are withdrawn from the rivers of the Black Sea basin (the Dnieper River basin), and around 40% are abstracted from the rivers of the Baltic Sea basin (basins of the Neman, Western Dvina and Western Bug Rivers).

We must remember that protection and rational use of natural resources, including water, is not only the task of the state, but also the duty of each of us!

