**Ecological characteristics:**

The Biosphere Reserve “Askania Nova” is the sole natural protected scientific institution in Ukraine which core area is situated within the near-Syvash-Azov lowland of near-Black and Azov Sea region of dry steppe province of the Steppe Zone. The reserve provides conservation of largest plot of feather grass steppe of relic flora-fanistic complex in Europe. Askanian steppe is one of the oldest reserves of the Earth. Reserve “Askania Nova” consists of the virgin steppe, the State Dendrological Park “Askania Nova” and the Zoological Park “Askania Nova”. 75 species of birds and 41 species of mammals in the Askania Nova zoo collection. The autochthonous flora of the virgin steppe is represented by 505 flowering species of plants. A fairly large portion is consisted of rare, endemic and threatening species – 85 flowering species and 8 lichens. 3 fungi, 4 lichen and 13 flowering species are listed in the Red Data Book of Ukraine. Fauna of core area is presented by 1154 species. Among them 219 species are the invertebrates and chordata, which include 2 species of amphibians, 5 reptile species, 21 species of mammals, 269 bird species. 60 animal species are listed in the Red Data Book of Ukraine; there are 9 insects, 3 are reptiles, 44 bird species and 4 species of mammals.

**Human activities:**

- Conservation of the natural steppe ecosystems, wild animals of Askania Nova Zoo and plants of Dendrological Park;
- Scientific researches and long term monitoring for natural environment;
- Environmental education.

**Protection classifications:**

The area was declared as a Biosphere reserve “Askania Nova” in 1983. The Reserve is listed in World Network of the Biosphere Reserves in 1984.

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