

The Green Lungs of Poland

'The Green Lungs of Poland' idea is based on sustainable development, which does not threatens natural environment and allows future generations to benefit from the Earth's supplies as much as we manage to benefit today.

"The Republic of Poland (...) shall ensure the protection of the natural environment pursuant to the principles of sustainable development", The Constitution of The Republic of Poland, Chapter I, Article 5.

The Green Lungs of Poland 1983 – 2003

1983 – the idea and conception of 'The Green Lungs of Poland' came into being; at the present time this conception can be recognised as a proposition of eco-development of the North-Eastern Poland.

1988 – an Agreement was signed by administrative and political authorities of the North-Eastern region of Poland. The idea was to protect the nature as a composite unity by introducing the concept of sustainable development for North-Eastern voivodeships, called 'The Green Lungs of Poland' (Białowieża, 13.05.1988). Programmatic and scientific Council was appointed to realise the Agreement. On base of appropriate settlements, the Council attended the Agreement on behalf of the International Union for Nature Conservation. An organising unit working for the Union was created and it is called The Agreement Bureau since 1992.

1990 – continuation of the Agreement. It is aimed at creating organising and programmatic basis for complex protection of the nature and sustainable development of 'The Green Lungs of Poland' region (Olsztyn, 21.12.1990).

1994 – The Sejm of The Republic of Poland Declaration, concerning 'The Green Lungs of Poland' as the most important territory for realisation of eco-development tasks in Poland.

1996 – many products and service start to use 'Green Lungs' as a Promotion Sign. This trademark, owned by the International Union for Nature Conservation, is registered at the Patent Office at No 143863.

1999 - the Senate Commission for Environment Protection expressed its support for the realisation of 'The Green Lungs of Poland' programme and also for improved version of the Agreement, considering the new administrative division of our country

2001 - on 26 November 2001 in Łańsk Marshals of Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Mazowieckie, Podlaskie, Pomorskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship signed a new Agreement

2002 and the first half of 2003 - interested sides of the Agreement acted in order to set up a self-governmental 'The Green Lungs of Poland' Association, but the aim was never achieved at that time

Intensification of actions

In the second half of 2003 Podlaskie Voivodeship Marshal's Office took actions to revive 'The Green Lungs of Poland' programme

The main theses were accepted:

- activities defined in the Agreement should be connected with needs, tasks and chances of our region, especially in order to joining the European Union,
- structural funds should be raised and rationally used,
- promotion of regional goods and services,
- the proper legal and organisational form should be maintained,
- gaining the right to 'The Green Lungs of Poland' trademark,
- 'The Green Lungs of Poland' programme should be a self-funded undertaking.

Working teams, consisting of representatives of local authorities of 'The Green Lungs of Poland' region as well as the International Union for Nature Conservation was created.

As a result of many consultations, main tasks were established:

- a new Agreement, providing a sustainable social, cultural and natural development as well as promotion of 'The Green Lungs of Poland' region, should be signed,
- 'The Green Lungs of Poland' Programme Council should be set up,
- The Foundation for 'The Green Lungs of Poland' should be established.

'The Green Lungs of Poland' Agreement

On 20 December 2004, in Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Poland in Warsaw, speakers of four Voivodeship authorities signed an Agreement. Its main task is to continuation former declarations and actions in order to the principle of sustainable development.

The Agreement is mainly aimed at preserving the cultural, natural, ethnic and religious diversity of the region as well as promotion of sustainable development of 'The Green Lungs of Poland' region.

Priorities and strategic issues:

- implementing well balanced social and economical development of 'The Green Lungs of Poland' region, sustainable development of agriculture, tourism and forest management,
- considering specific values of the region in spatial and regional policy,
- financial initiatives as the base for 'The Green Lungs of Poland' development,
- increasing the attraction and competitiveness of the region,
- increasing the local, polish and European society's education about natural and cultural values of the region.

The Programme Council of 'The Green Lungs of Poland' Agreement

The Programme Council consists of Signatories of 'The Green Lungs of Poland' Agreement.

Till the end of 2005, the chairman of the Council was the Marshal of Podlaskie

Voivodeship – Mr Janusz Krzyżewski. The Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship is going to be the chairman in 2006.

The Programme Council will define a policy and represent the Agreement in national and foreign contacts. The Council main task is to supervise the Foundation for ‘The Green Lungs of Poland’.

The Foundation for ‘The Green Lungs of Poland’

The Foundation and its statute were signed on 28 September 2005 in Podlaskie Voivodeship Marshal’s Office in Białystok. Białystok city is the seat of the Foundation.

On 7 October 2005 the Foundation Council was constituted. Mr Jarosław Idźkowski – director of the Department of Infrastructure and Environment Protection in Podlaskie Voivodeship Marshal’s Office was chosen as the chairman. Mr Bogdan Meina – director of the Department of Environment Protection in Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship Marshal’s Office is a vice-chairman. The Foundation Board was also established. President of the Board is Mr Krzysztof Wolfram, and Mrs Teresa Orłowska is a member of the Board. According to the statute, these positions are welfare.

On 17 October 2005 the Foundation was registered in the National Judicial Registry.

The Foundation’s main task is to support actions of local authorities and the whole society in range of sustainable development of North-Eastern Poland, especially these actions connected with protection of the environment as well as preserving natural values. The Foundation is going to raise both national and foreign proper funds for that aim.

The Foundation owns ‘The Green Lungs of Poland’ trademark.

On 19 April 2004 Board of the International Union for Nature Conservation passed a resolution No 6/2004 in this matter.

Developing as well as promotion of ‘The Green Lungs of Poland’ trademark will strengthen its regional character.

Functioning of the Foundation’s Council, consisting of representatives of voivodeships’ borders and other founder is decisive.

Sole references of the Foundation’s Council are:

- to chart main directions in functioning of the Foundation,
- to approve programs of functioning of the Foundation,
- to appoint and cancel members of the Foundation Board, to supervise works of the Board,
- to give the Board annual vote of approval.

Summary

Undertakings mentioned above are the great opportunity of development of the region specified in the Agreement.

Regional system functioning in range of sustainable development as well as



preservation of the cultural and natural Poland's diversity should be implemented to social, economic and political activities in our region and the whole country.

