

Deutscher Rat für Landespflege

Poland's Integration in the EU: The Challenge for Nature Conservation – an Approach

Introduction

Within the foreseeable future Poland will become a full Member State of the EU. The country possesses rare natural treasures and diverse cultural landscapes, by European standards, which therefore especially deserve protection. In view of rapidly progressing structural changes that are further promoted by EU accession, their conservation cannot be safeguarded without mutually agreed European and national nature conservation-oriented measures. Today – with Poland an associated member of the EU – we already ascertain serious interventions in and pollution of nature and landscapes. Apprehension about this moved the Deutsche Rat für Landespflege (The German Council for Land Stewardship) to concern itself with the land management consequences of eastern EU enlargement and the membership of Poland in the EU.

Many Council members have maintained good contacts within Poland for many years. In September 2000 a study journey by the council was an attempt to become familiar with the present situation using selected examples. Under experienced guides large protected areas, such as the Bialowieski, Narwianski, Wigierski, Slowinski and Biebrzanski National Parks and the Mazurski and Kaszubski Landscape Parks were travelled through and detailed talks were held with representatives of Polish scientific institutions. This booklet offers a glimpse at the present situation of nature conservation in Poland, its potential threats, yet also proposals of action to overcome them. We would like to express our appreciation to the authors who have provided articles.

Piotr BANASZUK & Leo REYRINK: Das The Narew Project of the *Land* North-Rhine Westphalia – Model project for the Green Lung of Poland

Inge MAASS: On the importance of historic elements of the cultural landscape in Poland: the need for their documentation and their preservation

Karl Heinz GROSSER: The Leba sandbar – Słowiński Park Narodowy

Karl Heinz GROSSER: The "Bielinek" Nature Conservation Area

Hartmut MÜLLER: A biosphere reserve in the Odra river mouth?

Eugeniusz NOWAK & Martin FLADE: Ornithological research and nature conservation in Poland

Jörg PETERMANN & Yvonne STECHLY: On the implementation of the Habitat Directive in Poland

Heiner LAMBRECHT: Practically testing the EIA in a cross-border context between Germany and Poland

Klaus ERMER: Cross-border cooperation in flood protection

Hartmut MÜLLER: Waterway or ecological corridor – Poland's rivers at the crossroads

Herbert SUKOPP: On the study of the "Bellinchen" Nature Conservation Area before 1945

Gerhard WAGENITZ: Hans Steffen (1882–1945) – an East Prussian botanist

Werner WAHMHOFF, Matthias KLEINKE & Volker WACHENDÖRFER: The promotional activities of the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU) in Poland

Lore STEUBING: Youth contacts and school exchange programs between Germany and Poland

Angelika WURZEL: German-Polish Nature Conservation Handbook – an example of successful cooperation.

Poland's location in Europe

Poland is situated in the centre of Europe. Due to its former incorporation in the Eastern Bloc, Poland is often falsely considered part of Eastern Europe. With an area of nearly

312,700 square kilometres the Republic of Poland is the seventh-largest country in Europe, bordered in the north by a 524-km long coastline and Germany in the west along the 460-km rivers of Odra and Nysa. The other neighbouring countries from south to east are the Czech Republic, Slovakia, the Ukraine, Belarus as well as Lithuania and the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad to the northeast.

Natural regions

Poland can be divided into six major landscape regions (PELZER 1991):

1. Coastal regions
2. The lakelands (moraines and sandurs, e.g. Mazury)
3. Lowland regions (Warsaw basin),
4. Uplands (Little Poland Uplands in the west, Lublin Uplands in the east),
5. Foothills (e.g. Lower Silesian woods),
6. Mountains (e.g. Sudetes).

Poland is situated in a transitional climatic region: Baltic climatic influences on the coast and ocean influences in the west meet with the continentally influenced climate in the east. The upland and mountainous regions also have their typical climate.

Water takes up approx. 2.6 percent of the area of Poland. The river landscapes of the Vistula, Odra, Biebrza and Narew are of particular importance for nature conservation with their moist meadows, flood-plain forests as well as rainwater and flat bogs.

More than 75 percent of the area is covered by glacial sediments. After the last Ice Age leached brown earth, brown earth and rust brown earth developed on these areas. With regard to the original geological substrate and soil types the remaining areas are characterised by great diversity. Among the most important soil types are boggy soil (area 8 %), alluvial soil (6 %), podzol (2 %, primarily from drift sand), chernozem (1 %, former steppe soils), black earth (2 %, hydromorphically influenced soils that developed from humus-rich soils) and rendzina from limestone (1 %).

The structure of the natural regions and the climatic uniqueness of Poland effect the interesting vegetation geographic structure and natural species diversity of the country. Pontic geographical elements include the pheasant's-eye (*Adonis vernalis*) and feather grasses (*Stipa joannis*, *S. capillata*), other elements are the bayberry (*Myrica gale*; euatlantic element), wood cow-wheat (*Melampyrum nemorosum*, central Russian flora element) and the downy oak (*Quercus pubescens*, sub-Mediterranean influence on the lower reaches of the Odra River).

SCHEEDER & BRANDE (1997) point out a significant historic aspect of botanical research. *Hugo Conwentz*, pioneer not only of German nature conservation, but also acknowledged representative of the idea of nature conservation in Europe, researched and studied the history and distribution of the yews (*Taxus baccata*) of West Prussia from Gdansk (e.g. CONWENTZ 1892). The decline of the natural and impressive occurrence of old yews and entire yew stands revealed by him and others later led him to the fundamental initiatives for the conservation of natural monuments (CONWENTZ 1904).

The map of anthropogenic changes in the vegetation of Poland (FALINSKI 1975) is an important example for studies of vegetation. Its concept is based on the assumption that the process of human-influenced changes is composed of the replacement of special or endemic vegetation components with cosmopolitan, autochthonic with allochthonic and stenotopic with eurytopic components.¹ In this way various zones of different degrees of naturalness can be delineated. According to this study, regions with wide complexes of natural vegetation take up approx. 8.5 percent of the area of the country.

The country is also well studied zoologically. The animal world reveals a large number of species that are primarily distributed in steppe regions or in eastern Europe, e.g. the spotted souslik (*Spermophilus suslicus*) or the southern birch mouse (*Sicista subtilis*). Although some are banished to protected areas, large mammals such as the brown bear (e.g. in the Tatra), lynx and wolf (primarily in the east of Poland and in the Carpathian Mountains) are still found. The population of European bison in Białowiecki

National Park is well known. Fish otters and beavers are much more abundant than in Germany (cf. GŁOWACIŃSKI 2001).

Species such as the white stork (*Ciconia ciconia*), with 25 percent of the world population in Poland, and the rare aquatic warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*), totalling even 40 percent of the world population (Polish Society of the Friends of Nature "pro Natura" 1999) are particular responsibilities for Poland. One of the largest European populations of little terns (*Sterna albifrons*) breeds on the Vistula River (WWF 2001). The country also provides extensive habitats for many other endangered bird species, e.g. the lesser spotted eagle (*Aquila pomarina*), white-tailed sea eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*), bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*) and corncrake (*Crex crex*).

The state of nature in Poland

The spatial disparities that characterise Poland, e.g. the economic differences between urban and rural areas, are also reflected in the state of nature. Besides the ecological problem areas of the conurbation centres (e.g. the "Black Triangle"), often caused by lignite mining, heavy industry and power generation, there are extensive natural areas of great ecological significance (CARIUS et al. 2000). Roughly 11 percent of the areas are identified as "ecologically endangered regions" (SCHMIDT 1999). One consequence of the socialist economic policy is the major pollution of running waters. Over 90 percent of their courses are of a quality that cannot even be used for agricultural irrigation or industrial purposes. The reasons for this are insufficient wastewater treatment, the organic pollution of waters as well as pollution by agriculture from the time before 1989, when extensive utilisation of fertilisers and pesticides caused high nitrate and phosphate concentrations that last even today (CARIUS et al. 2000).

Land use

Sixty percent of the total area of Poland is used for agricultural purposes (approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ arable land, $\frac{1}{4}$ grasslands) while forests cover 28 percent of the country (BBN 2000). Eighteen percent of the 38.6 million inhabitants of Poland work in agriculture

but produced only 3.8 percent of the gross domestic product in 1999 (European Commission 2000). Most are small farming enterprises, of which a part does not produce for the market, but for own use or self-marketing (RIBBE 2000).

Today the low capital resources of agricultural enterprises allow for only limited use of operating resources, although a slight increase in the use of fertilisers and pesticides was recorded again in recent years (METERA 2000). The existing extensive land management is decisively important for conserving the structural wealth and the variety of species – nature conservation in general – in the Polish landscape (cf. e.g. article by MAASS in this booklet).

Nature conservation in Poland

The Nature Conservation Act of 16 October 1991 is the legal basis for nature conservation in Poland, in which the objectives, competencies and instruments of nature conservation, among other things, are laid down. That same year the Strategy for the Protection of Living Natural Resources in Poland was drawn up, which includes guidelines for the protection of valuable natural resources and recommendations for protective measures. Other legislative provisions such as the Forest Act of 28 September 1992 or the Hunting Act of 13 October 1995 also contain provisions that are important for the field of nature conservation (cf. BBN 2000: Deutsch-Polnisches Handbuch zum Naturschutz). Most of the more valuable natural regions have been safeguarded in the form of national parks, nature conservation areas, landscape conservation parks and landscape conservation areas. Other conservation instruments include ecological lands, geological demonstration areas, protected landscape complexes and natural monuments (ibid).

There are a total of 23 national parks (314,450 ha) in Poland, of which 17 fulfil the criteria of the IUCN (categories II or V). The oldest of these is Białowiecki National Park. In this primeval forest, whose preservation can also be attributed to its former use as royal hunting grounds, a 4,650 ha nature conservation reserve was established as early as 1921, in which any use of timber was prohibited (BUCHHOLZ 1952). In 1932 it was renamed "Białowieza National Park" and recreated in 1947 as Białowiecki National Park. Today the national park covers 10,502 ha, 4,747 ha of which are under strict protection (total

reserve). It was included in the list of the UNESCO World Heritage sites in 1979. The youngest national park is "Ujście Warty", the Warthe river mouth in the west of Poland, which was established on 19 June 2001 and covers an area of 7,956 ha (The Board of Polish National Parks 2001).

Nature conservation is financed by the state and through environmental funds from the national to local levels. The environmental funds are fed from income from the application of the polluter-pays principle (BBN 2000). The Ecofund Foundation ("Ekofundusz") is a farsighted institution, whose means come from so-called "eco-conversion", i.e. various creditor states have agreed that Poland can spend parts of its foreign debt for environmental objectives within its own borders rather than repaying them (cf. SCHMIDTENDORF 2001). Its founder and head is the former deputy Environment Minister, Professor *Maciej Nowicki*.

Nature conservation and environmental protection should be integrated in national, regional and local spatial planning. In Poland there is no autonomous, region-related nature conservation planning similar to landscape planning in Germany. However, individual protection plans are drawn up for national parks, nature conservation areas and landscape conservation parks. These regions and objects should be integrated in the local regional development plans, but such plans are not obligatory. Polish environmental associations criticise that the requirements for the content of regional plans are too imprecise and hence that interventions in nature and the landscape, such as the construction of industrial plants, deforestation, the construction of hydro-electric power plants, the removal of structures important to the landscape (hedges, small waters, tree alleys, clusters of trees, etc.) in the course of melioration measures are hardly controllable. Not every project is subjected to an environmental impact assessment; this is only used for specific investments that are classified by the Polish environment ministry as environmentally hazardous.

The implementation of environmental policy is under the control of the voivodships (regions), poviats (districts) and gminas (towns). Poland follows the principles of sustainable development. This objective was laid down in the association agreement with the EU (see below). A *National Strategy for the Protection of Biological Diversity* is being drawn up as an important instrument for this (BBN 2000).

The process of accession

After an association agreement was made between Poland and the EU in 1991, Poland officially applied for accession on 5 April 1994. In March 1998 the accession negotiations between the EU and the six candidates of the so-called Luxembourg Group, including Poland, commenced. Until accession Poland must adopt Community Law and the "acquis communautaire", i.e. the laws and rules adopted on the basis of the EU's founding treaties (treaties of Rome, Maastricht and Amsterdam).

The process of eastern enlargement of the European Union is primarily politically and economically motivated, however the environmental policy dimension of European integration was intensified by the coming into force of the Amsterdam Treaty (CARIUS et al. 2000).

The subject of accession negotiations are the conditions under which Poland will adopt, implement and enforce the *acquis* as well as transitional arrangements and deadlines (European Commission 1999). The negotiations are led by the European Commission; resolutions are made by representatives of the EU member states (General Council of EU Foreign Ministers) with the involvement of the European Parliament (BMU 2001a).

The EU supports Poland's accession preparations in the scope of the pre-accession strategy through various programmes:

1. PHARE programme ("*Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economy*"): This instrument was introduced in 1990 and is mainly directed at the establishment of the institutions and at providing incentives for investment. The establishment of institutions is supported by the so-called "Twinning Programme", in which experts are delegated on the basis of partnerships between member states and applicant countries, to assist in strengthening and training institutional and administrative capacities. This also includes the establishment of an effective environmental administration. The area of investment promotion furthermore includes support in applying the Community rules on environmental issues and assistance in participating in the EU Structural Funds. Poland is slated to receive over 400 million euro in the scope of this programme as from 2000 (Auswärtiges Amt/German Federal Foreign Office, 2001).

2. ISPA (*Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession*) was established in 2000 and supports the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) in adapting to environmental standards of the Community and expanding the trans-European transport network. Environmental issues that are of particular relevance are drinking water, wastewater, waste and air pollution. Poland is receiving approx. 300 million euro, to be evenly distributed among environmental and transport infrastructure measures.

3. SAPARD (*Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development*) is a structural policy programme to promote agriculture and rural development. Projects that may be sponsored include the diversification of economic activities and creation of income alternatives in rural regions, as well as agricultural production procedures contributing to environmental protection and landscape conservation. The accession countries work out the programmes and are also responsible for them, meaning that they have to establish the administrative structures for the implementation of the programmes themselves. These structures correspond to those required in EU member states for programmes to promote rural areas. Thus SAPARD not least contributes to the establishment of administrative structures conforming to Community standards. Poland can receive approx. 150 million euro in the scope of SAPARD.

Further opportunities for financial support include:

4. INTERREG III: The Community Initiative INTERREG, which is being continued under a new name, is intended to support structurally weak border regions. Programme B, "Transnational Co-operation", assists in integrating the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) (CRAMER 2001).

5. LIFE III: LIFE is a financing instrument that was created to support the EU's environmental policy and co-finances the project in three areas (Nature, Environment, Third Countries). It was introduced in 1992 and is meanwhile in its third phase. LIFE-Nature is dedicated to the conservation of nature reserves, flora and fauna, that are of interest for the EU. This program contributes to the implementation of the EU Birds Directive (Directive 79/409/EEC) and the

Habitat Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) (Council of the European Communities 1979, 1992). In the associated accession states this is intended to pave the way for establishing the NATURA 2000 network. Not all accession candidates participate in the LIFE-Nature programme, e.g. Poland does not yet (European Commission 2001a).

Prerequisites on the European level

To ensure that the EU is at all able to admit further countries to the Community without losing its own capacity to act and make decisions due to the increased number of member states it was resolved in Cologne in 1999 to carry out institutional reforms. At the Intergovernmental Conference in Nice in December 2000 a "schedule" was resolved for the following months with the objective that the first accession treaties can be signed at the end of 2002 (BMU 2001a). In spring 2004 expansion is to begin simultaneously with the passing of a new EU constitution.

The EU also has to prepare itself for the admission of new member states in the sector of nature conservation. There is pan-European interest in preserving the large and relatively untouched natural areas as well as conserving the biodiversity. Therefore, the European nature conservation directives have to be adapted to the natural resources of the member states, for example by expanding the amendments of the EC Habitat and Birds Directives. These adaptations are fully in progress, taking into account the applicant countries: in autumn 2001 a preliminary position of the Commission is to be determined that will be included in the accession negotiations at a later date (NATURA 2000-Infoblatt/fact sheet 2001).

Poland's pathway to accession: Problems in nature conservation and environmental protection

Poland has already made many achievements in environmental protection and nature conservation, but it is also still facing some difficult steps on the pathway to accession. *Jan Kulakowski*, Chief Negotiator of Poland for EU accession, believes that the issue of environmental protection (among others besides agriculture) is one of the most difficult problems that remain to be solved (Das Parlament 2001).

Environmental protection is a crucial issue in the accession negotiations. In its progress report of November 2000, the European Commission found that Poland had only achieved very limited progress in the adaptation and implementation of the *acquis* (European Commission 2000). At that time numerous environmental laws were in preparation – once they have been adopted, this will significantly improve the compliance of Polish rules with EU environmental legislation. Their agreement with the environmental directives of the EC (e.g. Habitat and Birds Directives) is crucial to ensure their full implementation in national legislation. Poland has agreed to harmonise its legislation in the field of nature conservation with the requirements of the EU until the end of 2002 without transition periods (Swedish Environmental Protection Agency 2001).

As to the administrative structures, no sufficient progress was achieved either on a national or regional level. To achieve efficient implementation of the EC directives it is necessary to strengthen the capacities of the Environment Ministry, the voivodships and the counties. The level of knowledge about EC rules is also criticised by the Commission. Therefore, it is necessary to provide further training for the responsible environmental inspectors.

Preliminary work for the establishment of the NATURA 2000 network has already begun; some reserves have been expanded (European Commission 2000). In the scope of a PHARE project, Poland received support until March 2001 to work out a list of proposed NATURA 2000 reserves. The assistance in implementing NATURA 2000 is continued in a new *Twinning* project. Among others this comprises the strengthening of the institutions and preparation of a management system, including the development of methods to manage and organise monitoring of the selected areas and preparation of public relations material (Swedish Environmental Protection Agency 2001) (cf. article by PETERMANN & STECHLY).

In the opinion of the German Council of Environmental Advisors (Rat von Sachverständigen für Umweltfragen, SRU) it is necessary to develop a coherent national environmental policy, as European environmental legislation and national environmental policy are intended to complement each other (CARIUS et al. 2000). Working out *National Environmental Action Programmes* (NEAPs) to address environmental issues and promote sustainable development is also important in view of the fact that the

regulation of specific areas of environmental protection and nature conservation remains on a national level (CARIUS et al. 2000). A pilot project for the Polish NEAP, for example, was carried out from 1994 to 1999 in co-operation between the *Institute for Sustainable Communities* (ISC), Vermont, USA, and the Polish Ministry of the Environment (Institute for Sustainable Communities 2001).

In the agricultural sector, the Commission believes that policies and structures must be fundamentally reformed. Although some progress has been achieved in the plans for rural development, Poland is still far from fully implementing the *acquis communautaire* (European Commission 2000).

The date of accession scheduled by Poland itself, 1 January 2003, seems too early under present conditions. The postponement of the possible accession date by the EU to the year 2004 is causing increasing dissatisfaction among the Polish population and reduced efforts on its part (FREUDENSTEIN 2001, KRAFT 2001). The rate of approval dropped under 50 percent in the year 2000 (Auswärtiges Amt/German Federal Foreign Office 2001). The Polish government is planning to carry out a referendum in 2003 before the accession enters into force. Its successful outcome is not guaranteed if this development continues. The adoption of the environmental *acquis* in the course of the EU accession could improve the population's standard of living and thus have a positive effect on the acceptance of the expansion process.

German-Polish co-operation

Since the late 1980s, German-Polish co-operation has reached a new political dimension. On 10 November 1989 a German-Polish intergovernmental agreement was reached on the issue of environmental protection, which was amended on 7 April 1994. In this agreement both states commit themselves to cross-border co-operation among others in the area of nature conservation. The amendment was the result of one of the sessions of the German-Polish Environmental Council established in 1991, that was headed by the German Environment Minister at that time, Prof. Dr. *Klaus Töpfer*, and his Polish counterpart *Stanislaw Zelichowski* (Umwelt/Environment 1994). By resolution of the Environmental Council, the working group "Cross-border Nature Conservation" was

furthermore established in 1995, with the following objectives (GÖTTING-FROSINSKI 2000):

- Information on and co-ordination of the objectives and concepts of nature conservation,
- Stocktaking of existing and planned reserves in the border region,
- Co-operation in international agreements on nature conservation (e.g. Ramsar Convention) and
- Nature conservation education on a cross-border basis.

Consequently, co-operation in nature conservation at present mainly works in the field of cross-border activities, whereas co-operation on a national level still needs to be intensified (a successful example, however, is the Narew project, cf. article by BANASZUK & REYRINK, RIBBE 2001). Examples of a successful local co-operation are the "Lower Odra Valley International Park" and the "Green Belt Odra-Nysa" (WWF 2000). The fact that Poland is not yet a Member State of the EU causes difficulties in co-operation, e.g. for the reason that a transfer of promotion funds to the "Lower Odra Valley International Park" is not permitted, resulting in an imbalance in the budgeting of the reserves (GÖTTING-FROSINSKI 2000).

Other examples of co-operation are the collaboration in the registration of bat roosts in military facilities that are no longer in operation on both sides of the Odra and Nysa rivers (DOLCH & TEUBNER 2000) or the German-Polish handbook on nature conservation, which was produced through co-operation of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, the Federal Environment Ministry, both Bonn, with the Polish Ministerstwo Srodowiska (Ministry of the Environment), Warszawa, (cf. article by WURZEL in this booklet).

Various foundations and associations support nature conservation and environmental protection projects in Poland, e.g. the Euronatur foundation, the WWF or the German Foundation for the Environment (Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt, DBU) (cf. article by WAHMHOFF et al. in this booklet).

The German Federal Environment Ministry supports Poland in its transition to accession, for example in establishing an environmental information system in the scope of the EU Twinning Programme and by delegating German experts who pass on their knowledge acquired in the application of EU legislation. Furthermore it sponsors several environmental protection projects (Dialog inter-

view with Minister Jürgen Trittin 2001, BMU 2001b).

In the area of environmental education, the youth work performed in the "Lower Odra Valley International Park" at least has to be mentioned as a cross-border success (GÖTTING-FROSINSKI 2000). Aside from this, the issue of nature conservation/ecology is only of secondary importance in the organised youth exchange between Germany and Poland (cf. article by STEUBING in this booklet).

Possible effects of accession on the state of nature

Changes in agriculture and forestry

Traditional agriculture in Poland is the most significant factor for conserving landscape and species diversity (biodiversity) outside of protected areas. Accession to the EU involves adopting the Community Agricultural Policy (CAP), which was reformed with Agenda 2000. It covers the so-called "second pillar" of agricultural policy, Council Regulation 1257/1999 "rural development", which can be used as a funding instrument for sustainable development and for nature conservation measures or environmentally friendly agricultural production. Nevertheless the first pillar of the CAP, with "traditional measures", has higher priority. Therefore it is feared that adoption of the CAP will have negative effects on the country's natural wealth. Intensification of farming on fertile soils and giving up traditional use on less productive soils threaten Poland's natural heritage. Giving up agricultural use in less productive regions is a threat to habitats, which have formed over centuries of human use, e.g. moist meadows and marshes in the Polish river valleys, as well as to species that have adapted themselves to semi-natural habitats.

Even in the pre-accession phase, in which agricultural trade with the EU was liberalised, there has been a drop in agricultural production caused by a decrease in cultivation areas (European Commission 2000). Combining the agricultural areas would mean the destruction of valuable microstructures and corridors. Increased utilisation of fertilisers and pesticides and non-sustainable water consumption threaten the natural diversity. The drainage of moist meadows and pastures, the destruction of small waters and over-grazing are other factors linked to intensification that could

lead to reducing the value of the state of nature.

The financial means made available by the SAPARD programme (see above) are not sufficient for both adapting the agricultural sector to the CAP and lessening the dangers through agricultural environment measures (SLABE 2001).

The integration process is increasing the pressure to privatise the forests, 83 percent of which are presently in state hands (DAWIDZIUK 1997), since most forests in Western Europe are privately owned. This would probably result in more intensive and less sustainable management of the forests. Without prior expert nature conservation examination, the afforestation promoted by European agricultural policy on areas that are no longer used agriculturally could lead to an unacceptable impairment of habitats of open landscape species. Exotic (fast-growing) tree species should not be favoured over domestic plants in afforestation.

Economic and infrastructure changes

Further liberalisation of trade with Poland attaining an expanded market for the agrochemical industry of the EU would be linked to serious negative effects on the environment. It is feared that traffic infrastructure measures such as those promoted in the scope of ISPA would result in further fragmentation of habitats and, in addition, an increase in mobility to more pollution.

Expansion of waterways for transport or energy generation purposes is a risk for natural river landscapes, which could be decreased by the coming into force of the Water Framework Directive (The European Parliament and Council of the European Communities 2000), which envisions attaining good conditions for all types of waters by 2015.

Generally, implementation of technical environmental measures should lead to the alleviation of air and water pollution, which in turn would have positive effects on the state of nature.

Implementation of the EIA Directive (EU Directive 85/337/EEC) (The Council of the European Communities 1985) improves upon existing legislation and is hence very welcomed. Additionally, the EIA for Plans and Programmes (EU Directive 2001/42/EC) is also being implemented.

Including Poland in the establishment of the NATURA 2000 network of protected sites is of utmost importance for nature conservation.

Required actions

- for European policy / European nature conservation

- European nature conservation policy must consistently be implemented in all member states.
- The objectives of EU agricultural policy must be redefined in order not to repeat old mistakes in applicant countries; increased promotion of organic farming is desirable.
- Funds for nature conservation and environmental protection measures in various promotional programmes must be increased.
- The proposal of the "European Consultative Forum on Environment and Sustainable Development" must be supported: existing beneficial environmental policies of the applicant countries should be examined for possible adoption in EU law (European Commission 2001b).
- In promoting and implementing projects in Poland, e.g. the planning of trans-European traffic networks, nature conservation potentials must be given special consideration. Generally, the integration of nature conservation and environmental issues should be promoted in all areas of policy, in order to approach the desired model of a sustainable Europe.

- for Polish agricultural environmental policy / Polish nature conservation

- Incentives are needed for Polish farmers to continue to manage valuable grasslands and other semi-natural habitats in the traditional manner. The agricultural strategy of Poland should go beyond the requirements of the EU and take the natural wealth of the country into consideration, in order to ensure the conservation of the cultural landscape. Possible measures are the promotion of organic farming (in 1999 only on 11,000 ha or 555 farms = 0.03 percent of all farms) (cf. METERA 2000). The existing small farm structure offers a good starting point for continued naturally tolerable agriculture (cf. SCHWALL-DÜREN 2001).
- At the present time, Polish policy is focussed on solving social problems in rural regions in order to support the traditional modes of management in small farms. This approach should continue to be pursued for social reasons, since improving rural living conditions could prevent the departure from traditional farming methods, which preserve the cultural landscape and species diversity.

The existence of small farm structures is also dependent on the continued existence of regional markets (METERA 2001).

- The development of a multifunctional agricultural sector could serve as the basis for sustainable rural development, for example co-operation between agriculture and gentle tourism in which the strengths of food production can be combined with the rich natural heritage and sociocultural traditions (cf. SLABE 2001).
- With environmental education and public relations in the field of nature conservation the population should be convinced of the necessity of preserving traditional economic patterns and conserving natural resources.
- Not only is it necessary to pass but also to enforce nature conservation and environmental laws, enforce management plans, environmental action plans, etc. The possibility to further educate employees in environmental administration is one essential prerequisite for this.
- Nature conservation in Poland needs a stronger lobby to influence the Polish parliament and its relations with the European Commission. Environmental policy integration is needed to ensure that nature conservation objectives are not undermined by other policy areas (e.g. agriculture and traffic) (cf. Poland's strategy for sustainable development).
- Full use should be made of the financial promotional opportunities offered by the EU for nature conservation measures from Structural Funds or LIFE-Nature.
- Biomonitoring in Poland should be expanded and improved, also in order to fulfil the demands of the European nature conservation directives (cf. DYDUCH-FALINOWSKA et al. 2000).

- for German-Polish co-operation in nature conservation

Continuation and expansion of the co-operation between the two countries is desirable, through

- co-operation/joint management of cross-border protected areas, e.g. the Lower Odra Valley International Park,
- promotion of and co-operation in nature conservation projects within the borders of Poland,
- financial support for nature conservation projects,
- involvement and consideration of nature conservation concerns in existing partnerships, e.g. twinning partnerships,
- transfer of knowledge and scientists.

The possible endangerment of the state of nature in all of the candidate countries through their accession to the EU has been recognised – albeit late – and initial actions are following. For example, the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (Bundesamt für Naturschutz, BfN) held an international workshop of the topic "EU enlargement: Effects of Community Agricultural Policy on nature and the environment" in September 2001 during which scenarios were developed, which could serve as decision aids for the future. The event serves as the basis for a conference planned for 2002 on the same subject, during which action recommendations and measures will be drawn up for all countries involved.

For the members of the Deutsche Rat für Landespflege the reflections in this booklet are a contribution to further discussion on how nature and landscape should be treated in the EU, its member states and the accession candidates. We hope that all of the economic, social and ecological decisions are taken and implemented in the interests of the principle of sustainability.

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