

THE MODEL FOR ASSESSING THE NATURAL, LANDSCAPE, SCIENTIFIC AND EDUCATIONAL VALUES OF NATIONAL PARKS IN POLAND

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Abstract: The model for evaluating natural/landscape, scientific and educational values of Polish national parks presented in this paper, is based on criteria different from those applied to date in such valorisations. Apart from relative evaluations, differentiating comparable areas as more and less valuable vis-à-vis certain features, the model includes many indices based on direct, measurable values of the features compared. The criteria include estimates and indices describing the natural value of sites (both of biotic elements like flora, fauna, habitats, and also abiotic elements) and the values of landscape as well as educational, scientific and the tourism-related importance of national parks. The practical application of the valorisation criteria elaborated is shown on the example of four mountain-type national parks. The proposed model could be used as a tool for evaluating the value of a national park with respect to a given feature as well as for selecting new areas which should be covered by protection as national parks in order to optimise the network of protected areas in Poland.

Key words: national parks, criteria for valorisation, natural values, scientific/and educational importance, optimisation of network of protected areas, physico-geographical regionalisation.