

SUMMARY

Landscape parks against a background of protected areas system in Poland

Landscape conservation in Poland has a long-term tradition. Already in 1963 prof. Zygmunt Novák introduced project of foundation of the Jurassic Landscape Park and in 1976 the Committee of Nature Conservation of the Polish Academy of Sciences submitted a conception of Polish-wide network of landscape parks encompassing 20 large areas useful for tourism development. The first real landscape park was founded in 1976 in Suwałki Lakeland (Tab. 1). Legal regulations concerning establishment of new protected areas were found in the Law of Nature Conservation of 16th April 2004. The essential categories of areas protection are: national parks, landscape parks, nature reserves and areas of Natura 2000.

The most important form of nature conservation in Poland are national parks as units created according to definition of IUCN. Actually in Poland there are 23 protected areas of this kind of conservation (Fig. 1) which in total cover 314508 ha of an area. They represent major geographic regions and climate zones from seaside in the north to mountains in the south of the country. The smallest is Ojcowski NP (2146 ha) and the largest is Biebrzański NP (59223 ha), with average size area of 13674 ha.

The most abundant category are nature reserves. They are very diversified in relation to their size and protection purposes. At the end of 2003 there were 1368 of them in Poland, which cover 165248 ha or 0.53% of the territory of the country. The average size area amounts to 121.5 ha. According to tradition there are 9 types of reserves in regard to main purpose of conservation, more than 50% of them are forest reserves. Landscape parks are protected areas of regional importance. Their task is maintenance of landscape values, characteristic for different geographic regions and a promotion of tourism. The latest list of landscape parks comprises 120 objects, which total area amounts to 2585427 ha, i.e. 8.3% of the country territory (Tab.1, Fig. 1). Development of these areas network was shown in table 2 and 3 but in table 4 data useful for tourism purposes were listed.

Apart from above mentioned protection categories to the other important ones, areas of Natura 2000 belong, from which in Poland there will be about 300 covering in total 45000 km² (15% of the territory of the country). International category, based on regulations of UNESCO, are biosphere reserves of which 9 are founded in Poland (Fig. 1). Their area amounts to 396345 ha, i.e. 1.3% of the general country area.