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## ECOTOURISM – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**Z. Wnuk**

*University of Rzeszów, Faculty of Physical Education  
Chair of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Tourism Geography  
Rzeszów, Poland*

Nowadays tourism has become a very important element of modern life and culture and a significant factor of economical growth. In this article the problem of ecotourism in Poland is presented along with its perspectives of development and the conflicts which occur when it is practised on the large scale. This article presents areas mostly affected by the negative changes during the excessive practice of tourism e.g. seaside areas, high mountains, river banks, forests, caves, national parks, nature reserves. When one particular area becomes a national or scenic park, nature reserve or Natura 200 Area, it immediately attracts increased tourist traffic. All the forms of environmental protection are the most valuable locations to practice ecotourism. The least conflictual form of tourism is ecotourism = sustainable tourism.

*Key words:* forms of environmental protection, ecological education, ecotourism, sustainable tourism.

Nowadays tourism has become a very important element of modern life and culture and a significant factor of economical growth. The processes of democratisation, in which not only elites but larger social groups take part, aim at egalitarianism and the fair participation in the national income by means of its secondary distribution and directing it in the areas devoid of industry. Tourism provides favourable conditions for establishing bonds between various cultures and for the mutual understanding among people. Nevertheless, apart from the positive influences, tourism has also negative effects on nature and culture. According to Jan Gwalbert Pawlikowski one hundred years ago its negative effect was seen mainly in the tourists' inappropriate conduct (Olaczek 2007, 2008). The increased density of the tourist traffic has caused many negative phenomena, partly objective ones and related with the incredible development of transportation technology and the diversity of ways in which tourist resources are used. The large-scale tourist traffic requires e.g. the development of road networks, parking lots and airports and causes their congestion, the Polish road from Kraków to Zakopane commonly called "Zakopianka" being a salient example. This traffic, which involves over 800 million people a year, consists of car transport in about 60% (Olaczek 2008) and of plane travel in 25% (according to World Tourism Organisation). Lots of concerns are raised regarding the frequently aggressive mass tourism penetrating inaccessible areas which were previously unaffected by human activities and areas of high natural value, mostly protected by the law.

When one particular area becomes a national park, a scenic park, a nature reserve or a Natura 2000 Area, it immediately starts to attract an increased flow of tourists. Globally, the following areas have been most severely affected by tourism:

1. Seaside areas (beaches, dunes, coastal waters, coral reefs, islands),

2. High mountains, especially in industrialised countries,
  3. Waters and banks of rivers and lakes,
  4. Easily accessible forests,
  5. Caves and areas with prominent features of the landscape (canyons, rocks, gorges)
- (Olaczek 2008, Wnuk 2008).

Traces of tourism can be easily seen in nature: contamination of water, soil and air, trampling and picking of vegetation and scaring animals. Moreover, other changes can be noticed - less evident but more far-reaching and profound, which cannot be unambiguously assessed. The former changes include: interference in the natural ecological processes (e.g. matter cycle, gene transfer, ecological balance, the reproduction capacity and migration of organisms, water circulation and the regeneration of soil fertility) the stimulation of erosion, the loss or the risk of loss of biological diversity, cosmopolitisation and synanthropisation of fauna and flora. The latter changes include: the deterioration of the quality of the environment and the loss of aesthetic, emotional and educational attributes of the landscape. Tourism is considered to be the biggest branch of industry (in the European Union about 13% of the employment share) and a major social phenomenon and, as a consequence, it had to be recognised as an environmental protection issue – as a threat to nature but, at the same time, as a beneficiary of the protection. Environmental protection as understood today is a component of the new direction in the perception of man and nature and the major civilisation trend called sustainable development.

### Sustainable development

Some authors such as Kozłowski (2007), Piątek (2005), Olaczek (2008) describe the concept of sustainable growth, which derives from the report by the World Commission on Environment and Development published in 1987 entitled “Our Common Future” also called in short “Brundtland Report”. The idea of combining environmental protection with social and economic growth was created 15 years ago (Kozłowski 1994). This concept was forced on the representatives of industrialised countries by the delegation of the developing countries (India, Brazil) when preparing the final declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, which took place in Stockholm in 1972. The Declaration states that the protection and improvement of the environment are aims equal in importance to the preservation of peace and the social and economic development of the world and they should be pursued for the good of the present and future generations. The declaration consists of 26 principles, one of which includes the following sentence: *Economic and social development is essential for ensuring a favourable living and working environment for man and for creating conditions on earth that are necessary for the improvement of the quality of life* (Kozłowski 2007). Subsequently, this idea was expressed by the English term *sustainable development* (the French term *le développement durable*) and was first announced in the publication by the International Union for Conservation of Nature entitled “World Conservation Strategy” (1980).

For the first time this term was translated into Polish by Olaczek as: **trwały rozwój** (English: durable development) (Olaczek 1985); the authors of Brundtland Report as: **stabilny rozwój** (English: stable development) (Grzelońska, Kolanowska 1991); Stefan Kozłowski (1994) as: **ekorozwój** (English: eco-development). The term: **zrównoważony**

**rozwój** (English: sustainable development) has become generally accepted and become incorporated into the wording of **the Constitution of the Republic of Poland**.

At the beginning, this idea was truly revolutionary as it includes environmental protection into the most significant issues of mankind: the preservation of peace, the development of economy and society. Instead of contrasting environmental protection with the economic and social development, the new concept focused on the duty of cooperation and negotiation of common aims and methods of action.

Moreover, it stated that economic and social development (*development* and not just *growth*) is necessary for the natural environment to be effectively protected (Olaczek 2008).

In the 70's highly developed countries were extremely enthusiastic about the protection of the natural environment. Many institutions and social organizations were established as a part of the protection movement, new academic disciplines also in the scope of humanities were created and the protection of environment was a real "blockbuster" in the media and politics. The highly electric atmosphere started to become more and more relaxed in the 80's, mainly because of political reasons. The worsening economic situation of the developing countries increased the number of regions ridden with famine and poverty. **The US government intensified the arms race**, flauntingly began ignoring United Nations and **left UNESCO**. Those organizations are the promoters of new ideas and the coordinators of international cooperation for the purpose of environmental protection and ecological education. "World Conservation Strategy" aimed at the protection of the living resources of the Earth states that the coordination of goals of the environmental protection and economic growth on all levels of administration and the pursuit of compromise rather than presenting a demanding attitude has to constitute the fundamental condition of sustainable development. In 1983 the UN General Secretary asked Ms Gro Harlem Brundtland, the former PM and minister of environmental protection in Norway, to become the chair of the commission that would prepare a global programme. The results of the commission's work was presented to the General Assembly of the United Nations in autumn 1987 and published also in Poland.

The main idea is defined in the following way: (...) stable development means such a process of changes, in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, technological development and institutional changes are in harmony and which provides opportunities of satisfying human needs and aspirations in progress and in the future" (Grzełowska, Kolanowska 1991).

The final definition of the term was given by the documents of the UN conference "Environment and development" in June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro called the Earth Summit. Those documents read: "In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process chain and cannot be considered in isolation from it" (Dokumenty Końcowe... 1993). The detailed scheme of activities for such direction of development is included in Agenda 21, published in the same collection of documents.

Currently, sustainable development is the topic of numerous articles and books. The most comprehensive overview of its principles, rules, strategies and implementation plans is presented in the publication by Prof. Stefan Kozłowski (2007).

The definition of sustainable development in Poland can be found in Art. 3 of the Law

on the Protection of Environment – Act of the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2001: it means such socio-economic development which entails the process of integration of political, economic and social activities and which maintains balance in nature and the durability of the basic natural processes in order to guarantee the possibility of satisfying the basic needs of particular communities or citizens of both the present generation and the future ones. The crux of this matter is the agreement of aims and actions in three spheres of social life: **industry, society and environment**, whose expression is the entrepreneurs, social organisations and trade unions as well as institutions and organisations of environmental protection. The crucial point is that the development and the benefits of each of those three partners should not be gained at the expense of other two, everyone should participate in the benefits (and the expenses) of every action. Such equalization should occur on every level of the organisation of social life, between sectors and within each sector and every company. Another significant point would be to consider sustainable forest management, transport management and also sustainable tourism.

Further evolution of the term *sustainable development* went in the direction of increasing and expanding the significance of social issues – economic order, justice, fighting poverty and exploitation, whereas environmental problems were limited to technical, normative, legal and controlling issues – in a word, to the dehumanised aspect of environmental protection. This might pose the risk of distracting people's attention from environmental problems and removing them from public awareness. An example of this unfavourable tendency might be the fact that a highly important UN document, Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, published in 2005 and available in the Internet, passed unnoticed and remains virtually **unknown (Olaczek 2006)**.

The sustainable development of a civilisation consists in the adaptation of environmental protection issues to the situation of nature, politics and social awareness in the global reality of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The universal idea stems from the critical consideration of human approach to nature.

**Sustainable tourism can be described as follows:**

1. It meets the expectations of contemporary tourists and people living in tourist areas,
2. It preserves and strengthens the possibility of meeting such expectations in the future,
3. It develops space and manages natural resources as well as takes advantage of the cultural heritage in order not to diminish their industrial role, not to lower the social and aesthetic values, but to preserve biological diversity, the cultural integrity and the smooth course of ecological processes.
4. It provides protection for the characteristic and original features of landscape for a given area.
5. It protects and improves the quality of the environment.
6. It does not detrimentally affect other users of common space.

The general rules should be very strictly followed, most importantly, in tourism practised in the protected areas, where they are usually introduced by visitation regulations and protection schemes, and in their proximity as well as in the areas previously free from tourist pressure, where the observance of such rules depends only on the will of local communities,

tourist guides' and entrepreneurs' attitudes as well as tourists' culture (Olaczek 2008).

What is the place and role of the Polish Tourists' and Country Lovers' Society (PTTK), League of Nature Conservation (LOP), the Polish Ecological Club (PKE) and other organizations in sustainable tourism? With this question we proceed to the third level of this problem's complexity and the first answer which comes to mind is as follows: within the triad of the interest groups, organisations should take the role of an arbitrator and in each particular example of any conflict should defend the weakest of the three partners. These partners are usually social benefits and environmental protection because they have a weaker position in comparison with the power of money (money makes people blind to everything else?) – the tourist industry and the insatiate appetite of tourist communes. As a consequence, it does not seem to be an exaggerated demand to expect from PTTK, LOP and PKE to perform what follows:

1. To make available and popular facilities and areas to be visited, but first of all to educate society about tourist culture.
2. To promote the knowledge of the country and non-aggressive forms of tourism.
3. To boldly protect the common possessions such as landscape, nature, forests and waters, cultural heritage from being appropriated or degraded.
4. To set a good example of care for the environment on their own premises e.g. to promote renewable power engineering.

The implementation of the rules of sustainable development into tourism will face some formal and psychological obstacles. Some of them will be presented below. First one is the ambiguity of social benefits. On the one hand, there are tourists who seem more important as they create the social phenomenon and movement. On the other, there are those who provide them with services. Tourists would like to lower their expenses, the latter - to obtain higher income. Communes would like to obtain higher takings from taxes and to save expenses and, as a consequence, they should reach a compromise because they might lose both tourists and income. Another obstacle might also be the fragmentation of the service providers such as travel agencies, accommodation providers, providers of transport and guiding services, manufacturers and sellers of souvenirs, folklore groups, equipment rentals etc. Consequently, special attention should be paid to obtaining the state of equilibrium between the numerous and diverse expectations but not at the expense of nature. What is more, there should be institutionalised possibilities of shaping non-egoistic attitudes, which are in favour of sustainable tourism in all the participants of this activity (Olaczek 2008).

The other type of obstacles is the attitude to the possessions which are common for everyone so seemingly they belong to nobody e.g. forests, rivers, seas, water bodies and the way of understating property rights. Here, we deal with a case of discrepancy between the legal state and the intuitive comprehension of our citizens' rights to space. Touristic attractions consist also of such elements of nature as: climate and the total characteristics of the environment, the landscape and its characteristic features, wild vegetation, wild animals and fungi, forest ecosystems and waters. They fill space and are indivisible but such space *is* divided into thousands of lots, each of them having a separate owner. The question arises: is the owner of the land – be it a private one, the government, a cooperative, etc. – at the same time the owner of a part of the landscape? The owner of e.g. butterflies, birds flying over the meadows, fields, mushrooms and forest herbs, rays of the

sun and drops of rain, fog and wind, the rustling of trees and the murmur of the stream? They can freely dispose of them, enclose, cover, prohibit and collect charges? People e.g. highlanders have not created mountains; the inhabitants of the so called “Jurassic Communes” (located in the Polish Jurassic Highland) – Rocks in Podlesice, Mirów and Ogrodzieniec; the inhabitants of Białowieża – the Białowieska Forest. Landscape, nature and environment are common possessions, which we all are entitled to as citizens and not just because we live in the particular neighbourhood. Possessions, parts of which cannot be appropriated and their common use should be regulated by law and administered by the government as the representative of all the citizens. Some elements of nature are legally regulated in this way regardless of where they occur. Some species of animals, plants, lichens and fungi are protected by legal regulations, others are not. All the reptiles and amphibians are protected, some birds undergo game management, others are subject to legal protection. Only the government can offer the protection of forests and waters and that is why the society defends them so vigorously against privatization. The most difficult issue is the effective protection of the landscape. The apologists of economic liberalism (also the political opposition in the People’s Republic of Poland), demoralized the society (and they still do) leading them into believing that what belongs to the government belongs in fact to nobody. It was a clear encouragement to steal in the factories, to steal in the forests and to destroy various forms of nature. After 1989 the common possessions and the public interest became something evidently shameful or even forbidden, egoism earned respect. Even in the works on the act on the protection of the environment in 1991 MPs from the “Solidarity” movement did not allow to repeat the sentence which was present in the acts from 1934 (“Environmental protection encompasses those forms of nature [...] the protection of which is in the public interest [...]” and from 1949: “[...] the protection of which is in the public interest [...]”). Politicians managed to remove the concept of public interest from the legal acts but not from the minds of the citizens. Undoubtedly, the landscape – the face of nature and the environment - is a common possession, whose responsible administrators are the protection of nature and tourism, acting in the public interest. Unfortunately, a very important defender of this interest, spatial planning, in the recent years has become incapacitated and defeated (Olaczek 2008).

### **Sustainable development and the protection of nature**

Tourism and the protection of nature draw inspiration from the same sources: the human need to gain knowledge about the world, to experience emotions and nature. Because of this fact, apart from scientific and educational motives, the knowledge of the country and tourism have always been a significant argument for the protection of nature. In its ideological premises they are consistent and mutually supportive. Even if any conflicts arise, they occur only when one side or the other deviates from their ideological principles. Now we will consider how the protection of nature acts in favour of tourism and what it gets in return.

The forms of environmental protection in Poland (Tab. 1) exist in order to preserve, to explain and to make accessible under certain conditions precious areas and natural formations, which are simultaneously the most attractive areas from the point of view of tourism and sightseeing activities. The system includes many forms of legal protection with various scopes of economic use and tourist accessibility.

National and scenic parks, areas of protected landscape by their definition have to be made available to the visitors (Art. 12 of the Act on the Protection of Nature). Most of the reserves provide access for visitors. In 1991 landscape-nature protected complexes were introduced. Since 2000 there has emerged a new form of improved use of geological resources - the geo-parks, and after the accession to the UE in 2004 – Natura 2000 Areas, which are supposed to be used in tourism, education and the regional development. The administration of national and scenic parks and the forest inspectorate of the National Forests have widely developed their informative-didactical activities which has created new forms of tourism – educational and ecological tourism.

It has to be added that the popularization of the information about the protected areas brings new threats: it increases the influx of people, the construction traffic becomes heavier, it incites the need to introduce unfavourable or even detrimental forms of activity. The protected areas are described in guidebooks and included in maps. The information about the creation of a national or scenic park, a wildlife reserve or Natura 2000 Area attracts people's attention to them. Communes have free advertisement of their own existence. Since a national or scenic park, Natura 200 Area are national institutions and include mostly state-owned land (forests, waters, swamps), some owners of stud farms, quad or mountain bike rentals etc. think that there are not as many prohibitions in force as in other areas (Olaczek 2008).

What benefits could the protection of nature have from tourism apart from the friendly cooperation and the support between organizations on both sides? The main advantage is the legitimization of the system of environmental protection in the eyes of some politicians and the less aware citizens. Apparently, not everyone is able to comprehend the values in the name of which economic activity (forest logging, house building, the freedom to practice motor sports etc.) is terminated or restricted in the protected regions. Arguments promoting scientific values, ecological balance, the duty to preserve diversity (resulting also from international agreements) are less persuasive than unexpected experiences and breathtaking views on a trip and not so compelling as the realisation of the high income from tourism in such places. Tourism in the protected areas is a convincing example of rationality of such protection and constitutes an instrument for the implementation of the principles of sustainable development.

It is worth mentioning at this point that 23 Polish national parks are visited annually by about 11 million people, the local inhabitants excluded. If one such trip entails spending 200 PLN per person, it stimulates the cash flow of over 2 billion PLN, 20% out of which i.e. over 300 million PLN, returns to the state budget in the form of taxes. It is an amount much higher than the budget expenditure on the whole protection of nature in Poland. It is impossible to calculate in financial terms the health benefits and others, which come from trips to the protected areas (Olaczek 2008).

### **Protected areas and the development of sustainable tourism**

*Up to the mountains you should flee, 'tis where freedom awaits thee!* – wrote Wincenty Pol (a renown Polish poet and geographer) one and a half century ago. Nowadays, in pursuit of the above mentioned freedom we can observe on a sunny summer day what follows:

1. Ten thousand people crowding on the road to the Morskie Oko Lake, jostling around

and outshouting one another,

2. Flocks of tourists queuing to Kasprowy Wierch in the Tatra Mountains,

3. Endless line of people walking in Indian file along the Połonina Trail in the Bieszczady Mountains, passing another identical line of people walking in the opposite direction and politely saying “hello” both to strangers and friends,

4. Tourists waiting for an hour to climb the Trzy Korony Peak, who watch attentively the queue but not the awe-inspiring landscape,

5. On Równia pod Śnieżką, the subalpine plateau, masses of people just like on a city square during a parade; it is easier to meet a friend there than on the streets of Warsaw, Poznań, Wrocław, Opole or Łódź.

It seems that in such places, genuine cult destinations of Polish tourism, one can feel free only on a cold windy and rainy day, outside the tourist season and except for weekends (Olaczek 2008).

The issue of making available and protecting the natural and landscape values and the tourists' safety in the protected areas can result in the headache for national parks' employees and is the reason for constant concern of all the environmental protection services. Those services are at the same time pilloried from two opposite directions: some people demand widespread availability, others – the comfort of sightseeing; some – modern day conveniences, others – as much of wilderness as possible; when bark beetles attack spruces, some create an uproar that the park does nothing to fight the pests and that it is in fact a cemetery for trees, whereas others, when sick trees are removed, claim that the park acts against the laws of nature. The matter of tourist use of protected areas has become the subject of substantial experimental research and numerous sociological observations and theoretical investigations. Every two years, starting from 1994, Prof. Zygmunt Wnuk from the University of Rzeszów organises scientific conferences entitled “Protection of nature and tourism”, the results of which are published (Wnuk 2000, 2003, Wnuk, Ziaja 2007, 2009). The governing bodies of national parks (especially Ojcowski Park) and scenic parks, faculties of natural sciences and physical education of universities and academies have displayed high activity. The present author has no ambition to put in order the existing knowledge, especially that the world reference literature is quite abundant in this respect. This article just focuses on a few issues, not always noticed or appreciated.

1. The more opportunities to practice tourism are available in the protected areas and the wider they are made accessible, the more people flock in with a wider range of needs and expectations. It is impossible to meet everybody's needs so it becomes increasingly necessary to impose various restrictions and prohibitions.

2. The scope and the way of providing access to national parks, scenic parks and reserves is compulsorily specified in protection plans. In the plans only such prohibitions and restrictions can be included which are mentioned in the act on environmental protection. In the land which is governed by the national park, the set of restrictions is much wider and can be effectively enforced. In the land which is protected by scenic parks, there are not many prohibitions, but their non-state owner or administrator can impose restrictions and limitations exceeding what is specified in the act on environmental protection.

3. Protection plans are a useful tool of undertaking actions, provided they are well prepared and subsequently followed and implemented. Unfortunately, last several years

wrought havoc in protection planning. On the one hand, regulations too detailed with respect to the content and form of the plans have been introduced. On the other, significant plans were annulled with a single signature (similarly to the plans of spatial development). As a result, most parks and reserves have no protection plans and will not have them for many years to come, which allows communes and various interest groups to exert bigger pressure to implement investment projects in the protected areas.

4. Restrictions and prohibitions in the protected areas are significant not only from the legal, but also from the moral and psychological point of view. Our behaviour must come in between two extreme attitudes:

- Everything which has not been prohibited is allowed,
- Everything which has not been allowed is prohibited.

People cannot be deprived of the feeling of freedom, but such freedom cannot be unrestricted. It is difficult to find the golden means especially in scenic parks. The representatives of rock climbing clubs, speleologists, sailors etc. claim that they will observe the prohibition of exploring given locations provided that they can freely enjoy practising their passion in all the other locations. The administrators of the protected areas, in turn, would like to take the following stand: you can practice your sport in the indicated areas provided you will leave all the other locations alone.

5. In each case the most important issue is the basic function of the protected areas i.e. the protection of nature. These areas are included in the strategy of sustainable development of not just one sector (tourism), not just one region (communes), but the whole economy, the whole country and even the whole world. They are subject to protection because they preserve the values which do not exist anywhere else or have already been lost. The economic and social benefits can be obtained in many ways and in many places, can be transferred and exchanged, losses – compensated for or recouped. In contrast, landscapes cannot be transferred, extinct species cannot be brought to live and similarly devastated caves or limestone cannot be reconstructed.

If we analyse the sources of ecological conflicts in Poland in the recent years – the road through the Rospuda Valley, the motorway through St. Anne's Mountain, the extension of lifts and ski runs in Karkonosze Mountains – it can be clearly seen that they were not caused by objective necessity but from the violence of one of the participants who play the game of sustainable development.

6. All the participants bear the burden of responsibility for the condition of protected areas, for the future of natural world and landscape. Not only the environmental protection services but also the organizers of tourism, hotel and hostel owners, sports and tourist equipment rental owners, climbing, diving, survival, gliding school owners etc. It is high time to think whether such responsibility should be only moral but also legal or financial (Olaczek 2008).

The network of protected areas is not a dream-come-true for scientists, social activists and ecologists. Such a dream would entail rational administration of common possessions for the benefit of contemporary society and the future generations. The prohibitions and restrictions which are imposed in such areas serve for the good of everyone who takes advantage of them. Consequently, such restrictions should be considered normal and commonly accepted just like traffic rules (Olaczek 2008).

All the forms of environmental protection constitute “living museums” and, accordingly, should have a limit of visitors who attend them.

Apart from protected areas, ecotourism can be practised in e.g. meadows, fallow fields, mid-field bushes, sand and limestone turfs, river valleys, water bodies, forests and orchards.

*We need to remember  
God forgives all the time  
Man forgives some of the time  
Nature never forgives*

Tab. 1. The forms of protection of nature and the environment in Poland (Paczuski 1996) completed with the data of 2009

No.	Form	The competent body to create a legally protected area
1.	National parks – 23 (1% of the area of the country) Protection plan for 20 years	The Council of Ministers – the protection plan
2.	Wildlife reserves – 1650 (about 1% of the area of the country) Protection plan for 20 years	Minister of Environment, Natural Resources and Forestry, since 1.01.1999 – Voivode – protection plan, 2009 Regional Director of Environmental Protection
3.	Scenic parks – 120 (about 8% of the area of the country) Protection plan for 20 years	Since 1991 Voivode – protection plan, 2010 Voivodeship Assembly (Seymik)
4.	Areas of protected landscape – 449 (about 22,5% of the area of the country)	Voivode
5.	Historic gardens	Minister of Culture and Arts or the Voivodeship Conservator of Monuments
6.	Rural parks	Commune council
7.	Botanical gardens	Minister of Environment, Regional Director of Environmental Protection
8.	Zoological garden	same as in pt. 7
9.	Protection of plant species	Minister of Environment and Voivode, since 2009 Regional Director of Environmental Protection
10.	Protection of animal species	Same as in pt. 9
11.	Monuments of nature – 34 989	Voivode or Commune Council
12.	Documentation site – 115	same as in pt. 11 since 1991
13.	Ecological sites – 6421	same as in pt. 11 since 1991
14.	Nature-landscape protected complexes – 188	same as in pt. 11 since 1991
15.	Natura 2000: OSO (areas of special protection) – 72, SOO (special protection areas) – 184 Protection plan for 20 years	since 2004 Minister of Environment and EU
16.	Planned geo-parks (submitted since 2001)	
17.	Biosphere reserves – 10	UNESCO – UN
18.	World Cultural and Natural Heritage List – 1	UNESCO – UN
19.	Ramsar Convention water and marsh areas – 13	

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## ЭКОТУРИЗМ – УСТОЙЧИВОЕ РАЗВИТИЕ

### З. Внук

*Университет города Жешув, факультет физического воспитания  
Кафедра экологии, охране окружающей среды и туризма География  
Жешув, Польша*

В настоящее время туризм стал очень важным элементом современной жизни и культуры и существенным фактором экономического роста. В этой статье рассматривается проблема экотуризма в Польше вместе с его перспективами развития и конфликты, которые возникают. В данной статье описывается наибольшее влияние на негативные изменения в процессе чрезмерной практики туризма, например, в приморских районах, высоких горах, берегах рек, лесах, пещерах, национальных парках, природных заповедниках. Все формы защиты окружающей среды являются наиболее ценными местами для практики экотуризма.

*Ключевые слова:* формы охраны окружающей среды, экологическое образование, экологический туризм, устойчивое развитие туризма.

## ЕКОТУРИЗМ - СТАЛИЙ РОЗВИТОК

### З. Внук

*Університет міста Жешув, факультет фізичного виховання  
Кафедра екології, охорони навколишнього середовища та туризму Географія  
Жешув, Польща*

В даний час туризм став дуже важливим елементом сучасного життя і культури та істотним чинником економічного зростання. У цій статті розглядається проблема екотуризму в Польщі разом з його перспективами розвитку і конфлікти, які виникають. У даній статті описується найбільший вплив на негативні зміни в процесі надмірної практики туризму, наприклад, в приморських районах, високих горах, берегах річок, лісах, печерах, національних парках, природних заповідниках. Всі форми захисту довкілля є найбільш цінними місцями для практики екотуризму.

*Ключові слова:* форми охорони навколишнього середовища, екологічна освіта, екологічний туризм, сталий розвиток туризму.