

**General Directorate for the Environmental Protection
Poland**

Towards a methodology of landscapes typology

Poland signed the European Landscape Convention (ELC) in 2001, ratified in 2004 and ELC came into force in 2005.

The General Directorate for Environmental Protection, Department of Nature Conservation (based on the recommendation of the Minister of Environment from the date 10 December 2009) is responsible for implementation of the European Landscape Convention.

Last year Polish government started to work towards establishment of landscape typology which should be used in planning, managing and protection of Polish landscapes through spatial planning system and protected areas net.

Polish science has a great output when it comes to identification of physico-geographical units. In 1955 Professor Jerzy Kondracki on the first time published his work on Poland regionalisation. These proposals were modified couple of times from then.

And for example this is a recent map of Polish hierarchical physico-geographical regions.

Also in 1964 Professor Janusz Bogdanowski developed method of identification of architectural-landscape units which have been improved later. This methods after some modification and actualisation could be used in the process of identification and characterisation of landscapes at the regional or local levels.

So we have some research work and starting point but it has to be put into legal binding system to make it effective.

The foundation for this work is the National Spatial Policy, adopted by Polish Government and published in December 2011, according which the management of landscape must be carried on in accordance with the European Landscape Convention.

On the President of the Republic of Poland initiative a public debate on the natural and cultural landscapes protection was organized in 2011. In conclusions of this debate, lack of strong and effective legal tools in protection and management of the landscape was highlighted.

In the current year, the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland has prepared a project of the *act on changes in some legislation in connection with reinforcement of landscape protection tools*. The project has been consulted with the public and the second public debate was organized in frame of the consultation. At present, the project is being discussed in the Polish Parliament.

This project set up new rules of situating the adverts in public space and along roads and introduce new tool - adverts fees to stop and prevent spreading chaos in public space. There will be also new restrictions of the situating the structures which could be dominating in the landscape.

The project provides also new standards for the protection of outstanding landscapes.

A Regulation of the Minister of the Environment will determine landscape types classification and common principles and guidelines to identification and characterization of the landscape at the regional level including identification of the forces and pressures transforming them.

According to the project of the act, regional parliaments will be obliged to finished the identification within 3 years after the act will come into force.

On the basis of the results of the identification, a priority landscapes will be designated and urbanistic rules for the protection of these landscapes will be determined. These rules will

contain restrictions in situating new buildings and investments. Also factors of the buildings will be described, such as maximum heights, colors, materials etc.

These rules will be binding in spatial planning decisions.

In order to reach proposals mentioned above, the General Directorate for the Environmental Protection organized the Conference on identification and evaluation of landscapes in Poland.

The aim of the conference was to discuss broadly with experts the methodology for the landscape identification.

The conference was attended by representatives of the governmental institutions, regional level institutions, administration of landscape parks, NGOs, landscape architects, spatial planners and scientist.

The discussion on the adoption of a common methodology for the identification of landscapes helped to formulate the following conclusions:

- There has been made a lot of research on identification of the types of landscape in Poland, they should be used in future work on implementation of the ELC,
- Identification of landscapes should be carried out hierarchically,
- The first step should be to determine the basic types of landscapes (national level), which should form the basis for the identification of homogeneous landscape units. The evaluation of the landscape quality should be made on the lower level,
- In the process of the identification of landscape types at national level, stable characteristics such as geology, topography and potential vegetation should be taken into account. However, a more detailed identification of landscape units (at regional and local level) should be based on land cover, types of habitats and actual vegetation. Anthropogenic landscape features should be relevant to the identification of landscape units at local or regional level.

On the basis of the conference outcomes, a common methodology for typology and evaluation of landscape is planned to be developed in 2014.