



Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection

# REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN POLAND 2008



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## The Report

- drawn up in the **Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection** under the supervision of Lucyna Dygas Ciołkowska edited by Barbara Albinia

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# I. Introduction

This Report presents the analysis of the environmental state in Poland until 2008. It constitutes a continuation of the report entitled „The state of environment in Poland vs. European Union objectives and priorities. Indicator report 2004” worked out in the Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection and issued in 2006. The previous report was in a way a photograph of the environmental state in the country taken at an important social and economic moment, i.e. Poland's joining the European Union in 2004. Poland's entry in the EU structures could have a bipolar impact on the state of the environment. On the one hand one could expect the improvement of the environmental condition as a result of a strong injection of community funds to support environmentally-sound investments, while on the other hand an increased economic growth could have become a source of increased pressure on the environment. The collected data and information allow to already assess some of the effects of our presence in the EU, in particular ones related to driving forces. The inflow of the EU funds, in conjunction with the economic situation on the global markets till mid-2008, have significantly boosted the Polish economy, which is proven by the macroeconomic indicators. However, this growth did not increase the pressure (emissions to water, air and waste generation), which may prove the effectiveness of activities aimed at ensuring protection and improving the state of the environment. Less pressure did not mean an instantaneous improvement of the environmental state, which should be expected in the long-run.

However, one has to bear in mind that 2008 which closes the time frame of analyses covered in the report, was a year of breakdown of the global economy. The economic slowdown has also had its impact on Poland, although it was much less severe than in the other EU states. Such situation can be treated as a potential risk, as it may result in limited resources for environmental protection. But above all it should be treated as a challenge for the environmental policy and sectoral policies, as well as a unique opportunity to intensify activities aimed at greening the economy including effectiveness improvement in terms of the use of resources.

Due to the time frame the Report's layout refers to the tasks of two consecutive environmental policies i.e.: „The National Environmental Policy for 2003-2006 and Its 2010 Outlook” and „The National Environmental Policy for 2009-2012 and Its 2016 Outlook”. At the same time the Report takes account of the priorities of the 6th Environment Action Programme of the European Community. Objectives quoted in each chapter of the Report stem from the aforementioned documents, as well as from thematic strategies or specific EU directives. The objectives were used as a leitmotif for the analysis of individual issues.

Indicator-related nature of this Report is determined by the capacity of information and transparency in presenting the environmental state. Analysis of individual issues was presented as state-pressure-response, and the indicators were selected correspondingly. This allows to present cause and effect relationships between human impact on the environment and the quality of individual environmental components, as well as preventive or remedying activities aimed at improving the existing situation. The choice of indicators was determined by both the current strategic objectives, as well as credibility, availability, unequivocal character and transparent nature of data.

The starting point for analysis of individual issues was the information about the state of individual environmental elements or environmental impacts, obtained under the state environmental monitoring (SEM) by the authorities of the Inspection for Environmental Protection. They are characterized by their credible, reliable and measurable nature. One has to bear in mind that the Report was drawn up in the situation when individual subsystems of the state environmental monitoring have been functioning pursuant to the requirements of the Community law transposed in the national legal order, which was often preceded by a deep modification of the monitoring programmes. Modification, in particular extension of SEM tasks, is still going on, along with the constantly changing Community law. This is visible in particular in the monitoring of waters, which was changed by Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (Water Framework Directive - WFD). The new requirements resulted in the necessity to revise the network of monitoring points, and to adjust their location to the arrangement of sub-basins and water bodies, as well as to modify the measurement

programmes. New biological parameters became more important, as they became a basis for the assessment of the status of surface waters. This significant modification of the system made it much more difficult to compare multi-annual trends concerning the quality of waters. That is why the Report focuses on presenting the assessment of the status of individual water categories in the years 2007-2008, carried out in line with the WFD requirements. Equally important changes were implemented in the air quality assessment system. In 2007 the scope of assessment was extended with new substances: benzo(a)pyrene and heavy metals (arsenic, nickel, cadmium) in PM10. A new breakdown of the country into zones where air quality is assessed was introduced in 2008.

The Report also contains the results of two nature monitoring programmes launched in 2006: birds monitoring, including the monitoring of Natura 2000 special protection areas and species and habitats monitoring with a focus on the Natura 2000 Special Areas of Conservation, which take account of the requirements of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitats Directive) and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (Birds Directive). Moreover, the part concerning the impact of noise uses the results of noise maps drawn up across Europe under the first stage of implementation of Directive 2002/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 June 2002 relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise (Noise Directive).

The Report uses both data from the public statistics, as well as from administrative systems for the needs of characteristics of pressure and response. Wherever possible, the environmental problems were presented using international comparisons, based on data and indicators used by international institutions, such as: European Environment Agency (EEA), Eurostat and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). It needs pointing out, that the data collected and processed by those institutions stem from reporting also carried out by the Chief Inspector for Environmental Protection relating to the state and use of the environment.

In parallel to the work on this Report, the Chief Inspector for Environmental Protection in cooperation with national experts from the European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET) participated in the work on the report of the European Environment Agency on the European Environment State and Outlook Report (SOER 2010). This Report is aligned with the method of analysis of environmental problems applied by EEA. Integrated nature of both reports will be more visible after their internet versions have been completed.



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