

LANDSCAPE PROTECTION

Measures aimed at maintaining the original condition and natural and cultural qualities of the landscape.

In Poland, the first official document concerning landscape protection and conservation was the Act of 1980, which introduced legal regulations and established landscape parks. The document was a response to the progressive degradation of the natural landscape and mass industrialisation of the country, which began after 1945. Another legal act in the Polish legislation strengthening landscape conservation was the Nature Conservation Act of 2001. It defined the forms of landscape conservation existing in Poland (including: national park, nature reserve, landscape park, protected landscape area, Natura 2000 area, nature monument, ecological site and natural and landscape complex). The document took into account the need to protect many landscape types: urban, suburban, industrial, rural and settlement.

A significant change in the perception of landscape conservation was brought about by the so-called "presidential" Landscape Act of 2015. The Act defined several important concepts related to landscape protection, such as advertising, signboard, landscape and priority landscape or landscape dominant. Within the framework of the Act, the institution of a landscape audit has been established, responsible for indicating protected landscapes in particular voivodships, defining their features and qualities and locating priority landscapes. The document indicates places and borders of cultural parks, national and landscape parks, nature reserves, protected landscape areas and objects included in the UNESCO World Heritage list and areas of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

In the local law we have the urban landscape protection principle (UZOK), which defines the principles of spatial development taking into account the landscape qualities. Other acts play a minor role in landscape conservation, e.g. the Act on Maritime Areas of the Republic of Poland and Maritime Administration of 1991 (coastal landscapes), the Forest Act of 1991 (forest landscapes) and the Agricultural and Forestry Land Protection Act of 1995 (rural, agricultural, hydrogenic landscapes), the Act on the Protection and Care of Historical Monuments of 2003 (historical and archaeological landscapes).

Polish legislation lists two forms of landscape protection. In the light of the Nature Conservation Act, these include a landscape park, an area of protected landscape and a natural and landscape complex. Polish Monuments Protection Act also introduces the protection of cultural parks.

Due to its complexity, the cultural landscape and cultural heritage are under particular protection. The forms of protection of the aforesaid landscape type have been taken into account in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland (especially Articles 5 and 6), the Act on the Protection and Care of Monuments of 2003, the Act on Spatial Planning and Development of 2003, the Construction Law of 1994 and in strategic documents: The

National Programme of Culture "Protection of monuments and cultural heritage" and the Concept of spatial development of the country.

The European Landscape Convention of 2000 distinguishes two approaches to landscape conservation: passive (aimed at landscape conservation and maintenance) and active (consisting in making harmonised changes within the landscape). In addition to the European Landscape Convention, there are a number of other international regulations relating to the protection of the landscape and its elements, such as the Ramsar Convention (1971) on Wetlands of International Importance, the Bern Convention (1979) on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Grenada 1985), the Valetta Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1992) and the new Helsinki Convention (1992) on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area. These conventions are also an important part of the Polish landscape conservation system.

Many international and local ecological movements are also interested in landscape protection.

[B. F., M. K.]

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