Sustainable forest management under various types of ownership

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Ownership structure of forests in Poland

- States Forests NFH: 78%
- National Parks: 16.90%
- Other Treasury-owned: 1.10%
- Commune-owned: 0.90%
- Natural persons: 2%
- Other private: 0.00%
Legislation

- The State Forests National Forest Holding operates in accordance with the legal provisions of the Forest Act of 28 September 1991 (as amended), the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 6 December 1994 which outlines the principles of financial management in the State Forests and other regulations resulting from the Forest Act.

- The statutory obligation of the State Forests is to follow sustainable forest management in order to ensure preservation of forests, increase of forest resources and their continuous multifunctional utilisation.
Organization of the State Forests National Forest Holding

• The State Forests are the largest organisation in the European Union managing forests which are state property.

• Our management stretches on almost 1/3 of Poland’s territory.

• We care for the biodiversity of forests, we protect them against threats as natural desasters, insect plagues, tree diseases, fires, pollution, as well as against consequences of vandalism and poaching.

• We care for nature and yet enable all people safe use of the forest wealth.
Organization of the State Forests National Forest Holding

- The organisation of the State Forests, evolving for decades, functions on the basis of self-financing.
- Due to that, the State Forests do not use taxpayers’ money.
- Forest units function at local, regional and national level.
- The State Forests employ jointly almost 25,000 people.
State Forests basic principles:

No public aid

Financial independence from the State budget

Profitability but no profit maximization

Forest fund

Authorization to perform all forest operations including round wood sales

10 years forest management plan as a base for operational planning

Outsourcing of services

Forest tax instead of corporate tax
Sustainable forest management

- Poland appears on the top list of European countries with the largest forest area.
- Polish forests cover 29.2% of the country’s territory, an area of 9.1 million hectares.
- The vast majority of them are state owned forests, 7.6 million hectares are managed by the State Forests National Forest Holding.
Sustainable forest management

- The forest area of Poland is constantly growing.
- The country’s forest affluence has risen from 21% in 1945 to 29.2% today.
- The afforestation basis is the National programme of raising forest affluence which anticipates a growth of the forest area to 30% in 2020 and up to 33% in 2050.
Natura 2000

- The majority of Natura 2000 areas was established on forest ground.
- They make up 40% of the areas under State Forests management, covering 2.8 million hectares.
- Foresters are responsible for those habitats and the population of species under protection of Natura 2000.
Nature protection

- In forests managed by the State Forests National Forest Holding nature protection is undertaken in various ways.
- National parks, nature monuments, species protection – these are some examples of it.
The Natura 2000 network consists of two types of areas:

- **Special Protection Areas for birds (SPAs)** established for wild birds protection,
- **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)** protecting habitats, plant and animal species.
- **The basis for establishing Natura 2000 areas** is scientific research.
Forest education

- Forest education of the society is one of the major commitments of the State Forests.
- The educational offer of the State Forests is addressed to children, adolescents, adults, naturally also disabled people.
- All for the sake of spreading knowledge about forest environment and sustainable forest management.
Tourism and recreation

- Foresters encourage choosing forests for recreation. Picturesque places provide good locations and facilities for outdoor picnics in beautiful forest scenery. Fireplaces or barbecue places are specially signed.
- There is a huge number of **tourist trails and cycling routes** in the State Forests. These are specified and marked in cooperation with forest inspectors for tourists to discover unique landscapes.
Protecting forests against threats

- Knowledge of natural processes and overview of the forest environment state allow foresters an early diagnosis of threats having a negative impact on forests.
- Every year actions are undertaken to upkeep the forest durability and enlarge its natural resistance against harmful factors.
Sustainable forest management

- Forest management providing the market with the universal ecological raw material as wood, is led accordingly to the rules of sustainable growth, with respect to all forest functions.
- This policy is acknowledged by international certificates awarded to regional directorates of the State Forests.
Operations, finances, taxes

- Aforestation and reforestation: 55,000 ha
- Cleaning of young stands: 149,000 ha
- Thinnings: 444,000 ha
- Wood harvesting: 35,075,000 m³
- Insects control measures: 138,000 ha
- Fungi diseases control measures: 26,000 ha
- Protect against damages by game: 94,000 ha
- Forest fire prevention: 67 million PLN
Operations, finances, taxes

- **Revenue**  
  7 464 mln. PLN  
  Including wood selling  
  6 567 (88,5 %)

- **Costs**  
  6 604  
  Including costs of sold products  
  3 710  
  management costs  
  2 763  
  forest tax  
  168

- **Net profit**  
  829
Operations, finances, taxes

Current changes in tax policy

In 2014-2015 State Forests are obliged to transfer the amount 1,6 mld PLN to the state budget.

Since 2016 State Forests are about to transfer annually 2% of the value of the wood selling.
**Private forestry in Poland**

- **Total area**: 1,7 mln ha
- **Number of forest owners**: 840 000
  - Natural persons: 94 %
  - Association of private forest owners: 4 %
  - Commune owned: 0,3 %
  - Other: 1,7 %

- Average privat forest estate: 1,3 ha (UE 10 ha)
Private forestry in Poland

• Private forestry is managed by local authority, but according to the Forest Act, local authority can pass responsibility to The Forest District.

• Harvesting and operations are based on simplified forest management plan
Private forestry in Poland

Challenges in private forestry

Number of forestry owners and small average forest estate
Outdated data in the land register
Invisible borders of forest parcels
Unclear legal status and number of owners migrate to the cities
Lack of respect for forest law leads to excessive harvesting
Conclusions

Only combination of sustainable forest management with growing public awareness concerning responsible and sustainable use of different forest functions will effect in saving our green heritage for the next generations.
Thank you