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Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguish Delegates

- Environmental protection, being an interdisciplinary field, requires cooperation of different communities and institutions. Effective operation within the field of environmental protection requires partnership: cooperation between government organs and units of territorial self-government, as well as cooperation with non-governmental organisations, economic and social associations.
- During recent years, legal and organisational changes have been made. These changes facilitate cooperation between public institutions and non-governmental organisations, for example the members of these organisations were included in committees which made decisions on allocating UE funds. Strengthening this cooperation, as well as including business communities, representatives of the production and finance sector will be one of the priorities of the ecological policy for next years.
- Successes achieved by Poland in implementation of ecological objectives after 1990 wouldn't have been possible without creating an effective system of financing investments included in environment protection programmes.
- An effective system of financing ecological undertakings outside the budgetary sphere, created in Poland and followed by other countries, is a success. The system is based on the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management and ecology funds in every province.
- The most important objective of the National Fund is the accomplishment of tasks included in the National Ecological Policy, with the guaranteed fulfilment of obligations resulting from the Treaty of Accession to the European Union, by maximum absorption of UE funds for the environment protection. Co-funding of ecological projects with the use of one's own resources is based on the principle of optimising the ecological effect.
- The operational strategy of the National Fund - as a pillar of the Polish system of financing environment protection - includes substantial increase in financial resources necessary for implementing the National Ecological Policy, in particular the Treaty of Accession. This will be achieved by:
 - synchronisation and concentration of financial resources on priority objectives of the National Ecological Policy, such resources coming from various sources (in particular from non-budgetary earmarked funds, EU funds and loans).
 - applying new instruments and solutions which expand financing opportunities (e.g. by expanding institutions of product and recycling payments, launching venture capital enterprises);
 - possibility to exact ecology payments and fines according to regulations for public and legal payments;

- substantial increase in the flow of preferential bank loans (as a result of, among others, increasing the scale of subsidies for loans at the expense of direct subsidies);
 - creating legal conditions for using surpluses of sub-fund resources for financing priority projects.
- Substantial increase in the effectiveness of the National Fund, in the scope of absorbing UE resources will take place by way of:
- the National Fund taking over the function of an implementing institution;
 - simplifying procedures and shortening a waiting period connected with allotting and managing funds granted to a beneficiary;
 - developing an institution of bridge financing, which aim is to maintain financial liquidity of project investors during the period of waiting for a decision on granting EU resources.
- Developing new forms of operation by the National Fund which would strengthen the efficiency of its impact on implementing the National Ecological Policy and the Treaty of Accession, is planned to be carried out by:
- gradual and systematic development of analytical and managerial works which enable to effectively synchronise the activities of all the links in the financial system of environment protection and water management.
 - creating a national system of monitoring the degree of accomplishing material tasks, included in the National Ecological Policy (also in the Treaty of Accession):
 - substantial expansion of the National Fund's rights in the scope of coordinating the flow of funds from individual sources (earmarked funds of all levels) and their concentration on priority projects.
 - ensuring professional, dynamically expanded loan support from the bank sector.
- Adopted priorities, a range of financial tools and models of financing projects applied by the National Fund, impose the necessity of much stronger cooperation between all links and elements of the system of financing environment protection and water management. It means creating formal bonds (e.g. by strategic cooperation agreements) with, among others, individual provincial environmental protection funds and water management, or with banks. A strategic agreement for the cooperation between the National Fund and Bank Ochrony Środowiska S.A. will be particularly important. It should streamline the system of financing in the area of the environment.
- Positive effects of intervention with the use of EU funds in the area of environment protection in Poland are becoming more and more visible. EU funds, especially the Cohesion Fund, create an important source of financing environment investments. All resources available for Poland by way of the Cohesion Fund between 2004-2006 have been allocated. Large infrastructure investments, co-financed by the Cohesion Fund, are being carried out in all largest cities of Poland. Both the National Fund for Environmental Protection and provincial funds were engaged in preparing the Cohesion Fund projects.

In our country, the funds from the Cohesion Fund for environmental protection, for the period between 2000-2006, amount to approximately EUR 3 billion. Almost half the resources, intended for new member states of the EU in 2004-2006 will be granted to Polish beneficiaries, especially to self-governments and other public entities. EU funds are complemented by national funds, mainly from self-government budgets and from the National Fund and provincial funds.

- During the 2007 - 2013 period of programming, Poland will be the greatest beneficiary of EU cohesion policy. Over EUR 67.3 billion, out of EUR 347 billion which the European Commission designated for this purpose, have been granted to Poland. Together with national financing, the amount is EUR 85.6 billion.
- Taking into account six “proecological” priorities of the Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment, funds for the environment protection in Poland amount to EUR 5.5 billion for the years 2007-2013 from the Cohesion Fund and the European Regional Development Fund.
- An example of effective partnership is engaging other countries in activities taken up by the European Union. This is both the matter of “effective diplomacy for the environment protection” and developing and transferring technology in a way that may support other countries, which are less economically and socially advanced than the European Union. This is a condition for accomplishing global objectives.
- The condition of the environment in Europe has improved in many aspects within the last decade, however it seems that this progress may be destroyed as the result of unbalanced economic development. This is the reason why European governments should make every effort to prevent the increasing pressure on the environment, resulting from the economic activity.

Thank you for your attention.