

Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference
(8–10 June 2016, Batumi, Georgia, Sheraton Hotel)

High-level meeting of Education and Environment Ministries

Wednesday, 8 June 2016, 4.30–6 p.m.
Batumi, Georgia, Sheraton Hotel

Agenda item 3. Towards a new society: 10 years of education for sustainable development

Intervention of Poland

By Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of the Environment, Poland

Mr Sławomir Mazurek

In Poland, we successfully combined the activities of the ministry responsible for education and the ministry of environment in order to enhance the knowledge for sustainable development. We managed to move away from the silo approach to complementary and supporting activities. Minister of Education is responsible for the formal education, whereas Minister of the Environment - for awareness raising aiming to sensitize the public on environmental issues in everyday life.

These actions are stimulated by the effective financial system, supplied by extra-budgetary means coming from i.a. fees for use of the environment.

Poland perceives education for sustainable development (ESD) and in broader terms - knowledge on sustainable development - as an opportunity for **rising environmental and civic awareness of the society**. ESD should also aim at **strengthening potential of local communities**, in particular of communities in non-urban areas, as well as for increasing their involvement in decision making processes on local, national and European level.

Poland also sees ESD as a **tool to promote cultural and natural heritage of local communities** as well as a **tool to arouse local patriotism, appreciation to nature, attachment to community, family and tradition**. Polish experiences with ESD result from the traditional and sustainable use of natural resources. Thanks to the traditional model of

Polish agriculture and non- liberal Polish almost all the wild native species of plants and animals have been preserved. **The best example is the Bialowieza Forest, created and shaped by the local community.** Those very people, local community, showed how to use and shape natural resources so that we can retain the sustainable development indicators.

Thematic priorities for ESD in Poland in the upcoming years will be:

- a. climate change in the context of the Paris climate agreement, including reduction of CO₂ concentration through carbon sequestration in forests and soils,
- b. water management including sustainable use of water resources,
- c. waste management in the context of circular economy,
- d. promotion of Polish natural resources in the context of biodiversity conservation,
- e. promotion of output and tradition of the Polish forest service.

The output of ESD in Poland is remarkable. ESD has been included into curricula at all levels of education and into national strategic documents such as the *Strategy "Energy Security and Environment"*.

It is challenging for each country implementing ESD to satisfactorily involve all stakeholders: both public and private as well as acting on different levels.

Poland supports further actions of the UNESCO and UNECE on promoting ESD. Poland declares its readiness to further contribute to the actions aimed at enhancing citizens' attitudes and values such as **respect for others, respect for human dignity, respect for the environment, active participation in the community life.**