**Foreword**

The “Partnership: Environment for Development” Network celebrates its 10th anniversary of operation in Poland. It is a great joy and satisfaction for me and for all of us. I am aware how much we managed to do throughout these years. This jubilee confirms that the actions have taken under the Network are necessary and translate into measurable environmental benefits.

This is extremely important that this initiative allowed us to combine knowledge and experience of many environmental management authorities. Drawing upon a decade of experiences, we may face the upcoming years of actions for development and environment.

I want to sincerely congratulate successes to all institutions and individuals involved in this crucial initiative, express my thanks for their work and wish them equally effective activity for environmental-friendly development in the next years of the Network operation.

**Marek Kajs, Deputy General Director for Environmental Protection**

**10 years of activity in Poland**

**Information Bulletin of the National Network of Environmental Management Authorities “Partnership: Environment for Development”**

**“Partnership: Environment for Development” Network**

The National Network of Environmental Management Authorities “Partnership: Environment for Development” was established as an equivalent of the European cooperation platform – the European Network of Environmental Authorities – Managing Authorities (ENEA-MA) - by means of an agreement concluded on 3 December 2010 by and between: the Minister of the Environment, Minister of Regional Development and General Director for Environmental Protection.

The Network activities are coordinated by the General Director for Environmental Protection, while its operation is co-financed from the Operational Programme Technical Assistance. This report presents the key actions and results of the Network in 2010-2020.

**“Partnership: Environment for Development” National Network**

*- summary of 10 years of activity in Poland*

**“Partnership: Environment for Development” National Network in numbers:**

* 10 years of operation in Poland;
* 10 thematic working groups;
* more than 500 individuals involved in working groups’ activities;
* more than 200 meetings and study visits – including 16 foreign study tours;
* 19 specialist expert reports and publications developed by the working groups.

Operation of the “Partnership: Environment for Development” Network financed under the Operational Programme Technical Assistance addresses the EU expectations to incorporate the environmental protection into the actions and programmes co-financed by the EU funds in comprehensive and due manner. Presence of the Network enables continuous cooperation between the authorities in charge of actions in the area of environmental protection and managing authorities at different administration levels.

The Network is composed of the representatives of the following institutions:

* Ministry of Climate and Environment;
* Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy as the managing authority;
* Ministry of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation (currently the Ministry of Infrastructure);
* General Directorate for Environmental Protection;
* regional directorates for environmental protection;
* regional authorities as the managing institutions for regional operational programmes;
* State Water Holding Polish Waters.

In addition, the representatives of European Commission, expert and research institutions, other state and local governmental institutions as well as NGOs acting as the observers are invited to cooperate within the Network.

The Network implements its objectives and tasks by means of expert working groups composed of the representatives of all authorities involved in its works.

**Working Groups**

Working Groups act as the cooperation forums for the authorities in charge of environmental protection and managing authorities at different administration levels for integration of environmental issues in preparation, management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the operational programmes co-financed by the EU funds.

**The following Working Groups operate within the Network:**

* Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment;
* Working Group on Waste Management;
* Working Group on Water and Sewage Management;
* Working Group on the New Financial Perspective 2014-2020, transformed into the WG on the New Financial Perspective 2021-2027;
* Working Group on Air Protection and Energy;
* Working Group on Noise;
* Working Group on Integrated Permits;
* Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change;
* Working Group on Environmental Damage;
* Working Group on Green Public Procurement.

Activities of each Working Group focus on development of new guidelines, methodologies, recommendations, statements, procedures and best practices in the scope of competences of an individual Working Group. These tasks are implemented during the meetings and workshops, in the course of which the Working Groups’ members share their knowledge, opinions and experiences between the entities forming the national network.

In addition, participation of the Working Group’s members in the organised study visits (in-country and abroad) provides the opportunity to derive from the experiences and knowledge of the EU member states with the aim to introduce an innovative and pro-environmental approach to implementation of projects co-financed by the EU funds.

**Secretariat of the “Partnership: Environment for Development” Network**

The tasks of the Secretariat of the Network include among others:

* ensuring Network operation (implementation of budget and ensuring financial viability);
* coordination of actions taken within the Network;
* ensuring technical and organisational operation of the Working Groups;
* logistic service of the Working Group meetings, including study visits in the country and abroad;
* development of financial plans and schedules;
* execution of tender procedures;
* preparation of minutes and reports from the meetings;
* administration of informational website of the Network.

The Secretariat of the Network is composed of committed staff of the General Directorate for Environmental Protection having comprehensive technical expertise, while the General Director for Environmental Protection acts as its coordinator.

**Communication Platform**

In order to ensure effective coordination, management and monitoring of all actions taken within the Network, a dedicated IT tool – Communication Platform - was developed to streamline communication between the participants of the “Partnership: Environment for Development” Network.

Upon registering to this interactive tool, all logged-in users can:

* sign up for the meetings;
* view the materials used during the meetings;
* provide opinions, submit comments, agree the opinions on the proceeded statements, guidelines or expert reports.

This tool supports and streamlines the everyday duties.

All who are interested in the implementation of projects co-funded by the EU funds in an environment-friendly manner are welcome to visit the website dedicated to the Network activities.

The website contains:

* detail information on the actions taken by each Working Group;
* broadcasts and reports from the meetings, workshops and study visits;
* complete studies, publications and expert reports developed within the Network’s activities.

**Website address:**

**https://sdr.gdos.gov.pl**

**Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment**

Year of establishment of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment: 2011

Mission of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment:

The main objective of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment is to identify the issues of concerns and harmonised application of the environmental impact assessment legislation as well as issuing of the decisions on environmental conditions.

The Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment is involved in:

* providing opinions on guidelines dedicated to administrative procedures for environmental impact assessments and methodological guidelines on preparation of environmental impact reports;
* identification of thematic scope of trainings of the greatest demand and effect on improving quality of the prepared environmental impact assessment documentation;
* development of recommendations for administrative authorities in the scope of transboundary procedures and prognoses of environmental impact for the operational programmes;
* identification of the opportunities to support the project selection system using the list of defined criteria;
* taking the actions in the field of education on environmental impact assessments and establishment of technical bases to launch post-graduate studies in future;
* education in the field of environmental protection by means of ecological programmes, radio broadcasts, quarterly journals, brochures, publications of guidebooks and guidelines on environmental impact assessments;
* carrying-out trainings for institutions and authorities involved in the environmental impact assessment procedures, including in particular for the local government units (village head, mayor, president of the city);
* carrying-out trainings for the authorities implementing the operational and regional programmes.

**Members of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment:**

The Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment is composed of the representatives of the following institutions: the Ministry of Climate and Environment, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, General Directorate for Environmental Protection and of the regional directorates for environmental protection, regional authorities as the managing authorities competent for the regional operational programmes, Institute of Environmental Protection – National Research Institute as well as of the JASPERS representatives.

**Expert reports:**

1. “*Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity in to Strategic Environmental Assessment*”, European Union, 2013 - translation of the European Commission’s publication into Polish
2. “*Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Environmental Impact Assessment*”, European Union, 2013 - translation of the European Commission’s publication into Polish.

Translations of the abovementioned documents of the European Commission play the role of materials that support these involved in the environmental impact assessments and strategic impact assessments in the field of integrating the aspects of biodiversity protection and counteracting climate change into their everyday duties.

1. “Procedural Issues in Environmental Impact Assessments” – original publication of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment.
2. “Nature-related Issues in Environmental Impact Assessments. Results of works of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment” - original publication of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment.

The purpose of these publications is to identify the key issues of concern underlying the process of environmental impact assessment at its individual stages and to present the proposals of practical solutions in specific areas. These publications are used by the staff involved in environmental impact assessment procedures carried out when preparing the draft decisions and procedural documents.

**Meetings held by the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment**

**Plenary meetings**

During 10 years of its operation, the Working Group held more than 30 meetings. The aim of the meetings was to improve operation of the environmental impact assessment system in Poland. The key issues brought up by the Working Group include among others: addressing the problems of environmental impact assessments (EIAs), implementation of projects funded by the EU funds with consideration to EIA, environmental protection against electromagnetic fields, flood control projects, relations between the EU directives listed in the environmental part of application for the co-financing and the national legal acts, enforcement and integration of the climate issues in the documents at the EIA stage, cooperation and sharing the experiences with the other Working Groups operating at the national and European level (meeting dedicated to Dutch and Croatian experiences).

The meetings addressed also the issues of among others strategic impact assessments in the project entitled: “Development of climate change adaptation plans for cities with a population of above 100,000", postulates of introducing amendments to Polish legislation in the field of legalisation of investments likely to have effects on environment as well as progress of works on the EU NFP 2021-2027, including in particular in context of adaptation to climate change and climate analyses of the investments and in context of draft amendment to the Act on providing information on the environment and environmental protection (..) as well as the Regulation on the projects likely to have significant effects on the environment.

**In-country meetings**

**Hel, Jastrzębia Góra, 17 - 20 April 2012**

The study tour aimed at familiarizing with the exemplary practices applying to biodiversity projects. The following aspects were discussed: progress in the negotiations on regulations for the Cohesion Policy and LIFE Instrument, options to finance the pro-environmental activities from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, environmental assessment of projects under the Regional Operational Programme (ROP) of the Pomeranian Region, protection of maritime habitats in order to ensure effective protection of endangered species and economic benefits or channelling the tourist traffic at the Natura 2000 site in the Sandomierska Forest. The meeting included the workshops dedicated to programming and financing biodiversity in the new financial perspective and field workshops.

The output of the meeting was a joint approach to the biodiversity projects within the new financial perspective developed by the representatives of institutions involved in programming.

**Krakow, 4 – 5 September 2012**

During the study visit to Krakow, the Working Group stopped by the Trzebinia Refinery, where it took a deep look at the solutions implemented by one of the key companies of the ORLEN Polish Oil Company Capital Group. The meeting was the occasion to discuss the aspects of EIA in the process of verification of co-financing applications submitted for the projects co-financed from the ROP of the Kuyavian – Pomeranian Region for 2007-2013 as well as verification of environmental documentation of the ROP projects on the example of the Kuyavian – Pomeranian Region, audit of correctness of IEAs carried out in the projects co-financed from the Regional Operational Programme of the Lubusz Region for 2007-2013 and the issues related to strategic impact assessment.

The visit enabled sharing the experiences and knowledge of the managing authorities in the area of verification of the EIA procedure at the stage of examination of applications for co-financing of the projects from the EU funds.

**Poznan, 18 – 20 February 2013**

The meeting of the Working Group in Poznan focused on terms and conditions of implementation of the projects defined in the decisions on environmental conditions. The cases proceeded by the Regional Directorate for Environmental Protection in Bialystok acted as an example to discuss the difficulties related to decision-making process and the issues associated with making the decisions on environmental conditions for flood-control structures.

The other examined issues included the decisions on environmental conditions for the projects consisting in implementation of the investments in flood control structures and the procedures for issuing the decisions on environmental conditions and their evaluation. The other problems pertained to the competences of the environmental protection authorities and regulations in the area of noise emission, air pollution and eligibility of the projects.

The meeting acted as the platform to share the experiences on the most common errors and problems related to issuing of the environmental decisions and IEA and to jointly deliberate how to overcome them in future.

**Kostrzyn nad Odrą, 3 – 5 June 2013**

The meeting served as an option for the members of the Working Group to participate in the field session featuring the natural values of the „Warta Mouth” National Park and to gain knowledge on the outcomes of projects implemented in the Park, which were co-funded by the LIFE funds. The participants enjoyed also observation of water and breeding birds present in the Park. In addition, within the field survey, the participants visited the "PELECIARNIA" biomass processing plant in Słońsk, where they saw how the reconstruction and development of the flood embankment at the Warniki- Kamień Mały looks like, followed by the results of removing the 2010 flood damages.  During the visit, the issues related to bird hunting at the outskirts of the game protection zone and of the “Łyska” Hunting Association were discussed. Participation in the meeting allowed the visitors to extend their knowledge on the EIAs of the planned projects in context of water protection and delivery of the environmental objectives laid down in the Water Framework Directive.

**Iława, 2 – 4 September 2014**

The leitmotiv of the meeting was the role of sanitary inspection authorities in the EIA procedure. The meeting was attended by the representatives of the State Sanitary Inspection and of the regional sanitary inspections, who discussed the scope of tasks executed by the inspection pursuant to the Act of 3 October 2008 on providing information on the environment and environmental protection (…) and the issues of concern occurring at the stage of arrangements in pending environmental impact assessments. During the voyage on the Jeziorak Lake, the Working Group members familiarised with operation of the only in Poland comprehensive waste collection system. The system was established under the project entitled: “Development of tourist infrastructure around the Jeziorak Lake”, co-financed by the EU funds.

The meeting enabled sharing information and experiences on the activities taken by the regional directorates of environmental protection and sanitary inspection authorities in the EIA procedure, with consideration to human health and safety as well as care of the environment.

**Lodz, 30 September – 2 October 2014**

The aim of the meeting was presenting the Fuel and Energy Complex in Bełchatów, a division of the PGE Górnictwo i Energetyka Konwencjonalna (PGE Mining and Conventional Energy) company – the national power producer. During the meeting, the participants took their option to visit one of the power blocks in the plant and the Kamieńsk Mountain and to discuss the actual conditions of cooperation between the environmental protection authorities and the investors in the area of obtaining the necessary decision for the planned investments.

In addition, the issues of environmental impact assessment of the projects on the example of experiences of the Voivode of the Silesian Region, the role of administration authority in observing the environmental protection requirements at the stage of road investment permits as well as the role of architectural and construction administration authorities in observing the environmental requirements at the stage of building/investment permits were discussed.

The meeting outputs included identification of difficulties in cooperation between the administration authorities and the investors at the stage of investment permits as well as development of effective methods to streamline the EIA procedures.

**Lublin, 21 - 23 April 2015**

In the course of the visit to the Chełm Cement Production Plant, the members of the Working Group gained understanding on the effective and sustainable solutions implemented by the Plant that contributed to mitigation of negative environmental impact. The cement power plant holds the integrated permit and is entered into the register of the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) under the no. PL.2.06-001-29, which confirms application of the best available techniques and compliance with the most stringent requirements in the area of environmental protection.

The next step was the visit of the Working Group to the carbonate peat bogs located at the area of the Chełmski Landscape Park and being the important site of the water and breeding birds as well as the birds of prey. The Working Group members gained knowledge on the effective eco-innovation contributing to more environmental-friendly operation from the production plant perspective.

At the meeting, the participants discussed also the draft guidebook on project implementation with a view to integrate climate change, prepared by the Ministry of Environment (currently the Ministry of Climate and Environment), in light of the experiences gained during the visit.

**Torun and Bydgoszcz, 3 – 4 October 2016**

The aim of this Working Group meeting was discussing the issue of animal breeding and farming, which is of importance in context of actions taken by the regional directorates of environmental protection that are related to issuing of the decisions on environmental conditions for such projects. The representatives of regional directorates of environmental protection attending the meeting presented their experiences in this field. During the meeting, the group members identified the key weaknesses in the existing legislation, on the basis of which the regional directorates for environmental protection enforce the relevant technical and technological solutions promoting the environmental protection from the investors. The methods to integrate these aspects in the EIA reports were also discussed.

The Working Group visited the PESA plant in Bydgoszcz. This facility makes continuous efforts to improve its production process, seeking the solutions to, for example, minimise noise emission. Its experiences will be used by the Working Group in implementing the environmental-friendly solutions to the rail transport projects.

**Olsztyn 15 - 17 April 2019**

The leitmotiv of the meeting was to analyse the existing legal provisions related to legalisation of the projects likely to have significant environmental effects and issuing of decisions on environmental conditions for already implemented projects. The Working Group pointed out at the need to introduce the applicable legal regulations into the EIA system. In the second part of the meeting, the Working Group members shared their experiences with the ROP managing authorities on evaluation of environmental documentation for the projects co-financed by the ROP funds with a view to the existing case law.

The visit to the Michelin Polska S.A. tire production plant in Olsztyn was a part of the meeting. During the visit, the technical, technological and organisational solutions aiming at mitigation of environmental impact of the installation, including on air quality, applied by the entity were presented, followed by the actions addressed at limitation of carbon fuel combustion sources at the area of the plant and construction of the state-of-the-art power and heat plant supplied with natural gas.

The meeting was an attempt to work out a joint strategy to address the issues of concern related to legal regulations for the completed projects and effective solutions for the projects referred to in the CJEU decisions.

**Foreign study tours**

**Great Britain, 8 - 12 November 2012**

The main objective of the study tour to Great Britain was gaining knowledge on the British experiences in acquisition of external funds for nature conservation by the local governments on the example of implemented projects co-financed by the EU funds. The participants of the study visits familiarised also with the British EIA system, municipal waste management and experiences in the area of public consultation. All these items were then compared with the Polish reality.

**Island, 10 - 14 June 2013**

The study tour to Island allowed the Working Group members to get up to date with the geothermal energy use system and practical solutions related to this energy source. Opportunities of use and application of this type of energy in Polish conditions were identified.

**Belgium and the Netherlands, 17 - 23 May 2015**

The opportunity to extend knowledge on integrating climate change into the EIA procedure was the leitmotiv of visit to the Benelux countries. During the study tour, the water management systems of Poland and the Netherlands were compared. The participants expanded their knowledge with Dutch experiences in the implementation of Water Framework Directive. The Netherlands presented also the case of adaptation to climate change on the example of Rotterdam. Assumptions of sustainable development of this city and strategies to tackle climate change implemented by the Netherlands served as a subject of further debates on the opportunity of implementing such solutions in Poland.

**Lisbon, Portugal, 24 - 27 October 2016**

The essence of the Working Group’s study tour in Portugal was identification of the climate change-related issues and their integration into the EIA procedure. Portugal gained comprehensive experience in adaptation to climate change in spatial planning and implementation of the investments. The examples of solutions applied in practice presented by Portugal included among others a green roof on the sewage treatment plant in Lisbon – ETAR de Alcantara and a green corridor – City Park with allotment gardens Quinta da Granja.

The examples of practical solutions applied in Portugal are the source of inspiration both in terms of EIA and strategic assessment in spatial planning with consideration of adaptation to climate change. The outputs of meeting included a joint position on the merits for establishment of the list of projects and initiatives that need no full “climate assessment”. Uniform approach to this issue laid the foundations for further cooperation between the Polish and Portugal Party.

**Plans for the future of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment**

* On-going identification of the issues of concern and efforts to harmonise the application of provisions on environmental impact assessments and issuing the decisions on environmental conditions;
* Implementation of issues related to the new financial perspective 2021-2027;
* Examining integration of climate-related issues into the environmental impact assessment, both in context of impact of investment on climate and their adaptation to the activities preventing climate change;
* Organisation of study visits combined with workshops or trainings in the scope of state-of-the-art solutions mitigating and compensating the environmental effects of the projects.

**Working Group on Waste Management**

Year of establishment of the Working Group on Waste Management: 2011

Mission of the Working Group on Waste Management:

The superior task of the Working Group on Waste Management is to coordinate the activities aiming at implementation of waste management policy. The Group’s activities include primarily sharing the experiences and mutual cooperation on preparation of joint positions on waste management in context of amending legislation. In addition, there are also the activities enabling effective allocation of the EU funds onto the waste management-related projects as well as preparation of guidelines for the waste processing installations.

Throughout ten years of its operation, the Working Group on Waste Management was involved in:

* establishment of the dialogue platform on the draft legal acts prepared by the European Commission;
* examination of thematic scope of trainings dedicated to the local government’s administration and the regional inspectorates of environmental protection on proper waste management, including also proper research methods (e.g. gas measurements at waste landfills);
* laying down guidelines on determination of the amount and form of securing claims for the decisions on waste management;
* inspection of different types of installations, including among others mechanical and biological as well as thermal processing installations, medical waste combustion plants, alternative fuel production plants, sludge processing plants and preparation of technical guidelines serving as guidance for administration and entrepreneurs;
* preparation of methodologies, guidelines and *best practices* for waste management;
* updating the guidebooks/manuals upon entering of the new legislation on waste management into force (e.g. updating the guidebook on issuing the decisions on waste management; updating the guidebook on issuing of administrative decisions).

**Members of the Working Group on Waste Management:**

The members of the Working Group on Waste Management include the representatives of the following institutions: the Ministry of Climate and Environment, Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, General Directorate for Environmental Protection and the regional directorates for environmental protection, marshal offices and NGOs.

**Expert reports:**

1. Stage I of the expertise: “Review of mechanical and biological waste treatment plants existing in Poland and guidelines for building the new or expanding the existing mechanical and biological waste treatment facilities”.

The expertise formed the basis to issue the Regulation of the Minister of 11 September 2012 on the mechanical and biological processing of mixed municipal waste.

1. “Guidelines for the preparation of a contingency plan for landfills in case of detection of changes in groundwater quality due to emissions from landfills”.

The results of expertise contributed to better transposition of the EU directives on waste management, which enabled harmonisation of the Polish legislation with the EU regulations.

1. “National Waste Prevention Programme”.

Preparation of the National Waste Prevention Programme fulfils Article 29 of Waste Directive that called for establishment of waste prevention programmes by 12 December 2013.

1. Stage II of the expertise: “Review of mechanical and biological waste treatment plants existing in Poland and guidelines for building the new or expanding the existing mechanical and biological waste treatment facilities”.

Stage II of the expertise consisted in survey of the existing MBP installations in Poland and inspection in 50 installations. 20 MBP installations intended for waste analysis at a later stage were selected. In addition, the expertise involved preparation of documents pointing out at the recommended and non-recommended technical and technological solutions, proposals of amendments to the existing MBP legislation and disposal of post-processing waste produced in these installations.

1. “Guidelines for determining the maximum and minimum fees for municipal waste management and an analysis of costs of municipal waste management incurred by the municipality”

The expertise aimed at preparation of guidelines on determination of maximum and minimum fees for municipal waste management along with complete analysis of costs incurred by the municipality. The results of works formed the basis to amend the Act on maintaining cleanliness and order in municipalities.

1. State III of the expertise: “Final report aiming at performance of waste analysis in 20 installations for mechanical and biological waste processing.”

The final report on the III stage of expertise aiming at performance of waste analysis in 20 MBP installations was used to prepare the evaluation of the applied solutions with the view to compliance with the requirements of the applicable EU and national legislation. The performed expertise identified both recommended and not recommended technical and technological solutions and provided the proposal of amendments to the existing MBP legislation and disposal of post-processing waste produced in these installations.

1. “Analysis of information necessary to assess the presence of significant risk to human health or status of the environment in the case of identified exceedance of permissible content of substances causing a risk to soil, ground or ground waters.”

The expertise resulted in a review of legal acts imposing the need to perform remediation or corrective actions for ground surface, the criteria and methods of classification of risk substances, specification of soil and areas, including also as a source of ground water pollution.

1. “Examination of the potential to implement the deposit system for packaging in Poland.”

The performed expertise enabled comparison of the operation of deposits systems in waste management implemented in the selected European countries, providing the guidance for introducing the applicable provisions at the national level.

1. “Development of draft solutions for the procedure of assessing the presence of significant risk to human health or status of the environment in the case of identified exceedance of permissible content of substances causing a risk to soil, ground or ground waters and the principles of selecting the appropriate remediation method and technology.”

The expert study performed by the “REMEDIUM” Consortium laid the foundations for establishment and modification of legislative solutions for the method of assessing the presence of significant risk to human health or status of the environment. The expertise acts also as the guidebooks for the investors, remediation designers and regional directorates of environmental protection on specification of the requirements and the scope of remediation, selection of the other potential effective methods both in terms of finance and risk to human health and status of the environment.

**Meetings of the Working Group on Waste Management**

The meetings of the Working Group were held primarily in the building of the Ministry of Climate and Environment in Warsaw. Since the Group has been established, 27 plenary meetings, 6 in-country meetings and one foreign study tour were organised.

**Plenary meetings**

The focus of the meetings was on preparation of draft amendments to waste management legislation and its harmonisation with the EU regulations as well as on development of guidelines related to preparation of the Regional Waste Management Plans (RWMP). The effects of the Group’s meetings included among others amendments to the Act on waste and implementing regulations, development of the new waste management system in the country and therefore amending the Act on maintaining cleanliness and order in municipalities. In addition, the guidelines for administration and entrepreneurs on operation of installations for mechanical and biological waste processing were drawn up.

In 2020, the Working Group held also an on-line meeting aiming at discussing the investment opportunities in the field of waste management within the EU’s new financial perspective 2021-2027. The provisions of draft EU regulations with the view to identification of investment opportunities in the field of waste management under the future EU funds were analysed. Amendment of the Act on waste that entered into force in 2019 and introduced numerous solutions for administration authorities and entrepreneurs was discussed. The selected issues of concern were presented by Marcin Kazimierski, expert witness and specialist in environmental protection law, including waste management law. Future activities of the Working Group will focus on working out draft amendments to the provisions, which will be submitted to the Ministry of Climate and Environment in order to improve the waste management system in Poland.

**In-country meetings**

Within the study tours at the territory of the country, the Group members inspected the waste processing installations operating in the individual regions as well as discussed the problems arising from amending waste management legislation.

**Orli Staw, 12 – 13 December 2013**

The meeting was targeted on the new waste management legislation, with particular focus on packaging and post-consumer waste management and integration of waste management within the EU’s new financial perspective for 2014-2020. The Working Group held a study visit to the Orli Staw Municipal Waste Treatment Plant. The Plant has been treating municipal waste from Ceków Kolonia commune and its surroundings for ten years. The investor, plot owner and user is the “Czyste Miasto, Czysta Gmina” (Clean City, Clean Commune) Municipal Association of Communes.

The Plant applies the technology of mechanical and biological waste processing, along with sorting and composting plants. With a view to the environment, it is successively modernised and expanded to meet the most stringent standards

The visit acted as the baseline for further discussions on the needs related to product, packaging and waste management database (so called BDO) and amendment of the act on packaging and packaging waste management that laid down the new packaging-related obligations for the entrepreneurs and administration.

**Bielsko-Biała, 17 - 19 November 2014**

The meeting aimed at discussing the potential for using the regional installations for municipal waste processing (so called RIPOK) to retrieve raw material waste on the basis of knowledge gained during the visit to the Waste Management Plant in Bielsko-Biała. During the meeting, identification of the issues of concern related to RIPOK operation in the new waste management system was discussed, which will be subject to further works of the Working Group.

**Sandomierz–Stalowa Wola–Rzeszow, 7 – 9 November 2016**

During the study tour, the inspection of plasma waste processing installation was performed. Waste processed in this method comes from disassembly of electrical and electronic equipment. The MBP installation performing anaerobic processing of so called fines originating from municipal waste was also inspected. Impact of the provisions of waste management plan on the form of municipal waste management system in Poland was also discussed. The Working Group obliged itself to work out the principles for giving opinion on the RWMPs and arranging the investment plans in context of the Act on waste.

**Kielce, 18 – 20 June 2018**

In the course of the visit, the members of the Working Group took a look at the municipal waste management system in the Świętokrzyskie Region with a view to effects of the applied solutions and issues of concern. The aspects of classification of an item or substance as a by-product and potential loss of waste status by such items or substances by way of their recovery, including recycling, subject to specific prerequisites laid down in the Act, were discussed.

**Bialystok, 24 – 26 September 2018**

The visit to the Municipal Waste Treatment Plant in Hryniewicze – hosting the state-of-the-art technological line for selectively collected waste recycling – was the opportunity for the Working Group members to see the composting plant, Selective Waste Collection Point (SWCP), a landfill, electronic waste disassembly line and technologically advanced waste sorting plant. The Working Group inspected the thermal waste processing installation with power and heat recovery in Białystok, where – thanks to thermal processing – power and heat is produced and supplied to the citizens. The visit laid the foundations for discussing the effects of the applied solutions and identified problems related to the implemented municipal waste management systems in context of the Podlasie Region as a whole.

**Zielona Góra, 23 – 25 October 2019**

The Working Group visited the hazardous waste combustion plant in Ciepielówek that handles medical, veterinary and post-slaughter waste as well as the Waste Management Plant in Marszów. During the meeting, the preparations to BDO implementation as well as emerging concerns with a view to amended waste legislation were discussed in detail. The Working Group analysed also the provisions of the Code of administrative proceeding (CAP), BDO and providing access to information on the environment in context of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/9 of 5 January 2016 on joint submission of data and data-sharing in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) were also examined.

**Foreign study tours**

The Working Group on Waste Management held one foreign study tour.

**Spain (Madrid, Barcelona), 8 – 12 April 2019**

The purpose of this study tour was gaining knowledge on the Spanish municipal waste management model. The key issues discussed during the visits included among others circular economy (CE), preventing waste production, extended responsibility of producers placing waste on the market and thermal waste processing. Spain is one of the EU member states maintaining an effective selective waste collection system for many years. Experience sharing involved the methods of municipal waste management method on the example of the largest agglomerations in Spain i.e. Madrid and Barcelona.

Knowledge on legal and technological solutions in the area of waste management applied in Spain gained during the study tour will be used in further works of the Working Group, while the new experiences will support development of a sustainable waste management system in Poland.

**Plans for the future of the Working Group on Waste Management**

* Two-day visit to Warsaw to discuss the issues related to industrial symbiosis, preventing waste production and actions for circular economy as one of the priority directions of the future Cohesion Policy. In addition, the following will be discussed:
* waste regulations amended in 2019 and their effects on administration and entrepreneurs;
* food waste – preventing its production and methods of waste production monitoring as well as the Act of 19 July 2019 on prevention of food waste;
* landfill rehabilitation in context of issuing of the decision on landfill decommissioning and the procedures of substitute performance;
* increased fees for environmental use in the scope of waste storage and landfilling.
* Three-day visit to the Western Pomeranian Region to deliberate on implementation of amended waste management directives. During the meeting, the role of the RWMPs in context of amended definition of RIPPOK and the impact of abolishment of municipal waste management regionalisation will be presented. In addition, the following will be discussed:
* decisions of administrative courts on determination of installations for municipal waste processing;
* legislative changes in waste management and their impact on the operation of the regional government;
* municipal waste management, including reporting on collected municipal waste;
* the issues related to BDO keeping with focus on operability of the reporting module and sharing the experiences and good practices related to system handling.

The plans include also visiting the local and regional waste processing installations, including municipal waste combustion plants and SWCPs.

* Four-day study tour to one of the EU member states, where the Working Group - as part of experience sharing process - will take a look at the installations for municipal and industrial waste recycling, including plastic recycling installations. In addition, the visit will aim at extending knowledge on the methods of handling the flammable fraction sorted out of municipal waste, including alternative fuels. Waste biogas, its use and biowaste processing technologies are also in the agenda, so as gaining experiences on achieving high municipal waste recycling rates.

**Working Group on Water and Sewage Management**

Year of establishment of the Working Group on Water and Sewage Management: 2011

Mission of the Working Group on Water and Sewage Management:

The primary task of the Working Group on Water and Sewage Management is taking the measures to improve management, implementation and monitoring of the objectives laid down in the Directive 2000/60/WE, Water Framework Directive and Directive 91/271/EEC concerning urban wastewater treatment as well as implementation of the National Municipal Sewage Treatment Programme (NMSTP).

Operation of the Working Group on Water and Sewage Management focuses primarily on implementation of tasks by identification of barriers in the implementation of WFD and “wastewater” directive in three areas:

* legal area – sharing the experiences in application of law, drawing up the draft legal amendments, analysis of European case law and legal expert report;
* organisational and technical area – streamlining cooperation between the Working Group members as the representatives of various authorities competent for implementation of the Water Law Act;
* NMSTP implementation area – specification of reporting and updating surveys on the implementation of National Municipal Sewage Treatment Programme and their analysis, discussing the scope of reports submitted to the EC, analysis of legal provisions on the household wastewater treatment plants and holding tanks.

**Members of the Working Group on Water and Sewage Management:**

The members of the Working Group on Water and Sewage Management include primarily the representatives of the following institutions: the Ministry of Climate and Environment, Ministry of Infrastructure (previously the Ministry of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation), Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, Polish Waters (National Water Management Authority, Regional Water Management Authorities), General Directorate for Environmental Protection and the regional directorates for environmental protection and marshal offices. The representatives of the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management are also invited to participate in the Working Group activities.

**Expert reports:**

1. “Expertise on checking the correct interpretation of Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concer­ning urban wastewater treatment and its trans­position into Polish law”;
2. “Assessment of the effects of changes in the assumptions for the National Municipal Sewage Treatment Programme (NMSTP) and the Regulation of the Minister of Environment of 24 July 2006 on the conditions to be met when introducing sewage into water or soil and on substances particularly harmful to the aquatic environment”;
3. “Links between the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Directive on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (2001/42/EC)”;
4. “The tasks of the local government administration resulting from the implementation of the Water Framework Directive with a focus on the tasks delegated by the government administration”;
5. “Expertise which will constitute the base material to develop a strategy for dealing with municipal sewage sludge for the period 2014-2020”;
6. “Assessment of the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on minimum requirements for water reuse - stage I”;
7. “Assessment of the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on minimum requirements for water reuse - stage II”.

**Meetings of the Working Group on Water and Sewage Management**

The members of the Working Group on Water and Sewage Management employ the experience gained from the meetings and study visits in their everyday duties and make all efforts to transfer it to the local governments, which contributes to more effective cooperation between the authorities in charge of environmental protection and EU funds management at different administration levels.

**Plenary meetings**

At the Plenary meetings, the Working Group on Water and Sewage Management discusses the key issues in the area of water management. For this purpose, 3 subgroups were established:

**National Municipal Sewage Treatment Programme Subgroup**

Specific tasks:

* NMSTP reporting;
* Establishment of water and wastewater agglomerations;
* Compliance of agglomerations with Directive 91/271/EEC;
* Legal and technical solutions for municipal sewage sludge;
* Reuse of “grey” water;
* Co-financing of investments in agglomerations in the 2021-2027 financial perspective;
* Rain and thawing water issues.

**Water Framework Directive Subgroup**

Specific tasks:

* Identification of barriers in the implementation of WFD: legal, organisational and technical;
* Cooperation of authorities (regional directorates of environmental protection, Polish Waters) in the environmental impact assessment procedure;
* Analysis of “small retention” aspects;
* Actions aiming at decreasing water pollution with nitrates from agricultural sources;
* Assessment of the investment compliance with the Water Framework Directive, including in particular the impact assessment of the planned projects on the environmental objectives established for water bodies;
* Analysis of the potential to implement the investments at the protected areas e.g. Natura 2000;
* Analysis of proper implementation of Directive in the area of quality of potable water.

**Collective Water Supply and Sewage Discharge Subgroup**
Specific tasks:

* Identification of the issues of concern in the area of collective water supply and sewage discharge;
* Development of directions for guidelines on Water and Sewage Management in context of sustainable development and environmental protection;
* Sharing experiences and discussing the issues of concern related to tasks implemented by the regulatory authority in the scope of collective water supply and sewage discharge.

**In-country meetings**

**Żywiec, 27 – 28 September 2012**

The visit of the Working Group to Żywiec was a perfect opportunity to gain information on hydrotechnical investments implemented at the area of the Silesian Region and the actions taken within the fourth NMSTP update. The participants extended their knowledge on the issues of concern related to sewage management in the Żywiec Region and on the applicable solutions. During the meeting, the “Sewage treatment process in the Żywiec Region” project co-financed from the Cohesion Fund under the Regional Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment was presented. The main Beneficiary is the MPWiK Sp. z o.o.. This initiative acts as an example of water management project co-financed by the EU funds.

In addition, the Working Group took a look at the small retention reservoir – the first such facility in the region, and the Porąbka – Żar Pumped Storage Power Plant.

**Plans for the future of the Working Group on Water and Sewage Management**

* Implementation of relevant sewage management policy with a view to the requirements laid down in the Directive concerning urban sewage treatment;
* Analysis of use of grey water, small retention as well as rain and thawing water;
* Further cooperation of the authorities (regional directorates of environmental protection, Polish Waters) in the environmental impact assessment procedure.

**Working Group on New Financial Perspective 2021-2027**

Year of establishment of the Working Group on New Financial Perspective 2021-2027 : 2019

Mission of the Working Group on New Financial Perspective 2021-2027:

The primary task of the Working Group on New Financial Perspective 2021-2027 is to support the process of identification of areas and principles of financing related to environmental protection and climate change from the Cohesion Fund in the upcoming financial perspective.

Working Group on New Financial Perspective 2021-2027 delivers this objective by:

* technical support of the authorities involved in programming of the new financial perspective (NFP) in the process of drawing-up the programme documents – draft Partnership Agreement, the scope of future operational programmes and their specification as well as project selection criteria, etc.;
* development of draft proposals of demarcation line between the national operational programme and the ROP, Common Agricultural Policy, LIFE programme, etc.;
* sharing information on the results of works/arrangements made by the other inter-ministerial bodies and working groups involved in financing of future activities contributing to implementation of the environmental objectives under the NFP.

The Working Group operates as a continuation of the previous group existing since 2011 that has been involved in preparation of the current financial perspective 2014-2020. The WG NFP 2014-2020 has significantly contributed to supporting the process of identification of the areas of financing for the actions in the area of environmental protection and climate change from the Cohesion Policy Funds. The need for operation of this working group expired in 2015, while its activities are successfully continued by the WG NFP 2021-2027.

**Members of the Working Group on New Financial Perspective 2021-2027:**

The Working Group on New Financial Perspective 2021-2027 is composed of the representatives of the following initiatives: the Minister of Climate and Environment, Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, General Directorate for Environmental Protection and the regional directorates for environmental protection, marshal offices as the authorities in charge of environmental protection and EU funds management at different administration levels for integration of environmental aspects in the preparation, management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the operational programmes co-financed by the EU funds.

**Meetings of the Working Group on New Financial Perspective 2021-2027**

**Plenary meetings**

The primary objective of the meetings held by the Working Group operating since 2019 is to draw up the baseline assumptions for the programmes and projects to be implemented under the NFP. The discussions covered also the demarcation line between the national and regional programmes. During the meetings, the potential for supporting sewage management in the future Cohesion Policy to ensure its fulfilment of the obligations under the Directive 91/271/EEC concerning urban wastewater treatment, integration of sewage sludge management and contribution to promotion of renewable energy sources, was examined. The meeting results included drawing-up of the position of the Working Group in order to provide assistance the negotiations with the European Commission on the scope of support of sewage management under the NFP. The analysis covered also the assumptions of the key planning document i.e. the Priority Action Framework (PAF) for Natura 2000. In effect, the actors discussed the support areas of the future environmental projects to be implemented from such EU funds as: Cohesion Policy, Common Agricultural Policy, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and the LIFE Programme, on the basis of experiences gained from the currently implemented projects. Despite COVID-19 pandemic, the Group continued its activity remotely, which allowed for discussing among others the operation of energy clusters and opportunities to use the LIFE Programme funds that significantly complement the funds available under the operational programmes managed at the national and regional level.

**In-country meetings**

**Krakow, Trzebinia, Wadowice, 9 – 11 December 2019**

The leitmotiv of the study tour was circular economy being one of the priority areas of the future Cohesion Policy. The experts shared their experiences on CE implementation in the Polish undertakings comparing to the other European countries. The presented examples of the European economic and consumption behaviour transformations acted as inspiration for the Working Group members and will enable integration of the discussed aspects into the operational programmes’ provisions in future.

During the visit to the Unimetal Recycling sp. z o.o. plant in Trzebinia, the Working Group members gained knowledge on the environmental policy solutions applicable for CE, followed by the recyclers’ needs in the area of waste management support from the EU funds.

At the area of the Tymbark plant being a part of the MASPEX Group with its seat in Wadowice, a wide range of environment-friendly investments mitigating the negative environmental impact in the spirit of CE was presented. The study visit posed a great opportunity to the Working Group members to familiarise with the new trend of circular economy. This is of particular importance with a view to the need to add boost to CE development, including from the EU funds. The experiences gained during the visit, in particular suggestions on the expected areas of financing, will enable more precisely targeted scope of support in this area.

**Plans for the future of the Working Group on New Financial Perspective 2021-2027**

* Continuation of plenary meetings of the Working Group dedicated to individual support areas of the projects to be financed under the Cohesion Policy for 2021-2027;
* Analysis of complementarity of environmental and climate projects to be financed from the other funds, e.g. LIFE Programme;
* Organisation of non-plenary meetings of the Working Group;
* Striving for possibly the most effective management of the EU funds.

**Working Group on Air Protection and Energy**

Year of establishment of the Working Group on Air Protection and Energy: 2011

Mission of the Working Group on Air Protection and Energy:

The main objective of the Working Group on Air Protection and Energy is establishing legal solutions and analysing the technical, organisational and economic solutions aiming at improved air quality in the country.

Poor air quality in Poland (including in particular in the heating season) results primarily from combustion of solid fuels for heating purposes in old furnaces of high emission rate. At the same time, air in large agglomerations is heavily polluted by transport. These economic sectors, combined with industrial emission, including in particular power and heat production sector, significantly affect air quality.

**This task is implemented by the Working Group on Air Protection and Energy by means of:**

* Reviewing the solutions of air protection programmes and the practice of implementing these programmes;
* Reviewing the possibilities of financing air protection programmes in the current financial perspective;
* Preparing recommendations on the principles to support the renewable energy in the future financial perspective;
* Developing opportunities and indications for financing the air protection activities.

**Members of the Working Group on Air Protection and Energy:**

The members of the Working Group include the representatives of governmental and local government administration at the regional and district level, scientific institutions, universities and representatives of NGOs.

**Expert reports:**

1. “Legal opinion concerning the implementation of proposals for changes to legislation to improve air quality, including an impact assessment”.

This expert report laid the foundations for preparation of the National Air Protection Programme by 2020 (with 2030 perspective) published on 9 September 2015 in the former Ministry of Environment (currently the Ministry of Climate and Environment). This programme was established under Article 91c of the Act of 27 April 2001 – Environmental Protection Law (Journal of Laws of 2020, item 1219) and lays down the directions of actions that should be taken at the national, regional and local level to improve air quality in Poland. At the same time, the diagnosis for poor air quality in Poland and the identified lines of corrective actions presented in the National Air Protection Programme that should be implemented at all management levels formed the basis for development of the “Clean Air” strategic project sheet implemented under the Strategy for Responsible Development and the recommendations of the Economic Committee of the Council of Ministers adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2017 – so called the “Clean Air” Programme.

1. Guidebook: “Improving the quality and effectiveness of air quality management in zones in order to ensure clean air in the region. A guidebook for public admini­stration”.
2. Guidebook: “Improving the quality and effectiveness of air quality management in zones in order to ensure clean air in the region. A guidebook for public admini­stration - part II”.

These publications act as the guidelines to develop the air protection programmes and short-term action plans by the regional marshals. They include also the examples of corrective actions focused on elimination of exceeded air quality standards, including in particular of PM2.5 and PM10, NOx, SO2 and benzo(a)pyrene.

The effect of application of these publications was improved effectiveness of air protection programmes established by the local governments, which translated into better air quality in Poland.

**Meetings of the Working Group on Air Protection and Energy**

**Plenary meetings**

Throughout ten years of operation, 27 plenary meetings were held. The meetings of the Working Group addressed the improvement of air quality in the zones in which air quality assessment is performed. The aspects of pollution emission level being one of the reasons for poor air condition have been also discussed. Technical, legal and legislative, financial and educational solutions to tackle the problem faced by Poland for many years have been sought.

The primary effects of the Working Group’s activity included the analysis of legal effects and consequences of the resolutions made by the local government assembles on air protection programmes and short-term action plans. In addition, the Working Group focused on verification of issues of concern related to preparation of air protection programmes and short-term action plans in compliance with legal requirements. Also the resolutions of local government assembly on the air quality programme and short-term action plan along with their updates were analysed – as the acts of local law and model examples of application of legislative techniques as well as technical and financial solutions that will contribute to improved effectiveness of the corrective actions and increased social awareness on harmful effect of pollution emission to air. They will also add to promoting good practices in everyday life of the citizens.

**In-country meetings**

The Working Group held 5 study tours – including among others to Krakow, Katowice, Rzeszow, Torun and Bydgoszcz and to Wroclaw. These cities were not selected randomly, since the Lesser Poland, Silesian and Lower Silesian Regions, including in particular their capitals, are the areas with the most alarming air quality setbacks. In-country meetings provide the regions with the opportunity to present their progresses and successes in air quality improvements. The Working Group familiarised with the innovative solutions in this scope applied by the individual regions.

**Krakow, 24 – 26 August 2016**

The meeting aimed at presenting the Working Group members with the air protection system in Krakow and cooperation of the individual institutions in the implementation of protection programmes. During the meeting, the participants gained knowledge on the pro-environmental actions implemented by the EDF Polska S.A. – the largest power and district heating producer in the Country as well as with the sustainable development policy of the City of Krakow, where air quality requires significant improvements. In effect, the Working Group Members familiarised with the air protection systems in Poland and can now employ this new knowledge in performance of their everyday duties.

**Katowice, 13 - 14 October 2016**

During the visit to Katowice, the Working Group members learnt about the operation of the Institute for Chemical Processing of Coal in Zabrze, which develops among others the technological solutions for the use of fossil fuels as well as renewable and alternative energy sources. The Working Group members expanded their knowledge on research in the area of emission rates of fuels and boilers used in the household and municipal sector.

**Rzeszow, 5 – 7 April 2017**

The visit aimed at familiarising the participants with the Air Protection Programme (APP) of the Subcarpathian zone and with the state-of-the-art installations used in sewage treatment plants, power and heat plants and hydropower plant on the Solina reservoir. The Network representatives learnt about the methods of measurements of the odour-active compounds in air and with the measures taken by the authorities of the region and of the City of Rzeszow that contributed to significant improvement of air quality in the Subcarpathian region throughout recent years. This formed the basis for discussion on the opportunity to implement similar, tested and effective solutions in the other regions.

**Torun and Bydgoszcz, 18 – 20 April 2018**

The study tour participants were presented with operation of the installation for thermal sludge processing on the example of the Central Sewage Treatment Plant in Torun. The Working Group visited also the Demonstration Centre of Renewable Energy Sources – Complex of Mechanical Schools in Bydgoszcz, where they took a look at different forms of use of renewable energy sources. They were also presented with technical solutions for energy-efficient and passive construction. In addition, the participants visited also the technologically advanced Municipal Waste Thermal Processing Plant in Bydgoszcz. This facility meets the criteria of the best available technique and technology for installation ensuring safety for humans and the environment.

**Wroclaw, 18 – 20 November 2019**

The Working Group familiarised itself with the successes of the Wroclaw University of Technology (WUT) in the scope of odour emission measurements performed by the accredited Olfactometric Research Laboratory of WUT and with the operation of the Institute of Territorial Development – including among others in context of air protection and energy efficiency. The members gained knowledge on the plans of dispersed energy development on the example of the EKO Oława Energy Cluster.

**Foreign study tours:**

During the study tours to Italy, Austria, France and Portugal, the Working Group members learnt about the solutions applied in the countries at various levels of economic development and economic capacity. All these countries struggle with poor air quality. The Working Group members shared their experiences in the scope of actions taken in Poland and in the other EU member states. The purpose of experience sharing was to find effective solutions to improve air quality that could be transposed into the country and adapted to our organisational and financial capacities.

**Italy (Milan) 15 – 19 September 2014**

The leitmotiv of this study visit was familiarising with the Italian experiences in the area of air quality monitoring and improvement in the cities on the example of Lombardy-Milan, where the Working Group was presented with the methodology of performing the inventory or pollution emission in the region and air quality models applied in Italy. The assumptions of the Regional Action Plan for Air Quality (PRIA) and organisation of city traffic were also presented. The discussion covered also financing of the municipal and regional plans dedicated to sustainable energy management. During the visit to Florence (Tuscany), the Working Group members gained knowledge on the strategy and concept of urban transport development in Florence that introduced restricted private transport zones in the city and at the same time developed the effective public transport. The potential (and consequences) of implementing similar solutions in large cities in Poland were analysed. The visit participants could see the Tocco da Casauria locality (Abruzzo), powered entirely from wind turbines.

**Austria (Vienna, Graz), 4 – 9 May 2015**

The visit aimed at sharing the experiences with the Austrian authorities on the use of measurements, regulations and control techniques dedicated to comprehensive air protection. The meeting participants could learn about the Austrian legal system applied for issuing the permits for air pollution emission, with particular focus on odour nuisance, and compare it with the system operating in Poland. The Pfaffenau waste combustion plant and “Biogas Wien” biogas production plant formed the example of innovative solutions to reduce odour emission to air. Demonstration of the smart transport system in the Vienna Agglomeration - ITS Vienna Region – and KAPA GS-Graz project consisting in the implementation of comprehensive air quality management system in the Styria Land initiated the discussion between the participants on reducing emission of pollution by providing support to sustainable transport.

**France (Paris), 26 – 30 June 201**

The purpose of the visit was to get know the French experiences in care of high air quality. The city of Avignon served as an example of organisation of air quality monitoring along with distribution of information among the inhabitants. The Working Group visited also the construction site of the future technical service centre for the city transport. The next visited city was Strasbourg, where the Working Group took its opportunity to meet the representatives of ATMO Grand Est – the association approved by the Ministry of Environment for regulatory surveillance over air quality in the Grand Est Region. The meetings, among others in the Administrative Centre the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg and in the city of Kehl (Federal Republic of Germany) – the seat of the Strasbourg-Ortenau Euroregion, were dedicated to legal, technical and financial conditions to counteract air pollution as well as to comparing the existing and developed in France action plans for air protection with the similar actions performed in Poland. Experiences gained during the visit to Rouen and the meeting in the city’s city hall with its staff and representatives of the Regional Directorate for Environment in Normandy (DREAL Normandie) as well as with the representatives of the Syctom waste combustion plant in Paris were employed in the then prepared draft Act on counteracting the production and emission of odours in Poland.

**Portugal (Lisbon) 21 – 26 October 2018**

The study visit to Portugal was dedicated primarily to mathematical projecting and modelling in air protection. During the meetings with the representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency, the participants could familiarise with the local regulations specific actions taken by the country in order to improve air quality. In addition, the Working Group visited the waste combustion plant and biogas plant for the metropolitan area of Lisbon - VALORSUL Amadora. The discussions with the Plant staff enabled the Working Group to gain knowledge on the principles of the combustion plan operation. This plant meets the highest standards of emission to air. The last item of the agenda was the University in Aveiro, the leading scientific centre in the European Union in the field of mathematical modelling of air pollution.

**Plans for the future of the Working Group on Air Protection and Energy**

* continuation of study visits of the Working Group to another regions in order to share the experiences on air quality;
* analysing the actions related to the progress in the implementation of the National Air Protection Programme and Strategy for Responsible Development;
* further share of experiences between the individual regions in the scope of APPs and short-term action plans implementation in the scope of among others imposing the obligations, enforcement opportunities and the existing administrative case law;
* analysing the effects of actions laid down in the anti-smog resolutions implemented by the individual regions;
* examining the annual Reports on the works of the Steering Committee for the National Air Protection Programme;
* regular examination of reports on implementation of the “Clean Air” Priority Programme;
* further works on legal solutions in the scope of odour nuisance;
* Integration of quality of solid fuels used in the household and municipal sector of particular importance for pollution emission to air and in effect their impact on air quality in the country in the thematic area of the Working Group; visits to the EU member states including among others to the Netherlands – targeted on implementation of the APPs (in particular at the local level) and air quality monitoring, as well as the issue of renewable energy sources and odour nuisance.

**Working Group on Noise**

Year of establishment of the Working Group on Noise: 2012

Mission of the Working Group on Noise:

The main objective of the Working Group on Noise is to work out joint solutions aiming at harmonisation of environmental protection law on noise enabling significant reduction of the negative acoustic impact of: industrial plants, roads, railway lines and airports.

Activity of the Working Group focuses primarily on:

* verifying the existing noise-related problems;
* working-out joint solutions mitigating noise nuisance by introduction of the new technical solutions in Poland on the basis of the experiences gained by the other EU member states or these developed by the scientists and research units.

**Members of the Working Group on Noise:**

The Working Group members are primarily the representatives of governmental administration: Ministry of Climate and Environment, General Directorate for Environmental Protection and of the regional directorates of environmental protection, Chief Sanitary Inspector and the regional sanitary inspectors as well as local government administration at the regional and district level. The Working Group members are also recruited from the specialists with vast professional experience related to noise protection. The Working Group frequently uses the opinions of experts representing the Polish universities, including among others the AGH University of Science and Technology of Stanisław Staszic in Krakow, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan and the Institute of Environmental Protection. In addition, the meetings are attended by the representatives of companies experienced in the implementation and promotion of the best transport and infrastructural solutions which ensure comfort to their users respecting the principles of environmental protection.

**Meetings of the Working Group on Noise**

**Plenary meetings**

During the plenary meetings, the Working Group implements the essential issues related to noise. The meetings agendas included among others:

* preparation of implementing provisions, including draft regulations on detailed scope of data presented on strategic noise maps and their layout, presentation method and the scope of environmental noise protection programmes;
* preparation of legal amendments to the amended Act of 27 April 2001 – Environmental Protection Law (Journal of Laws of 2020, item 1219, as amended) in the scope of preparation of noise maps and environmental noise protection programmes;
* discussing the practical difficulties related to enforcement of non-monetary obligations (decisions) in administration;
* commencing the works on preparation of the statement on the establishment of criteria for determining the boundaries of the areas requiring noise protection;
* preparation of the presentation to the President of the Council of Ministers and the then Minister of Environment on difficulties in the implementation of governmental tasks in the area of financing and establishment of the environmental noise protection programmes.

Legal amendments and technical solutions worked out by the Working Group on Noise were partially reflected in the acts amended in 2018-2019, including in the Act of 27 April 2001 – Environmental Protection Law (Journal of Laws of 2020, item 1219, as amended) and in the Act of 3 October 2008 on sharing information about the environment and its protection, public participation in environmental protection and environmental impact assessment (Journal of Laws of 2020, item 283 as amended). In addition, the presented statements contributed to greater interest of the governmental party in the issue of financing the tasks assigned by the governmental administration, in effect of which part of the regions was granted with targeted subsidies from the voivodes or the regional funds for environmental protection and water management for implementation fo the assigned tasks.

Experience gained from the study visits are employed by the Working Group on Noise members to perform their duties and are transferred to the contractors preparing the design documentations for industrial and linear installations. In addition, the Working Group managed to work out a joint statement on establishing the restricted use areas and determination of the boundaries of the areas requiring noise protection. The document prepared by the Working Group on Noise will provide support to all concerned with noise with a view to the applicable legislation.

Many issues of concern discussed during the meetings of the Working Group on Noise are presented at the Convention of Regional Marshalls.

**In-country meetings**

**Gdansk, 7 – 9 October 2019**

The study visit was focused on the use of continuous transport noise monitoring, including road, rail and air noise. The results of measurements are used for preparation of noise maps for agglomerations with above 100 thousand of population, within the main transport routes of the cities and at the stage of spatial planning. During the meeting, the methodology of performing the measurements of continuous air noise monitoring at the area of the Lech Walesa Airport in Gdansk was presented.

**Katowice, 20 – 22 May 2019**

The study visit was dedicated to application of the other noise reduction methods than the construction of noise barriers. One of the presented examples included the introduction of the “30 Speed Zone” in Katowice i.e. the calmed traffic zone with maximum permissible speed of 30 km per hour. During the visit to the area owned by ArcelorMittal Poland S.A.
in Dąbrowa Górnicza – the leader among steel manufacturers in Poland – the participants gained understanding on identification of noise sources and diagnosing the impact range of noise from individual installations included in the “Katowice Steelworks” industrial complex.

**Kazimierz Dolny, 26 – 28 November 2018**

The participants of this study visits analysed the issues related to traffic calming concept, introduction of which aims at reducing the speed and volume of vehicle traffic in order to increase safety and improve quality of the environment. The types and options to apply the physical technical measures to calm down traffic and protection of inhabitants against the negative impact of such solutions were also discussed.

The “Dutch City” project in Puławy formed an example to present the underlying principles of local traffic calming. At the field training, the Working Group performed inspection of the equipment.

**Poznan, 2 – 4 April 2014**

The Working Group members visited the Poznan-Ławica Airport being the example of a restricted use area. At the airport, the participants were presented with the advanced methods of environmental noise monitoring. The Working Group discussed also the methods and problems occurring at the restricted use area in context of environmental impact assessments and air noise monitoring carried out with a view to airport operation.

The outcome of the meeting was a joint statement of the members of the Working Group on Noise
and the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment concerning the environmental noise monitoring. The acquired experience will be employed by the Group members for performance of their duties.

**Bydgoszcz, 26 – 28 August 2013**

The general purpose of the meeting was to analyse the environmental impact reports prepared by the Regional Directorate for Environmental Protection in Bydgoszcz in context of noise aspects. The RDEP proceedings formed an example to discuss the issues related to the implementation of road investments up to the stage of acquisition of administrative decisions, which in effect of poor quality of documentation submitted by the investors is both time-consuming and burdensome. The examples of good practices in the investment planning in terms of noise conditions were also discussed. The Working Group visited also the Fordon Sewage Treatment Plant in Bydgoszcz, which receives and treats sewage from the left-bank part of Bydgoszcz. The attendants took a look at different types of equipment used for noise measurement and acquired information on the dedicated software. In effect, the Working Group members expanded their knowledge on noise emitted by power installations. The causes of complications related to noise aspects in the examined reports and the opportunities to find effective solutions to mitigate such complications were analysed.

**Plans for the future of the Working Group on Noise**

* implementation of proper spatial planning policy in terms of environmental and human noise protection;
* comparing the values of permissible environmental noise levels in force in Poland an in the other EU member states and referring them to the guidelines proposed by WHO;
* modifying the noise legislation;
* continued cooperation with the Polish Acoustical Society – Division in Poznan, within which preparation of a joint guidebook on the principles of appropriate proceeding when preparing and assessing the documentation and identifying further direction for legal amendments in the area of noise.

**Working Group on Integrated Permits**

Year of establishment of the Working Group on Integrated Permits: 2012

Mission of the Working Group on Integrated Permits:

The focus of the Working Group on Integrated Permits is on working out a uniform approach to the integrated pollution prevention and control system in Poland using such instruments as integrated permits and best available techniques (BAT).

The Working Group on Integrated Permits achieves this objective primarily by:

* preparing the authorities competent for issuing of integrated permits for the correct implementation of the provisions of the Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions, exchange of information on the newly-published BAT conclusions and resulting obligations;
* introducing the new requirements on the protection of ground surface and groundwater;
* solving the existing issues of concern related to the integrated permits issuing procedure.

**Members of the Working Group on Integrated Permits:**

The Working Group on Integrated Permits was established on request of the representatives of the marshal offices and the regional directorates for environmental protection involved in issuing of integrated permits. The participants of the activities of the Working Group on Integrated Permits include the representatives of the Ministry of Climate and Environment, marshal offices and the regional directorates for environmental protection.

**Meetings of the Working Group on Integrated Permits**

**Plenary meetings**

The entire period of operation of the Working Group was filled with numerous thematic meetings, agenda of which included the items of importance for issuing of integrated permits, among others:

* 25 May 2013

Meeting on the new waste management regulations – the provisions of the Act of 14 December 2012 on waste.

* 28 March 2014

Meeting on amendment of the Environmental Protection Law Act implementing the provisions of the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

* 31 March 2015

Meeting dedicated to preliminary reports – the requirement introduced by amendment of the Act of 11 July 2014 on the amendment of the Environmental Protection Law Act and of certain other acts..

* 7 December 2015

The meeting addressed the new requirements for fuel combustion installations covered with obligation to hold an integrated permit introduced by the amendment of the Environmental Protection Law Act.

* 5 May 2016

Meeting on waste processing technologies.

* 14 September 2016

Meeting dedicated to discussing the requirements under the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/1032 of 13 June 2016 establishing best available techniques (BAT) conclusions, under Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, for the non-ferrous metals industries.

* 15 February 2017

Meeting dedicated to the new legal standards for ground surface quality assessment.

* 9 May 2017

Meeting dedicated to discussing the requirements under the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/1032 of 13 June 2016 establishing best available techniques (BAT) conclusions, under Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, for the non-ferrous metals industries.

* 7 March 2019

Meeting focused on the new legal regulations – Act of 20 July 2018 on amendment of the Act on waste and of certain other acts (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 1592) and the Act of 20 July 2018 on the amendment of the Environmental Protection Law Act and of the Act on waste (Journal of Laws of 2018 item 1564) – implementing the new obligations applicable for issuing/amendment of authorisations and permits..

* 1 April 2019

Meeting dedicated to the Commission Implementing Decisions (EU) on the best available techniques (BAT) for the intensive rearing of poultry or pigs, large combustion plants and waste processing.

**In-country meetings**

**Opole, 5 – 7 November 2014**

During the visit, the key aspects of implementation of the requirements under the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/1032 of 13 June 2016 establishing best available techniques (BAT) conclusions, under Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, for the non-ferrous metals industries with reference to the production of cement, lime and magnesium oxide were discussed.

**Katowice, 27 - 29 April 2015 / 19 - 20 November 2015**

The meeting aimed at understanding by the Working Group members of the best available techniques (BAT) for metallurgic industry on the example of the coking plant applying many environment-friendly solutions mitigating its environmental impact.

In April 2014, the Koksownia Przyjaźń Sp. z o.o. coking plant in Dąbrowa Górnicza and the magnesium foundry operated by Shiloh Industries Sp. z o.o. in Bielsko-Biała were visited, while in November, the members visited the waste combustion plant owned by SAPRI in Dąbrowa Górnicza and waste processing installation in the Master plant in Tychy. In effect of the meeting, the representatives of the offices pointed out at interpretational difficulties and problems associated with the assessment of the submitted applications for updating and issuing of the new integrated permits for the metallurgic sector installations. The need for specification of definition of terms related to such type of production (including among others the definition of blast furnace) and preparation of standards for verification of compliance with the best available technique (primarily in the area of visual emission assessment).

**Legnica-Głogów Copper Belt, 25 - 27 September 2017**

Organisation of the visit to the Legnica-Głógów Copper Belt was the effect of establishment, by means of the decision of June 2016, of the best available techniques (BAT) conclusions for non-ferrous metals industries. The impulse for the visit was also putting into operation of flash and electric furnaces in the Głogów Copper Smelter by KGHM Polska Miedź in January 2017. These installations serve as an example of technology that significantly contributes to reducing the level of emissions harmful for gaseous environment.

Within the study visit, the Working Group on Integrated Permits could familiarise among others with the installation for copper production in flash furnace technology and energy fuel combustion installation (combined cycle gas and steam unit) of a nominal capacity exceeding 50 MWt in the Głogów Copper Smelter, copper melting, continuous casting and rolling installations in the Cedynia Copper Smelter and the “Żelazny Most” extraction waste treatment plant.

**Bydgoszcz, 18 - 19 October 2017**

In the course of the visit to Bydgoszcz, the participants could take a look at the thermal municipal waste processing installation, where they gained knowledge on the technological processes in the plant operated by the Inter-Municipal Waste Treatment Complex - ProNatura Sp. z o. o. – and visit the fuel combustion installation of the Bydgoszcz II Heat and Power Plant operated by PGE GiEK S.A.

The meeting result was preparation of the authorities competent for issuing of integrated permits for the correct implementation of the provisions of the Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions, exchange of information on the newly-published BAT (best available conclusions) conclusions and resulting obligations as well as preparation for introducing the new requirements on the protection of ground surface and groundwater.

**Opole, 10 - 12 October 2018**

The purpose of the visit, which was the second one organised at the territory of the Opolskie Region, was acquiring knowledge on the installations requiring the integrated permit. The visit posed the opportunity to confront the conditions of operation of the installation and the requirements contained in the BAT conclusions for the paper industry and large fuel combustion sources. The visited facilities included among others fuel combustion installation operated by PGE GiEK S.A. in Bełchatów – Opole Power Plant Division, paper production installation of Metsa Tissue Sp. z o.o. in Krapkowice and installation for mechanical and biological waste processing operated by “Eko-Region” Sp. z o.o. in Bełchatów – Gotartów Plant. In addition, the visit enabled learning about the waste treatment technology in context of the requirements laid down in the applicable national legislation.

**Subcarpathian Region, 7 – 10 May 2019**

The study visit was dedicated to the latest BAT conclusions for chemical production, both with reference to organic and inorganic substances. The following sites were visited:

* Goodrich Aerospace in Tajęcin near Rzeszow, manufacturing the airplane parts used in the machines of many globally recognised manufacturers. Its technological process belongs to the most advanced in terms of manufacturing regime;
* Sanok Rubber Company S.A. in Sanok – the European leader in manufacturing of rubber, rubber and metal products and products combining rubber with the other plastics, undertaking numerous activities contributing to sustainable development;
* Orion Engineered Carbons Sp. z o. o. – the oil processing and product production plant – carbon black used as a filler in rubber mixtures;
* PGE GiEK Rzeszow Heat and Power Plant Division applying the environment-friendly technologies, promoting the district heating and increase of pro-ecological awareness among others in terms of municipal waste management. The participants had the opportunity to see the waste combustion installation holding a status of the regional municipal waste processing installation in the Subcarpathian Region. This installation was put into operation in 2018.

Apart of acquired theoretical knowledge, the Working Group members, in effect of visiting the a/m industrial plants, learnt about various technological processes and specific actions and solutions that contribute to operation of such plants in line with the sustainable development principle.

**Plans for the future of the Working Group on Integrated Permits**

* a study visit to the Lublin Region dedicated to installations in chemical industry, intended for manufacturing of organic and inorganic chemical products and semi-products with the use of chemical and biological processes and surface metal treatment installations with the use of electrolytic or chemical processes;
* a study visit focused on legal, organisational and technical aspects of zero waste/low-waste management with the examples of the implemented actions – an exemplary waste recycling chain in the installations requiring the integrated permit;
* thematic meetings addressing the amendments to the Environmental Protection Law Act and Act on waste with reference to integrated permits;
* meetings dedicated to solving the on-going problems related to the integrated permits issuing/amendment proceedings.

**Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change**

Year of establishment of the Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change: 2015

Mission of the Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change:

The primary focus of the Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change is on integration of adaptation to climate change as a supporting measure in the implementation of the National Policy on adaptation to climate change.

The Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change achieves its objective by:

* implementation of the Strategic Adaptation Plan for sectors and climate change-sensitive areas by 2020 with a perspective to 2030 (SAP2020);
* Mainstreaming of actions aiming at adaptation to climate change at the regional level and identification of adaptation directions to be integrated into the strategic documents of the regions;
* sharing information between the local and regional level on adaptation to climate change;
* supporting the monitoring and reporting on the adaptation actions implemented at the regional and local level;
* establishment of the cooperation and experience sharing forum between the national and regional level authorities and for the international cooperation.

In addition, the Working Group supports the Minister of Climate in the implementation of the plans for adaptation to climate change in the cities (so called Urban Adaptation Plans - UAP): “Development of Urban Adaptation Plans for cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants in Poland” financed from the OP I&E 2014-2020.

**Members of the Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change:**

The members of the Working Group include the representatives of governmental and local government administration. The Working Group is composed of the staff of the Ministry of Climate and Environment, Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, General Directorate for Environmental Protection and the regional directorates for environmental protection as well as of the representatives of the marshal offices. Inclusion of the representatives of the State Water Holding Polish Waters into the Working Group is under way.

**Meetings of the Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change**

**Plenary meetings**

* The Working Group held its first meeting in June 2015. Its effect encompassed the establishment and commencement of operation of the Working Group;
* At the second meeting held in the same year, the Working Group discussed the adaptation manual for the cities, verified legal gaps in the area of adaptation to climate change bound among others by the Act on spatial planning and development and with the building law. The objectives and principles of operation of the “ Covenant of Mayors”;
* During the third meeting held in April 2016, the Working Group presented the Paris Agreement established during the COP21 in 2015. The issue of climate in the environmental impact assessment was discussed, followed by presentation of the tools, documents and technical solutions in the area of climate change applied in the other EU member states;
* The fourth meeting held in December 2016 was dedicated to rain water management systems. The experiences from implementation of the LIFE project entitled “Adaptation to climate change by means of sustainable water management in the urban space of Radom”, beneficiary of which is the Municipality of Radom were also presented;
* In the course of the subsequent meetings, the Working Group focused on the implementation of works within the Urban Adaptation Plans and analysis of the regional operational programmes’ provisions with a view to integration of the adaptation to climate change component;
* At its seventh meeting, the Working Group presented the results of ecological awareness survey of the citizens of Poland. In addition, the meeting agenda included the discussion on integration of adaptation to climate change in the New Financial Perspective 2021-2027 and the potential to finance implementation of adaptation to climate change. The provisions of draft National Environmental Policy with a view to adaptation to climate change;
* During the eight meeting held in November 2019, the Working Group familiarised with the progress of works on the new financial perspective 2021-2027 with particular focus on the draft Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment for 2021-2027 in context of adaptation to climate change. The discussion that took place during the meeting covered the proposals of the provisions on adaptation to climate change under the future regional operational programmes. The participants analysed the implementation of the priority programme “Adaptation to climate change and mitigating the effects of environmental hazards” as well as deliberated on the assumptions for COP25 in Madrid. The invited experts from the former Ministry of Climate presented the project of “Wooden Construction” implemented by the Ministry. The comments and remarks of the European Commission submitted to the National Energy and Climate Plan were also discussed.
* The ninth meeting was held in the on-line form on 4 December 2020. The representatives of the Ministry of Climate and Environment presented the conclusions from the urban workshops that were organised in the regional capitals and aimed at working out the legislative and non-legislative solutions in the scope of adaptation of the cities to climate change in such areas as spatial planning and development, water and sewage management, protection and development of green areas. In addition, the representative of the Warsaw City Office presented the practical aspects of conducting the adaptation urban policy in a large agglomeration.

**In-country meetings**

**Piła 9 – 11 July 2018**

The meeting aimed at understanding the practical technical solutions addressed at adaptation to climate change and mitigating the effects on climate on the example of the individual installations, an approach to solving the problems in the field of rain and thawing water management on the example of a medium-size city and confronting the theoretical knowledge with actual picture of approach to adaptation of forests and forestry to climate change.

The meeting outcomes included propagation and strengthening of knowledge on application of the most environmentally and economically effective solutions in the field of adaptation to climate change considering the ecosystem approach. The acquired knowledge can be employed for the on-going activities of the Working Group members e.g. in planning of amendments to programme documents, issuing of administrative decisions, etc.

**Krakow, 29 – 31 May 2019**

The meeting aimed at sharing the experiences between the “world of science” and administration in the field of climate change, adaptation or amendments to the Polish legislation.

The members of the Working Group familiarised with the results of scientific studies on climate change on Spitsbergen and in Central Europe, visited that adaptation facilities at the area of Krakow, the city acting as one of the partners in the project organised by the former Ministry of Environment i.e. “Development of Urban Adaptation Plans for cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants in Poland”. The Working Group visited also the facilities constructed within the comprehensive project of adaptation of forests and forestry to climate change – small retention and counteracting water erosion in the mountainous areas. Financing of adaptation-oriented actions in context of the NFP 2021-2027 was also discussed.

**Plans for the future of the Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change**

* a study visit to Portugal (Lisbon, Cascai), where the Working Group intends to implement the following tasks: implementation of adaptation strategy in Lisbon, adaptation actions in the coastal belt of the southern Portugal, restoration of forests after the fires in the Sintra-Cascais Natural Park region and a visit to the Cascais Operations Center;
* a study visit to Gdansk (Hel, Żarnowiec) for the planned meeting with the staff of the Climatic Change Department in the Gdansk City Office, visiting the water management facilities constructed after the 2001 and 2016 floods in Gdansk, visiting the Pumped Storage Power Plant in Żarnowiec, understanding the PGE Baltica project involving construction of the offshore wind farms in the Baltic Sea and implementation of silting works in Hel;
* within the planned plenary meetings in the seat of the Ministry of Climate and Environment, the Working Group will participate in the lecture by Marcin Popkiewicz, co-author of the “Science on Climate” book and author of the “Energy Revolution. But what for?” book as well as the editor of the “Science on Climate” portal. During the meeting the PV GK PGE programme will be presented as a response to climate change and a component of the implemented energy transformation process.

**Working Group on Environmental Damage**

Year of establishment of the Working Group on Environmental Damage: 2018

Mission of the Working Group on Environmental Damage:

The primary objective of the Working Group on Environmental Damage is working out the solutions aiming at preventing the environmental damage and its compensation by:

* establishing a forum for cooperation and sharing the experiences between the authorities competent for environmental damage and for international cooperation;
* addressing the existing issues of concern related to the procedure of issuing the administrative decisions on environmental damage and historical ground surface pollution;
* establishment of a uniform approach to administrative procedures and interpretation of the applicable provisions;
* sharing information and using knowledge of the EU member states in the scope of remediation of contaminated areas;
* identifying the opportunities and sources of acquisition of external funds for own tasks of the environmental protection authorities in the area of ground surface protection.

**Members of the Working Group on Environmental Damage:**

The invited participants of the Working Group activities include the representatives of the Ministry of Climate and Environment, General Directorate for Environmental Protection and the regional directorates for environmental protection as well as the representatives of the marshal offices.

**Expert reports**:

1. “Designing the proposals of solutions for the assessment of significant risk to human health or environment procedure in the case of identified exceedance of the permissible content of substances causing a risk to soil, ground or groundwater and the principles of selecting the proper remediation method and technology”.

The expert report aimed at proposal of harmonised procedures for assessment of significant risk to human health or environment in effect of presence of substances causing a risk to soil and ground as well as detailed rules of selecting the remediation method based on this assessment. It is used in the on-going works of the General and Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection for the purposes of pending proceedings on ground surface contamination.

1. “The status of official receiver and a bankrupt entity using the environment in the meaning of the Bankruptcy Law Act in the administrative proceedings pending under the Act on preventing environmental damage and its compensation and the enforcement proceeding concerning the enforcement of final administrative decisions issued on the basis of this Act.”

The expert report is used in the on-going works of the General Directorate for Environmental Protection and of the regional directorates for environmental protection for the purposes of pending proceedings.

1. “Impact analysis of presence of the selected substances causing a risk to soil or ground on human health and environment in order to verify or determine their permissible content in soil and ground.”

The expert report is used in the proceedings conducted by the General Directorate for Environmental Protection and the regional directorates for environmental protection in the cases related to environmental damage of ground surface and historical contamination of ground surface. In addition, the case of repeating reports on contamination of substances referred to in the expert report, its results will be used to extend the lists of “certain substances causing a risk, of particular significance for soil and ground contamination”, for which the permissible values are laid down directly in the regulation, with these substances.

**Meetings of the Working Group on Environmental Damage**

**Plenary meetings**

* The meeting that was held on 14 December 2018 aimed at presentation of the conceptual expert report “Designing the proposals of solutions for the assessment of significant risk to human health or environment procedure in the case of identified exceedance of the permissible content of substances causing a risk to soil, ground or groundwater and the principles of selecting the proper remediation method and technology” planned for implementation for the purposes of the Working Group. The financing of the RDEP tasks in the area of environmental damages and historical contamination of ground surface were also discussed, in effect of which the “Recommendations of the Working Group on Environmental Damage on changes to the offer of financing (from the national and EU funds) of the RDEP tasks in the area of environmental damage and historical contamination of ground surface” were established and submitted to the Deputy General Director for Environmental Protection. The proposed amendments to the legislation on environmental damage and historical contamination of ground surface were also examined. In addition, the lists of potential and historical contamination of ground surface provided by the heads of districts were discussed, in effect of which the joint statement on issuing the decisions on entry into the register of and historical contamination of ground surface was established.
* The meeting held on 28 February 2019 was dedicated to assessment of significant risk to human health and environment. The assessment methods applied in Poland and the approach to risk assessment applied in the other EU member states were discussed in presence of external experts.
* During the meeting held on 24 June 2019, the Remedium Consortium presented the results of the expert report “Designing the proposals of solutions for the assessment of significant risk to human health or environment procedure in the case of identified exceedance of the permissible content of substances causing a risk to soil, ground or groundwater and the principles of selecting the proper remediation method and technology”. The Group Members submitted no technical comments and recommended approval of this expert report.
* At the meeting scheduled for 17 September 2019, financing of tasks in the area of ground surface protection from the OP I&E was discussed. The Working Group pointed out at the areas that urgently require acquisition of external funds. Preparation of the expert report entitled “Impact analysis of presence of the selected substances causing a risk to soil or ground on human health and environment in order to verify or determine their permissible content in soil and ground” was commissioned. The issues of concern related to the list of potential historical contamination of ground surface and the proceedings for entry into the register of historical contamination of ground surface as well as additional legislative amendments were also examined.
* The meeting held on 14 November 2019 addressed environmental damage, including in particular with a view to amendment of the Regulation of the Minister of Environment of 22 July 2019 on the assessment criteria for environmental damage. Due to complexity of the issue, the Group decided to continue the discussion during the upcoming meetings.
* During the meeting held on 25 February 2020, the Group analysed the provisions on damage to protected species and habitats. A case study was presented and a harmonised approach to so called natural damage was established.
* On 28 October 2020, the first on-line meeting of the Group was organised. The meeting agenda covered the latest case law of administrative courts on environmental damage and historical contamination of ground surface, remediation other than removing contamination, exemption from the obligation of remediation and environmental damage caused by improper waste management. The case study formed the basis for discussing the key issues of concern and explaining the interpretational doubts. The Group decided also on the need to organise a separate meeting dedicated to the proceedings at the interface of the Act on waste and environmental damage provisions.
* The meeting held on 15 December 2020 was focused primarily on preparation and submission of applications for co-financing of tasks in the area of environmental damage and historical contamination of ground surface from the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management and from the regional funds. The essential elements of applications were discussed and the occurring issues of concern identified.

**Plans for the future of the Working Group on Environmental Damage**

* Collection and submission of the issues of concern related to waste
* Joint meeting with the Working Group on Waste Management
* Remediation methods
* Water damage
* Remediation in the investment process – ground surface contamination and IEA
* Cooperation with the Regional Inspectorate of Environmental Protection
* Study visits: Płock – Orlen, Pern – oil derivatives production, storage and transportation installations; Szczerbięcin (natural damage) and Bydgoszcz (Zachem);
* a foreign study tour to France, where the Working Group will gain knowledge on thermal remediation.

**Working Group on Green Public Procurement**

Year of establishment of the Working Group on Green Public Procurement: 2020

Mission of the Working Group on Green Public Procurement:

The primary objective of the Working Group on Green Public Procurement is to increase the scope of integration of environmental aspects in public procurement, including in particular financed by the EU funds.

The activities of the Working Group will focus on working-out the model of good practices on the basis of the examples of use of environment-friendly solutions in public procurement, verification of the existing studies, recommendations, guidelines and cooperation with NGOs and entities competent for public procurement.

The Working Group has been currently at the establishment stage. The first meeting is scheduled for the 1Q 2021 when the plans and schedules of work of the Working Group for the upcoming years of its operation will be determined.

*Destination: “Partnership: Environment for Development****”***

***-*** *what sites we managed to visit*

Great Britain, 8 – 12 October 2012 – British experiences in acquiring funds for nature conservation; experiences in waste processing; British environmental impact assessment.

Island 10 – 14 June 2013 – Geothermal energy – practical experiences and potential for use in the Polish conditions.

Denmark 21 – 27 September 2013 – Danish solutions for energy, climate, adaptation and environment.

France 6 – 11 October 2013 – Adaptation to climate change and environmental protection in the spatial planning process – French good practices.

The Netherlands 13 – 18 October 2013 – Noise – Dutch experiences in the area of intensification and use of new technological solutions enabling reduction of noise impact from the main transport routes.

Germany 23 – 27 June 2014 - Experiences in the area of improving air quality and noise reduction; strategies and concepts of municipal waste management; operation of the Hessian Centre for Renewable Energy Use and Energy Efficiency.

Italy 15 – 19 September 2014 - Italian experiences in the area of monitoring and improving air quality in the cities.

Sweden 22 – 26 September 2014 – Sustainable development in practice – Swedish experiences in the area of waste management and sustainable urban development.

Austria 4 – 9 May 2015 – Austrian experiences in the scope of air protection in process of complying with the requirements of Directive 2008/50/EC.

Belgium and the Netherlands 17 – 22 May 2015 – Climate in environmental impact assessment processes in accordance with the European Commission approach.

France 3 – 7 October 2016 – French experiences in the scope of sewage management and water supply.

Spain 16 – 21 October 2016 – Strategic noise management in the cities – good practices, regulations and tools.

Portugal 24 – 27 October 2016 – Experiences related to mitigation and adaptation to climate change – practical solutions implemented by Portugal in effect of climate change.

France 26 – 30 June 2017 – French experiences in the scope of air quality, preparation and implementation of air protection programmes, inventory of emission sources and air pollution monitoring.

Portugal 21 – 26 October 2018 – Mathematic projecting and modelling in air protection used in Portugal.

Spain 8 – 12 April 2019 – Spanish experiences in preventing waste production and waste management in circular economy.

*Plans for the upcoming years of the*

*“Partnership: Environment for Development” Network operation*

* support in preparation of guidelines, methodologies and expert reports for the purposes of the Working Groups operating within the Network;
* establishment of the forum for cooperation between the authorities in charge of environmental protection and EU funds management at different administration levels;
* ensuring the effective exchange of knowledge, opinions, experiences and good practices between the entities forming the national network;
* strengthening the relations between the authorities in charge of implementation of environmental protection tasks and operational programmes’ management;
* development and modernisation of IT tools aiming at streamlined implementation of tasks by the Working Groups;
* ensuring effective operation… and financing of the national network… at least for the next 10 years.

General Directorate for Environmental Protection

52/54 Wawelska Str., 00-922 Warsaw

Phone: 22 57 92 900, Fax: 22 57 92 127

e-mail: kancelaria@gdos.gov.pl

Team for the “Partnership: Environment for Development”

National Network

64 Chłodna Str., 00-872 Warsaw

Phone: 22 66 16 221, Fax: 22 66 16 220

e-mail: sekretariat\_sieci@gdos.gov.pl

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