The **Poland** National Report

Kolomyjska, I and Dobrzynska, N

*June 2005*

Report commissioned by WWF, SNM & LUPG

---

EUROPE’S LIVING COUNTRYSIDE

promoting policies for sustainable rural development

Report prepared by WWF Poland (Inga Kolomyjska with co-operation of Nina Dobrzynska in the 1st chapter) on the basis of the preliminary report made for WWF by the Institute for Sustainable Development – Poland (leading expert: Bożenna Wójcik, Aleksander Kędra with the co-operation of Andrzej Kassenberg and Krzysztof Kamieniecki).

Institute for Sustainable Development – Poland in the preparation of the preliminary Report had been cooperating with the team of consultants: Przemysław Chylarecki (Ph.D.), Janusz Kindler (Prof.), Anna Kozłowska (Ph.D.), Dorota Metera (M.Eng.), Monika Rusztecka (M.Sc.), Andrzej Sadurski (Prof.), Jerzy Solon (Ph.D.), Roman Zielony (D.Eng.Sci.), Janusz Żelaziński (D.Eng.Sci.)
# Table of contents:

**Introduction** ........................................................................................................................................................................ 7

1. **Summary of SAPARD implementation and review of the current RD Programme content.** ......................................................................................................................................................................................... 8

   1.1. Summary of SAPARD Operational Programme implementation – data and effects. .......................................................... 8
   Measures ............................................................................................................................................................................... 9

   1.2. Rural Development Programmes for years 2004-2006: objectives, measures and budget. .................................................................................................................................................................................. 12

2. **Environmental situation and objectives in Poland** .................................................................................................................. 18

   2.1. Overview of the state of the rural environment in Poland ............................................................................................................ 18
   Air pollution ........................................................................................................................................................................... 19
   Soil .................................................................................................................................................................................... 20
   Water resources .................................................................................................................................................................... 21
   Implementation of the Water Framework Directive .................................................................................................................. 22
   Biodiversity .......................................................................................................................................................................... 22
   High Nature Value Farmland .................................................................................................................................................. 23
   Natura 2000 .......................................................................................................................................................................... 24

   2.2. Proposal for priority environmental objectives and targets related to agriculture and rural development. ............................................................................................................................................................................ 26

   2.3. Assessment of the environmental description in the Rural Development Plan for 2004-2006 (RDP) and the Sectoral Operational Programme “Restructuring and Modernisation of the Food-Processing Sector and Rural Development in 2004-2006” (SOP) .................................................................................................................................................................................. 28

3. **Objectives and tasks** .................................................................................................................................................................. 32

   3.1. Evaluation of the environmental objectives in the RDP and SOP ........................................................................................... 32
   The Rural Development Plan ......................................................................................................................................................... 32
   SOP “Restructuring and Modernisation of the Food-Processing Sector and Rural Development” ........................................................................................................................................................................... 35

   3.2. Proposal for environmental objectives and targets. ...................................................................................................................... 37

4. **The use of RDP measures** ....................................................................................................................................................... 39

   4.1. The assessment of RDP measures in terms of their consistence with the proposed objectives in chapter 2. ............................................................................................................................................................................. 39

   4.2. Proposals of measures in terms of their consistence with the proposed objectives in chapter 2. ............................................................................................................................................................................. 42

5. **Mechanisms of the implementation of RDP** ........................................................................................................................................... 46

   5.1. Evaluation of the existing implementation mechanisms ........................................................................................................ 46

   5.2. Proposal of the improvement of delivery mechanisms ......................................................................................................... 50

6. **Public participation** ................................................................................................................................................................ 51

   6.1. Evaluation of the existing mechanisms of public participation .................................................................................................. 51

   6.2 Proposals for improvements of mechanisms of public participation .......................................................................................... 54

7. **Indicators – measures, monitoring and evaluation** ...................................................................................................................... 56

   7.1. Evaluation of the existing RDP monitoring system and indicators ............................................................................................ 56
   Existing Monitoring System ............................................................................................................................................................ 56
   Evaluation of the Plan .................................................................................................................................................................. 57
Preface

The second pillar of the CAP has been developed to contribute towards sustainable rural development and to help rural areas to adapt to changes in Pillar 1 support and to rural restructuring, particularly in the agricultural sector. The EU-15 Member States and the candidate countries developed and implemented a first generation of rural development programmes following the 1999 Rural Development Regulation and SAPARD. In 2005, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) package of measures was agreed. This provides the basis for the second generation of rural development programmes in the enlarged EU-25. EC strategic guidelines for rural development will be published and will place a stronger emphasis on the need to achieve sustainable development and on EU policy priorities, which include environmental priorities. Overall the new Regulation requires Member States to take a more strategic, focussed and participative approach to rural development as they develop their plans in 2005-6 for the new programmes to be implemented for the 2007-13 period.

This study is part of Europe’s Living Countryside, a pan-European research project sponsored by WWF Europe, the Land Use Policy Group (LUPG) of GB’s conservation, countryside and environment agencies and Stichting Natuur en Milieu (SNM) in the Netherlands. National studies were undertaken in seven countries (Spain, Poland, the Netherlands, the UK, Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria – see map below). The aim was to review progress with developing and implementing rural development programmes and to explore in detail how environmental priorities and objectives might better be identified and addressed in the new rural development programmes.
Our research builds on *Europe’s Rural Futures*, an earlier LUPG and WWF Europe pan-European project which analysed MSs’ initial progress with developing and implementing the 2000-6 plans. Areas highlighted where improvements could be made included the need for a more strategic, coherent and integrated approaches to addressing environmental issues.

The *Europe’s Living Countryside* national research was carried out using an agreed common framework. This included analysing the evidence on environmental data and trends, using the results of mid-term evaluations and holding discussions and/or seminars with key stakeholders to help identify environmental priorities and to consider how the tools in the new regulation might be used to address environmental priorities and improve integration of environmental issues. Each national study includes at least one local case study to illustrate how this could be achieved.

National experts from the LUPG, WWF and SNM partnership coordinated the in-depth national research, supported in some countries (Germany, the UK and Poland) by consultants commissioned to undertake the detailed work.

For further information about the *Europe’s Living Countryside* project please see [www.lupg.org.uk](http://www.lupg.org.uk) or [http://www.panda.org/europe/agriculture](http://www.panda.org/europe/agriculture) or contact:

**Rosie Simpson**, Senior European Policy Adviser (Sustainable Land Management), Countryside Agency: Tel: 00 44 1242 521381  
[rosie.simpson@countryside.gov.uk](mailto:rosie.simpson@countryside.gov.uk)

**Elizabeth Guttenstein**, Head of European Agriculture and Rural Development, WWF European Policy Office: Tel: 00 322 740 0924  
[Eguttenstein@wwfepo.org](mailto:Eguttenstein@wwfepo.org)

Arjan Berkhuysen, EU Nature and Agricultural Policies, Stichting Natuur en Milieu: Tel: 00 31 30 234 8218  
[a.berkhuysen@natuurenmilieu.nl](mailto:a.berkhuysen@natuurenmilieu.nl)
**Introduction**

Since the last “Nature of Rural Development II” study was published in 2002 a lot of has been changed in the planning and realization of the Polish vision of rural development. SAPARD Operational Programme has been started to be implemented and a new Rural Development Plan has been designed and submitted by Polish government to the European Commission.

On the first of May 2004 Poland became a European Union Member State and started implementation of the Common Agriculture Policy. Strategic Polish documents came into force and Rural Development Plan (RDP) and Sectoral Operational Programmes (SOP) started functioning. For the next two years: 2004-2006 Polish administration, organisation and citizens have unique possibility to learn and gain experience form the implementation of those documents. Acquired knowledge should be used to design new, sustainable programming documents for years 2007-2013.

In this report you will find environmental assessment of existing Rural Development Plan (RDP) and Sectoral Operational Programme (SOP- Restructuring and Modernisation of the Food-Processing Sector and Rural Development) for years 2004-2006. On the basis of the mentioned evaluation, environmental objectives and targets have been proposed. To achieve those environmental targets certain measures have been planned.

In the report also necessary mechanisms for the implementation of the Common Agriculture Policy were reviewed, such as: the implementation of RDP and SOP, public participation, monitoring and evaluation. On the basis of the evaluation proposals of the improvement of those mechanisms were developed.

The report is being published in time when European and Polish rural development policy is going to be changed. Plans for next European Union financial period 2007-2013 are being developed.

We believe that findings of the report will help in designing and implementing the future European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development as well as developing the Polish Rural Development Plan and Sectoral Operational Programme. It is necessary to secure the protection of Polish environment, biodiversity, traditional rural landscape, sustainable agriculture and strengthening rural communities.
1. Summary of SAPARD implementation and review of the current RD Programme content.

1.1. Summary of SAPARD Operational Programme implementation – data and effects.

1.2. Rural Development Programmes for years 2004-2006: objectives, measures and budget.

Since the last “Nature of Rural Development II” study published in 2002 a lot of has been changed in the planning and realisation of the Polish vision of rural development. SAPARD Operational Programme has been started to be implemented and a new Rural Development Plane has been designed and submitted by Polish government to the European Commission.

1.1. Summary of SAPARD Operational Programme implementation – data and effects.

The objectives, priorities and tasks included in the pre-accession SAPARD Programme were based on the analysis of the situation in the rural areas of Poland and in the agri-food sector. The Programme was focused on measures aimed at improving the efficiency of the market, quality and health standards, as well as the means for maintaining and creating new jobs in rural areas. It was also a tool facilitating the adoption of the *acquis communautaire* related to the Common Agricultural Policy (particularly with regard to the experience in creating relevant institutions, in particular the paying authority). Another aim was to prepare Poland to utilise the structural funds when it becomes a member of the EU.

The strategic objectives of the SAPARD Programme are as follows:

- to improve the competitiveness of the Polish agri-food sector, both domestically and internationally;
- to adjust the agri-food sector to safety, hygiene and food quality and environmental standards in line with *acquis communautaire*;
- to stimulate the multifunctional development of rural areas by supporting the development of technical infrastructure and boosting business activities outside of traditional agriculture.

These objectives should be achieved through carrying out tasks under the following measures:

1) Measure 1. Improving the Processing and Marketing of Agricultural and Fishery Products.
2) Measure 2. Investment in Agricultural Holdings.
3) Measure 3. The Development of Rural Infrastructure.
4) Measure 4. Diversification of Economic Activities in Rural Areas.
5) Measure 5. Agri-environmental Measures and Afforestation (pilot projects).
7) Measure 7. Technical Assistance.
Table 1. Initial SAPARD budget for years 2000-2006 (August 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Name of the measure</th>
<th>Maximum UE financial support for years 2000-2006 [Euro]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure 1.</td>
<td>Improving the Processing and Marketing of Agricultural and Fishery Products</td>
<td>433 272 688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 2.</td>
<td>Investment in Agricultural Holdings</td>
<td>222 081 137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 3.</td>
<td>The Development of Rural Infrastructure.</td>
<td>413 176 480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 4.</td>
<td>Diversification of Economic Activities in Rural Areas.</td>
<td>131 085 537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 5.</td>
<td>Agri-environmental Measures and Afforestation (pilot projects).</td>
<td>22 920 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 6.</td>
<td>Vocational Training.</td>
<td>25 610 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 7.</td>
<td>Technical Assistance.</td>
<td>4 990 432</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SAPARD Operational Programme Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

75% of the whole SAPARD financial public support is covered by sources coming from the EU budget.

On 2 July 2002 the European Commission decided to confer the management of the SAPARD Programme to Poland for 5 out of 7 measures. This meant acknowledging the readiness of Polish institutions to implement the programme pursuant to EU requirements. On the basis of this decision by the European Commission, the practical implementation of Programme measures No. 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7 was initiated. The budget for these measures accounts for 87% of funds available under the programme. On 13 November 2003, the European Commission issued a decision conferring the management of EU funds with regard to Measure 4 Diversification of Economic Activities in Rural Areas.

On 1 August 2003, Measure 5 Agri-Environmental Programme (pilot project) was approved by Commission Decision.

Measure 5 of SAPARD Agri-environmental Programme (pilot projects), aiming at encouraging farmers to obeying environmental rules in farming and promotion of nature protection, was to be implemented in 4 pilot areas: (1) Biebrza and Narew valleys, (2) Warta Mouth valley, (3) Warmia-Mazury (part of the province), (4) Podkarpacie (part of the province).

Nevertheless, taking into account a short time left to the accession date and time-and fund-consuming process of Paying Agency accreditation, the Monitoring Committee for SAPARD Programme recommended on its meeting held on 9th December 2003, not to proceed with further activity leading to accreditation for the Measure 5.1 Agri-environmental Measures (pilot project). The removal of scheme 5.2. Afforestation (pilot project) Measures 5 of PO SAPARD was approved by the Commission decision of 11th July 2003.

Due to the changes of the measures realised also SAPARD budget has been changed.
Table 1.1 – SAPARD budget for years 2000-2006 after modifications (August 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities and Measures</th>
<th>Maximum UE financial support for years 2000-2006 [Euro]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priority 1: Improvement of efficiency of agri-food sector</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 1: Improvement in processing and marketing of food and fishery products</td>
<td>410 772 688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 2: Investments in agricultural holdings</td>
<td>192 416 864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priority 2: Improvement of conditions for economic activity and job creation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 3: Development of rural infrastructure</td>
<td>494 175 908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 4: Diversification of economic activities in rural areas</td>
<td>131 085 537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complementary axis</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 5: Agri-environmental measures (pilot project)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 6: Vocational training</td>
<td>24 744 773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technical support</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 7: Technical assistance</td>
<td>4 937 932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total of measures</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 258 133 702</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance as referred to by Article 7(4) of Regulation No 1268/1999</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 258 133 702</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

Measures currently implemented under SAPARD Programme are financed by the funds available under the 2000 - 2003 AFAs. By 30th of April 2004 the total of 1,778 applications within the Schemes of Measure 1; 15,582 within the Measure 2; 6,230 within the Measure 3; 7500 within the Measure 4 (Table 1) have been approved.

Table 2. Number of applications and uptake of AFAs funds for 2000 -2003 by 30th of April 2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Number of applications</th>
<th>Number of commitments</th>
<th>Amount of commitments in PLN</th>
<th>% of AFAs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1778</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>1084 304 921.79</td>
<td>79.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15582</td>
<td>10674</td>
<td>501 229 859.89</td>
<td>117.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6 230</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>838 075 382.75</td>
<td>43.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7 500</td>
<td>1105</td>
<td>90 934 681.85</td>
<td>24.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>65 755 188</td>
<td>88.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13 824 320.22</td>
<td>88.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31 090</td>
<td>14531</td>
<td>2 514 544 846.28</td>
<td>61.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

Within the frames of Measure 6, 8 training projects have been accomplished with 6,000 farmers have been trained. As regards Measure 7, seminars and conferences for 8,000 potential beneficiaries of SAPARD Programme have been completed.
During SAPARD programme implementation some of its provisions that limited the farmers’ and food processing industry’ scope of utilising the funds have been modified.

The experience and skills gained by Polish administration and other entities benefiting from the SAPARD Programme shall be utilised to implement support measures under the SOP and the present RDP.

Table 3. UE financial support under the SAPARD Programme in Poland in 2000 - 2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in euro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFAs in</td>
<td>171570075</td>
<td>175057271</td>
<td>179874468</td>
<td>182 907 972</td>
<td>708,160,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAPARD*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AFAs – Annual Financial Agreements.

Taking into account the existing needs and opportunities of art. 3 pt 2 of the Commission Regulation (EC) No 447/2004 of 10 March 2004 laying down rules to facilitate the transition from support under Regulation (EC) No 1268/1999 to that provided for by Regulations (EC) 1257/1999 and 1260/1999 for the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia, the Polish side has dedicated certain funds from the RDP to finance projects under SAPARD in situation of the overcommitment, what is currently taking place. Last applications for SAPARD have been collected in February 2004 and all the contracts should have been concluded by 15th of August. It is planned to complete the SAPARD implementation, i.e. to pay out all the payments in the year 2006.

Evaluation of the SAPARD Programme

Programme funds mainly due to the capacity of the local administrations in the disadvantaged areas to absorb the available resources for measure 3 (rural infrastructure) as set against the steadier flow of resources going to finance the restructuring of agri-food business in the more developed areas. Larger enterprises tended to be the first beneficiaries of SAPARD Programme.

Increase of income and reduction of unemployment. The information obtained shows that average income has increased by 20% as an effect of programme investments, both for farms and food processing plants. There is no evidence of a reduction of unemployment as a direct effect of SAPARD investments, but the indicator selected to show the capacity of the programme to create and preserve work places in rural areas (i.e. “improvement of relationships between farms and processing industry”) is quite positive (26% of farms having improved their relations with the food industry)

Improvement of food quality and safety and compliance with EU standards proved to be the first priority for both farmers and food producers: 31% of investments in Measure 1 and 57.6% in Measure 2 are devoted to this purpose. 79% of the SAPARD Programme funds supported food processing plants attempting to meet EU food hygiene and veterinary standards and adopting other industry food quality standards as well. This share will increase to 85% on the completion of investments. Farms also are improving their rate of compliance with standards. Before SAPARD Programme started on the surveyed farms, 13% of
production was matching EU standards, a share that had grown to 17.6% by the time of the evaluation. The contribution of SAPARD Programme to this effort is still small since life of the programme is still short and also because so few beneficiaries have been financed; the food processing plants complying with EU standards as a direct result of SAPARD Programme aid also represent a very small share of the total: 4.4% of existing dairy plants, 0.8% of meat plants, 0.5% of fruit and vegetable processing plants.

A significant commitment to progress in safety and hygiene at work has been achieved. This was the main objective for 46.3% of projects financed on farms. Over 40% of food processing plants respondents stated that they have improved labour conditions as a result of investments financed by SAPARD Programme.

**Further efforts are required to promote the importance of environmental protection.** On farms only some 34 out of 54 respondents included environmental aspects in their investments but environment is the main objective for just 13% of investments under Measure 2, as against 57.6% of investments devoted to improving the quality of production.

Unfortunately as it was mentioned above the decision not to proceed with further activity leading to implementation of the Agri-environmental Measures (pilot project) in frame of SAPARD was taken in December 2003. It is necessary to promote the importance of environmental protection and specially the sustainable farming practices less damaging for the environment. Measure 5 has been not activated due to delays in the accreditation process.

As the result of such decision Polish society, farmers and public administration have not been able to gain any experience related to implementation of the agri-environmental schemes. The financial resources initially intended for agri-environmental measure have been shifted to different measures not connected directly with nature protection. Outcome of the above decision was lack of the direct environmental effects in the areas where programmes were planned to be implemented, lack of experience that could have been gained by administration and direct beneficiaries in the implementation of the measure and not sufficient knowledge on the operational mechanisms of the measure.

The advisory service for farmers is insufficiently prepared and the number of trained and prepared advisors is extremely low. It plays great role in the education of farmers and implementation of Good Farming Practice as well as implementation of agri-environmental schemes. The threat is that the implementation of agri-environmental schemes in the RDP for years 2004-2006 may cause a lot of problems and may not satisfy environmental needs.

**1.2. Rural Development Programmes for years 2004-2006: objectives, measures and budget.**

**a) Assumptions and objectives**

The Rural Development Plan (RDP) is the instrument financed by the Guarantee Section of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/99). A policy paper independent of the RDP is “The Restructuring and Modernisation of the Food Sector and the Development of Rural Areas”, a Sectoral Operational Programme (SOP) is co-financed by the EAGGF Guidance Sector.
The measures envisaged under the RDP should be consistent with the priorities of the Sectoral Operational Programme and thus compatible with the strategic objectives of the National Development Plan (NDP), which has been preliminarily formulated as follows: developing a competitive knowledge-based and enterprise-focused economy that will be capable of long-term harmonious development; ensuring the growth of employment and the achievement of social, economic and spatial cohesion with the European Union at the regional and national levels.

The measures envisaged under these two Programmes should be complementary; therefore, they should mutually contribute to achieving the supreme goal of rural development.

**Table 4. Measures of the SOP and the RDP.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RDP measures</th>
<th>SOP measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early retirement</td>
<td>Investment in agricultural holdings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for semi-subsistence farms</td>
<td>Setting-up of young farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for agricultural holdings in less-favoured areas</td>
<td>Vocational training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for agri-environment</td>
<td>Support for agricultural advisory services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afforestation of agricultural land</td>
<td>Water resources management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting the EU standards</td>
<td>Land reparcelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for agricultural producer groups</td>
<td>Rural renewal and the preservation of cultural heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance</td>
<td>Infrastructure related to agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complements to direct payments</td>
<td>Diversification of agricultural activities and activities related to agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving the processing and marketing of agricultural products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restoring damage in forests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pilot programme LEADER +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical assistance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theoretically choice of the RDP objectives and priorities was based on: 1) the analysis of the initial situation in Polish agriculture and completed review of problems related to the rural development; 2) the definition of opportunities and risks in agriculture and rural areas; 3) the extent to which the above objectives will be achieved with the use of other EU and national policies upon accession.

Following strategic objectives, common with the SOP- Reconstruction and modernisation of the ford sector and rural development and consistent with the National Development Plan, have been assumed:

**OBJECTIVE 1. Improving the Competitiveness of Agri-Food Economy**

- **Priority 1.1. Increasing the economic effectiveness of agricultural holdings (includes measures under the RDP and SOP)**
• Priority 1.2. Improvement of incomes in agriculture and rural areas (includes measures under the SOP only)
• Priority 1.3. Improvement of food safety, quality and market orientation of production (includes measures under the RDP and SOP)

OBJECTIVE 2. THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS
• Priority 2.1 Multi-functionality of agriculture (includes measures under the RDP and SOP)
• Priority 2.2 Reduction of rural unemployment (includes measures under the RDP and SOP)
• Priority 2.3 Improvement of living conditions and the economic and social functions of rural areas (includes measures under the RDP and SOP)

Taking into account the scope and purpose of available measures, this objective will be implemented under the Rural Development Plan (RDP) and the Sectoral Operational Programme “The Restructuring and Modernisation of the Food Sector and the Rural Development”, as well as under the Integrated Operational Programme of Regional Development (IOPRD), the SOP “Increasing the Competitiveness of the Economy” and the SOP “Human resources development”.

Sustainable development should be the long-term objective for rural areas. This notion encompasses simultaneous action in several directions: towards the multi-functionality of agriculture and rural areas, towards environmental protection of rural areas, towards the reduction of unemployment, and towards the enhancement of both the living conditions of rural populations and the economic and social functions of rural areas.

The policy of sustainable development of rural areas shall apply to all activities in these areas: agriculture, forestry, fishery, services, small industry, commerce, tourism, etc. Comprehensive measures are needed in relation to: human resources development, the protection of soils, the improvement of water resources management, the protection of biodiversity, the provision of energy for rural areas, and increasing the participation of the public in the decision process concerning the utilisation of resources. The key issue should be followed by the implementation of more efficient and environmentally friendly technologies such as plant fertilising systems that minimise losses and do not cause water pollution, integrated systems of plant and animal protection that minimise the use of potentially dangerous chemicals, integrated grazing systems that take the protection of natural resources into account, etc.

Description of Rural Development Plane measures

Measure 1. EARLY RETIREMENT

The early retirement pension is intended to encourage farmers at the pre-retirement age to give up farming activity and transfer an agricultural holding. The measure is aimed at improving the economic viability of agricultural holdings in Poland, as well as transferring land for non-agricultural purposes and will provide a sufficient source of income to farmers who end their farming activity.

The programme of early retirement is targeted at farmers of pre-retirement age, who are covered by the obligatory agricultural insurance system and that operate an agricultural
holding, being their (or his/her spouse) property, which they decide to transfer to another farmer or a successor, on condition that the transfer improves the economic viability of the farm.

**Measure 2. SUPPORT FOR SEMI-SUBSISTANCE FARMS UNDERGOING RESTRUCTURING**

Support for semi-subsistence farms undergoing restructuring is a temporary income support that will serve to alleviate cash flow constraints and household income difficulties whilst further restructuring is undertaken to ensure the commercial future of the holding. The support designated for semi-subsistence farms undergoing restructuring, paid out as a premium for 5 years, shall improve their profitability and thus the possibility of reconstruction of the holdings in question.

**Measure 3. SUPPORT FOR LESS-FAVOURITED AREAS (LFA)**

This measure aims to ensure continued agricultural land use for farms operating in more difficult conditions, to contribute to the maintenance of the countryside and of a viable rural community and to support sustainable farming systems.

**Measure 4. SUPPORT FOR AGRI-ENVIRONMENT AND ANIMAL WELFARE**

Measure 4 aims at strengthening of patterns of stable and sustainable farming systems, especially on the protected areas and those endangered with degradation. The measure covers 7 agri-environmental packages that are linked to agricultural management, focused on environmental protection, conservation of habitats with high natural value and maintenance of animal genetic resources. Each package covers a set of several strictly defined requirements, going beyond the Usual Good Farming Practices and does not overlap with other CAP support measures.

Agri-environmental payments shall be increased by 20% of the basic payment in case when the packages (at least one) are being implemented within the NATURA 2000 area.

Agri-environmental payment may be also increased by 20% in case of the package S02 implementation, if a farmer in running a balanced agricultural production. Increases mentioned above can not be summed up, it means that the payment for any package shall not exceed 120% of the basic payment.

**Measure 5. AFFORESTATION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND**

This measure includes the following forms of payment:

1) Support for afforestation, covering the cost of establishment and, if justified, of protection against animals.

2) Maintenance premium for the maintenance of newly afforested land

3) Afforestation premium as equivalent to cover loss of income resulting from the withdrawal of land from agricultural production.

**Measure 6. MEETING STANDARDS**

The financial support under this measure covers the necessary costs of investment of adjusting the farm to EU standards on environmental protection, public health, and animal health and welfare. The support shall be in a form of a yearly payment, it comprises investments costs which are necessary for implementation of the standard.
The support for the investment cannot exceed 25,000 EUR per year and per farm. The following standards are covered by this measure:

**Measure 7. SUPPORT FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS’ GROUPS**

Support may be granted for the setting-up and administrative costs of producer groups. Support will be granted to producer groups established in order to adapt production standards by the members of such groups and to develop the system of common sale of their products.

**FINANCIAL TABLE**

The funding provided to implement the proposed measures will come only from public sources without a contribution from the private sector. Total public expenditure for the period 2004-2006 amounts to 3587.8 million Euro, with an EAGGF-Guarantee contribution of 2866.4 million Euro (80%).

The financial table of the RDP includes an amount of 140 million euro of public expenditure (of which 105.0 million euro EAGGF contribution), to be used for the financing of projects approved under the Polish SAPARD programme. The projects concerned relate to the measures ‘Investments in agricultural holdings’, ‘Diversification of economic activities in rural areas’ and ‘Improvement in processing and marketing of food and fishery products’.

**Table 5. Budget of the Rural Development Plane for years 2004 - 2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programming period 2004 - 2006</th>
<th>Total expenditure</th>
<th>EU contribution</th>
<th>National contribution</th>
<th>% of the RDP budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early retirement</td>
<td>640.5</td>
<td>512.4</td>
<td>128.1</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for semi-subsistence farms</td>
<td>376.3</td>
<td>301.0</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to producer groups</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Priority A</strong></td>
<td><strong>1042.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>833.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>208.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancement of competitiveness of the farm holdings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for LFA</td>
<td>976.8</td>
<td>781.4</td>
<td>195.4</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agri-environment undertakings and animal welfare</td>
<td>349.2</td>
<td>279.0</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afforestation</td>
<td>101.8</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting EU standards</td>
<td>243.4</td>
<td>194.7</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Priority B</strong></td>
<td><strong>1650.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>1336.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>313.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>45.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable and multifunctional development with special regards to environmental issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complements to direct payments</td>
<td>705.3</td>
<td>564.2</td>
<td>141.1</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects approved under Reg. (EC) No 1268/1999</td>
<td>140.0</td>
<td>105.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total other actions</strong></td>
<td><strong>879.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>696.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>183.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>24.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Plan</td>
<td><strong>3592.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>2866.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>726.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Rural Development Plane
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
In Summary:

**Rural Development Plane for years 2004-2006:**

- **supports farmers’ incomes** (the largest allocations are for LFA farmers (27% of the budget) and for supplements to Pillar 1 direct payments (20% of the budget));
- **seeks to improve the lives of the poorest farmers** (e.g. early retirement measure (consist of 18%), support to semi-subsistence farms (10%));
- **supports farm restructuring** (several measures of NRDP);
- **provides low support to agri-environment schemes** (only 10% of the NRDP budget).
2. Environmental situation and objectives in Poland.

2.1. Overview of the state of the rural environment in Poland

According to the Main Statistical Office (GUS – in Poland), in Poland rural areas represent 93.2% of the surface area of the country and are inhabited by about 38% of the population of the country. In turn, according to the OECD method (below 150 persons per square kilometre) rural areas represent 91.7% of Poland’s territory or 83% - taking into account the EU method – below 100 persons per square kilometre).

Most of Poland consists of lowland areas (with 75% of its territory situated below 200 m above sea level) and mountain areas (above 500 m above sea level) can be found in less than 3% of its territory; while the other lands are uplands and the areas of elevated lake districts with diversified relief of the terrain. Poland lies in the moderate climate zone (with mean annual temperatures mostly falling between 7ºC to 9ºC), in a place where the continental and Atlantic air masses clash. Poland is one of the countries with very relatively low precipitation levels (about 600 mm/year on average), which also affects the state of water resources and contributes to water deficits in certain regions. The lowest total annual precipitation levels can be found in the Polish Lowland and in Wielkopolska (below 500 mm and in the interval 500-600 mm – therefore, in these areas that are particularly suitable for the development of agriculture), whereas the highest levels occur in the mountains (1000-1200 mm) and the lake districts in the north-western part of the country (above 750 mm). The low total annual levels of precipitation in Poland and its distribution over the year make agricultural production difficult.

Forests occupy 28.9% of Poland, along with wooded areas the share is 29.6%. Farmland represents 61.4%, of which 45.1% is arable land, 1% orchards and 13.0% meadows and pastures. The private ownership of land dominates in Poland, with 87.9% of farmland held in private farms. A characteristic feature of the Polish agriculture is a large number of farms (1.95 million in 2002) and a substantial fragmentation of farms – in 2002, the average farm size in Poland was 8.3 ha, of which 7.4% was farmland. Small farms prevail (32.2% with a surface area of 2 to 5 ha, along with very small farms (26.5% with a surface area of 1 to 2 ha). In contrast, there are very few large farms (of at least 50 ha) – 0.9%. Gradually, organic farms have become a characteristic feature of the Polish countryside. In 1990, there were only 27 of them, but their number grew in the subsequent years – to 174 in 1993. As from 1999, when organic farmers began to receive grants, their number began to increase distinctly – 515 in 1999, 1787 in 2001 and as much as 2286 in 2003 (including 1287 certificate-holders and the others in the first or second year of the transition process). Very small farms (619 farms with a surface area of 0 to 5 ha) and small farms (613 farms with a surface area of 5 to 10 ha) dominate among organic farms. There is also a fairly large number of farms with a surface

3 Data from publication as in footnote 3 and from: „Ochrona Środowiska 2004”. GUS, Warsaw 2004.
5 See Footnote 5.
area of 10 to 20 ha (540); but the number of very large farms is very small (e.g. there are only 74 very large farms with a surface area of 100 ha and more). Organic farms already hold about 50,000 ha of farmland (including mainly the field crops of cereals and root plants, meadows and pastures, whereas vegetable crops, berry plantations and orchards are very scarce) – still, they represent only 0.3% of the farmland in the country. The largest number of certified organic farms can be found in Świętokrzyskie, Lubelskie, Mazowieckie, Małopolskie and Podkarpackie Voivodships, while the largest number of farms shifting to organic production occurs in Małopolskie, Podkarpackie and Świętokrzyskie Voivodships.

Agricultural areas have a differentiated agrarian structure, which to a large extent reflects the former division of Poland’s territory between three occupying States and partly Poland’s division into its major geographic regions:

- the north-western region (lake districts, coastal areas and the area of the Sudety Mountains);
- the central and eastern region (central Polish lowlands and the northern part of central Polish uplands);
- the north-eastern region (uplands and the area of the Polish part of the Carpathian Mountains and their foreland).

The first of these regions - the north-western region, is dominated by large farms, to a large extent leased from the State (until recently the State ownership of land dominated there), locally large farming intensity can be found, but so also can substantial social problems related to the unemployment of the former workers of State-owned farms.

The central and eastern part of Poland is the most typical area, where small and medium-sized farms prevail, which in its western part has many farms with high farming culture, but also with high farming intensity.

The south-eastern region is characterised by a very fragmented agrarian structure, with a large number of very small farms and a large number of parcels within them, as well as with substantial social problems (open and hidden unemployment). In terms of nature, the third region features very high biological diversity and a large variety of landscape, which are the effect of the domination of traditional and extensive farming.

**Air pollution**

Agriculture in Poland is the main contributor to air pollution of:

- ammonia emissions (314 kilotonnes (kt) – about 97% of the national emissions);
- emissions of nitrous oxide (about 51 kt – about 70% of the national emissions) agriculture is exactly the main contributor;

The sector of agriculture and forestry is also an important source of:

- methane emissions (more than 435 kt – about 24% of the national emissions).
- particulate matter emissions (27 kt – about 6% of the national emissions);

---

• non-methane volatile organic compounds (33 kt – about 4% of the national emissions).

However, when compared with the natural releases of these compounds from rural areas as a result of natural processes (298 kt), other NMVOC emissions are not very large. Combustion processes related to agriculture and forestry also contribute to air pollution. In this respect, the important emissions are those of carbon oxide (268 kt – about 8% of the national emissions), carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas (37 kt – about 3% of the national emissions), and particulate matter (26 kt – about 5.5% of the national emissions)\(^\text{10}\).

**Soil**

In most of the territory of the country, there are light, permeable podsoils, which have formed on a sandy substrate. Since the extent of infiltration of precipitation is greater than its evaporation, these soils are prone to lose nutrients as a result of their washing out. There are also slightly more fertile and less permeable brown soils, which are a second group in terms of their quantity. Other soil types (mostly very good) can be found in relatively small areas. The best soils from the agricultural point of view can be found mainly in:

- the south of the country (in Lower Silesia, in the Opole region);
- the belt of uplands – in the Małopolska Upland and the Lubelska Upland;
- smaller areas of them are also present in the north of Poland (in Żuławy and Warmia – mostly in the Sępopolska Lowland
- the western part of the lake districts – south of Szczecin City
- the central Poland (at some places on the top of the high plains along the middle course of the Vistula River)\(^\text{11}\).

In Poland, light soils represent ca. 61%, whereas the average for the EU countries is ca. 32%, i.e. twice as little\(^\text{12}\). In arable farming, brown soils take on the features of a high culture and represent cropland of medium quality and, at times, of good quality. About 75% of farmland consists of Class IV and poorer soils, as soils of Classes I and II represent only 3.3%\(^\text{13}\) - the biggest areas of those soils are in the following regions (voivodeships): lubelskie, małopolskie and świętokrzyskie. Due to all these factors, the farming conditions in Poland are more difficult and, as a result, the yields are lower than those in most European countries.

The total fertilisation level in Poland is two - three times lower than in the other European countries, but there is a distinct drop in the use of lime fertilisers curbing soil acidification, which is not beneficial, given the approximately 40% share of acid and very acid soils in Poland.

**Soil and water pollution**

Threat to the quality of waters is posed by the insufficient wastewater treatment infrastructure in rural areas. Only 15.9% of the rural population is connected to a wastewater collection

---


\(^{11}\) According to: „Mapa kompleksów rolniczej przydatności gleb w Polsce”, IUNG: http://www.iung.pulawy.pl/Granty/KBudzynska/grant7.htm


system and 16.5% is served by wastewater treatment plants.\textsuperscript{14} As a result, wastewater tends to be discharged into the nearest watercourse, into soil or directly to the land surface. Shortcomings can also be found in the system for animal waste storage. The litter-based breeding of livestock dominates in Poland (75%). In itself, this is a favourable factor; however, most farms store manure directly on the ground (given the almost universal absence of plates for manure storage), but this situation in improving.\textsuperscript{15} This causes the presence of higher nitrate levels in farmyard wells - this is a problem of the farms using this source of water supply. This problem should be solved by the framework of the implementation of the Nitrates Directive. However, observations in recent years indicate that farmers often shift to the litter-free system (with a large number of animals, it is easier and cheaper for farmers to manage – provided that farmers have their own source of water). On the one hand, this causes higher water consumption and liquid manure production (since recently, the law has provided that liquid manure is a fertiliser!). When badly disposed of, liquid manure may turn into dangerous wastewater. On the other hand, this may lead to the loss of a very valuable organic fertiliser (stable manure), which cannot be fully replaced by liquid manure – as a result, the consumption of chemical fertiliser will grow. Such changes are often an effect of the financial assistance which farmers have received for building manure storage facilities.

**Water resources**

With its water resources, Poland is one of the least endowed countries in Europe, with 1,300 to 2,500 m\textsuperscript{3}/year per capita on average (counted as a amount of outflow)\textsuperscript{16} what depending on amount of rain-falls, in contrast to 4,600 m\textsuperscript{3}/year per capita on average in the European countries.\textsuperscript{17} Apart from the natural factors, this is an effect of the excessively quick runoff of precipitation and too low retention. The problem of water quality – its purity – is the basic problem of water management in Poland, with this problem to be seen particularly in rural areas. Indeed, large quantities of pollutants are discharged from agriculture (both crop production and livestock breeding) into both surface and underground waters. In rural areas, the sources of water intended for human consumption are mostly surface waters, whereas little use of underground waters is made for this purpose. Only for agricultural irrigations mostly the surface waters are used.

The surface waters in Poland are polluted. In accordance with the obligatory physico-chemical indicators (a classification which is closest to the one applied in EU, taking into account such indicators as BOD\textsubscript{5}, COD-Mn, phenols, chlorides, sulphates, dissolved matter and suspended solids), water in Polish rivers is classified:

- 47% as Classes II;
- 35.5% as Class III;
- 12.6% of the controlled river sections are found to be excessively polluted;
- There are no Class I waters.

\textsuperscript{15} During last 2 years lot of plates for manure storage was building using the financial sources from SAPARD Programme, successive will be build thanks to the financial sources of programmes prepared for the years 2004-2006.
\textsuperscript{16} See Footnote 14.
\textsuperscript{17} According to: „Mały Rocznik Statystyczny Polski 2003”. GUS, Warsaw 2003.
**Implementation of the Water Framework Directive**

The work on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) in Poland intensified two years ago. Amendments to national water legislation were aimed at the transposition of WFD provisions.

The Government believes that the WFD provisions were already transposed into the Polish law at statutory level by the adoption of amendments to the Water Act in June 2005.

However, according to WWF analysis transposition is not completed - the current and proposed legal regime does not allow for the management of waters in Poland in line with WFD. E.g. environmental objectives defined in the WFD were included in the national legislation but old legal provisions were maintained.

The result of that is that in the Polish Water Law (Act) contrary provisions exists. In this sense the main objectives of WFD are weakened by “old” objectives of water management determined by the previous version of the Water Low.. Also proposed financial mechanisms are insufficient and do not have any links to other Sectoral Strategies or legal acts. More information regarding implementation of WFD to the Polish law you can find in WWF PL report: “Changes of the Polish Water Law necessary for complete transposition of the Water Framework Directive ”(in Polish)\(^\text{18}\).

**Biodiversity**

In comparison to other European countries, Poland has relatively rich nature. This is indicated by the state of preservation of its biodiversity as assessed on the basis of the preservation of the original species and habitats as well as the old varieties and breeds of plants and livestock. In respect of its ecosystems and habitats, Poland is particularly rich in extremely valuable, well preserved wetlands and forests, which are the characteristic elements of the lowlands in Central Europe.

What makes Poland different from the other European countries is its richness of the natural resources present in rural areas. From the ecological point of view, agricultural areas are systems which are sensitive and susceptible to environmental dangers; therefore, it is all the more important to create the conditions for the conservation of wildlife enclaves in rural areas. In Poland, 485 types of plant communities were identified, half of which are related to farmland. The communities used as meadows and pastures are particularly valuable (48.4% of meadows are semi-natural)\(^\text{19}\).

The rural areas in Poland, thus a large part of the country, represent a combination of greatly transformed or man-formed areas (primarily farmland) and semi-natural areas (forestland and different other sites with semi-natural open-type communities), where the effects of man activities was much smaller.

The landscape of farmland is diversified – in many places there is an extremely interesting checkerboard of small pieces of farmland and meadows situated among forests. This layout has formed due to traditional, extensive farming (persisting even today in many places), the strong fragmentation of farmland and the low use of chemical agents in agriculture. These checkerboards are enriched by a large number of boundary strips, tree clusters and the


presence of segments of natural ecosystems in the form of water ponds, bogs, sedge-grown sites and dry stenothermal grasslands. All this has contributed to the preservation of many valuable species and specific habitats, which have become rare or have even ceased to exist in countries with intensive farming. The habitats considered valuable include primarily endemic habitats, rare habitats and those threatened with vanishing; therefore, many of these elements should be particularly protected.

**High Nature Value Farmland**

In order to distinguish within the areas farmed the sites which are particularly diversified and those with agricultural landscape which are rich in terms of their nature (and, at the same time, vulnerable to the growing pressure caused by intensive farming), wide interdisciplinary analyses were carried out, regional consultations were conducted and areas considered particularly valuable were selected. These areas were designated as High Nature Value Farmland (HNVF) - they are envisaged to provide the basis for the implementation of nature conservation packages within the framework of agri-environmental schemes in the future. Such areas were distinguished, 39 of which were assigned to priority 1 (about 17% of the territory of the country), whereas 13 were assigned to priority 2. Altogether, they represent almost 22% of Poland’s territory. 24% of the surface area of agricultural land was assigned to these areas.

**Three major types of HNVF can be distinguished:**

- HNVF in river valleys, with the dominating complexes of meadows and pastures as well as with grassland communities at the edges of the valleys;
- HNVF in submountain and mountain areas, with their mosaic of small-sized and dispersed agricultural sites.
- HNVF in lowlands (in lake districts, plateaus, plains and coastal areas), used for agricultural purposes, with their preserved old structure of agricultural landscape, layout of fields, small-sized and mosaic structure of land use.

---

20 Those activities were taking place during the years 2002-2004 by the team of several experts commissioned by Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development but coordinated by national Foundation for Environmental Protection. Works on delimitation of HNV farmland areas were realised in cooperation with special Regional Realisation Teams which were created for agri-environmental schemes purposes as advisory bodies for Regional Nature Conservators.
However, given the land-use structure in the areas designated, two types of these areas can be distinguished: typical agricultural ones, representing 75% of the total number of HNVFs, and those with the nature of enclaves, where agricultural land forms islands within forest complexes or between lakes in lake districts. As the strategic objectives of the establishment of High Nature Value Farmlands, it was found necessary to:

- conserve the semi-natural habitats of meadows and pastures threatened with degradation as a result of the abandonment of their use or intensification;
- preserve the small-sized structure of the agricultural landscape – the mosaic of habitats with high natural and cultural values;
- preserve traditional forms of farming, guaranteeing the preservation of valuable habitats.

**Natura 2000**

The implementation of the principles of biodiversity conservation, in accordance with the European Union requirements, will take place on the sites included in the Natura 2000 network. Only 64 habitats (30%) from those mentioned in Annex I to the Habitats Directive is present in Poland\(^{21}\). The main reason is that many of the habitats from Central and Eastern Europe do not exist in the EU-15. Poland has offered to the European Commission to add 19 habitats including 6 as priority ones into the list. Only three of them were fully agree by the Commission, 9 others Commission included by widening the existing definitions\(^{22}\). From 181 species or sub species which are listed in Annex I of the Bird’s Directive and must be protected in SPAs, in Poland we have 124 species\(^{23}\). Poland proposed to add only one sub species to the list – dunlin (*Calidris alpina schinzii*)\(^{24}\).

In Poland, the work to designate the sites for the network was carried out in a large number of stages since 1998. The list of the sites changed substantially in the course of the preparations for proposing the list of sites. Unfortunately the official list of sites was not available on Ministry of Environment web-side and the Ministry was not open for giving access to mentioned documents. They were either specified, or certain sites were excluded from the proposal, as some land users did not agree to their inclusion. In the first stage, 361 sites were designated (including 180 Special Protection Areas – SPAs – for birds and 181 Special Areas of Conservation – SACs – for habitats). In the next stage, a total of 418 sites were designated (141 SPAs and 279 SACs)\(^{25}\). The final list communicated to the European Commission on accession included 256 sites (72 SPAs and 184 SACs)\(^{26}\). The surface area of the proposed sites was also much reduced – from 15% of the territory of the country (initial proposal) to only 9.3% of country area (2’910’155 ha) final proposition (about 3.6% habitat’s sites and about 7.8% bird’s sites).

---


\(^{22}\) See Footnote 41.


\(^{24}\) See Footnote 43.

\(^{25}\) Information from The Institute of Nature Conservation of Polish Academy of Science (February 2004).

List prepared by Ministry of Environment was made accessible for “public consultations” for only 7 days – it was not possible for NGOs not only to prepare comments during this time but also to get information about possibility to be involve to the “process”. Any comments which were submitted to the Ministry Office were not regarded. Nevertheless, the Polish NGO Coalition on Natura 2000 (PSPB, WWF, Salamandra, Club of Naturalists) submitted the analysis of the governmental proposal. No response to this evaluation was received. Most of conservationists found this official list as a very bed.

This why 4 ecological organisations (WWF Poland, Naturalist Club, Polish Society for Nature Protection "Salamandra", Polish Society for the Protection of Birds ) started project to assess how well the species and habitats from the Bird and Habitats Directives are represented by the governmental proposal and prepared the Shadow List27.

Shadow list was sent to the European Commission, to the European Topic Centre in Paris and to the Polish Minister of Environment in the beginning of December 2004. NGOs propose 169 new sites for effective meeting the goals of the Habitat Directive and 69 sites for protection of areas important from Bird’s Directive point of view. NGOs propose also corrects of borders of some sites officially proposed. The sites from the official list of proposed Natura 2000 sites and those from Shadow List cover together almost 20% of the territory of Poland (9,4% habitat’s sites and 15% bird’s sites).

In assessing the availability of data on the state of the environment, it should be said that Poland has rich environment-related statistical data; a special statistical yearbook dedicated to these issues is published every year, also The State Environmental Protection Inspection publish the report about the state of the environment (not regularly). However, there is not enough numerical data on biodiversity, which would indicate trends in this respect, related to specific species and habitats. There is also lack of information on accuracy of certain species and habitats from the Bird and Habitats Directives in Poland and additional field studies are necessary to fill this gap. The extent of nature monitoring is still too limited.

2.2. Proposal for priority environmental objectives and targets related to agriculture and rural development.

In the previous paragraphs identified environmental problems of rural areas in Poland. Below two objectives are proposed that would cover the most important environmental issues:

I. The conservation of the landscape structure, natural values (including biodiversity) and soils in the Polish rural areas.

II. The protection of underground water resources and the improvement of ecological quality of surface water in the Polish rural areas.
I. The conservation of the landscape structure, natural values (including biodiversity) and soils in the Polish rural areas.

**Detailed objectives:**

- Prevent excessive land consolidation and decline of landscape features;
- Prevent reduction in crop diversity and the ploughing up of grassland for arable use;
- Avoid the decline in extensive farming and other practices where these are important to maintaining natural and landscape values (e.g. prevent intensification or abandonment, loss of traditional farming practices, changes to field and farm, changes to boundaries of ecological corridors);
- Conserve sites of high natural values both Natural 2000 sites and others;
- Conserve or restore agricultural landscape features;

The conservation of the complex landscape structure characteristic of Poland should be carried out through:

- preventing: the excessive consolidation of land and the elimination of different structure-forming elements in the landscape (as bounds, midfield clusters of trees and the clusters of trees along watercourses and reservoirs and water ponds which have often the role of buffer zones), the simplification and unification of the structure of crops, the replacement of permanent grassland by arable land;
- conservation and restoration of valuable elements of the agricultural landscape i.e.: bounds, midfield clusters of trees, the clusters of trees along watercourses and reservoirs and water ponds which have often the role of buffer zones.

The presence of these elements has a positive effect on:

- maintenance of the equilibrium of agricultural ecosystems and wildlife refuges;
- improvement of the water balance in farmland;
- mitigation of the microclimate of agricultural areas.

The conservation of the natural values present in rural areas includes:

1. prevention of the loss of the natural values occurring in rural areas by:
   - preventing from decline of the extensive agricultural use of specific areas through;
   - stopping the excessive intensification, and abandonment of traditional cultivation and breeding methods or;
   - preventing completely abandonment of agricultural activities;
2. preservation of the existing size structure of farms and agricultural parcels;
3. appropriate shaping of sites which function as ecological corridors, and the conservation of selected areas with especially high natural values (both strict conservation and active protection).

The achievement of this last objective (point 3) will be strictly related to the implementation of both the Natura 2000 network and a large number of other – mostly local – initiatives in the
range of nature conservation, where the rank of such values is lower and with the species of flora and fauna protection.

II. The protection of underground water resources and the improvement of ecological quality of surface water in the Polish rural areas.

In order to achieve the enhancement of the quality of surface waters and groundwater in rural areas, it is necessary to take an action to prevent their pollution by limiting the inflow of pollution into such waters by:

- improving municipal infrastructure related to rural settlements (wastewater treatment plants – both those that serve the public and the individual, house-based ones and wastewater collection systems),
- improvement of the sanitary status of the farms themselves
- improving manure handling practices (including the packaging/containers from fertilisers);
- reduction of excessive use of chemical inputs to agriculture.
- Improvement of water retention capacity of the land;

The implementation of measures for those objectives should apply to the whole territory of Poland. Particular measures may be used to a varied extent in different regions of the country depending on needs. This will apply to areas with High Natural Values, where some measures designed to conserve or restore these values will concentrate. In contrast, the measures designed to reduce the pollutants released into the environment should rather be implemented on a horizontal basis, given the large dispersion of their sources. For the purposes of deciding that priority areas need to be selected for the implementation of specific measures in the future and their selection itself, it will be necessary to carry out more detailed environmental studies and analyses of the measures implemented so far in the particular regions.

2.3. Assessment of the environmental description in the Rural Development Plan for 2004-2006 (RDP) and the Sectoral Operational Programme “Restructuring and Modernisation of the Food-Processing Sector and Rural Development in 2004-2006” (SOP)

In the process of preparation of strategic documents: RDP and SOP several versions were available. This assessment covers RDP and SOP in their latest available versions of July

28 The document of the RDP is available on Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development website: http://www.minrol.gov.pl/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabOrgId=1419&LangId=0 The law base for implementation of the Plan and it’s measures is the Act from November 22, 2003 (o wspieraniu rozwoju obszarów wiejskich ze środków pochodzących z Sekcji Gwarancji Europejskiego Funduszu Orientacji i Gwarancji Rolnej - Dz.U. Nr 229/2003, poz. 2272) and lot of implementation regulations which are referring to particular measures.

29 The document of the SOP is available on Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development website: http://www.minrol.gov.pl/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabOrgId=1452&LangId=0 The law base for implementation of the Programme and it’s measures is the Regulation of Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development from September 3, 2004 (w sprawie przyjęcia Sektorowego Programu Operacyjnego "Restrukturyzacja i modernizacja sektora żywnościowego oraz rozwój obszarów wiejskich 2004-2006" - Dz.U. Nr 197/2004 poz. 2032) and the Regulation of Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development from September 8, 2004 (w sprawie Uzupełnienia
Environmental description in Rural Development Plan for 2004-2006

The preliminary description of Poland’s geography and climate is rather general. It contains numerical data on the climatic conditions and the structure of land use in Poland. The section called “Resources and state of the natural and cultural environment” presents many environmental issues; however, there is no comprehensive assessment of the environment as such. Various environmental issues are discussed separately, with a distinct focus on their relations to agriculture – as factors hampering or benefiting agriculture, or as threats posed by agriculture to the environment.

Qualitative and quantitative information is provided on surface waters and groundwater. Information on the quantity of water resources is supported by numerical data (the average water resources per capita in Poland and Europe) and a short description of the geographical differentiation and the environmental problems caused by a shortage or incorrect management of water resources. A description of the quality of running and standing waters is also provided and supported by statistical data, without geographical differentiation. Surface runoffs and wastewater discharges are indicated as the main sources of the pollution of surface waters. More detailed consideration is given to the issue of water pollution by nitrates, particularly those of agricultural origin.

This document does not consider air quality, or the state of the air. It presents only the emission levels of particular gases in 1995-2001 in quantitative terms, while the problems of dust emissions and concentrations were not considered. The document contains analysis of the effect of the climatic conditions on the agricultural production in Poland – it is based on comparison of the net primary production with the yields achieved in Poland and European countries.

The document presents data on soil conditions in Poland and their comparison with the data for Europe. However the spatial variation of soils across Poland is not described. Tabulated data illustrate the percentage share of light soils in Poland and European countries and the grain size of soils in Poland and Europe is compared. The soil contamination levels are illustrated by the percentage share of soils where production has ceased because of their contamination. The problem of soil acidification is described in detail. The risk of erosion is described for different types of erosion and its causes as well as the measures to prevent it.

Biological diversity (and genetic diversity within it) is described in the context of the geographical differentiation of the country. Numerical data are provided on the percentage shares of the different land uses and so are data on the number of plant communities present in Poland in rural areas. Data are also presented on the number of vascular plant species and the number of vertebrate species, particularly birds. The state of nature conservation in Poland is generally described. Existing forms of nature conservation and numerical data on the areas covered by these forms as well as Poland’s areas with special natural values are described.
The sites proposed for the Natura 2000 network are very briefly presented. One of the annexes to the Rural Development Plan for 2004-2006 presents the characteristics of the priority zones designated for the implementation of agri-environmental schemes. These descriptions show the major natural and landscape values of these areas and the basis threats to the environment which have identified there.

The cultural and landscape values of rural areas are not characterised in the Plan. This document does not describe separately the issues related to agriculture in areas with high natural values. It only indicates the natural values present in rural areas (see above). Even when the issue of organic farming is discussed, its role in the conservation of natural and cultural values is not considered. The farming conditions in mountain areas are analysed, but only in the context of difficulties in farming rather than the natural values of these areas.

Measurable data are given in the case of water resources, air quality, soil conditions, soil pollution and erosion as well as, to a lesser extent, biodiversity. However, no numerical data were presented on specific species. The document does not provide also any measurable data on changes in the landscape.

The geographical differences are mentioned with respect only in relation to certain issues such as: soil pollution, erosion, biodiversity, abiotic conditions. Some data is compared at provincial level, while some other data is compared between Poland and other EU countries, what may be not clear. There is no comparison between agricultural sector and other economy sectors, which are present in rural areas. No regional differentiation of different types of farming is indicated.

General recommendation:

The description of environmental issues should be more systematic and the individual issues should be presented in a more uniform way.

Environmental description in the Sectoral Operational Programme “Restructuring and Modernisation of the Food-Processing Sector and Rural Development for 2004-2006”

In the part “Agriculture and the Environment” of the document, following issues are discussed:

- soil conditions;
- rural water resources;
- air protection;
- climate change;
- impact of agriculture on the environment;
- zones vulnerable to the pollution by nitrogen compounds from agricultural sources;
- cultural values of rural areas;
- biodiversity, both of wildlife and the genetic resources of plants and livestock.
Unfortunately there is no comprehensive assessment of the environment as such. The state of the environment in Poland is described in a concise way. In case of certain issues (soil conditions, the impact of agriculture on the environment) only the spatial differentiation was taken into account.

The description of the environmental issues is oriented on its linkages with agriculture (factors hampering agricultural activities, benefits for agriculture or threats for the environment posed by agriculture). As part of its diagnosis, the document considers more broadly other issues related to rural development, such as the issues related to the processing of agricultural produce, infrastructures in agriculture and rural areas as well as non-farming directions of development.

Summary:

- The environmental description needs to be more systematic and issues presented more consistently. (e.g. in present documents there is no data on specific species;)
- There was no mention of regional farming differences or of the differences between the agricultural and other rural economic sectors;
- Landscape characteristics and cultural values are not covered at all in the RDP, nor are HNV areas related to agriculture;
- The link between stated objectives and priorities and their relative status is unclear (also refers to the SOP);
- Objectives are not measurable (also refers to the SOP);
- Measures to improve the competitiveness of farming could have adverse impacts on the environment where it encourages intensification and land use changes that reduce natural values e.g. early retirement and take over of farms by young farmers tends to increase farm size, intensification and pressure on the environment;
- The sustainable development objective should not cause environmental damage and should benefit the environment. In present RDP and SOP it is not clear;
- Advisors have a vital role in the successful implementation of environmental measures by advising on and encouraging farmers to participate in agri-environment schemes and implementing Good Agricultural Farming Practise;
- Adaptation of holdings to EU standards: the achievement of environmental objectives will depend upon the type of projects implemented. The RDP allows for investment in improving farm manure storage which should improve standards.
3. Objectives and tasks

3.1. Evaluation of the environmental objectives in the RDP and SOP

The Rural Development Plan

Within the framework of the Rural Development Plan, the following two goals were proposed:

Goal 1. Improving the competitiveness of the food-processing sector;
Goal 2. Sustainable development of rural areas.

At the level of its goals, the Plan does not set out clear environmental goals. Still, certain pathways adopted for activities designed to achieve both goals may contribute to the implementation of certain environmental objectives. However, it should be said at this point that the structure of the goals/objectives of the Plan is substantially developed, but it is not presented clearly.

Goal 1. Improving the competitiveness of the food-processing sector
This is not an environmental goal, as it refers to the economic aspects of agriculture and, more broadly, to the food-processing sector.

Goal 2. Sustainable development of rural areas.
This is not a strictly environmental goal, either. Given the essential components of the concept of sustainable development, it should be expected that this very broad goal also should contain environmental objectives in it. The sustainable development of rural areas is set out in the Plan. Thus, it may be hoped that within the framework of its implementation it will be possible to achieve certain environmental objectives.

Within the scope of Goal 2, some priorities were proposed, to which, specific measures were subordinated. Some of these measures will contribute to the achievement of environmental objectives to a greater extent, while others will do so to a lesser extent. The priorities include:

Priority 2.1 – Ensuring the equal opportunities for rural development;
Priority 2.2 – Environmental protection and the preservation of the natural values in rural areas;
Priority 2.3 – Increasing the wood cover rate in the country.

The Plan contains one direct environmental objective represented as Priority 2.2, although it is a very general one. Within the other two Priorities, some partial intention to pursue environmental objectives may also be discerned.
Priority 2.1.
Within the framework of this Priority related to ensuring the equal opportunities for the development of rural areas, following objectives were distinguished:

- ensuring the continuity of the land use for farming purposes and maintaining thereby the vitality of rural areas;
- preserving the landscape values in rural areas;
- promoting environment friendly agriculture.

The second and third objectives have environmental nature.

Priority 2.1. is to be implemented by Measure 3 “Support for farming in Less Favoured Areas (LFA)” (in mountain and lowland areas and those facing specific difficulties – in the foreland of the mountains). The aim of the support for less favoured areas, where the natural conditions are less suitable for the development of agriculture, is to maintain crop production where such production is less profitable. Such areas are threatened by depopulation and environmental degradation (these are, in particular, the areas in the mountains and in their foreland as well as those in the Eastern and South-western parts of the country).

Very important requirement to receive payment for LFA is to apply the Ordinary Good Agricultural Practice (applicable to the farmers assisted under this Measure). It should be regarded as an environmental criteria, but it may be unlikely to achieve its purpose, as there is no sufficient knowledge among farmers as well as the lack of experience and sufficient financial and technical capacity to consistently enforce it among inspection services.

Priority 2.2 – Environmental protection and the preservation of the natural values in rural areas
Within the framework of this Priority related to environmental protection and the preservation of the natural values in rural areas, Measure 4 “Support for agri-environmental schemes and the improvement of animal welfare” was proposed. It consists of projects designed to prevent the deterioration of the state of the natural environment and the natural values in rural areas and at some sites even to restore the values which have been lost.
The preservation of the landscape and a good condition of the environment allows for the preservation of the basis for the multi-functional development of these areas; thus, for their sustained and sustainable development. The following objectives of Measure 4 are listed:

- promotion of crop production systems managed in line with the requirements of environmental protection (preventing water pollution and soil erosion), the protection and shaping of the landscape, the conservation of wild species of fauna and flora threatened with extinction and their habitats;
- conservation of the genetic resources of livestock;
- raising of the level of environmental awareness in the rural population.

These detailed objectives are not measurable, either. An additional objective of the measure is to improve animal welfare at farms. The National Agri-environmental Programme consists of 7 agri-environmental packages.

The packages are related to agricultural management oriented on:

- environmental protection;
- conservation of habitats with high natural values;
- preservation of the genetic resources of livestock.

Each package involves a set of several strictly defined requirements which go beyond the ordinary good agricultural practice (however, farmers have to apply the principles of the ordinary good agricultural practice in the whole of their farms). The agri-environmental programme will be implemented in priority zones, which occupy about 32% of the territory of the country. Four zones were designated in area which will be treated as sensitive ecological areas in the future and those proposed for the Natura 2000 network.

The implementation of the agri-environmental schemes may bring such benefits as:

- conservation and preservation of biodiversity;
- preservation of the specific agricultural landscape and the cultural traditions of the countryside;
- enhancing the attractiveness of rural areas for tourists and lead to the development of other forms of activity.

Unfortunately, the present set of agri-environmental packages is very limited and not sufficient therefore it will not be possible to pursue all the environmental or ecological objectives which they might implement.
Priority 2.3 - Increasing the wood cover rate in the country.

This Priority related to increasing the wood cover rate in the country will be implemented through Measure 5 “Afforestation of farmland”.

The main goal of the programme for afforestation of farmland is to:

- expand forestland by afforestation of farmland which is hardly suitable for farming;
- maintain and strengthen the ecological stability of forest areas by reducing the fragmentation of forest complexes and creating ecological corridors;
- increasing the share of forests in the global carbon balance.

Apart from the general beneficial increase of the wood cover of the country, afforestation may play a role in strengthening the equilibrium of ecosystems and biodiversity, but provided that such afforestation is conducted properly. This means that afforestation should be excluded from wetlands, meadows, dry grassland, woodland clearing etc. – areas which are important for the preservation of the mosaic of habitats and biodiversity. The afforestation of too small areas, which will not be connected to the natural system of the surrounding areas, will prevent them from playing their functions. The overriding role of afforestation should be building the stability of the ecological system, strengthening of the ecological corridors structure and the establishment of protective areas (e.g. for the protection of water resources), instead of seeing exclusively financial aspects.

SOP “Restructuring and Modernisation of the Food-Processing Sector and Rural Development”

Three goals were set out within the framework of the agricultural SOP:

Goal 1 – Improving the competitiveness and the sustained and sustainable development of the agricultural sector

Goal 2 – Support for the processing industry to improve its competitive position

Goal 3 – Support for the multi-functional development of rural areas.

None of these goals is an environmental goal, although within the framework of Goals 1 and 3 it is possible to set out detailed environmental objectives.

Goal 1. Improving the competitiveness and the sustained and sustainable development of the agricultural sector

This goal involves inter alia the adjustment of the production conditions to the standards ensuring food safety, which are essential for the functioning of farms in the Internal Market. Investment projects designed to improve hygienic, sanitary and quality standards in food production as well as measures to protect the environment may influence reduction of the adverse pressure exerted by the sector on the environment.
Goal 2. Support for the processing industry to improve its competitive position

The support for the processing industry to improve its competitive position aims at modernisation of the sector which processes agricultural produce in terms of veterinary, hygienic and environmental standards. Support will be provided to investment projects designed to improve the standards ensuring food safety and also measures aimed at protection of the environment and improving conditions under which animals are kept.

Goal 3. Support for the multi-functional development of rural areas.

The support for the multi-functional development of rural areas is to be ensured by supporting the sustainable development of these areas; thus, by creating the conditions for diversified economic activities conducted with respect for the environmental aspects and the development of social and cultural functions as well as by ensuring good living conditions for their residents. Thus, again, at the level of non-articulated detailed objectives, there is an environmental goal.

In addition to the goals, the agricultural SOP sets out priorities. Just as in the Rural Development Plan, the structure and interdependence of the goals and priorities of the Programme are not sufficiently clear as to their hierarchy and mutual relations. The following priorities have been set out:

Priority I – Support for changes and adjustments in the food-processing sector; and

Priority II – Sustainable development of rural areas

Priority I. Support for changes and adjustments in the food-processing sector

Within the framework of the support for changes and adjustments in the food-processing sector will be implemented:

- investment projects primarily designed to improve the competitiveness of farms and the living conditions of the rural population,
- environmental investment projects;

Detailed environmental objectives have not been clearly defined, nor represented as measurable ones (within the framework of the measures: “Investments in farms”, “Support for the setting up of young farmers” and “The improvement of processing and marketing of agricultural products”). Specific environmental objectives can be achieved by non-investment measures (measures: “Training” and “Support for farm advisory services”).

Priority II. Sustainable development of rural areas

Within the framework of priority II, support will be provided to several measures. Some of measures were designed to achieve certain environmental objectives - e.g. they support water protection from the pollutions (the measure „development and improvement of the technical infrastructure connected with agriculture”) or protection of landscape value (the measures „village renewal and the maintenance and conservation of the cultural heritage” and „Pilot Leader+ Program”).

However, some other measures can provide treats for the environment and especially treat for biodiversity. E.g. the measure reparcelling, which may lead to the liquidation of greenery belts separating fields and farms as well as measure “the management of agricultural water
resources”, within the framework of which mostly land amelioration projects were planned, which may lead to farther drainage.

A very important measure is the “Pilot Leader+ Programme”, as it promotes bottom up approach. It provides opportunities for the drawing up local development strategies based on the principles of sustainable development and creates the conditions for establishment of local partnerships.

**General comment:**
As indicated above, both of these documents contain environmental objectives, but they are vary general and very fragmentary. There is no complete integration of environmental policy in the agriculture sector and rural development.

### 3.2. Proposal for environmental objectives and targets.

In chapter 2 section 2.2 general objectives of the main environmental problems of the rural areas were proposed. To the projected objectives some targets are being proposed. Through realization of proposed targets it should be possible to delivery environmental objectives.

The idea was to counteract adverse processes which are already taking place in rural areas and those that we are afraid will yet come.

**Priority environmental objectives proposed in the chapter 2.2:**

I. The conservation of the landscape structure, natural values (including biodiversity) and soils in the Polish rural areas.

II. The protection of underground water resources and the improvement of ecological quality of surface water in the Polish rural areas.

**Objective I “The conservation of the landscape structure, natural values (including biodiversity) and soils in the Polish rural areas”:**

**Targets:**
- Maintain at least 50% of the traditional landscape of rural areas at least at HNV areas or in NATURA 2000 designated sites;
- Maintain at least 40% of mosaic–like structure of rural landscape and preventing the decline of landscape features at least in HNV areas or in NATURA 2000 sites;
- Maintain at least 50% of semi-natural habitats and species related to rural areas in NATURA 2000 sites and HNV areas;
- Ensure implementation of the High Nature Value farming and Natura 2000 sites in rural areas;
- Make obligatory integration of the rural landscape planes into spatial planes in order to maintaining natural and landscape values.
Objective II. The protection of underground water resources and the improvement of ecological quality of surface water in the Polish rural areas

Targets:

• Maintain at least at present level of the pollution of surface waters and water habitat eutrophication by nitrates, phosphates and other pollutants originating from agricultural runoffs (from crop production and breeding);

• decrease by 15% of underground water pollution by nitrates, phosphates and other pollutants originating from agricultural runoffs (from crop production and breeding);

• Preventing an increase in groundwater abstraction for municipal, crop production and food processing;

• Stop the fall in water retention capacity due to the increased run off rates caused by e.g. field drainage and soil compaction and river bed regulation.
4. The use of RDP measures

4.1. The assessment of RDP measures in terms of their consistence with the proposed objectives in chapter 2.

In RD Plane for year 2004-2006 following measures were designed:

Measure 1. Improving the Processing and Marketing of Agricultural and Fishery Products.
Measure 2. Investment in Agricultural Holdings.
Measure 3. The Development of Rural Infrastructure.
Measure 4. Diversification of Economic Activities in Rural Areas.
Measure 5. Agri-environmental Measures and Afforestation (pilot projects).
Measure 6. Vocational Training.
Measure 7. Technical Assistance

Additional measure: Complements to direct payments

The principal part (76.5%) of the financial resources envisaged in the Plane was allocated to 7 basic measures within two main priorities of the Plan and the Technical Assistance measure, i.e. for supporting the implementation of the Plan. Unfortunately, the other resources were allocated for different purposes – for supplementing direct payments (19.6%) and for supplementary co-financing of the projects submitted and approved within the framework of the SAPARD Programme (3.9%). The table below presents the percentage shares of the resources allocated to the individual measures of the Plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RDP priorities and measures</th>
<th>Percentage share in total resources allocated for the implementation of RDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priority A Improving the competitiveness of agricultural holdings</td>
<td>29.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early retirements</td>
<td>17.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to semi-subsistence farms</td>
<td>10.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural producer groups</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priority B Sustainable development of rural areas</strong></td>
<td><strong>46.50</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for farming in less-favoured areas (LFAs)</td>
<td>27.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for agri-environmental schemes and improvement of animal welfare</td>
<td>9.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afforestation of agricultural land</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation of agricultural holdings to EU standards</td>
<td>6.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priorities A and B as a total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>75.52</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other measures</strong></td>
<td><strong>24.48</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementing direct payments</td>
<td>19.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects approved under Regulation (EC) No. 1268/1999</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[co-financing for the SAPARD Programme]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The allocation of resources in the Plan for the individual measures indicate that the main goal that the Polish authorities want to achieve through this Plan is to support farmers’ incomes.

It is planned that a large part of the Plan resources (46.5%) is to be spent within the priority B- sustainable development of rural areas, but the only measure of distinctly environmental nature is support for agri-environmental schemes and the improvement of animal welfare (9.7% of the budget)

Another measure that can have environmental impact is LFA measure, although the main objective of the support for farmers in LFA areas is to prevent the abandonment of farming and permanent resignation from land cultivation. It should contribute to, at least, the conservation of the landscape structure in some areas and to the conservation of their natural values. The adoption of the criteria for the designation of LFAs which are not connected with the system of protected areas (existing and those which will be in future) prevents the resources designated to support farmers in these areas from being recognised as directly serving the purposes of nature conservation and environmental protection.

Therefore, only agri-environmental schemes can be regarded as those that directly serve nature conservation purposes. To certain extend afforestation measure covers nature conservation issue, on the condition, that strict control is carried out on areas that are going to be afforested. Although, the implementation of the afforestation measure may bring both positive and negative environmental effects. The direct positive environmental effects include:

- improvement of the protection against erosion and flood,
- protection of water resources and the augmentation of wood cover itself,
- creating thereby the conditions for strengthening forest ecosystems.
- strengthening of ecological corridors

However, the afforestation of areas which must not be afforested or incorrect afforestation may generate dangers to the natural environment. Such a danger may primarily be the risk of reducing biodiversity in the areas of new forest plantations. Other danger that may be posed by afforestation is decrease of population of birds- as specific bird species are very strictly connected to specific habitats. The simultaneous afforestation of large parts of slopes may lead to more intense erosion by causing the exposure of deeper soil strata in the course of plantation. Usually, afforestation is also unfavourable for ecologically extreme habitats – which are distinctly wet and marshy, and those particularly dry, especially the thermophilous ones. Indeed, young plantings, particularly those of pine, cause, as a rule, a decline in the number of plant species present in the planted area compared with the adjacent non-forest communities (e.g. sand-based grassland, meadows or heathland). The sites which must not be afforested, either, also include mid-forest clearings – places with high biological diversity and important ecological functions.

The implementation of other RDP measures:

- early retirements
- support for semi-subsistence farms
- support for groups of agricultural producers

may have an adverse impact on the environment, which does not mean that these measures present dangers only.
However, they will not bring any new types of danger to the environment, but they may cause intensification of existing farming systems. The intensification of agriculture is expected to improve the competitiveness of farms implementing mentioned measures.

However, provided that measure is used to support the placing on the market of the products of organic farming, the measure “Support for agricultural producer groups” may substantially contribute to the development of this farming system, with benefits for the environment. Also young farmers who, as a rule, intensify their production and often expand the surface area of their holdings may increase the pressure on environment.

Assessing RDP measures in terms of their consistence with the proposed objectives in chapter 2 it is necessary to remind objectives.

Priority environmental objectives proposed in the chapter 2.2:

I. The conservation of the landscape structure, natural values (including biodiversity) and soils in the Polish rural areas.

II. The protection of underground water resources and the improvement of ecological quality of surface water in the Polish rural areas.

As it is presented below in the table agri-environmental measures contribute to the implementation of proposed objectives through the extensification of agricultural production and reduction of the pressures on the environment made by agriculture. Effects of agri-environmental schemes may include both the conservation of biodiversity, the maintenance of landscape values in certain regions as well as the protection of waters and the protection of soils against erosion. An essential condition for the achievement of positive environmental effects from the implementation of agri-environmental schemes is compliance with the principles of the Ordinary Good Agricultural Practice, which are a mandatory requirement for these schemes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RDP measures</th>
<th>proposed objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>support for agri-environment schemes and the improvement of animal welfare following packages:</td>
<td>objective I and objective II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sustainable development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• organic farming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• maintenance of extensive meadows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• maintenance of extensive pastures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• protection of soils and wasters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• buffer zones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support for agri-environment schemes and the improvement of animal welfare following packages</td>
<td>objective I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• preservation of local livestock breeds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support for agriculture in less-favoured areas</td>
<td>indirect contribution to the implementation of the objective I and objective II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afforestation of agricultural land</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moreover, as regards the other measures of the plan: measures “**support for agriculture in less-favoured areas**” and “**afforestation of agricultural land**” will indirectly contribute to the implementation of Objectives I and II.

The **support for holdings in less-favoured areas** in nearest years will contribute to the implementation of environmental objectives on the condition that farmers comply with the requirements of the Ordinary Good Agricultural Practice (the enforcement of such compliance will be very important) and that the financial resources granted to farmers are not spent to intensify the agricultural production, which would cause new or greater dangers to the environment. Since the areas eligible for LFA payments are often areas vulnerable to pollution, it is important to maintain higher environmental standards as the condition for these payments. Therefore, it seems important for these payments – which are, however, additional to direct payments – to be not only a sort of compensations for more difficult farming conditions, but also to trigger additional activity for the environment by farmers through their specifically more stringent requirements.

The **measure afforestation of agricultural land** may contribute to the implementation of Objective I, however, it will depend on which areas are afforested. In a longer term, the afforestation will also support Objective II, i.e. contribute to water protection.

The effect of the **measure adaptation of agricultural holdings to EU standards** focused on the implementation of environmental objectives will depend on the types of projects launched - whether these resources will be used to carry out investment project on the implementation of environmental standards or if it will be other undertakings. RDP envisages the possibility of the implementation investment projects to equip agricultural holdings with manure storage vessels – their implementation will support the achievement of Goal II.

The other RDP measures (“early retirements”, “support to semi-subsistence farms” and “agricultural producer groups”) will not have positive effect on the achievement of proposed environmental RDP objectives. Their potential negative effects were discussed in the former chapter.

### 4.2. Proposals of measures in terms of their consistence with the proposed objectives in chapter 2.

Taking into account developments of the section 4.1. in order to deliver proposed environmental objectives and targets it is necessary to improve existing and create new measures. It is necessary to:

- application of agri-environmental schemes to a much wider extent than in present RDP. It would be necessary to introduce such packages as:
  - conservation of natural features (such as peat-bogs, rushes, herbal bushes) and mid-field clusters of trees,
  - protection of soil against erosion,
- maintenance of open areas in the landscape,
- conservation of traditional orchards
- preservation of old varieties of crops and the wider use of the package designed to preserve the local livestock breeds (more livestock types and breeds\textsuperscript{30})
- restoration of water ponds,
- planting and renovation of mid-field clusters of trees and shrubs,
- preservation of old crop varieties,
- renaturalisation of meadows and pastures by transforming cultivated meadows into semi-natural ones and the transformation of arable fields into permanent grassland, mainly pastures,
- Meadow package aimed at the reduction of invasive plants
- Meadow package aimed at compensation for cultivating distant meadows and pastures.
- removal of invasive vegetation
- creating specialist packages that would include the needs of the most prominent bird species, e.g. “aquatic warbler,” corncrake,” or “black grouse
- retaining cultural and historical values of the region;

- implement new actions aimed at retaining the traditional rural landscape of the areas of high environmental value.

- implement properly the Ordinary Good Agricultural Practice, which is the basis for the implementation of agri-environmental schemes and support to agricultural holdings in LFAs. It will certainly have positive effect on reducing the pressures on the environment which arise from pollution of agricultural origin. (\textit{Unfortunately in the next programming period European Commission would like to resign from the requirement that for payments within the framework of agri-environmental schemes and for LFAs the requirements will be higher then for other payments without extra money. This will mean also that requirements may be reduced in respect of those in place now. Some higher standards should be maintained particularly for farmers in LFA areas so as to prevent their conviction that these payments are only formal and that nothing is demanded from the farmer in return for them});

- maintain higher environmental standards for farmers implementing agri-environmental schemes and receiving LFA payments;

- adopt the use of agri-environmental schemes in such a way as to allow to a greater extent for the achievement of environmental objectives (including an expansion of the list of packages). It is also necessary to ensure that new packages fit to the varied local conditions and may be implemented on the wide territory. Such packages could be focused on:
  - the conservation of the habitats of fish ponds, within which the damage caused by protected bids would be covered; and

\textsuperscript{30} It is very important to change actual situation and make those animals possible to get for farmers – now the farmers which wont to breeding those animals have problems with baying them.
the protection of waters against chemical agents by introducing payments for non-use of these agents in zones directly adjacent to surface waters;

- implement proper scope of potential beneficiaries proposed by EFARD Regulation measure “Payments for Natura 2000 sites” so that not only farmers, but also the other owners of land situated in the network could use it (including non-governmental organisations, companies providing tourist services);

- adopt environmental criteria related to biodiversity conservation as the criteria for access to the afforestation measures as well as broader environmental criteria for the measure designed to improve technical infrastructure in rural areas, which in the next programming period will be a combination of two existing measures – those related to infrastructure and rural water resource management;

- adopt new measures such as:
  - financing of the investment costs of wider programmes to renaturalise river valleys, designed to eliminate the effects of earlier regulation and land amelioration works as well as the possible movement of flood protection embankments farther from the river beds;
  - the grant of payments for the readiness to allow flooding of farmland in river valleys, in connection with floods.
  - the grant of financial compensation to the owners of private lands situated within the boundaries of national and landscape parks in return for their compliance with the ban on land use change (e.g., from farmland to land for construction purposes) or in return for the implementation of changes suggested by the boards of national parks.

- The authentic implementation of the environmental objectives in the future Rural Development Plan will require the allocation of large financial resources for environmentally sound measures (primarily, for agri-environmental schemes and payments for Natura 2000 sites, but also for investment measures related to environmental protection, i.e., designed to eliminate the related gaps in equipment).

Strong support is needed from spatial and environmental policies and they need to be strongly integrated. It is necessary to:

- Strengthen the rank and role of spatial planning and make strong its integration with environmental goals

  **Proper use of the system of environmental impact assessments**
  More nature values and other nature connected aspects in environmental assessments need to be taken into consideration;

- **Further improvement of environmental law and its rigorously enforcement**
  Full implementation of the Water Framework Directive to the Polish law is needed;

- **The development of Civil Society with environment friendly attitudes**
  For achieving this goal the substantially improvement of the poor environmental awareness of rural residents is needed, but this can be much supported by wide training activities and information and education campaigns should be addressed both to farmers and the other residents and users of rural areas, and also by proper use of advisory services. The correct arrangement of instruments supporting agriculture will be of basic significance for the achievement of this objective, so that farmers can discern the
profitability and importance of implementing measures which are desirable from the point of view of environmental protection. This why it is necessary to expand among others the range of agri-environmental schemes and introduce to the widest extent possible new, environmentally friendly agri-environmental support instruments as well as to ensure the consistent enforcement of environmental requirements, primarily by applying the principles of the Ordinary Good Agricultural Practice.

**In the ANNEX I** – additional list of measures that can be used to address environmental objectives and targets that has been proposed in earlier chapters. The list is based on the present Council Regulation No. 1257/99 and the proposal for a new Council Regulation.
5. Mechanisms of the implementation of RDP

5.1. Evaluation of the existing implementation mechanisms

Not so much time has passed since the implementation of the Rural Development Plan began in Poland and not all the measures under the Plan have already been launched. They are made available gradually; therefore, it is difficult to fully evaluate how the prepared implementation mechanisms have worked in practice. Both the main implementing body - Agency for the Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture (the Paying Authority), the advisory services, farmers and other rural residents who wish to receive assistance only gather their first experiences. For the first time, the farmers and other beneficiaries in rural areas can make use of such a large number of assistance pathways; indeed, this is the first year when not only RDP measures, but also the measures under the SOP “Restructuring and Modernisation of the Food-Processing Sector and Rural Development” have been implemented, and so have direct payments and measures under the Integrated Regional Operational Programme.

On the basis of talks held by the Institute for Sustainable Development at selected agricultural advisory centres31 and the offices of the Agency32 and on the basis of analysis of the information available to the public on the opportunities to use RDP measures, it should be said that large number of trainings and information meetings for farmers were conducted as part of the preparations for the implementation of the Plan. As a rule, they were held jointly for RDP and SOP measures;

First trainings were intended for advisory services and the field staff of the Agency. As the second step advisory services trained potential beneficiaries- farmers.

Information regarding meetings for farmers were publicised in the rural communities:

- primarily through agricultural advisory centres;
- local authorities;
- village chiefs and co-operative banks;

Advisory services organised two-stage training courses for farmers, attended by about 70,000 farmers throughout the country. The first stage consisted of general information meetings and the second stage included meetings demonstrating how the particular applications should be filled in.

Information received from the chambers of agriculture and farmers indicated that:

- not all meetings with farmers provided them with sufficient knowledge
- not all the legal grounds for the implementation of these schemes had been published (that caused a lot of difficulties for potential beneficiaries)

---

31 Interviews were realised in National Advisory Centre for Agriculture and Rural Areas Development in Brwinów (from January 1, 2005 will be transform into Centre for Agricultural Advisory) and in 3 advisory centres within the Mazovian Region, and materials obtained there were used.
32 Interviews were realised in Headquarter of the paying agency (the Agency for the Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture), in it’s regional office for Mazovian Region and also in three district (in powiat’s) offices.
there is large number of different support pathways which is offered to farmers within the framework of various programmes and a lot of knowledge that sometimes can not be

In all the agricultural advisory centres, training courses were provided to advisors expected to offer assistance in the scope of both RDP and SOP measures (minimum one person per office).

The advisors who were to provide assistance in developing 5-year agri-environmental plans for the implementation of agri-environmental schemes had to take part in specialised training series and obtain special qualifications. In the first round of training courses, 254 of such advisors were trained and so were 256 in the second round, so that there are now 510 of them altogether – next training are in the process of preparation.

The advisors mainly came from agricultural advisory centres; however, in the second round of training courses, some of the trained advisors were persons from chambers of agriculture (104), the nature conservation services and local governments. However, it seems that much more advisors would be needed to service the agri-environmental schemes, which would be more developed in the future than the present ones, and to meet, hopefully, the growing interest in them. There are concerns, too, whether all the advisors are sufficiently well prepared for their roles; whether they have sufficient knowledge in the range of both agriculture and natural sciences.

On 1 January 2005 new Act on Agricultural Advisory Service Units (Official Journal of 22 October 2004)\(^33\) has come into force. This new law introduces a new structure of advisory services. There is a danger that this reform will weaken the relations between local and national advisory centres, which may have an unfavourable effect on the quality of services given by the advisors. Act’s provisions state that advice on agri-environmental programmes, may become paid. Against that provision farmers’ organisations protested, but no changes in the Law till may have been made. There are concerns that poor farmers, who often have farms in the areas of the greatest importance for the implementation of agri-environmental programmes, would resign from such assistance and, thereby, from the implementation of these programmes.

The implementation of the measures laid down in the RDP document, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 2 March 2004, began on 15 April 2004, thus, even before Poland’s accession to the European Union (i.e. before 1 May 2004) and before the European Commission formally approved RDP (the European Commission approved the Plan only on 6 September 2004). At the time of accession, most enabling Regulations on the implementation of the particular RDP measures had not been adopted and the Paying Agency did not have the full accreditation which it needed to handle all the measures. This created a situation of a high risk that the deadlines announced for the payments of the grants which farmers were to apply for would not be met – indeed, it so happened making many farmers very disappointed.

From 15 April to 25 July 2004, at the same time that applications for direct payments were submitted for 2004, farmers submitted their applications under the measure “Support for farming in less-favoured areas (LFAs)” (these applications were an integral part of the applications for direct payments). They were submitted by almost all the farmers who had applied for direct payments and whose farms were located in this type of areas. Applications were submitted for 84% of the surface area of Poland’s farmland which was designated as

---

\(^33\) The law from October 22, 2004 (o jednostkach doradztwa rolniczego - Dz. U. 251/2004, poz. 2507).
LFAs, whereas the applications for area payments represented only about 70% of the farmland for which these payments could be granted. The largest numbers of applications for support under this measure were submitted in Mazowieckie, Wielkopolskie and Łódzkie Provinces (113,486; 70,781 and 64,606 applications until 15 November 2004); with the lowest numbers from Opolskie and Lubuskie Provinces (6,142 and 13,660 applications). Not all the farmers entitled to receive LFA payments were given a chance to submit these applications.

The implementation of the measure “Early retirements” began on 2 August 2004. A very large interest in the pensions could be seen (more than 19,000 applications were already submitted until 15 November 2004). The interest greatly exceeded the expectations; therefore, there is the risk that the resources planned for this measure may turn out to be insufficient, which may pose a specific danger. The interest in this measure is very varied among regions; it is the greatest in Mazowieckie and Łódzkie Provinces (3,285 and 2,229 applications submitted until 15 November 2004) and the lowest in Lubuskie and Śląskie Provinces (206 and 448 applications)34.

The measure “Afforestation of agricultural land” was launched on 1 September 2004 and farmers can submit their applications for 2004 until the end of year 2005. The interest which farmers declare in this measure is large; still, given the difficulty to complete the necessary documentation, to date only 51 applications have been submitted in Poland (as of 15 November 2004), including their largest numbers in Lubelskie Province (11) and Podkarpackie Province (9). 5-6 applications have been submitted in Dolnośląskie, Wielkopolskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie Provinces, whereas several or none have been filed in the others.

“Support for agri-environmental schemes and improvement of animal welfare” was another measure which was also launched on 1 September 2004. It is the most important environmental instrument of so-called second pillar of the reformed Common Agricultural Policy. Until 15 November 2004, 3,604 applications had been submitted throughout the country for the implementation of agri-environmental schemes, including 3,589 applications for the implementation of the organic farming package and only 15 applications for the other packages. The main reason for the difference is that in case of the organic farming package the deadline was set on 1 October 2004, by which date farmers had to submit their applications in order to be able to receive the payments for 2004; whereas the applications for the other measures concern 2005 and will be considered only after 16 January 2005, this why farmers have a time for submission the applications. Moreover, the farmers who ran organic farms or intended to change their farms into organic ones were very anxious to use this measure, given the fact that in 2004 the state budget support they had enjoyed formerly each year (from 1999) was stopped. However, the information collected indicates that even more farmers were interested in shifting to organic farming, but not all of them managed to complete the relevant documentation and submit their applications.

In respect of the measure “Support for agri-environmental schemes and improvement of animal welfare”, in some regions of Poland the official information and training activities conducted by the state services were supplemented by the activities of non-governmental organisations. Some organisations dealing with the issues of nature conservation- including WWF PL - published information materials on the essence and significance of agri-environmental schemes and organic farming; in the areas where they carried out their

34 See Footnote 87.
projects, they also conducted their information campaigns and even training courses. Although, in general, these actions were limited in their range, still, they certainly played a significant role in some regions with high natural values.

**Within the framework of the Agricultural SOP**, two measures are very popular: “Setting up of young farmers” (with 3,237 applications submitted all over Poland by 15 November 2004) and “Investments in farms” (with 1,550 applications by 15 November 2004). Among other measures, it is only for the measure “Diversification of agricultural activities and activities close to agriculture to provide multiple activities and alternative incomes” that any large number of applications have been submitted (128). Substantial regional differences can be seen with respect to the interest in the SOP resources, with distinctly more applications submitted in Wielkopolskie and Mazowieckie Provinces (776 and 762 applications), and with the smallest numbers in Podkarpackie and Śląskie Provinces (86 and 98).35

Farmers do not use SOP measures to implement investment projects to reduce environmental pollution, but submit their applications seeking support for purchases of agricultural equipment. The only form of environmentally sound investment projects, which is popular is the construction of manure plates and animal waste storage facilities. Since the condition for the use of the resources for investments in farms is compliance with the EU standards, many farmers do not use the resources of the SOP measure “Investments in farms” until the RDP measure “Adaptation of agricultural holdings to EU standards” has been launched. When those investments are implemented within the framework of the SOP, together with another project, farmers have to co-finance them in part. Therefore, to date the measure “Investments in farms” has been mainly used by the farmers who gained resources for the construction of plates and storage facilities from the SAPARD programme or had implemented them earlier on their own.

**Main problems in the field of implementation of RD measures were identified:**

- delays in the publication of the legal basis for the implementation of these programmes (with changes coming many times) and in the transfer of other important information to the local units;
- the lack of good information materials on the programmes, which would be available much in advance of the deadlines for the launch of the collection of applications;
- problems in gaining assistance from agri-environmental advisors for the drawing up of agri-environmental plans for the implementation of packages other than organic farming;
- lack of wider informative campaign focused on the other measures than direct payments. Only information that was promoted in TV was campaign on direct payments and early retirements;
- lack of information regarding measures aimed at improvement of environmental standards;
- not sufficient number of well trained advisors- especially in the field of agri-environmental programmes;

---

35 See Footnote 87.
• Lack of sufficient number of printed materials (books) on Ordinary Good Agricultural Practice (even that farmers have to meet its requirements to receive payments in Less Favoured Areas and within the framework of agri-environmental schemes). Printed number of books was not sufficient even for the advisors;

• Not certain effect of the implementation of new Act on Agricultural Advisory Service Units that came into force on 1 January 2005. It may create situation that advice in the field of agri-environmental schemes will not be free of charge, that may endanger present - weak - implementation of these programmes.

5.2. Proposal of the improvement of delivery mechanisms

Basing on the described in previous chapter existing delivery mechanism it is necessary to:

• start preparation to the implementation of the rural development programme for 2007-2013 should as much in advance as necessary.

• prepare special information service on RDP and SOP that provide detailed and uniform interpretation of the provisions of the legislation. That could be used by advisors, staff of the offices of the Implementing Authority, farmers and other interested parties.

• train larger number of advisors in the field of agri-environmental programmes.

• maintain free of charge advisory services for less affluent farmers. There are concerns that poor farmers, would resign from such assistance specially for agri-environmental schemes.

• create a balance of information between measures focused on intensification of agricultural production and measures focused on sustainable rural development.

• develop detailed guidance for local authorities on the preparation of certificates concerning afforestation. This occasion should be availed to inform the local authorities of the need to check whether the land proposed for afforestation is not located within the range of the NATURA 2000 sites submitted to the European Commission.

• carry out/ repeat training courses for farmers in the scope of compliance with the requirements of the Ordinary Good Agricultural Practice. Also it is necessary to prepare larger amount of information materials on this subject that could be available to farmers.

• develop system of advisors certification – to provide farmers and interested stakeholders with proper and professional information.

• prepare and distribute professionally prepared information materials available for advisors, farmers, NGOs and land and forest manages/owners.

• Provide sufficient funding for advisory services to visit farms in practice.
6 Public participation

6.1. Evaluation of the existing mechanisms of public participation

The preparation of the Rural Development Plan was based on inter-ministerial consultations and on those with scientific advisory bodies. The participants in consultations carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development were:

- Ministry of the Environment,
- other Ministries,
- Agency for the Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture,
- Foundation of Assistance Programmes for Agriculture (FAPA),
- research institutes of the Ministry of Agriculture (National Advisory Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development, Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics, Institute for Land Reclamation and Grassland Farming)
- Polish Academy of Science.

In frame of the consultations seminars and workshops with mentioned bodies were carried out. They focussed on the selection of measures for the Programme, defining the possible extent of support within the framework of these measures, the financing levels and the system of the implementing institutions. The assumptions of the Plan were presented in the course of numerous meetings organised at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, at other Ministries and in all the provinces – with Regional Task Groups (represented by regional administrative bodies and experts).

The programming stage - consisted of the selection of objectives, implementation mechanisms and designing instruments – was based on consultations within the State administration and consultations with scientific communities. Public participation in this stage was minimized. The “outside consultations” were held only with scientific community but they failed to bring satisfactory input (according to the Ministry).

Only in the case of agri-environmental schemes the type of public consultations were held– the regions and provincial authorities were offered freedom in the selection of zones and packages (their choice was later limited in order to reduce the number of packages). In many cases, the Voivodship Implementing Teams, set up for this purpose in regions, included representatives of non-governmental organisations. In the case of other instruments, a centralised approach was applied, on the grounds that they relate to whole country.

The draft Rural Development Plan for 2004 to 2006 was subjected to so called “public consultations” – although it was not really coordinated. The first draft of the Plan – version of October 2002- (as the only version) was published on the Ministry’s website. The comments communicated on this draft were taken into account in the second draft of the Plan, which was drawn up in March 2003. Again, this version was published on website and thus subjected to public consultations. However, the problem that was often communicated, was the lack of information on the launching of the consultation process. As a result interested parties did not often join the process in time.
The technical mechanism used for public consultation was:

- publication of the draft Plan on the Ministry of Agriculture website. (however the information about the possibility of consultation and procedure was missing)

No information was distributed about the beginning of consultation and the process itself. In the same time public consultations of the National Agro Environmental Programme were held for one of RDP’s measures. This duality of the consultation process was misleading – even the Ministry do not distinguish both paths, insisting that NGOs that participated in consultation of National Agri-Environmental Programme (NAEP) did in effect consult whole RDP, which is not correct.

The RD Plan was subjected to consultations, with the participation of Ministries, scientific advisory institutions, the institutes subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development as well as institutions, organisations and trade unions enumerated in Annex R to RDP (a total of 32 non-governmental and trade organisations which had been invited directly by the Ministry to consult the Plan document).

Regional (provincial) meetings were also organised in all 16 regions, with the representatives of Marshall Offices, Voivodeship Offices, Powiat Offices, Gmina Offices and farmers’ organizations. Each of the meetings was attended by 100 to 400 persons. In many cases, however, the participants in these meetings did not include representatives of environmental organisations and other non-governmental organisations active in rural areas, since in many regions the marshal’s offices invited to these meetings primarily their partners related to agriculture.

Public consultations of National Agri-environmental Programme differed significantly. There were 5 consultation meetings (including the one on May 15-16th with representatives of Marshal Offices, Regional Task Teams and NGOs from whole country, and the one on October 30th and November 6th with participation of farmers and agriculture advisors). The purpose of those meetings was to set up the concept how to implement agri-environmental schemes in Poland both in the spatial dimension (Priority Zones) and in regard to possible packages available for the particular regions. The number of participants of those meetings varied from 80 to 120.

In the process of RD Plane preparation Ministry of Agriculture proposed very big reduction of packages in agri-environmental schemes. Although NGOs had vigorously lobbied against the reduction of number of packages, the Ministry decided to reinstate only token number (2) of reduced packages.

Some results of the consultation process and the parallel ex-ante evaluation were taken into account in the work on the successive versions of the Plan. Some remarks coming from the public were used in the RDP draft made in August 2003 and some in final RDP from November 2003. There was no unified set of comments from consultation process – together with coupled position of the drafting team - therefore it is not possible to ascertain how many and what type of comments were treated favourably and which were rejected.

During programming phase no resources were allocated for the training of non-governmental partners in the scope of the relevant EU legislation and policy. During implementation phase the only financial resources that could support dissemination of the information (TA) are not available for NGOs.
The public participation in the implementation and monitoring of RDP and SOP-Agriculture is based on the Steering and Monitoring Committees. Some obstacles were encountered in the selection of the representatives of non-governmental organisations for these committees related to the absence of relevant procedures in the Ministry of Agriculture. Ministry invited only several chosen organisations and asked them to elect their representative. The Steering Committee was divided into two committees: for RDP and for SOP.

There was no representative of eNGOs in Steering Committee for SOP-Agriculture. It was caused by lack of interest on the side of Ministry of Agriculture and limited lobbying efforts from the NGOs to join this committee. In turn, on request of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, it was the Ministry of the Environment that organised the election for the Steering Committee for RDP. The RDP Steering Committee has been dealing with only one RDP measure, “Technical assistance”. The Ministry believed that the other measures did not require any decision of the Steering Committee.

Main problems in existing mechanisms of public participation were identified:

- absence of a liaison institution/organisation for the “third sector”, which would facilitate the transfer of information and conduct the process of public consultations (problem communicated by the Ministry of Agriculture);
- lack of clear concept how the consultation process should be organized;
- not clear timetable of the RDP preparations, scope of consultations and on which stage the consultations are being held;
- parallel conduct of the work and consultations on RDP and SOP-Agriculture, which were addressed to different beneficiaries and consulted with different partners. The Ministry had some problems with the coordination of work on these documents;
- the main media used for informing about consultations was Ministry of Agriculture website. This was the main form in which the draft Plan was made public;
- only one daily newspaper “Rzeczpospolita” published a notice on the possibility of taking part in the consultations of the Plan;
- no action was taken by the public administration to build the capacity and strengthen the ability of the public to participate in the process of consultations on such complex documents;
- not clear procedures for choosing representatives of NGOs to Steering Committees. Also work in Steering Committees has rather informative character instead of real influencing decision-making process;
- lack of clear and transparent procedures of government-NGOs cooperation;
- no financial resources were allocated for the training of non-governmental partners in the scope of the relevant EU legislation and policy. During implementation phase the only financial resources that could support dissemination of the information (TA) are not available for NGOs.
6.2 Proposals for improvements of mechanisms of public participation

The process of the preparation of RDP and the document itself was new- both for the administration and for wider public. At present, both Ministry and NGOs have the time and experience; therefore, when the next Rural Development Plan is prepared it will be possible to conduct more thorough consultations, starting already with the first stage.

**Basing on the described in previous chapter existing public participation mechanisms, it is necessary to:**

- form the basis for full public participation in the early development of the Programme. It is important to create a clear concept how the consultation process should be organized;
- develop and disseminate time schedule of the work on the preparation of the documents. It is important to set up dates and venues for public consultations;
- establish institution/organisation, which could facilitate the transfer of information and help with the process of public consultations. Forum of Animation of Rural Areas could play such a role;
- prepare and keep a permanent mailing list of organisations which professionally deal with the issues related to the content of the Plan and can be consulted. The drafting team should then engage in continuous correspondence with listed NGOs. The Ministry could identify such organisations among those active in Poland and then keep the list open and disseminate information on its existence;
- create and make public in advance, clear time table of the RDP preparations, scope of consultations and on which stage the consultations are being held;
- take action to expand information channels, by using mass media, creating public debates, press clubs, placing the information on the most popular NGO internet portals. Useful would be also organisation of seminars, participation of representatives of the Ministry in seminars and conferences organised by different stakeholders in order to present the assumptions of the Plan and then the Plan itself;
- place on the Ministry of Agriculture website consulted documents and also relevant provisions of legislation, particularly good and authorised Polish versions of EU legislation, scientific analyses etc. Consulted documents publicly accessible should be continuously updated, containing questions, comments and opinions submitted in response as well as the answers and position of the Ministry;
- it is necessary to build the capacity and strengthen the ability of the public (incl. NGOs) to participate in the process of consultations on documents in the field of agriculture and rural development;
- establish clear procedures for choosing representatives of NGOs to Steering Committees and make Steering Committees real influencing decision-making process;
- establish clear and transparent procedures of government-NGOs cooperation;
- allocate some financial resources for the training of non-governmental partners in the scope of the relevant EU legislation and policy.
• enhance the involvement of the Regional Task Teams, which could involve also representatives of NGOs, in the process of development and consultations of instruments other than agri-environmental schemes;

• provide non-governmental partners with drafts of the documents and the results of independent expert analyses prepared by independent institutions.
7. Indicators – measures, monitoring and evaluation

7.1. Evaluation of the existing RDP monitoring system and indicators

Existing Monitoring System

Planned monitoring system for Rural Development Plan 2004-2006 is primarily based on the use of the comprehensive central database which is being established at the Paying Agency - the Agency for the Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture. This database is expected to be compatible with the Integrated Administration Control System (IACS), the work on which is to be concluded in the next 2.5 years. Data from the beneficiaries' applications and from all the documents related to the administration and implementation of these applications will be entered into this database. Data will be collected and processed in order to control and monitor implementation of the individual measures and implementation of the Plan.

The indicators proposed for monitoring of RDP are based only on the data from the aforementioned databases of the Paying Agency. However planned indicators will not allow for complete evaluation of the effects of the implementation of RDP. The Plan also does not contain any information whether it is planned to use any other indicators or the results of other monitoring activities conducted by other institutions.

The indicators are listed in Annex P to the RD Plan. For every measure indicators are planned. The indicators refer to the following issues:

Evaluate

- **Output indicators** refer mainly to: the number of the decisions issued, the number of the farmers supported and the amount of the resources engaged. These are input (financial resources) indicators and outputs (product) indicators, that evaluate the extent to which the tasks of the Plan have been carried out. Through this indicators the degree of interest in the measures of the Plan can be calculated.

- **Result indicators** refer mainly to: the area where measures have been implemented, the number of animals for which support is delivered, the number of farms meeting standards, the number of the cow-houses modernised and the average level of support. These are indicators which demonstrate the direct, physical effects/results of the implementation of the measures of the Plan.

- **Impact indicators** mainly refer to: the average age of the farm holders, the average size of farms, the average income of the farms supported, the share of the rural population in the total number of rural residents, the surface area of the protected areas covered by agri-environmental schemes, or the surface area of the land afforested. Therefore, these are indicators which describe certain aspects of the situation after the measures of the Plan have been applied, although such situations are not often the effect of just one specific measure, but, instead, the accumulated effect of the different other RDP and SOP measures and other processes occurring in rural areas. Thus, they are mostly result indicators and, to a lesser extent, impact indicators. In contrast, there are no real impact indicators, particularly those designed to evaluate the environmental impact of the RDP implementation. One of the earlier RDP versions (of July 2003) included a large number
of real impact indicators for the measure of agri-environmental schemes; unfortunately, they were dropped later.

Proposed indicators will not allow for the monitoring of the implementation of the objectives of the Plan. As the current Plan does not have environmental objectives as a main goal, therefore, the Plan does not include indicators to monitor the extent to which these objectives have been implemented or to monitor the environmental status which would be the result of measure application.

The Plan also includes a set of target values for the physical indicators on the implementation of the Plan which should be used to monitor progress in its implementation as reference values. In most cases, they set out the number of the predicted beneficiaries and, less frequently, the surface area on which the measure is to be implemented. However, these values constitute some resultant effect of analyses on the needs as well as the expected interest and the financing capacity. Therefore, these are values expected to be achieved within the framework of the Plan. However, the monitoring of the implementation of the measures under the Plan – including environmental objectives – requires values which would illustrate the needs for support in the individual areas covered by the particular measures. Still, this would require the preparation of a set of baseline information specifying these needs.

It follows from the information on the monitoring of the Plan as contained in the Plan that the institutions engaged in this process will include only the Paying Agency (Agency for the Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture) and the Managing Authority - the Ministry of Agriculture. No other institutions are envisaged to be included in this process for toady.

The scope of the monitoring of the implementation of the measures under the Plan also includes the issue of the monitoring of the process to launch the individual measures of the Plan. A large number of reservations may be raised in view of the situation which took place in this respect in Poland.

Although it has to be taken into account, that all the measures under the Plan failed to be launched at the same time (just as was the case with the measures under SOP), and also dates of the formal/”real launch” of successive measures have been postponed.

**Evaluation of the Plan**

Given the short time covered by RDP (years 2004-2006), it was planned that it would only be subject to ex-ante analysis and the final review – called “ex-post evaluation”. Evaluations of the type of mid-term review, would not be performed. The current review of the implementation of the Plan is going to be carried out by the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee, which would meet twice a year as a minimum. The reviews and decisions of the Committee would be based on reports on the implementation of the Plan, to be prepared by the Ministry on the basis of data from the Agency.

**7.2. Proposal for improvements of monitoring and reporting**

As it was described in the chapter 7.1 the set of indicators for monitoring of the implementation of RDP, may not sufficient. Given the needs related to the monitoring of the
environmental objectives of RDP which we set out, it is necessary establish efficient system of evaluation and monitoring that ensures targets and priority objectives are achieved.

**Basing on the described in previous chapter existing planned monitoring system, it is necessary to:**

- build the efficient system of evaluation and monitoring of the RDP implementation that ensures targets and priority objectives are achieved;

- propose indications that are complimentary to proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture. It is important to revise and add to the indicators already adopted in the RDP. At present 28 additional indicators are proposed (listed in *Annexes II and III of the report*) to enable a more effective assessment of the positive and negative trends and to better monitor progress on achieving environmental objectives;

- add a new type of indicators which would allow for the monitoring of the achievement of the environmental objectives of RDP and the environmental effects of the measures implemented (proposals in *Annex IV of the report*);

- expand the range of institutions taking part in the monitoring of the effects of RDP with the institutions which have experience in the monitoring and evaluation of the environmental, social and economic impacts of different measures related to development;

- establish a denser grid of monitoring points to check the status of surface and ground waters to monitor Goal 2 ‘Protect underground water resources and improve surface water quality’;

- include indicators developed for the agri-environment programmes and data collected within the following monitoring framework:
  - expand work of the existing national environmental monitoring system managed by the Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection that it could deliver data on water status in rural areas;
  - combine monitoring system for Natura 2000 sites which will be organised by the Ministry of Environment with monitoring for environmental impact, especially for such measures as: agri-environmental schemes, afforestation and LFA;
  - set up new permanent monitoring system for land use and landscape change – basing on the results of current research and pilot projects;
  - implement a new water quality monitoring system to regularly check (every few years) the quality of surface and ground water in randomly selected areas where different RDP measures.

- incorporate the use of remote sensing and GIS tools and techniques in the RDP monitoring and evaluation (and IACS) systems at both national and regional levels. The IACS Land Parcel Identification System should be available for use in the 2007-13 programme. It could be valid very much for monitoring of primarily changes in the mosaic-like layout and fragmentation of landscape, changes in land use and change in the occurrence of wet meadows caused by the implementation of CAP and the use of the Structural Funds.
ANNEX I

List of measures\textsuperscript{36} proposed for use to address the priority environmental problems of the Polish rural areas and the implementation of operational objectives related to the two environmental goals

Goal I “The conservation of the landscape structure, natural values (including biodiversity) and soils in the Polish rural areas”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>target</th>
<th>Measures proposed for use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Maintain at least 50% of the traditional landscape of rural areas at least at HNV areas or in NATURA 2000 designated sites | • Support for agri-environmental schemes and the improvement of animal welfare [1257/99 - Arts.22-24; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(iv) and 37]
  Particularly important systemic package support for organic farming and as well as the packages: conservation of traditional orchards, buffer zones and field borders, restoration of water ponds as well as the conversion of arable land into grassland, reconstruction of midfield clusters of trees and shrubs, support for the conservation of genetic resources in agriculture – the protection of old plant varieties and livestock breeds.
  • Support for agriculture in less-favoured areas (in mountain areas and areas with natural handicaps other than mountain areas) [1257/99 - Arts.13-21; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(i),(ii), 35 and 36]
  • Payments for Natura 2000 sites [SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(iii) and 36]
  • Village renewal and the maintenance and conservation of the cultural heritage [1257/99 - Art.33; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.49(b)(ii) and 55]
  • Support for the implementation of local strategies on measures developed within partnerships established within the framework of the LEADER type approach [SEC(2004)931 – Art. 63]
  • Diversification of agricultural activities and activities close to agriculture to provide multiple activities and alternative incomes\textsuperscript{37} [1257/99 - Art.33; SEC(2004)931 - Art.49(a)(i) and 50]

This objective is impossible to achieve by using only the instruments of rural development plans. E.g. it is well-advised to develop standards for the spatial structure of rural areas which would be justified by natural factors (general and, partly, regional standards) as a guidance to be used in spatial planning and the steering of agri-environmental schemes. In addition, it is also well-advised for protection covering landscape and cultural values (e.g. through the system of spatial planning) to be extended to the most valuable areas of this type in the country.

\textsuperscript{36} In the table the measures from two documents were being used: 1257/99 – The Council Regulation on support for rural development from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) and amending and repealing certain Regulations, SEC(2004)931 – Proposal for the Council Regulation on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

\textsuperscript{37} However, it is necessary to introduce relevant criteria for the system of application approval so as to prevent the financing of projects which are clearly inconsistent with the traditional character of the Polish rural landscape.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>target</th>
<th>Measures proposed for use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain at least 40% of mosaic–like structure of rural landscape and preventing the decline of landscape features at least in HNV areas or in NATURA 2000 sites</td>
<td>Support for agri-environmental schemes and the improvement of animal welfare [1257/99 - Arts.22-24; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(iv) and 37] Particularly important packages include: the establishment and reconstruction of mid-field clusters of trees and shrubs, the restoration of water ponds, buffer zones and field borders, conservation of traditional orchards and the conversion of arable land into grassland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make obligatory integration of the rural landscape planes into spatial planes in order to maintaining natural and landscape values.</td>
<td>Payments for Natura 2000 sites [SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(iii) and 36] The establishment of agroforestry systems on agricultural land [SEC(2004)931 - Art. 34(b)(ii) and 41] This objective is possible to achieved with the instruments of rural development plans in small scale - however, its implementation may be promoted by such a differentiation of payments as would ensure that assistance is awarded to a greater extent to small and medium-sized family-owned farms rather than to very large agricultural holdings. It would also be beneficial to adopt progressive rates of farmland tax, depending on farm size. It is necessary to strengthen the rank and role of land-use planning and the system of environmental assessments and strong enforcement of environmental law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain at least 50% of semi-natural habitats and species related to rural areas in NATURA 2000 sites and HNV areas;</td>
<td>Support for agri-environmental schemes and the improvement of animal welfare [1257/99 - Arts.22-24; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(iv) and 37] Particularly important systemic packages include: support for organic farming and support for sustainable agriculture(^\text{38}) as well as the packaging concerning: buffer zones and field borders, conservation of traditional orchards, conservation of natural features, reconstruction of mid-field clusters of trees and shrubs, maintenance of open areas, the conversion of arable land into grassland, support for the conservation of genetic resources in agriculture – the conservation of old plant varieties and livestock breeds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure implementation of the High Nature Value farming and Natura 2000 sites in rural areas;</td>
<td>Payments for Natura 2000 sites [SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(iii) and 36] Support for agriculture in less-favoured areas (in mountain areas and areas with natural handicaps other than mountain areas) [1257/99 - Arts.13-21; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(i),(ii), 35 and 36]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{38}\) A package which is valid in areas with intensive agriculture should not be recommended for areas where agriculture has so far been extensive, as it may increase pressures on the environment by higher doses of fertilisers and plant protection agents.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>target</th>
<th>Measures proposed for use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Maintain at least 40% of mosaic–like structure of rural landscape and preventing the decline of landscape features at least in HNV areas or in NATURA 2000 sites | Support for agri-environmental schemes and the improvement of animal welfare [1257/99 - Arts.22-24; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(iv) and 37]  
The particularly important package concerning the conversion of arable land into grassland and the packages: the maintenance of wet and marshy meadows as well as the systemic packages: support for organic farming and support for sustainable agriculture  
   | The establishment of agroforestry systems on agricultural land [SEC(2004)931 - Arts. 34(b)(ii) and 41]                                                   |

The achievement of this objective depends primarily on the resignation from the current regulation of river valleys and the launch of appropriate valley development. This objective cannot be achieved with the instruments of rural development plans; it is necessary to strengthen the rank and role of land-use planning and the system of environmental assessments and strong enforcement of environmental law. It is also necessary to make it possible for farmers to transfer their land for nature conservation purposes under conditions which would be beneficial for them.

39 See Footnote 64.
Goal II “The protection of underground water resources and the improvement of surface water quality in the Polish rural areas”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>target</th>
<th>Measures proposed for use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Maintain at least at present level of the pollution of surface waters and water habitat eutrophication by nitrates, phosphates and other pollutants originating from agricultural runoffs (from crop production and breeding); | • Investments in farms\textsuperscript{40} [1257/99 - Arts. 4-7; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(b)(i) and 25]  
• The development and improvement of technical infrastructure related to agriculture\textsuperscript{41} [1257/99 - Art. 33; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(b)(iv) and 28]  
• The instrument concerning new EU standards\textsuperscript{42} [SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(c)(i) and 29], replacing the previous adaptation of agricultural holdings to EU standards [1257/99 - Art.33l, (2b)]  
• The improvement of processing and marketing of agricultural products [1257/99 - Arts.25-28 and 30(1), 3; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(b)(iii) and 27]  
• Support for agri-environmental schemes and the improvement of animal welfare [1257/99 - Arts.22-24; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(iv) and 37]  
The particularly important systemic packages include: support for organic farming and support for sustainable agriculture\textsuperscript{43} as well as the packages concerning: buffer zones and the conversion of arable land into grassland  
• The establishment of agroforestry systems on agricultural land [SEC(2004)931 – Arts. 34(b)(ii) and 41]  
• Afforestation of agricultural land [1257/99 - Arts.29 and 31; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(b)(i), 39 and 40] |

This objective cannot be achieved by rural development plans alone; it is indispensable for the authorities at all levels to co-operate, particularly within the framework of the implementation of the national programme for urban wastewater treatment and the alignment of food-processing enterprises with the requirements for wastewater. It is indispensable to enforce with the determination the provisions of legislation which implement the provisions of the Water Framework Directive and the Nitrates Directive relating to the protection of waters against pollution.

\textsuperscript{40} See Footnote 67.  
\textsuperscript{41} See Footnote 67.  
\textsuperscript{42} See Footnote 67.  
\textsuperscript{43} See Footnote 64.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>target</th>
<th>Measures proposed for use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Decrease by 15% of underground water pollution by nitrates, phosphates and other pollutants originating from agricultural runoffs (from crop production and breeding) | • Support for agri-environmental schemes and the improvement of animal welfare [1257/99 - Arts.22-24; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(iv) and 37]  
The particularly important systemic packages include: support for organic farming and support for sustainable agriculture⁴⁴ as well as the packages concerning: buffer zones and the conversion of arable land into grassland  
• Afforestation of agricultural land [1257/99 - Arts.29 and 31; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(b)(i), 39 and 40]  
• Investments in farms⁴⁵ [1257/99 - Arts. 4-7; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(b)(i) and 25]  
• The development and improvement of technical infrastructure related to agriculture⁴⁶ [1257/99 - Art. 33; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(b)(iv) and 28]  
• The instrument concerning new EU standards⁴⁷ [SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(c)(i) and 29], replacing the previous adaptation of agricultural holdings to EU standards [1257/99 - Art.331, (2b)]  
• The improvement of processing and marketing of agricultural products⁴⁸ [1257/99 - Arts.25-28 and 30(1), 3; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(b)(iii) and 27]  
• The establishment of agroforestry systems on agricultural land [SEC(2004)931 – Arts. 34(b)(ii) and 41] |

This objective cannot be achieved by rural development plans alone; it is indispensable for the authorities at all levels to co-operate, particularly within the framework of the implementation of the national programme for urban wastewater treatment and the alignment of food-processing enterprises with the requirements for wastewater. It is indispensable to enforce with the determination the provisions of legislation which implement the provisions of the Water Framework Directive and the Nitrates Directive relating to the protection of waters against pollution.

---

⁴⁴ See Footnote 64.  
⁴⁵ See Footnote 67.  
⁴⁶ See Footnote 67.  
⁴⁷ See Footnote 67.  
⁴⁸ See Footnote 67.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>target</th>
<th>Measures proposed for use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Preventing an increase in groundwater abstraction for municipal, crop production and food processing | This objective cannot be achieved directly with the instruments of rural development plans. In this respect, it is primarily necessary to pursue an appropriate pricing policy, which would encourage the construction of adequate intakes and systems for the purification of surface waters. Indirectly, it can be implemented with the following measures:  
  • Investments in farms⁴⁹ [1257/99 - Arts. 4-7; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(b)(i) and 25]  
  • The development and improvement of technical infrastructure related to agriculture⁵⁰ [1257/99 - Art. 33; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(b)(iv) and 28]  
  • The instrument concerning new EU standards⁵¹ [SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(c)(i) and 29], replacing the previous adaptation of agricultural holdings to EU standards [1257/99 - Art.33l, (2b)]  
  • The improvement of processing and marketing of agricultural products⁵² [1257/99 - Arts.25-28 and 30(1), 3; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(b)(iii) and 27]  
  • Support for agri-environmental schemes and the improvement of animal welfare [1257/99 - Arts.22-24; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(iv) and 37]  
    The particularly important systemic packages include: support for organic farming and support for sustainable agriculture  
  • Training [1257/99 - Art.9; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(a)(i) and 20]  
  • Use by farmers and forest holders of advisory services [SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(a)(iv) and 23] |

⁴⁹ See Footnote 67.  
⁵⁰ See Footnote 67.  
⁵¹ See Footnote 67.  
⁵² See Footnote 67.
Stop the fall in water retention capacity due to the increased run off rates caused by e.g. field drainage and soil compaction and river bed regulation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>target</th>
<th>Measures proposed for use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Stop the fall in water retention capacity                               | • Afforestation of agricultural and non-agricultural land [1257/99 - Arts.29 and 31; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(b)(i), (iii), 39, 40 and 41]  
|                                                                        | • Support for agri-environmental schemes and the improvement of animal welfare [1257/99 - Arts.22-24; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(iv) and 37]  
|                                                                        | The particularly important systemic packages include: support for organic farming and support for sustainable agriculture\(^{53}\) as well as the conversion of arable land into grassland and the restoration of water ponds and old river beds, buffer zones and field borders, reconstruction of midfield clusters of trees and shrubs, maintenance of wet meadows  
|                                                                        | • Support for agriculture in less-favoured areas (in mountain areas and areas with natural handicaps other than mountain areas) [1257/99 - Arts.13-21; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.34(a)(i),(ii), 35 and 36]  
|                                                                        | • The establishment of agroforestry systems on agricultural land [SEC(2004)931 – Arts. 34(b)(ii) and 41]  
|                                                                        | • The development and improvement of technical infrastructure related to agriculture\(^{54}\) [1257/99 - Art. 33; SEC(2004)931 - Arts.19(b)(iv) and 28]  
|                                                                        | The achievement of this objective depends e.g. on the resignation from the current regulation of river valleys and the launch of appropriate valley development and on the adoption of a special national programme to enhance retention.                                                                                              |
ANNEX II
PROPOSAL FOR THE SET OF INDICATORS FOR MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES OF RDP

I. Results Indicators (partly impact indicators) from the Rural Development Plan which are most useful for indirect evaluating the implementation of proposed objectives

| Indicators [their situation in the RDP list of indicators is given in brackets: number of measure – type of indicator\(^{56}\) – successive number of indicator] | RDP environmental goals |
|---|---|---|
| | The conservation of the landscape structure, natural values (including biodiversity) and soils in the Polish rural areas | The protection of underground water resources and the improvement of surface water quality in the Polish rural areas |
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Surface area transferred under measure 1 (early retirements) for objectives related to environmental protection [1r2] | X | X |
| Surface area transferred under measure 1 (early retirements) for afforestation [1r2] | X | X |
| Average surface area of a Polish farm [1o2] | X |
| Number of hectares covered by package S01 – “Sustainable agriculture” (including those on Natura 2000 sites) [4r8] | X | X |
| Number of hectares covered by package S02 – “Organic farming” (including those on Natura 2000 sites) [4r9] | X | X |
| Number of hectares covered by package P01 – “Maintenance of extensive meadows” (including those on Natura 2000 sites) [4r10] | X | X |
| Number of hectares covered by package P02 – “Maintenance of extensive meadows” (including those on Natura 2000 sites) [4r11] | X | X |
| Number of hectares covered by package K01 – “Protection of soils and waters” (including those on Natura 2000 sites) [4r12] | X | X |
| Number of running metres covered by package K02 – “Buffer zones” (including those on Natura 2000 sites) [4r13] | X | X |
| Number of hectares in priority zones covered by particular agri-environmental packages (with a division into zones) [4o1] | X | X |
| Number of hectares of the surface area of protected areas\(^{57}\) covered by particular agri-environmental packages (with a division into provinces) [4o2] | X | X |
| Number of hectares covered by support under “husbandry premium”\(^{58}\) [5r1] | X | |

\(^{55}\) X – an indicator which may be applied to evaluate the implementation of a definite objective – thru more or less operation goals.

\(^{56}\) Types of indicators according to their division in the RDP document:: p - output indicator, r – result indicator, o – impact indicator.

\(^{57}\) Natura 2000 sites, National Parks and Landscape Parks.
Including new ones and with a division into applications concerning sites with a favourable relief of terrain and slopes with an inclination exceeding 12°, with a division into individual, group and cooperative-based applications concerning afforestation with the use of repellents and without the use of repellents.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of hectares covered by support under “afforestation premium”(^{59}) [5r2]</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hectares covered by support with payments under “support for afforestation”(^{59}) [5r3]</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hectares of afforested land (with a division of soils according to their quality classes) [5r4]</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface area of afforested land (with a division into counties) [5o1]</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average size of afforested area [5o2]</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage shares of afforested sites which are part of larger tree-stands and of those that constitute independent tree-stands [5o4]</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares of particular tree species in afforested sites [5o3]</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of farms meeting EU standards which used support in the total number of farms meeting EU standards in Poland [6o2]</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of farms which get support for building facilities for storing natural manures(^{61}) [6p3]</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{59}\) Including new ones and with a division into applications concerning sites with a favourable relief of terrain and slopes with an inclination exceeding 12°.

\(^{60}\) Including new ones and with a division into applications concerning sites with a favourable relief of terrain and slopes with an inclination exceeding 12°, and with a division into deciduous and coniferous forests.

\(^{61}\) Including new and those on areas covered by Nutritive Directive.
ANNEX III

II. Additional result indicators (partly impact indicators) proposed for use within RDP to evaluate the implementation of proposed objectives:

a. – for the implementation of existing RDP measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surface area transferred under measure 1 (early retirements) to enlarge the holdings of other farmers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average surface area of farms (by provinces)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of registered parcels within farms (in Poland and in 16 provinces)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average largeness of registered parcels within farms (in Poland and 16 provinces)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface area of farmland supported under measure 4 “Support for agri-environmental schemes and the improvement of animal welfare”</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage shares of the surface area of priority zones covered by the implementation of particular agri-environmental schemes (in Poland and in particular zones)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface area of farmland supported under measure 4 (agri-environmental schemes), situated in river valleys (including those on Natura 2000 sites)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface area of farmland supported at the same time under three measures: measure 3 (LFA), measure 4 (agri-environmental schemes) and measure 6 (standards) as well as under two of the aforementioned measures (3+4 or 3+6 or 4+6)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of farms using at the same time support under three or two of the aforementioned measures (3+4 or 3+6 or 4+6)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of areas supported under packages P01 and P02, situated in river valleys (including those on Natura 2000 sites)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of animals covered by grants under package G01 – “Protection of local livestock breeds” (with a division into varieties and breeds, including newly purchased ones)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of animals covered by grants under package G01 on Natura 2000 sites</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of new animals born in farms as progeny of animals covered by grants under package G01</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of farms meeting the conditions of Ordinary Good Agricultural Practice in the total number of farms inspected</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average size of afforested area (by counties)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage shares of afforested sites that are a part of larger tree-stands and those that represent independent tree-stands (by counties)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

62 Including those in protected areas and on Natura 2000 sites.
63 See Footnote 100.
64 See Footnote 100.
Surface area of afforested sites within the range of protected areas, Natura 2000 sites and LFAs (with a division into counties) | X
---|---
Shares of particular tree species in afforested areas (according to soil classes in these areas) | X X
Number of producer groups acting on the basis of traditional forms of management (in favour of local and regional products) | X X
Number of producer groups acting within the scope of organic farming | X X

**b. – in case of the implementation of new environmental measures as proposed in the proposal for a Council Regulation [SEC(2004)931]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surface area of farmland supported under the measure “Payments for Natura 2000 sites”</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of the surface area of farmland supported under the measure “Payments for Natura 2000 sites” in the total surface area of farmland falling within the range of the Natura 2000 network (in Poland and in 16 provinces)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface area of sites supported under the measure “The establishment of agroforestry systems on agricultural land” (including those in protected areas, on Natura 2000 sites and in LFAs)</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface area of forestland supported under the measure “Forest-environment payments” (including the land in protected areas and on Natura 2000 sites)</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface area of forestland covered by support under the measure “Payments for forest sites of the Natura 2000 network”</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of forestland supported under the measure “Payments for forest sites of the Natura 2000 network” in the total surface area falling within the range of the Natura 2000 network (in Poland and in 16 provinces)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. – if new agri-environmental packages are implemented (including both those that were considered for Poland earlier and completely new ones), output and impact indicators will have to be developed in the same way as indicated above for the packages which are now present in the Plan.
ANNEX IV

III. Examples of impact indicators proposed for use to evaluate the environmental effects of agri-environmental schemes and the RDP measures as a whole and to evaluate the achievement of the proposed environmental objectives:

a. To evaluate the changes in the landscape structure and to evaluate the presence of landscape elements and land uses of significance for the preservation of biological diversity [some indicators to be used on the basis of spatial analyses of teledetection data (aerial and satellite), others to be based on field inspections in specific areas]:

- the share of the particular elements in the land-use structure (some ecosystems and phytocenosis, arable lands, meadows, wet meadows, pastures, forests, recently afforested areas, barren land and set-asides);
- the share of the surface area of mid-forest clearings used for agricultural purposes in the total surface area of rural areas;
- the surface area of wet meadows in river valleys;
- the density of water ponds;
- the length of midfield and roadside strips of trees;
- the density of field borders in the landscape;
- the presence of single trees in the fields (e.g. pear-trees).
- the ratio between spring and winter crops;
- the surface area of stubble fields left for winter;
- the density of roads with different surface;
- the surface area of the built up part of farms (habitats) and the percentage share of the hardened surface within the built up part;
- the density of overhead transmission lines;

etc.

b. To evaluate the species richness of selected groups of animals and plants (indicators to be used mainly on the basis of field research conducted by specialists):

- the number of field bird species;
- the number of amphibious species related to agricultural land (mainly frogs);
- the number of insect species related to agricultural land – mostly butterflies, beetles, spiders, mebraneous species (mainly wild bees, wasps and ants);
- the presence of specific segetal communities (of arable land), meadow communities and those on dry stenothermal grasslands in the selected areas;
- the number of field weeds and meadow plants, including which are big and have colour flowers (such as e.g. poppy, blue-bottle, corn cockle, delphinium, crocus, autumn crocus, orchid, gladioli, iris, sages, Adonis, globe flower);
- the share of the surface area occupied by specific segetal communities;

etc.

c. To evaluate the size of the populations of selected animal and plants species (indicators to be used mainly on the basis of field research conducted by specialists)

- the size of the populations of brown hare, fox, skylark, partridge, corncrake, lapwing and stork;
- the density of selected weed species or meadow plants (e.g. some species of poppies or others above-mentioned plant species);
- the presence and density of alien (invasive) species;