



Poland  State Forests

For Forest,  
People and the Environment  
Development Projects of the State Forests



Photo by P. F.

The State Forests National Forest Holding operating mainly in rural, little urbanized areas is a major stimulator of social and economic development. This is particularly important in regions with the lowest development dynamics, poor infrastructure and high unemployment, but with large forest cover at the same time. In such areas, the State Forests is most often the largest employer. It employs 25 thousand foresters and almost 50 thousand people working in outsourced forest services, who are seasonally employed in nurseries, forest renewals, afforestation, for the care of plantations and logging operations. Each passing year, more and more people find jobs here as the number of tasks is increasing. In 2016 and in the first half of 2017, development projects were launched in the State Forests (partly as joint undertakings of forestry and local governments) as a result of which there will be a demand for new project related jobs, and in the near future – also jobs related to facilities planned for launching. The development of service sector and tourist infrastructure will be an additional asset.

Photo by R. J.



# Forest Carbon Farms

This is a development project of major strategic importance both to the State Forests and nature protection, which is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere and to hinder climate change.

The project assumptions are that as a result of the so called additional activities in forestry, carbon dioxide sequestration by forests will increase. As a result, additional amounts of organic carbon will be captured and will become either a part of the forest organic matter or will be held in timber gathered in energy storage facilities.

Substantiated additional number of carbon dioxide units which were accumulated as a result of additional activities in forestry will be sold by the State Forests to entities interested in purchasing them. Letters of intent have already been signed with a number of representatives of the energy sector covered by the European Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS).

It is planned that the funds obtained from the sale of carbon dioxide units will be spent on joint projects of the State Forests and local government units. This will result in further reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and will also increase absorption. The buyers of CO<sub>2</sub> units will be authorized to indicate any activity from the list of initiatives proposed by the State Forests, so that they gain the image of socially responsible companies.

It is believed that the project *Forest Carbon Farms* will be eligible for wide dissemination at the international level.

Photo by P. E.



# Wood for energy self-sufficiency of local governments

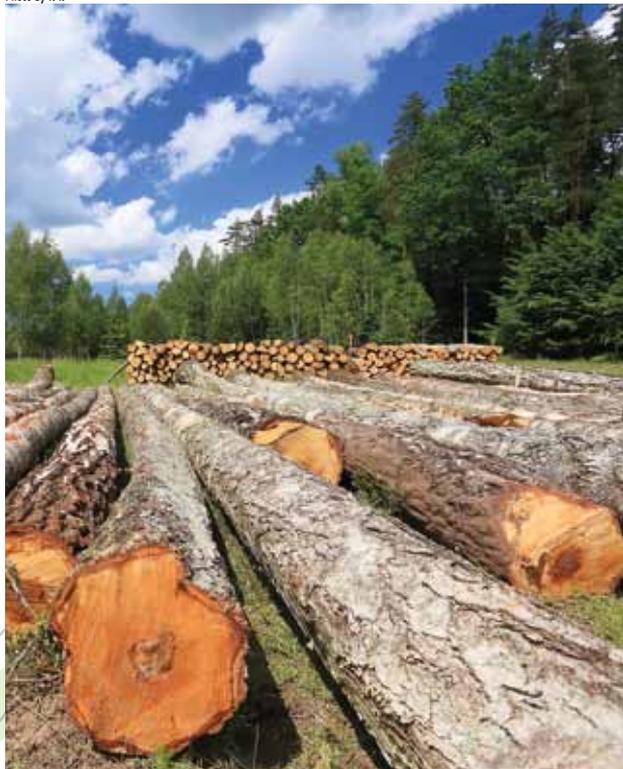
The main objective of the project is to support the pro-ecological policy of the Polish state. It requires from the State Forests, within the framework of their mission, to build a system of 17 storage depots of woody biomass and to determine the technology of its optimal conversion into heat and electricity, at the maximum reduction or total elimination of pollution in the combustion process. As part of the pilot project, two installations will be built which use biomass as a fuel for electricity and heat production.

Energy wood repositories, which also serve as a “container” of organic carbon accumulated in wood and a warehouse of raw timber intended for sale, will also be used for:

- ~ storage of minerals needed for road construction,
- ~ implementation of a development project related to promotion of building industry which uses wooden components,
- ~ organising auction and submission of specific types of wood,
- ~ conducting observation and research.

Various functions of timber storage depots demand creation of new jobs which will be taken naturally by people from surrounding areas.

Photo by P.E.



# Polish Wooden Houses

## – live in harmony with nature

This project is also of great significance to the development of non-urbanized areas and the increase of employment. Its main objectives are:

- ~ reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions through wider use of timber – the most pro-environmental building material, and carbon “container” as well;
  - ~ promotion of wood in modern energy-saving technologies used in the construction industry with account being taken in particular to special public facilities (schools, nurseries, kindergartens, etc.); demonstrative objects will serve the purpose of presenting such technologies;
  - ~ development of a core curriculum of education in new scarce branch – engineering of wooden structures. It is assumed that in selected forestry technical colleges there will be created two pilot classes teaching in this profession. The main recipients will be young people from rural areas;
  - ~ identifying and eliminating legislative barriers hindering the development of wooden building construction;
- ~ creating demand for affordable energy-efficient building construction – the development of standard projects of energy-efficient houses, together with an offer to finance their construction. There will be reference projects available for single- and multi-family buildings designed for people with little incomes and living in rural areas (it is possible to build a single-family house priced below PLN 150 thousand).

The project is a core part of the national Strategy for Responsible Development, created in the Ministry of Development, especially of its flagship project *Ecobuildings*.

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# Creating a network of local energy sources

The main objective of the project is the participation of the State Forests in enhancing national security through the development of dissipated energy. This includes building a network of mini- and micro-power plants which use forest biomass, geothermal resources, energy of water courses, photovoltaics and other renewable energy sources.

Among others, the project provides:

- ~ designating locations for power plants on the grounds of the State Forests,
- ~ determining economic conditions and project partners,
- ~ construction of the preliminary installations.

One of the ulterior objectives is to improve the living conditions of people in rural areas, whom the project will give the opportunity to earn additional income. This applies particularly to persons leaving agriculture. Thanks to the expansion of local infrastructure, including information technology, the quality of life will also improve.

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# Road construction

The development of little urbanized areas depends to a very large extent on a due network of public roads owned by the local government. This, in turn, determines the prospects to perform forest management by the State Forests, especially timber production and making forests publicly available.

The aim of the State Forests' road construction programme is to lead to the pilot integration of the forest and local government road infrastructure through:

- ~ building or rebuilding selected forest roads on lands administered by the State Forests;
- ~ building or rebuilding selected local government roads functionally linked to the forest roads;
- ~ commissioning, starting from 2017, a multi-annual program for the construction of an integrated system of forest and local government roads throughout Poland.

The exemplary of the implementation of joint road projects is the letter of intent signed 2 March 2017 between the State Forests, District Authorities in Hajnówka and 8 municipalities and 2 cities of the Hajnówka County located in the area and the neighbourhood of the Białowieża Forest.

It provides among others:

- ~ creating and developing in the years 2017–2019, the forest road infrastructure and functionally tied the infrastructure of roads under administration of local government units;
- ~ developing the potential for tourism, recreation, and education in the Hajnówka County, within the territorial reach of Białowieża, Bielsk, Browsk and Hajnówka forest districts;
- ~ promoting wooden construction as one of the ways for reducing emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Photo by M. K.



# Healthy food from Polish forests

The aim of the project is to promote food coming from forests administered by the State Forests National Forest Holding. This includes:

- ~ a significant increase in the quantity of processed products: among others forest floor produce, venison, and honey;
- ~ leading to a substantial increase in their supply on the domestic market;
- ~ supporting development of non-urbanized regions by creating good conditions for new jobs in local companies, as well as for increasing self-employment at forest products processing in individual farms;
- ~ protection and promotion of beekeeping.

The project provides:

- ~ reconstruction of the infrastructure facilitating purchase, storage or short-term storage, and sales of forest products;
- ~ establishing a network of food producers – the network will comprise local food producers and processors, and individual farms;
- ~ organising distribution of food and other goods coming from forests;
- ~ promoting beekeeping among SF employees and supporting them in establishing apiaries.

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Photo by P.G.



# The Great Forest Trail

## of tourism, recreation, history and education

Tourism is an important and dynamically growing branch of the economy, an important factor for local development and activation of regions, a major challenge for the State Forests.

The aim of the project is to increase the significance of the SF as an organizer of leisure both in forest areas and their immediate surroundings. The project includes:

- ~ preparing, in cooperation with local governments and local communities, a comprehensive tourist and educational offer based on a network of objects: recreational, educational, environmental, cultural heritage, accommodation and catering;
- ~ developing tourist infrastructure, together with monitoring of tourist traffic, which takes into account environmental, economic and aesthetic aspects via implementation of new techniques and technologies;
- ~ creating a tourist map of the State Forests with attractive offers for spending leisure time in the woods, and a multi-media guide with an application for mobile devices which includes tour offers masterminded on the basis of the forest tourist facilities network;

- ~ creating a modern and user-friendly portal of tourist information updated on a regular basis.

The project will contribute to the improvement of the management of forest tourism and will provide safe access to the attractions and services. It is expected that its implementation will revive economic activity in rural areas and will contribute to the development of sustainable tourism, including agritourism.

The undertaking is assisted by three other development projects of the State Forests concerning the protection of black grouse, osprey and bison. Thanks to them, favourable conditions will be created for nature tourism in the habitats of these three species.

Photo by A. A.



# Obtaining a mining concession for exploitation of mineral deposits

The project concerns the preparatory activities for the extraction of minerals from deposits located within the boundaries of land managed by the State Forests. It includes:

- ~ creating a map of minerals occurrence in the area managed by the State Forests National Forest Holding,
- ~ developing a plan for their use by the organizational units of the SF,
- ~ obtaining a mining concession for the organisational units of the State Forests.

It is scheduled to launch mining companies which extract minerals for road construction. This will include among others, joint enterprises of forestry and local governments. It is planned that the operators of these companies will be departments of regional reach, already functioning in the SF organizational structure. In order to fulfil their commitments concerning exploitation of deposits, they will employ workers drawn from local communities.

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