

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY IN THE FIELD OF THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION IN THE LIGHT OF A QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY (ILLUSTRATED BY THE EXAMPLE OF SŁUPSK COUNTY)

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Abstract

This paper shows the results of a survey in which the environmental awareness of the inhabitants of one of the local government units of the Pomeranian Voivodeship – Słupsk County was examined. The aim of the study was to determine the state of the inhabitants knowledge in the field of environmental degradation, and to identify the local community opinion on proecological activities of the local government. Conducted survey allowed to state whether the local community noted the local government activities in the field of environmental improvement and whether the local community is interested in participating in activities leading to realization of particular proecological activities in its place of living and the closest neighbourhood. The paper contains an attempt of confrontation between opinions and evaluations of the surveyed community, and actual activities undertaken by the local authorities in the field of environmental improvement and protection.

Key words: ecological awareness, local government, development strategy, sustainable development

INTRODUCTION

One of the main components of a socio-economic area is an immaterial sphere of man's ideas reflecting spiritual and intellectual potential of mankind which is a creative force of the civilization development (Degórski 2005). This sphere includes a perception of the man consequential to his consciousness. Ecological awareness is an significant part of man's consciousness, being one of the determinants of a man-environment relationship (Degórski 2008). Ecological awareness is a result of a specific knowledge of the environment, it shapes human attitude towards surrounding

natural space, creates attitudes and models of behaviour, as well as motivates to proecological activities. Ecological education is crucially important in shaping ecological awareness (Edukacja ekologiczna... 2014, Zalewska 2013, Buchcic 2009, Corney 2006). So-called “education for the environment” (Staeck 2008) is one of the most important challenges faced by local communities. The quality of life and the state of environment on a local, regional, and global scale depends on activities and actions undertaken by local communities.

The study presents the results of the survey of the ecological awareness of the inhabitants of one of the local government units of the Pomeranian Voivodeship – Słupsk County (Fig. 1). Słupsk County covers an area of 2,347 square kilometres. There are nine rural communes and two cities (Słupsk and Ustka) within its borders. It is the biggest county in Pomeranian Voivodeship with a total population of 188,598 (www.infoeko.pomorskie.pl). Population density of the county is one of the lowest among Pomeranian Voivodeship counties (40/km²).

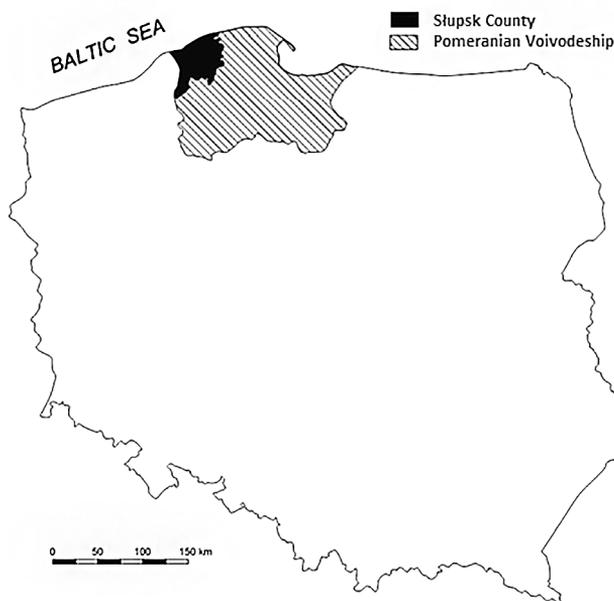


Fig. 1. Location of Słupsk County on a map of Poland and Pomeranian Voivodeship

The aim of the study was to determine the state of the inhabitants knowledge in a field of environmental degradation, as well as to identify the local community opinion on proecological activities of the local government. Conducted survey allowed to state whether the local community noted the local government activities in the field of environmental improvement and whether the local community itself is interested in participating in activities leading to a realization of particular proecological activities in its place of living and the closest neighbourhood. The paper contains an attempt of confrontation between opinions and evaluations of the surveyed community, and actual activities undertaken by the local authorities in the field of environmental improvement and protection.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to identify the condition of Słupsk County local community knowledge of degradation of the environment and local government activities in the field of the environment improvement and implementation of proecological solutions in particular towns and communes, a survey has been conducted. Two thousand people participated in the survey in total, which accounts over 2% of the whole population of the county (97,367). Among the surveyed woman constituted over half of the group (52%). The group of people between 31-60 years of age was the most numerous (56%), followed by the age group of 21-30 (27%). Survey (personal interviews) was conducted in 2013.

Moreover the author collected and analysed a total of 12 Environmental Protection Programmes of Communes of Słupsk County (they were attached to Słupsk County Environmental Program) and development strategies, with a particular emphasis placed on chapters dedicated to environmental protection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Słupsk County local government activity in the field of environmental improvement in the light of selected strategic documents.

Environment protection is one of the main responsibilities of Słupsk County authorities. In the “Strategy of socio-economic development of Słupsk County for the 2001-2011 period” (resolution number XXVII/164/2001 of October 15, 2001) (Strategia rozwoju społeczno-gospodarczego...) the following objectives concerning the environment protection have been set:

- Implementation of a constitutional principle of sustainable development-promotion of the county as a region favouring environmentally friendly technologies, and public –private partnership in achieving the objectives of the environment protection.
- Water and wastewater management and land conservation efficiency improvement –lobbying for groundwater protection, coherent waste water treatment system, and balance of the Słupia, the Łupawa, the Wieprza and the Leba rivers catchment area.
- Creating the conditions for varied economic usage of the existing potential and family farming, including the conditions for the development of ecological (organic) farms by promoting ecological (organic) methods of agricultural production, and ecological (organic) farms development schemes.
- Technical infrastructure improvement as an instrument of balanced development of the county communes.
- Health care and environmental security – raising public awareness of existing hazards

Among the aims and objectives in the field of ecology the following have been considered to be a priority (Hałuzo et al. 2003):

- Raising of ecological awareness – general, widespread and more available ecological education, creation of local ecological education programmes in primary schools, and promotion of the benefits of the environment protection.
- Implementation of cleanness and order laws, as well as implementation of waste management acts – formulation of communal environmental protection and waste management programmes.
- Providing the emergency system protecting against the environment pollution – monitoring potential hazards, equipping the emergency services, integrated environmental conservation system.
- Exploiting the potential of water resources – construction of surface water retention systems and reconstruction of weirs and regulating facilities on rivers and watercourses.
- Taking actions in the field of implementation of new technologies in utilisation of local natural resources and resource base – agro-fuel (biofuel), wind, hydro- and bioenergy.
- Supplying gas to various localities – construction of high pressure grids and pressure reducing stations, connecting housing developments to the gas network and education of the inhabitants about the benefits of the connection.
- Creating the conditions for sport and leisure infrastructure development – bicycle lanes and tourist waterways.

According to the above document, the fundamental strategic and medium-term objectives of the programme have been defined taking into consideration the improvement of environmental quality and ecological safety through development of a deliberate social participating in a decision making process regarding the natural resources utilisation, as well as sustainable utilisation of materials, water and energy. Having analysed economic development strategies and the environment protection programmes of Słupsk County cities and communes, one can identify certain areas in which local governments were executing measures to improvement and protection of the environment in the years 2001-2013.

Activities in the area of *water purity protection and water management* in Słupsk County are aimed at water conservation in catchment areas and ground water and surface water replenishment areas which are a source of drinking water, modernization of the existing sewage treatment plants as well as construction of the new sewerage system connected to existing sewage plants, activities reducing soil, surface water and sea water pollution, supply of drinking water of a good quality, small retention, and protection of seaside ground water intake facilities.

The development of sewerage network and modernisation of a few sewerage treatment plants in the years 2004-2013 had a major impact on the improvement of surface water quality in Słupsk County. The level of examined rivers purity within discussed area is presented in Table 1.

It has been possible, as a consequence of the above mentioned investments, to prevent ground water degradation, improve drinking water quality (the EU drinking water quality standard has been reached) and to achieve the level of waste treatment in the Ustka health resort area compliant with the EU standards.

Table 1

Quantitative state of river waters in Słupsk County

River name	Commune	Control point/km of the river	Year of examination	The final reaserch results	
				ecological condition/sanitary condition	general classification/body of water condition
Słupia	Dębica Kaszubska, Słupsk, Ustka	Charnowo/11.3	2011	good	good
Łupawa	Potęgowo, Damnica, Główczyce, Smółdzino	Kłuki/2.6 Poganice/54.4	2011	good	good
Łeba	Główczyce	Cecenowo, Izbica/15.0	2011	good	below good
Wieprza	Kępice	Korzybie/59.0	2011	above good	very good
Skotawa	Dębica Kaszubska	Jawory/25.8	2011	good	good
		Skarszów Dln./1.0	2011	above good	very good
Kwacza	Kobylnica	Kwakowo/2.1	2009	average	bad
Głaźna	Słupsk	Łosino/0.1	2009	average	bad
Kamieniec	Kobylnica	Kobylnica/0.1	2009	average	bad
Darżyńska Struga	Potęgowo	Głuszyno/1.2	2009	average	bad
Rębówka	Damnica	Rębowo/3.3	2011	good	good
Charstnica	Damnica	Damnica/0.6	2011	above good	good
Rzachcianka	Główczyce	Karpno/1.8	2009	average	bad
Studnica	Kępice	Ciecholub/1.6	2011	above good	very good
Orzechowa	Ustka	Orzechowo/0.3	2007	poor	poor
Potynia	Ustka	Potynia/0.3	2007	average	poor
Karwina	Ustka	Duninowo/3.5	2007	poor	poor

Source: data of The Regional Inspectorate of Environment, Gdańsk 2012, www.gios.gov.pl/pl/stan-srodowiska/monitoring-wod

Water quality improvement and a rational management of water have been achieved through water pipe system development. The new water pipe installation in the seaside communes of Słupsk County (Ustka, Smółdzino, Główczyce) as well as in Słupsk Commune has been built in the years 2004-2006. In order to improve the quality of water 15 water treatment plants have been modernized. Furthermore, the quality of ground water is monitored around the three municipal waste landfills operating in the county. The actual level of water line system and house drainage of administrative units of Słupsk County is presented in Table 2.

Activities undertaken in Słupsk County in the area of *air quality improvement* are, above all, the following: realisation of the comprehensive programmes of heating systems modernisation (elimination and limitation of fossil fuel combustion, disposal of low efficiency heating devices) and thermal modernisation and insulation of buildings, promotion of renewable energy sources and energy produced from waste,

limitation of high level emission especially in towns, health resorts and protected areas, implementation of “cleaner production“ programmes as well as promotion of eco-friendly forms of transport.

Table 2
Water line system and house drainage of Słupsk County communes in 2013

Commune	Water line system – percentage of population connected to water supply system [%]	House drainage – percentage of population connected to sewage system [%]	Percentage of population connected to sewage treatment plants [%]	Surface water intake [number of intake stations]
Damnica	95.5	57.7	78.2	-
Dębica Kaszubska	98.9	84.5	84.5	1
Główczyce	87.9	39.4	39.4	-
Kępice	90.0	74.0	82.0	1
Kobylnica	99.0	82.0	76.4	-
Potęgowo	93.0	68.0	68.0	2
Słupsk	95.5	80.1	98.9	-
Smoldzino	87.6	17.2	17.2	-
Ustka	94.0	57.3	97.5	-
City of Ustka	100,0	100,0	100,0	-
City of Słupsk	100,0	100,0	100,0	-

Source: Program Ochrony Środowiska... 2014

Popularisation of biomass as a source of energy derived from the agricultural industry (straw, grass, waste from a process of biofuel production) should be emphasized. Słupsk County Governor’s Office cooperates with The Voivodship Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, as well as with National Energy Conservation Agency in implementation of the programme – “Bioenergy as a chance for ecological sustainable development of Słupsk County”. As a result of this initiative, a methyl esters production plant has been functioning since 2005. Seven boiler houses which use biomass as a fuel have been built. There are functioning solar energy collectors in the county. In addition, wind farms have been constructed in Kobylnica and Potęgowo communes (45 wind turbines with capacity of 90 MW of power and 30 wind turbines with capacity of 60 MW respectively). Development of heating network has a major impact on a reduction of pollutants emission into the atmosphere. In the Ustka resort area geothermal energy is in use.

There is an effort to reduce *noise* emission in Słupsk County. The most frequent activities in order to protect the environment against noise pollution in Słupsk County communes are:

- investments aimed at curbing the traffic noise inconvenience, which includes reconstruction and modernization of streets, replacement and repair work on streets surface, keeping traffic routes clear, construction of acoustic screens;
- development of public transport and bicycle lanes, plants growing;

- regulating and enforcing the acceptable noise level in the environment by the environment protection authorities;
- compliance with the rule of “zoning” in town planning – location of objects of similar noise nuisance in one neighbourhood, separating them by green belts, elimination of residential development from areas exposed to traffic noise. Implementation of planning acts concerning the location of activities creating specified acoustic inconveniences in particular zones;
- creation of limited use areas in neighbourhood of objects, installations, and transport infrastructure where, in spite of applying all available technical, technological and organisational knowledge, noise parameters cannot be met.

Activities undertaken in Słupsk County in the field of **ground protection** are the following: organization of recycling and safe disposal of municipal waste system, support of technological innovations reducing waste in a process of production, reclamation of degenerated areas. In the years 2004-2006 recycling improvement and extension was noted, particularly the recycling of bulky waste and hazardous waste from households. Furthermore nine landfills which did not comply with the environmental standards had been closed. At the moment there are four landfills operating in the county (one industrial and three municipal) which are organized in compliance with the obligatory rules. Landfill in Bierkowo is one of the most advanced facilities in Poland, with quarters to store municipal waste and asbestos, mechanical sorting facilities and composting plant. Landfill in Chlewnica operates on a similar level. The percentage of waste reclamation is 20% in Chlewnica, 17.4% in Obłęże and 7% in Bierkowo.

Pilot project under the name “Waste disposal from forest car parks and tourist areas of Słupsk County” has been implemented as the first in Poland. The programme, which had been stopped in 2004, was running in 25 car parks located in 5 forest inspectorates. Car parks were equipped with bins for municipal waste, glass and plastic.

Industrial waste in the county is reclaimed at a level of 63%. Network of reclaiming end of life vehicles is still insufficient.

Activities in the field of **nature protection** undertaken in Słupsk County are the following:

- afforestation of the post-agricultural areas,
- renovation of parks and green spaces,
- active operations of the environment protection, species conservation.

Environmental education trails and paths have been created within the landscape protection policy – “Łupawa river valley”, “Warcino palace and park complex”, Leśny Dwór Forest District, forest didactic paths (Krępa–Łosino, Krzynia–Łysomice), “Orzechowo Dune”. The management of the Słupia River Landscape Park and the Słowiński National Park encourages to sightseeing with licensed guides (Bieliniak and Popiołek 2010). New forms of nature protection were created in the county in the years 2004-2013, e.g. nature and landscape areas.

Activities in the area of **ecological education** in Słupsk County include promotion of regional initiatives undertaken in order to gain the access to ecological information and education, implementation of the environment management system, as well as ecological agriculture. In order to improve the level of environmental knowledge the following actions were taken in the years 2001-2013:

- supplementary education of local administration employees in the field of the environment protection acts in the Polish and European law;
- popularisation of ecological transport through signposting of 500 km walking and cycling paths, including 72 km of international cycling lane;
- organisation of public actions, courses for children, teenagers and adults on the subject of waste recycling;
- distribution of many books, brochures maps and calendars about protected, and nature and landscape attractive areas (e.g. Słowiński National Park, the region of so called “Checked Land”, international cycling lane EuroVelo 10);
- promotion of regional products (e.g. słowiński bread) registered in the Polish List of Traditional Products.

Centres of the extra-curricular ecological education have been also created in the village of Warcino by the Complex of General and Forestry Secondary School, and in the village of Kluki. The center in Kobylnica Community is being under construction. Scientific conferences and courses for the commune employees and farmers in the field of farming, biomass production and renewable sources of energy are organized, with the aim of promotion of renewable energy. One of the results of the courses is a development of willow cultivation as a source of heat energy. In order to increase the ecological awareness, educational programmes for the inhabitants and tourists visiting the county have been prepared.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

Ślusk County inhabitants opinion on the condition of the environment and the evaluation of local government proecological activity.

At the first stage of the survey the respondents evaluated the general condition of the county environment. The majority of the surveyed rated the state of the environment as “average” (56%) and as “good” (30%). Only 8% of the respondents rated it as “bad” and 6% did not answer that question (Fig. 2). The key environmental issues, according to the surveyed, include illegal dumping sites, air pollution and surface water contamination (Fig. 3).

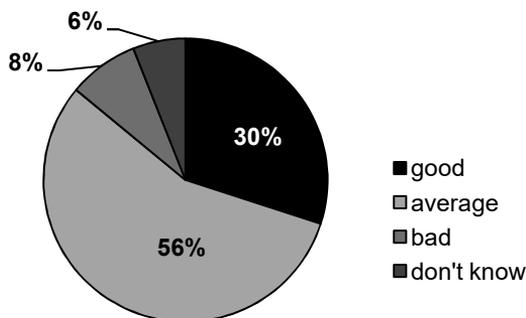


Fig. 2. Evaluation of the general condition of the environment according to the respondents

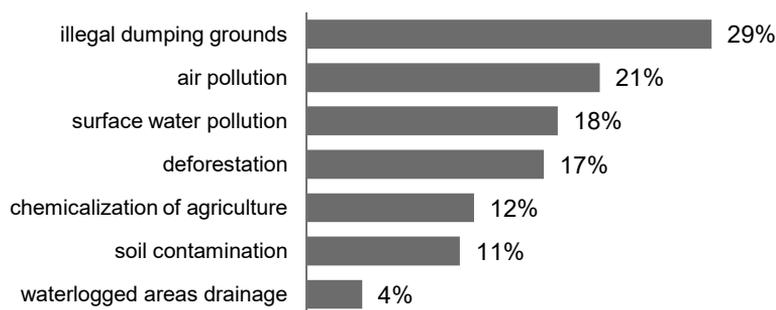


Fig. 3. The key environmental issue in Słupsk County according to the respondents

As regards the state of the environment components: surface and ground water, air, ground, and nature, the surveyed tried to evaluate quality of these elements accordingly to their own knowledge, observations which had been made and subjective feelings. Almost half of the respondents rated quality of surface water as “average”, a quarter as “bad”, and 18% as “good” (Figs 4 and 5).

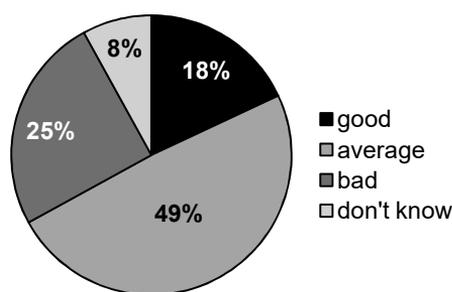


Fig. 4. Surface water condition according to the respondents

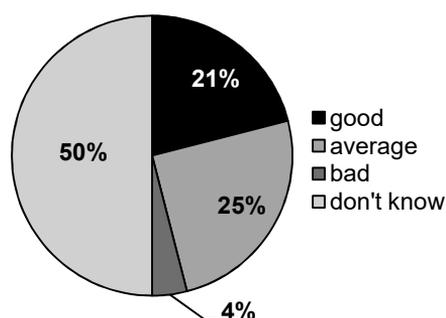


Fig. 5. Ground water condition according to the respondents

In the opinion of the most of the surveyed surface water pollution has a negative impact on their standard of living. The main sources of surface water pollution in the county include: municipal sewage, and agriculture (fertilizing and livestock farming). Communal waste disposal facilities and industrial plants have been also mentioned (Fig. 6).

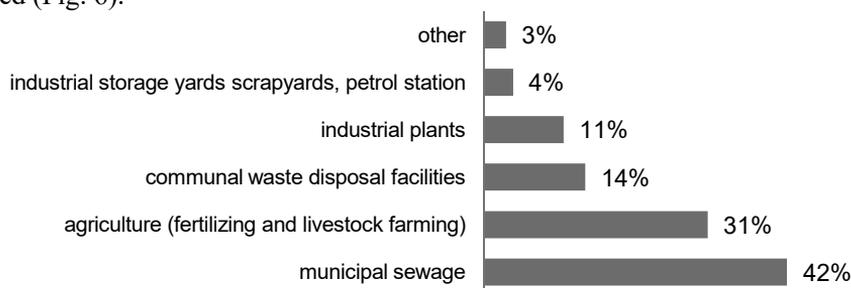


Fig. 6. Sources of a degradation of surface water in the opinion of the respondents

There was a problem with the evaluation of ground water condition. Half of the respondents could not give an answer to the question concerning the quality of ground water (Fig. 5). According to the surveyed, the main sources of ground water degradation are municipal sewage and agriculture, followed by industrial yards, petrol stations, landfills and industrial plants (Fig. 7). Most of the respondents noted a correlation between quality of ground water and a standard of living.

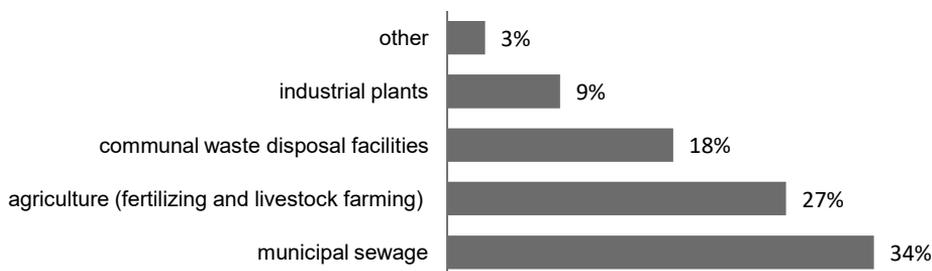


Fig. 7. Sources of a degradation of ground water in the opinion of the respondents

The analysis of the respondents opinion showed that a large group of them had noted local authorities activity in the field of surface water quality improvement, mainly because of the increase of quality and quantity of sewage treatment (construction and modernization of water treatment plants). The inhabitants acknowledged the increase of drinking water availability (investments in water pipe network construction), but there was a lack of knowledge about quality of drinking water among them.

As regards the quality of air, around 43% of the respondents is of an opinion that the level of air pollution is low. Nearly 40% of the respondents indicated average level of air pollution and 7% claimed that air pollution is high. About 11% did not express an opinion on this issue (Fig. 8).

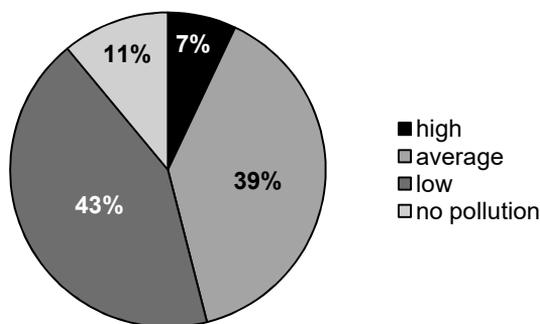


Fig. 8. Evaluation of the air pollution level according to the inhabitants of Słupsk County

Most of the interviewees considered air pollution to be a seasonal problem – heating season. Part of the surveyed claimed that air pollution is a permanent problem. Main sources of air pollution, in the opinion of the Słupsk County inhabitants, are: combined heat and power stations, heating plants, local boiler houses, followed by

households and industrial plants. The results of the survey show that air pollution has a major impact on a living standard of the inhabitants.

Almost half of the respondents claim that there are no sources of noise and odour emission in their neighbourhood. Such nuisance was mentioned by 36% of the respondents, 16% did not have the knowledge about this issue. The main sources of noise and odour are presented in figures 9 and 10.

A large number of the surveyed (49%) acknowledged the need of undertaking the actions in order to reduce emission of the pollutants into air and water, as well as reduction of the noise and odour within the exanimate area. 23% was of the opposite opinion and 28% did not express their opinion. The analysis of the opinion on execution of the objectives in the field of air and acoustic climate protection by local government shows that the respondents did not noted a correlation between these activities and the improvement of air and acoustic climate quality. The results of local government actions are insufficient. The inhabitants pointed to still existing, important problem of seasonal air pollution and traffic noise.

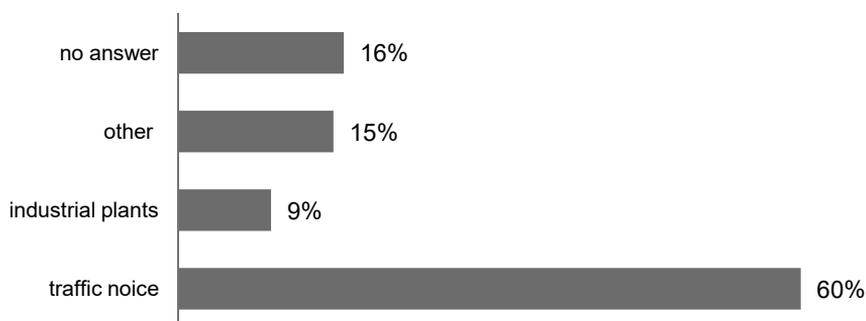


Fig. 9. Sources of noise emission in the opinion of the respondents

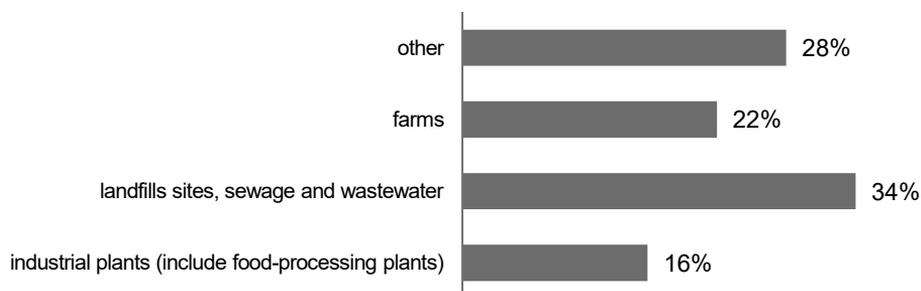


Fig. 10. The main sources of odour in the opinion of the respondents

In the field of ground protection, it should be noted, that the respondents did not observe local government activities in this area.

Despite many activities of the local government in the area of illegal dump sites liquidation, 70% of the respondents did not observe such actions (Fig. 11). 52% claim that illegal dump sites are permanent issue in their neighbourhood (Fig. 12). It may

be an evidence of disobeying the environmental regulations by the inhabitants of the county in spite of local government activity.

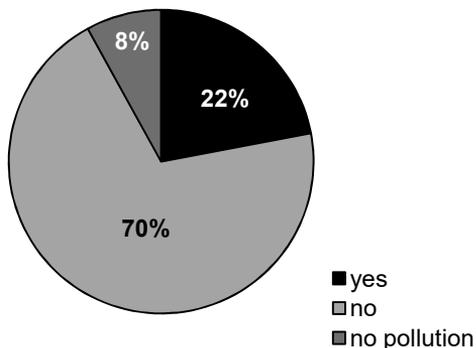


Fig. 11. The respondents answer to the question about the existence of activities undertaken in the county in order to prevent illegal dump sites development

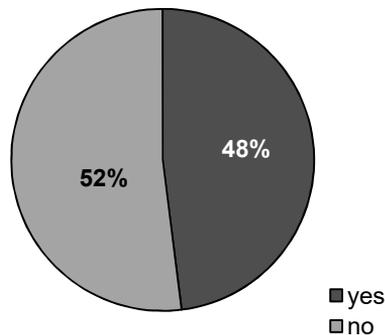


Fig. 12. The respondents answer to the question about the existence of illegal dump sites in their place of residence and the closest neighbourhood

Condition of animate nature in the county was considered to be average by 52% of the interviewees. 34% rated this component as good, and 6% as bad (Fig. 13). Dying out and a decrease in a number of plant species, including fungi, withering of trees and bushes, along with a decrease in the number of animal species were considered to be an indication of a degradation of plants and animal resources.

The surveyed were able to identify sources of the flora and fauna degradation (Fig. 15). However, almost half of the respondents could not evaluate quality of the local government actions in the field of nature and landscape protection. Respondents did not have the opinion on the need of such actions or the knowledge about the projects which had taken place. Only 20% claim that the actions in the field of protecting nature and landscape need to be undertaken (Fig. 14).

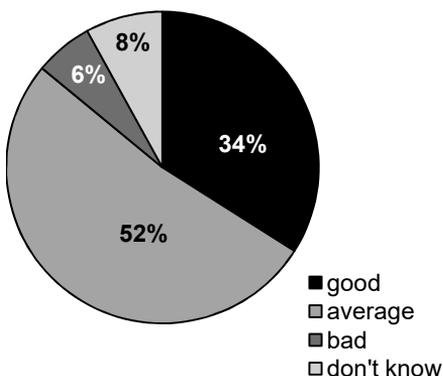


Fig. 13. Animate nature condition in the opinion of the respondents

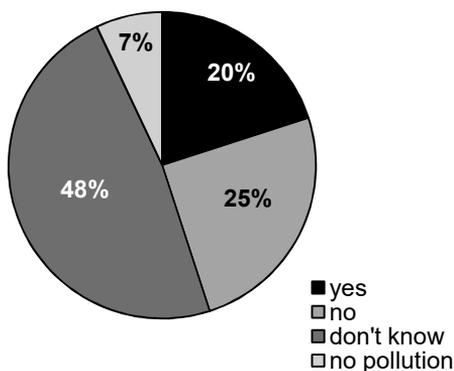


Fig. 14. The respondents opinion on the need of protection of the environmental value areas and objects in Słupsk Count

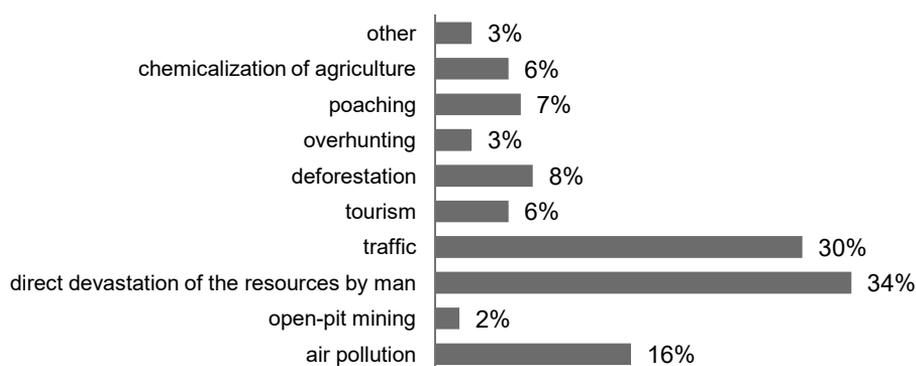


Fig. 15. Sources of the flora and fauna degradation as indicated by the respondents

General opinion concerning the *local government activities* in the area of the environment condition improvement is shown in Figure 16.

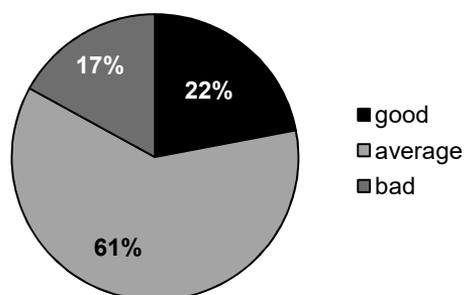


Fig. 16. General evaluation of the local government activities in the respondents opinion

The majority of the respondents (over 80%) rated the activities as good and average (22% and 61% respectively). Among the investments and objectives carried out by the local government so far, the most frequently mentioned by the inhabitants are the following:

- placement of recycling bins in towns and villages of examined communes;
- development of the water distribution and sewage system;
- solar collectors installation;
- construction of wind energy plants;
- commissioning of the city of Słupsk ring road;
- construction of eco friendly walking paths and playgrounds.

According to the foregoing, the most noticeable by local community activities of the local government are actions taken in the field of water management, waste management, improvement of air quality and acoustic climate.

The respondents noted the positive results of investments undertaken in the field of water and waste management, whereas the results in the field of protection against air and noise pollution appear to be insufficient in their opinion. Knowledge about the activities in the nature and landscape protection area is not good enough among the respondents.

Ecological education issue was mentioned in two aspects: the local community knowledge of the existence of environmental projects carried out by the local government e.g. in educational institutions (Fig. 17), and the need of implementation such programmes (Fig. 18). Over half of the respondents did not identify the authorities activity in that field, but the majority acknowledged the need of learning about the environment.

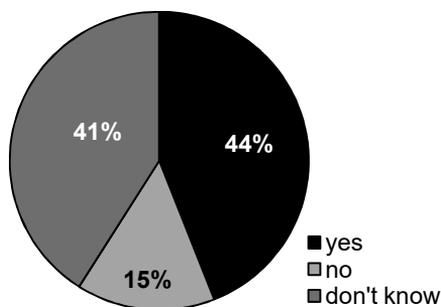


Fig. 17. The respondents opinion about the existence of environmental education projects taking place in local schools

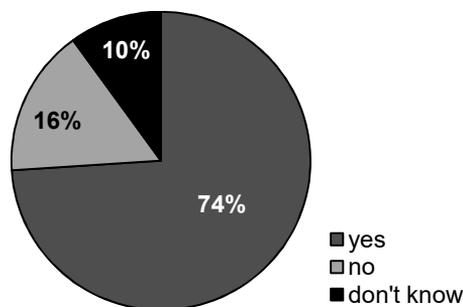


Fig. 18. Opinion of the respondents about the need of ecological education programmes in towns and communes of Słupsk County

The results of the survey concerning the activity of the inhabitants of the county and their involvement in proecological schemes implemented by the local government turned out to be interesting. Over half of the respondents is not participating in any actions connected with the environment protection. Motives of that behaviour are the following: lack of knowledge and interest, difficult financial situation, generally low ecological awareness, lack of desire to change lifestyle. However, 80% of the respondents noted their impact on the environment condition. It confirms a thesis that local communities observe their influence on the environment, but it is difficult to confirm whether local communities obey the environmental acts. Only 10% of the inhabitants is engaged in actions organized by the local government. It can be assumed that this part of the community would be interested in participating in a decision making process related to a widely understood environment protection issue. The respondents proposed particular actions which could contribute, in their opinion to increased activity of the inhabitants in that field (Fig. 19).

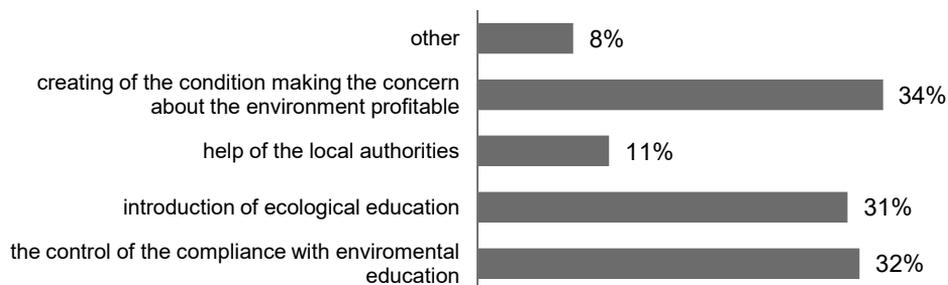


Fig. 19. Examples of actions which may contribute to an increased activity of Słupsk County inhabitants in the field of proecological behaviour (according to the respondents)

CONCLUSION

The environmental awareness of the local community of Słupsk County differs depending on a type of issue and a place of residence. On the whole, residents of towns (Słupsk, Ustka) have greater knowledge of environmental issues. In general there is a good understanding of problems connected with the issue of surface water pollution, nature condition, and occurring of emissions of noise and odour. Observations made by the respondents in the area of air pollution are accurate – air pollution increases seasonally. There are problems with evaluation of ground water, knowledge about this issue is poor. In addition, there is limited knowledge of the existence of protected areas and nature conservation forms, as well as a poor recognition of environmental protection projects taking place in local educational centres among the respondents.

Local community notes the authorities activities undertaken in order to improve a condition of the environment, especially in the field of investments in water and sewerage management and waste management. Furthermore, the respondents identify the need of increased control of compliance with environment protection acts and ecological education of the society. As shown by the results there is a little interest in proecological activities of the local government. Reasons for it, among others are: low level of education, place of living (town, village), local economic problems (e.g. high unemployment in some localities of the examined area) and other, local, specific cultural characteristics of the studied community.

It should be noted that active participation of local communities with government administrative units is increasing. Part of the respondents proposed ideas of solution of certain environmental problems e.g. pollution of public areas by animals, development of public, green areas. The respondents noted also a negative impact of environment degradation on living standard.

The results of the questionnaire survey seem to contribute significant knowledge in the field of the local community environmental awareness, in this case, the knowledge about one of the administrative units of Pomeranian Voivodeship – Słupsk County. The survey is a source of information for the local government in the area of diagnosing socio-environmental problems, as well as defining, planning and execution of the most important issues of the region's sustained development strategy.

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DZIAŁALNOŚĆ SAMORZĄDÓW LOKALNYCH W ZAKRESIE OCHRONY ŚRODOWISKA W ŚWIETLE BADAŃ ANKIETOWYCH (NA PRZYKŁADZIE POWIATU SŁUPSKIEGO)

Streszczenie

W opracowaniu przedstawiono wyniki badań sondażowych dotyczących świadomości ekologicznej mieszkańców jednej z jednostek samorządowych województwa pomorskiego – powiatu słupskiego.

Celem badań było rozpoznanie stanu wiedzy mieszkańców dotyczącej zagadnień związanych z degradacją środowiska przyrodniczego, jak również poznanie opinii społeczności lokalnej na temat działań proekologicznych samorządów lokalnych. Artykuł zawiera próbę konfrontacji opinii i ocen badanej społeczności z rzeczywistymi działaniami władz na rzecz poprawy stanu i ochrony środowiska przyrodniczego.

Prowadzone badania pozwoliły stwierdzić, że zainteresowanie społeczności lokalnej działaniami proekologicznymi podejmowanymi przez samorządy lokalne jest niewielkie. Wśród przyczyn takiego stanu można wymienić wiele czynników m.in. niski poziom wykształcenia ludności, miejsce zamieszkania, występowanie lokalnych problemów ekonomicznych oraz inne, lokalne, specyficzne cechy kulturowe i środowiskowe badanych społeczności. Większym zainteresowaniem problematyką środowiskową cechowali się mieszkańcy miast (Słupsk i Ustka) niż wsi. Odpowiedzi chętniej udzielali też respondenci z wykształceniem średnim i wyższym.

Ponad 80% badanych ocenia prośrodowiskową działalność samorządów jako dobrą i średnią (odpowiednio 22% i 61%). Wśród inwestycji i dotychczas wykonanych zadań najbardziej dostrzegalne były działania z zakresu gospodarki wodno-ściekowej i odpadowej, poprawy jakości powietrza i klimatu akustycznego. Gorzej wypada wiedza na temat działań związanych z ochroną przyrody i krajobrazu.

Respondenci dostrzegają przy tym pozytywne efekty inwestycji z dziedzin gospodarki wodnej i gospodarki odpadami, natomiast nie odczuwają skutków wykonanych działań z zakresu ochrony powietrza i ochrony przed hałasem.

Warto podkreślić, że czynny udział społeczności lokalnych dotyczy współpracy z jednostkami samorządowymi powoli się zwiększa. Część ankietowanych zgłaszała pomysły na rozwiązanie określonych problemów środowiskowych np. zanieczyszczenia terenów publicznych przez zwierzęta czy zagospodarowania publicznych terenów zielonych. Postulowali oni także zwiększenie kontroli środowiskowych związanych z egzekwowaniem przepisów ochrony środowiska. Widzieli również konieczność kontynuowania edukacji środowiskowej społeczeństwa.

