

The First Polish Agroforestry Conference „Agroforestry – the tool for adaptation of agriculture to climate change”



The Conference brought diverse stakeholders together

On 25th November 2014 the First Polish Agroforestry Conference was held at the Institute of Soil Science and Plant Cultivation – State Research Institute (IUNG) in Puławy, Poland. The event was entitled: “Agroforestry – the tool for adaptation of agriculture to climate change”. The conference was organized by IUNG, Polish Committee of Sciences - National Committee on Cooperation, together with the International Geosphere–Biosphere Programme, the Institute for Agricultural and Forest

Environment (IŚRiL) of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Poznań, and with the “State Forestry” National Holding’s financial support. The conference was under the auspices of the European Agroforestry Federation (EURAF).

The meeting brought together experts of different fields all over the country (61 participants).

The representatives of State Forests – National Forest Holding - took an active part in the event. EURAF was represented by Bohdan Lojka and Radim Kotrba from the Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague. General Directorate for Environment Protection (governmental unit responsible for environmental protection including trees and shrubs outside forests) representatives attended the meeting as well.



From left to right:
Prof. Wiesław Oleszek (IUNG Executive Director)
Dr Robert Borek (IUNG), Prof. Andrzej Kędziora (IŚRiL)

The conference was supported by the Forest Research Institute by the active participation of a number of researchers. Experts from Institute of Horticulture were present. Studies on short-rotation woody crops that are important element in modern alley cropping systems were shown in the presentations of scientists from University of Warmia and Mazury (NE Poland) as well as from the Forest Research Institute. Moreover, four Polish ecological organizations (NGOs), the business sector (SME), and farmers attended the conference.



The following topics were presented:

1. Environmental elements in the Rural Development Programme and Greening Policy in Poland within the new CAP 2014-2020
2. Agroforestry systems in Poland – preliminary identification
3. The network of midfield shelterbelts as a system of agroforestry for enriching of biodiversity and controlling water resources and its quality in agricultural landscape
4. Studies on trees and shrubs outside the forest in Poland
5. Agroforestry systems in problematic agricultural areas
6. Opportunities in wood resources assessment in shelterbelts and woodlands
7. Traditional orchards in Poland and Europe in the light of the international project ESTO (European Specialists in Traditional Orchards)
8. Short Rotation Coppice experiments of the University of Varmia and Mazury in Olsztyn
9. Opportunities for Black locust use in non-forest cultivation
10. Anti-erosion shelterbelts
11. The role of mycorrhiza in agroforestry
12. Improving the landscape structure as a tool for enriching biodiversity in an agricultural landscape
13. Roads for Nature – the campaign for trees in agricultural landscapes
14. The problem of rural-forest border shaping in the process rural areas development
15. Regeneration and supplementation of ecological corridors in Żuławy region.

Participants expressed the need to improve the legal regulations of shrubs and trees outside forests. Regarding agroforestry systems; on the one hand the role of trees in the landscape was agreed indisputable, however on the other hand, doubts arose as to modern agroforestry systems on big farms, mainly due to the lack of the governmental support for them and restricted number of trees per hectare. There is large uncertainty how these farmers will come up with ideas for the greening policy and EFA introduction on their farms. The participants expressed the hope that emerging agroforestry association will contribute to creating the legal conditions in which these investments will bear fruit on the national level (agroforestry systems) as well as on the level of local administration units (communes are preparing Zoning Schemes of General Spatial Plans including planning establishment of trees systems in the landscape). Special attention was given to the important role of agroforestry systems in organic farming. This mainly is affected in Poland by restrictions of direct sale for farmers and these issues remain unclear for producers. NGO showed good examples of participatory-approach activities for alley trees (including mid-field shelterbelts) protection on the level of the local administration unit (communes level).

The day after the conference was devoted to setting up the **Polish Agroforestry Society (OSA)**. The information about the agroforestry conference and the planned association has been mentioned in the local media (Radio Lublin). Promotion actions are intended to encourage people to participate in the agroforestry society.



1st meeting of the Polish Agroforestry Group

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