

Protection of natural processes in Poland

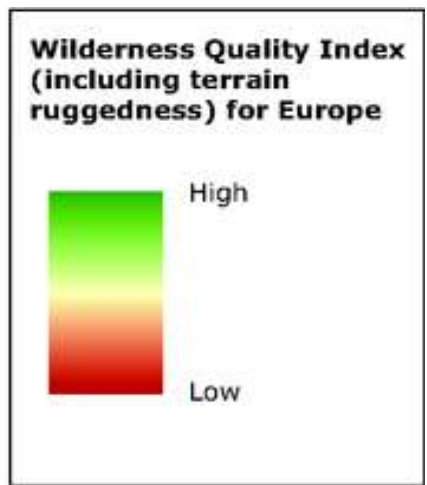
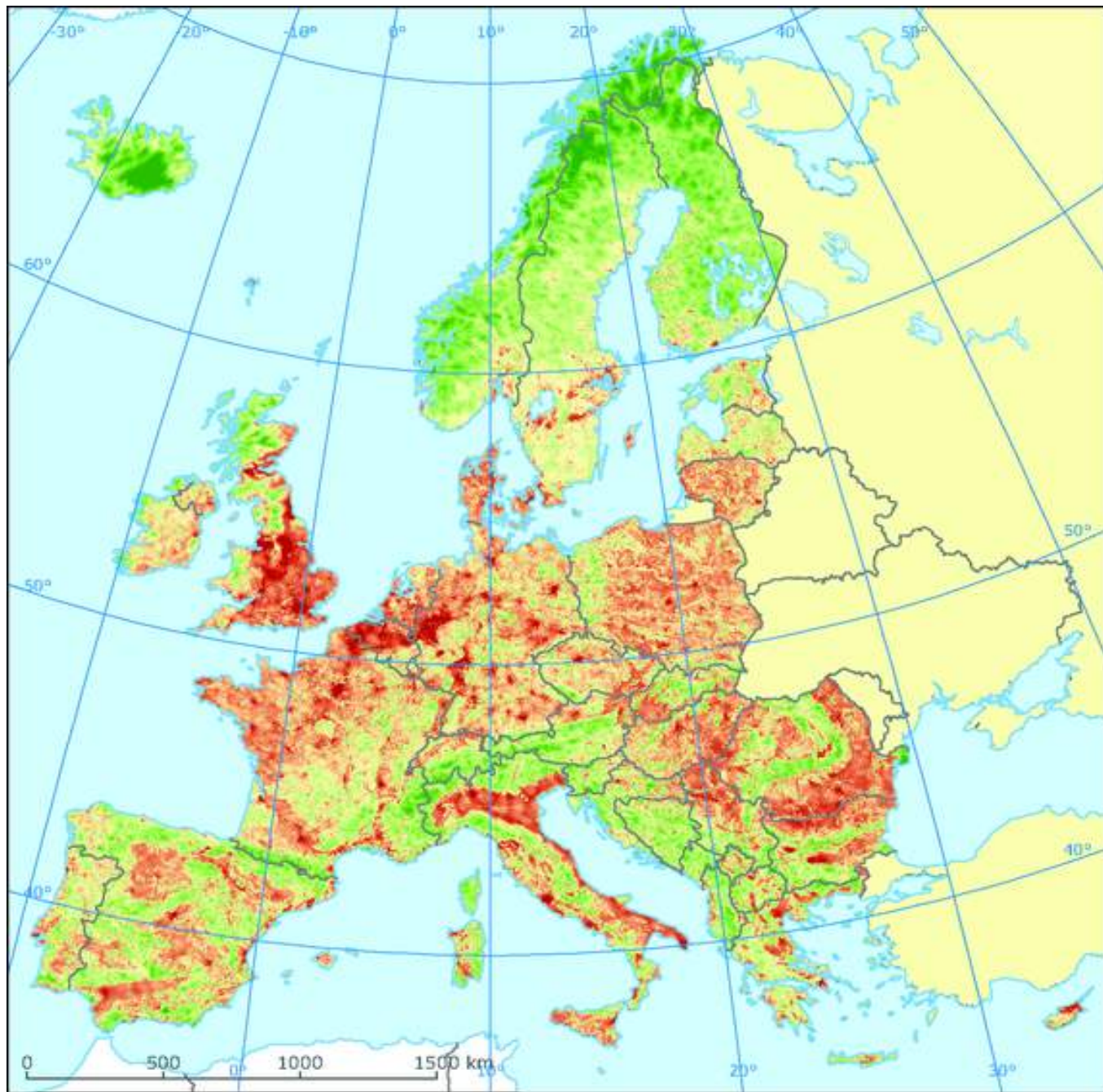


Paweł Pawlaczyk,
Naturalists Club Poland & CEEWeb for Biodiversity,



Poland is generally not a wilderness country...





Policy & strategy

- Does a country strategy on natural processes protection exist and is it either officially approved or implemented?
- If yes, what are main pillars of the strategy?
- If it does not exist, what is the official country position?



Policy & strategy

- Does a country strategy on natural processes protection exist and is it either officially approved or implemented?
 - No strategy nor reflection in strategic documents
- If it does not exist, what is the official country position?
 - Till 2015: strict protection (=protection of natural processes) is an integral part of nature conservation, and a tool of nature conservation with should be applied where relevant, in case by case mode
 - New government 2015+: The human obligation is to manage and utilise nature. Sustainable use is a optimal way of nature conservation



Scientific advise

National Board for Nature Conservation 2016, April 16th:

- Deficite of areas of natural processes conservation is one of the 10 most important Polish nature conservation challenges
- 0,24% as present estimation
- 2% target recommended
- To be achieved both in existing national parks and reserves and by establishing new ones

Nevertheless whole Board was dimissed by the Minister of Environment some weeks later



The idea still alive

Despite lack of present political support, the idea of natural processes protection is still widespread among protected areas managers & nature management planners



2015 policy change

- not (yet?) reflected in most of management decisions and management plans (inertia of nature conservation system)
- but, Poland not join the international application for extending UNESCO World Heritage ancient beech forests
- change of conservation policy for Bialowieza Great Forest



Implementation

- Where a natural processes protection is currently implemented?
- Who is a responsible body (who is an initiator if the activity)?
- How many percent of the country is covered such protection and what is the goal (if defined)?



Implementation

- Where a natural processes protection is currently implemented?
 - national parks
 - nature reserves
 - some other areas
- Who is a responsible body (who is an initiator of the activity)?
 - root level: national park, regional conservation authority, forest district
- How many percent of the country is covered such protection and what is the goal (if defined)?
 - 0,24% (*official designation*) - ca 0,5-0,8% (*in practice, not always sufficiently secured, not always fully protected, not precisely recorded*)
 - no defined national goal



Implementation

Protected areas (NP + reserves) zonation:

- strict protection zone (= designated for natural processes which are the objective itself)
- active conservation zone (= active conservation may be implemented if necessary, but non-intervention approach may be applied if relevant for conservation objectives)
- ~~landscape conservation zone~~
- not zoned (= all interventions forbidden)

Outside official protected areas:

- forests designated for natural processes by forest management decisions
- areas not managed because useless or hardly accessible



Strict protection zones

Officially designated for protection of natural processes (natural processes protection is an intrinsic goal):

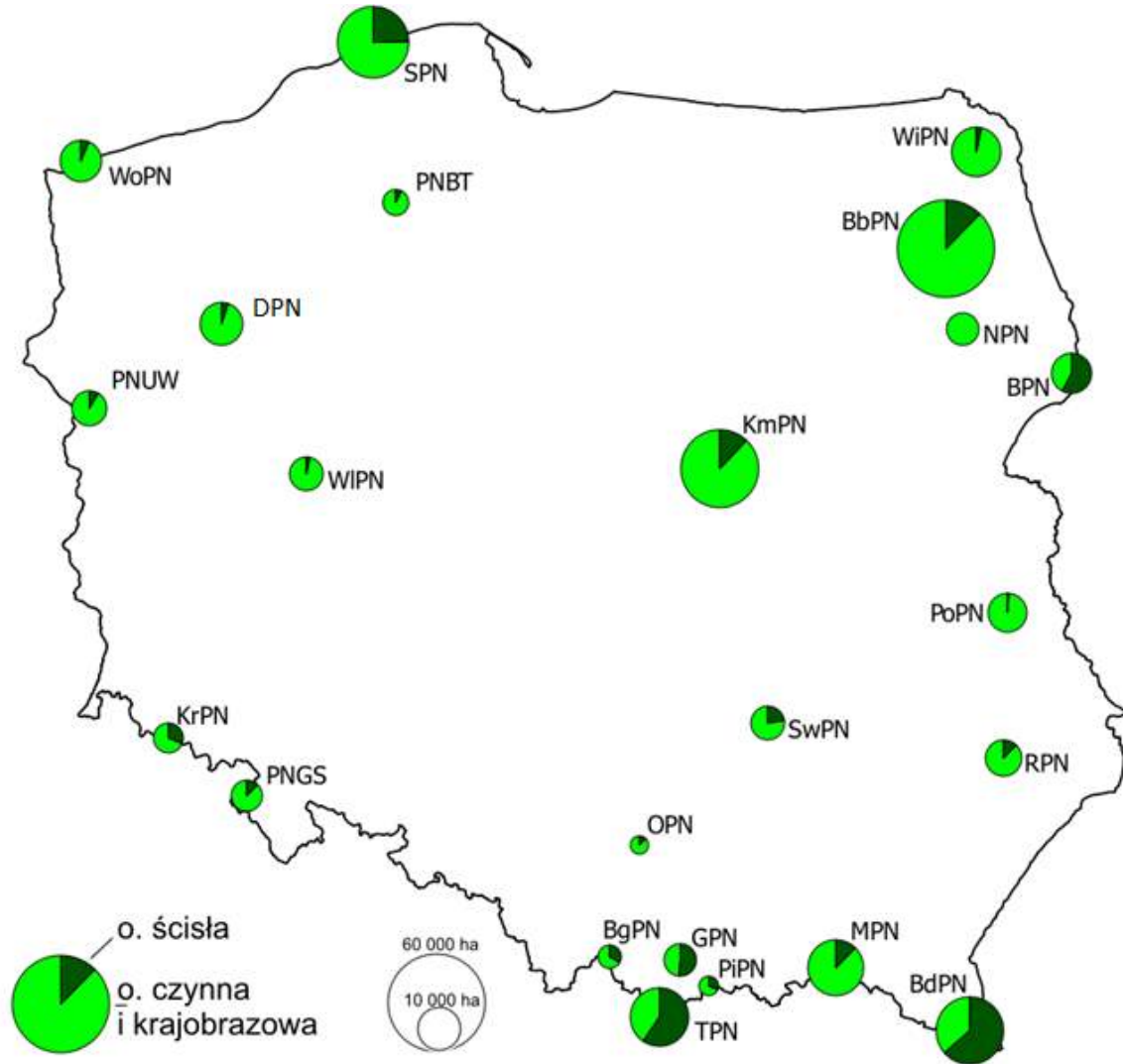
- 73 351 ha in national parks
- 5 792 ha of nature reserves



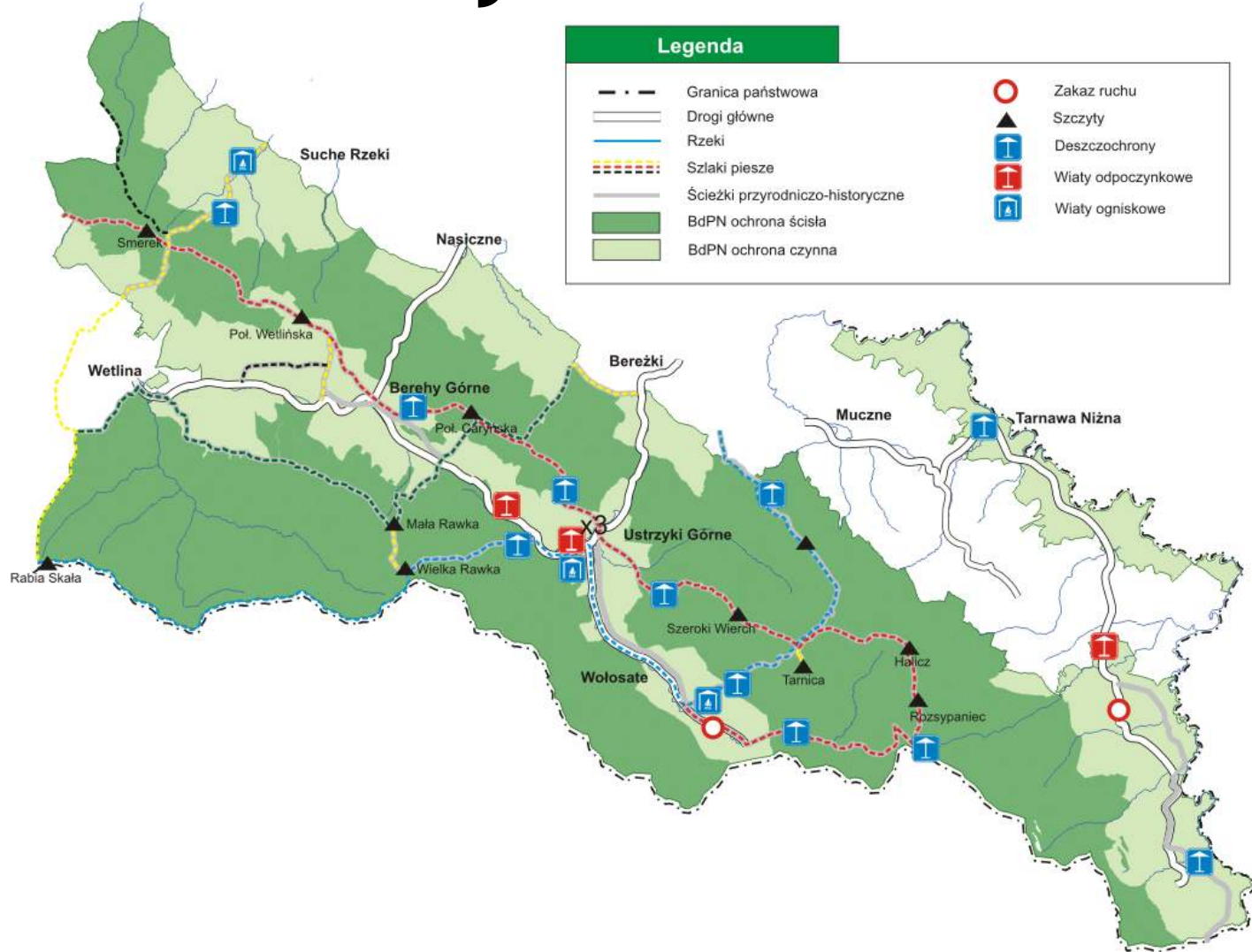
National parks



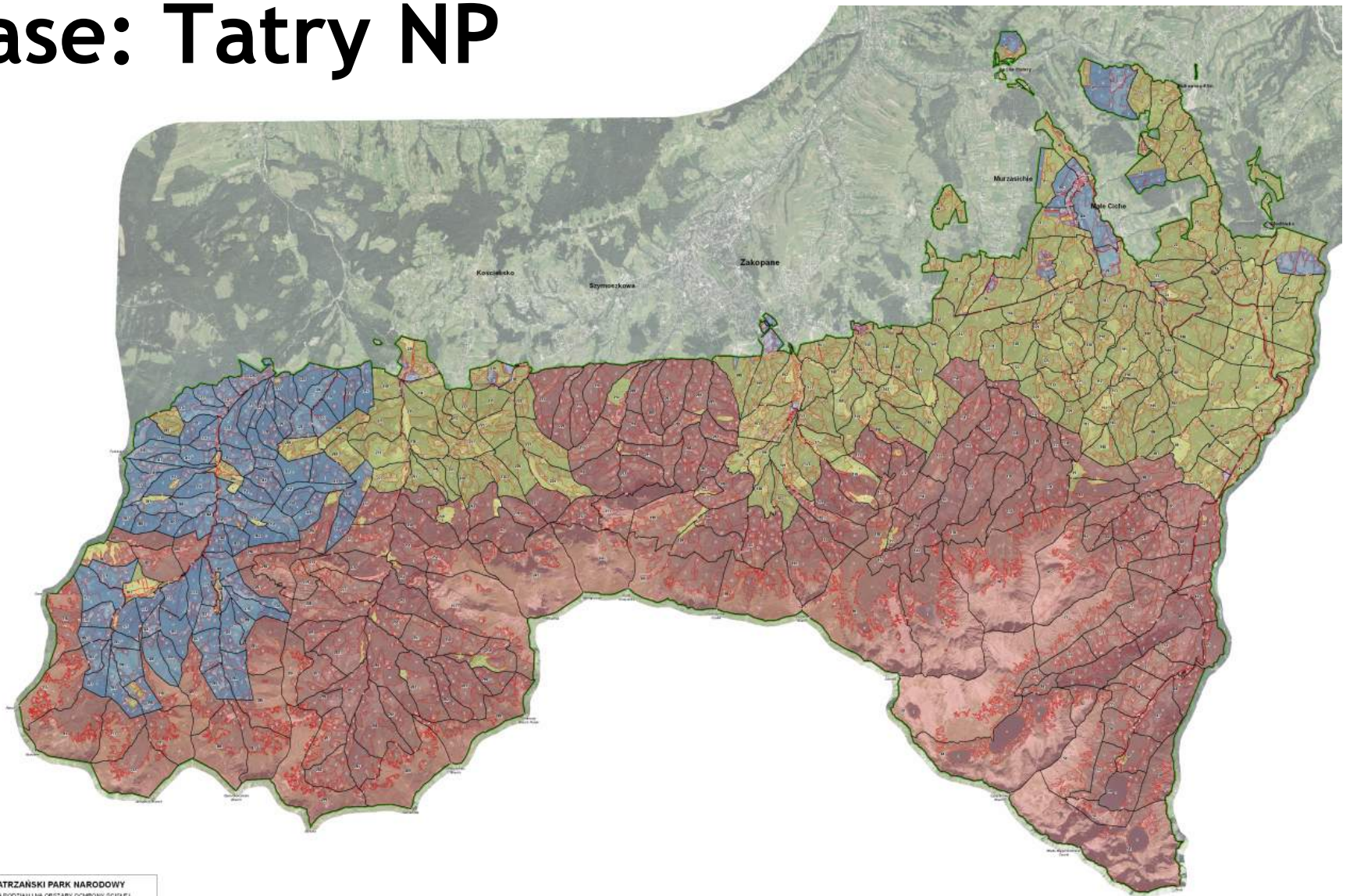
Strict protection zones in national parks areas



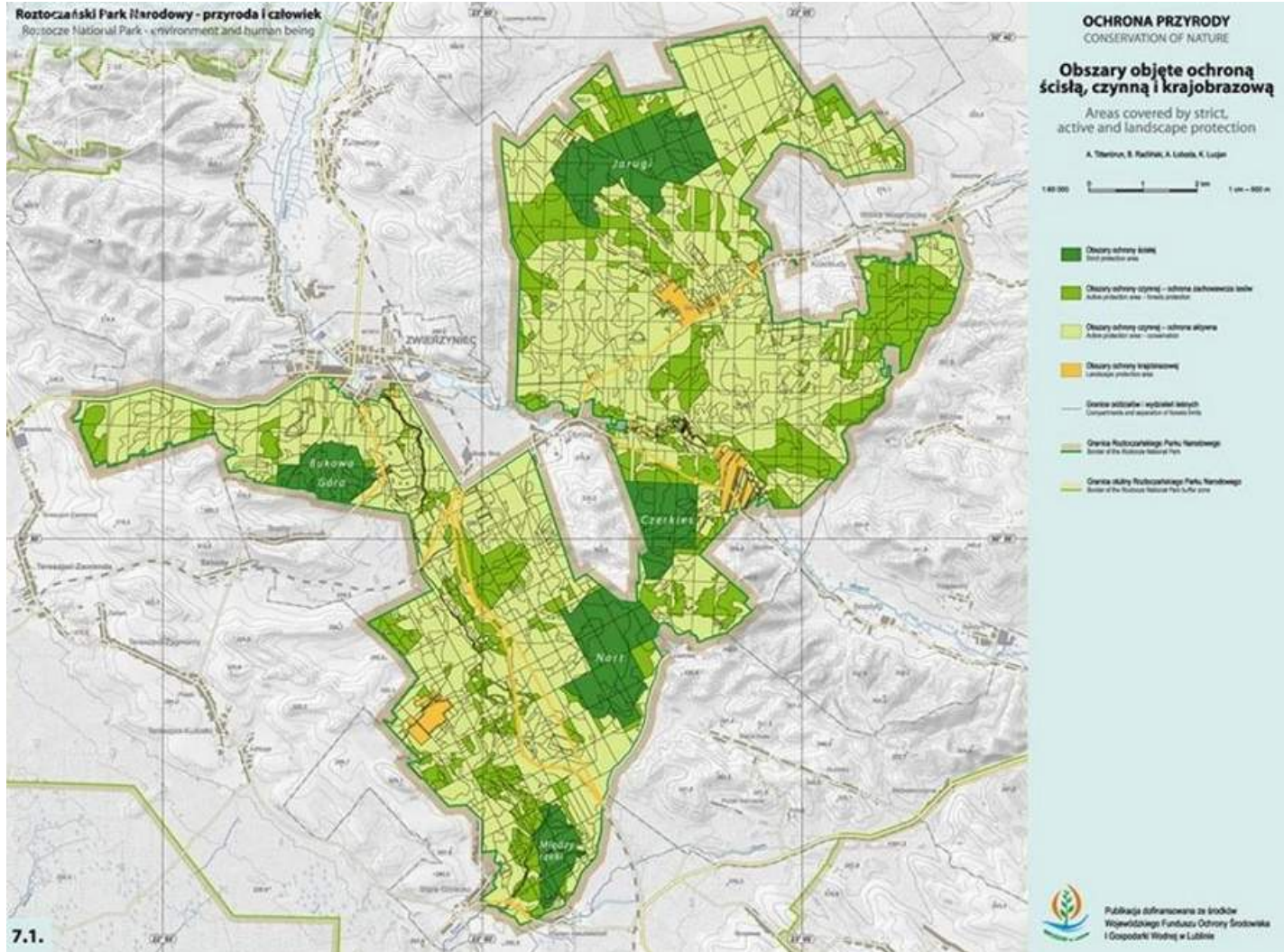
Case: Bieszczady NP



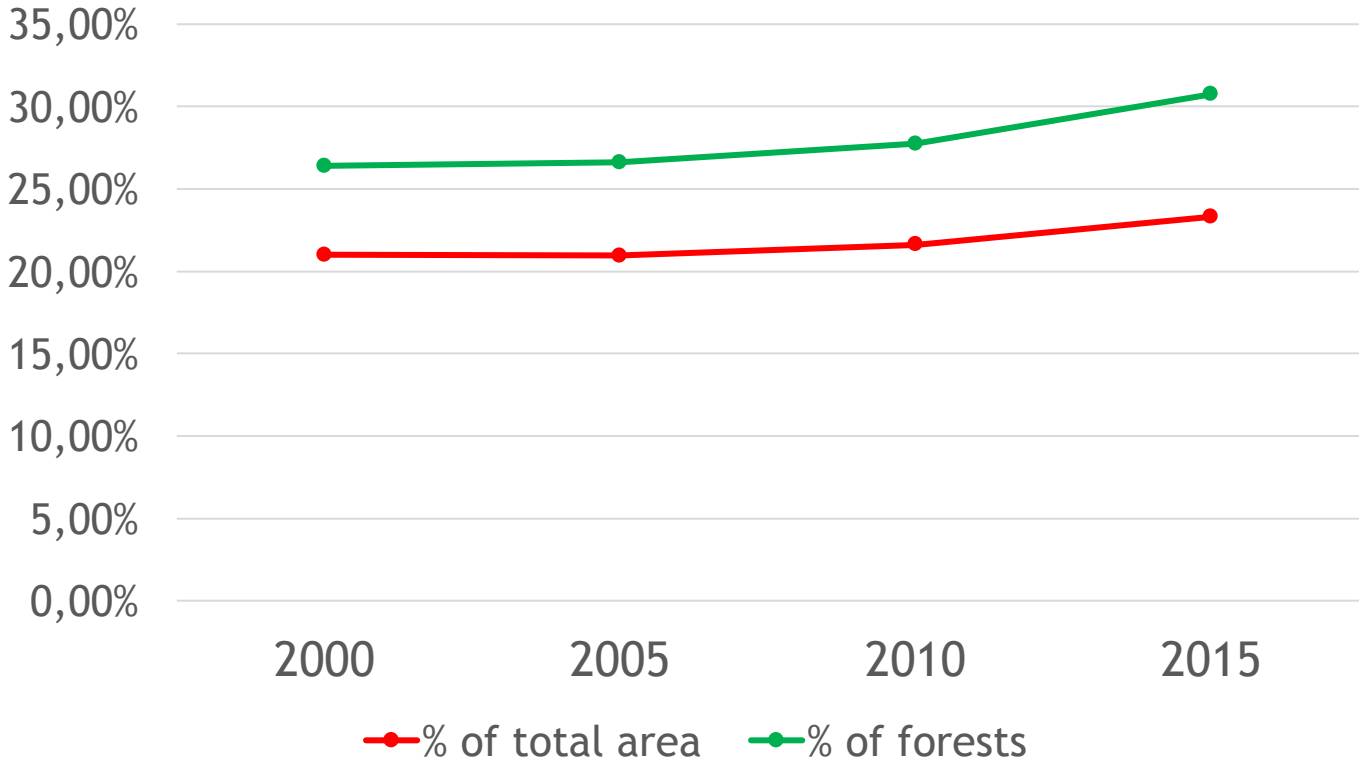
Case: Tatry NP



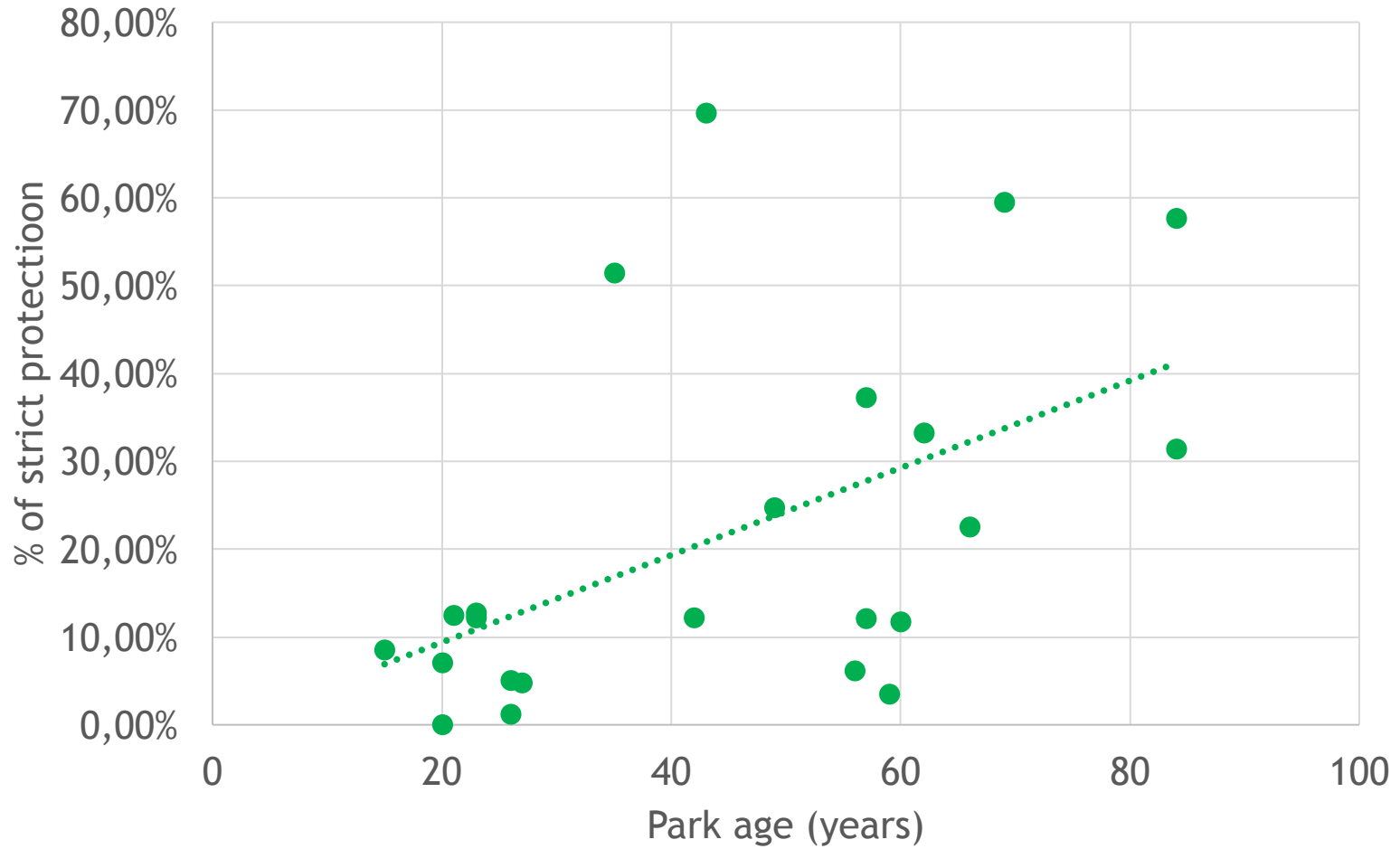
Case: Roztocze NP



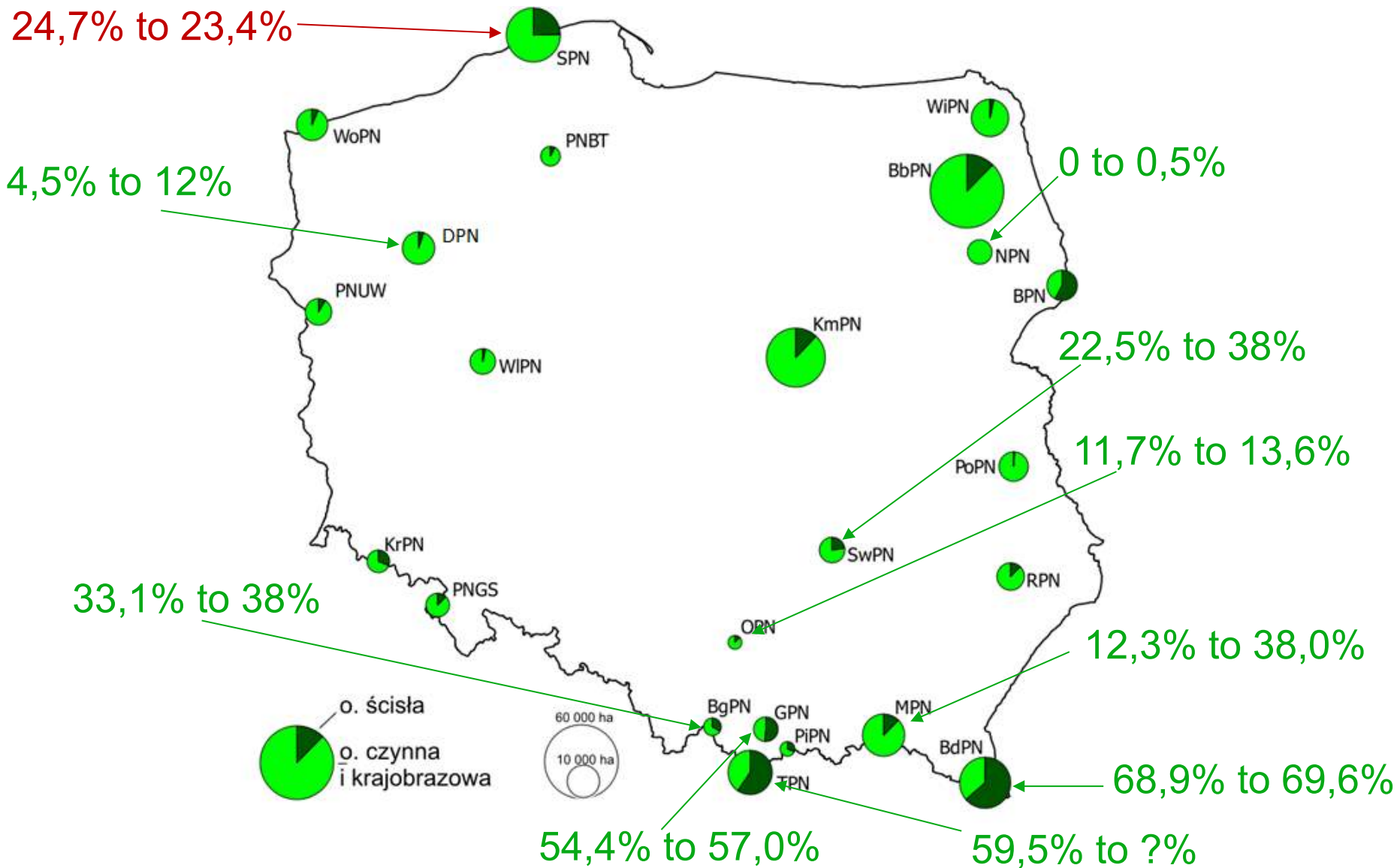
Strict protection zones in national parks area

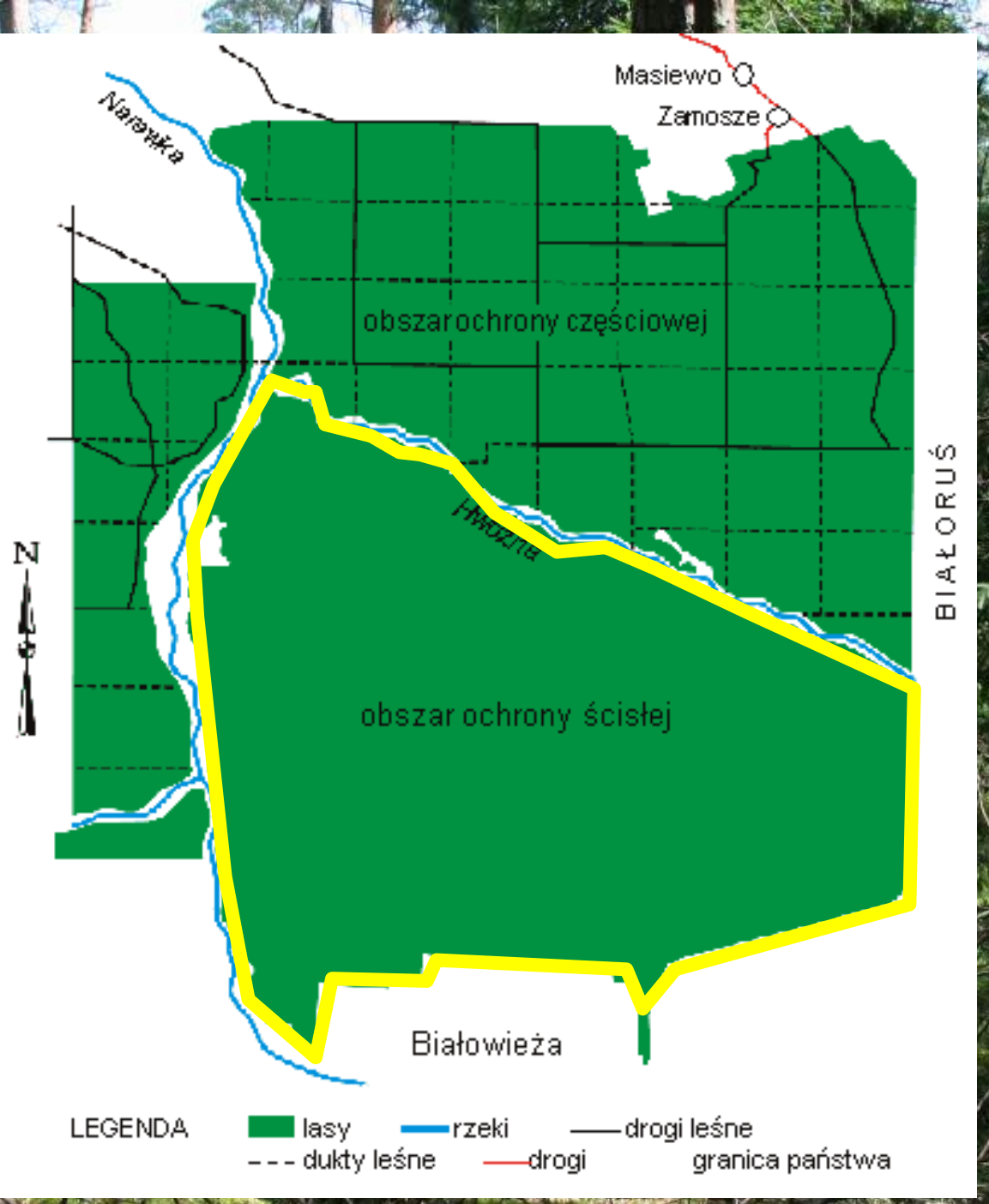


Strict protection vs park age



Expectations: strict zones upgrade





But also...

The „grey number” of zones of „non-intervention in practice”:

Formally designated as Active Conservation Zone

But with no active conservation measures prescribed,

Non intervention is a tool for achieving conservation objectives

More flexible, not always full non-intervention

No centralised statistics nor spatial data



Case: Drawa NP



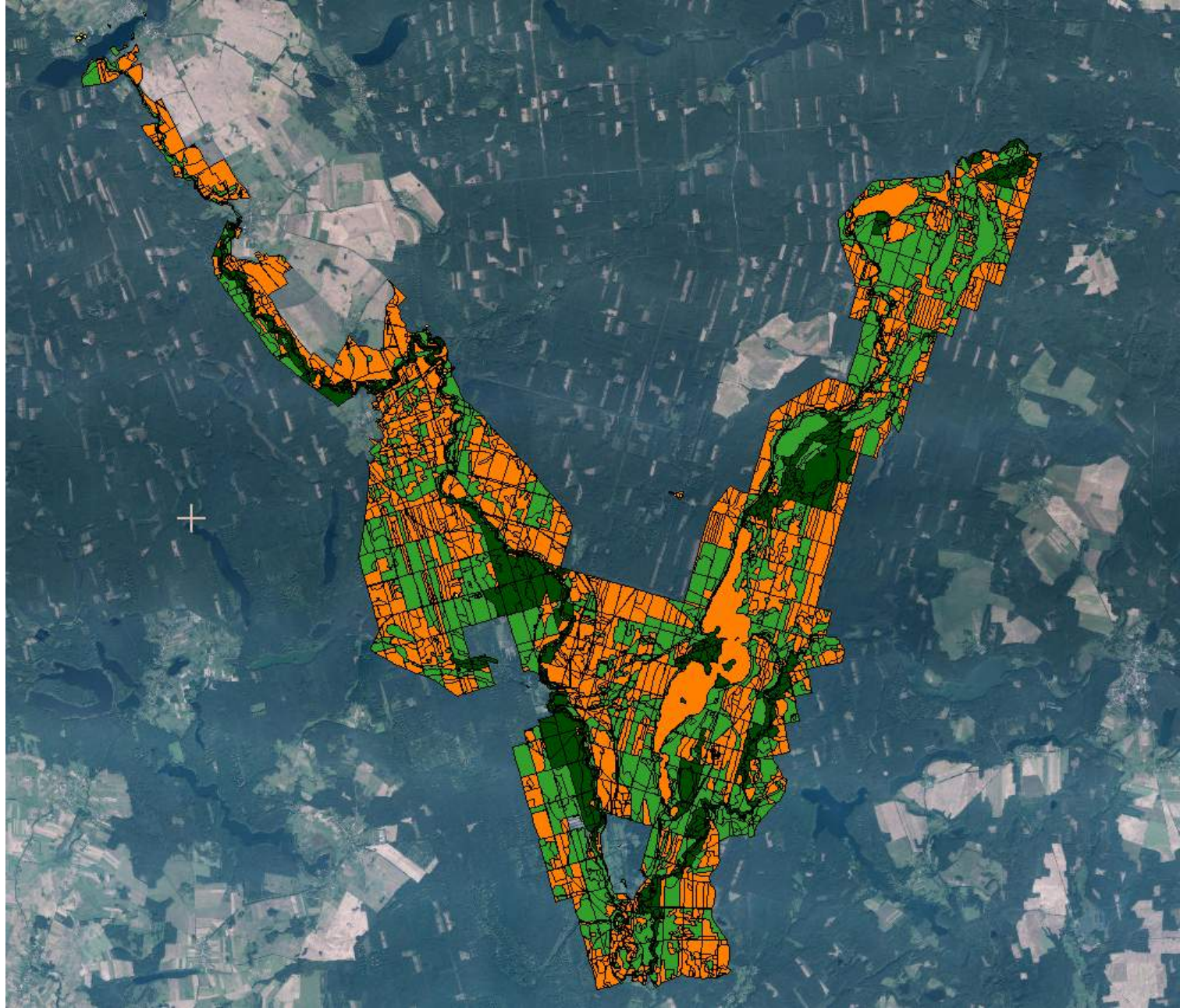
Formally designed non-intervention zone for protection of natural processes



„Non intervention in practice” – achieving conservation objectives by natural processes

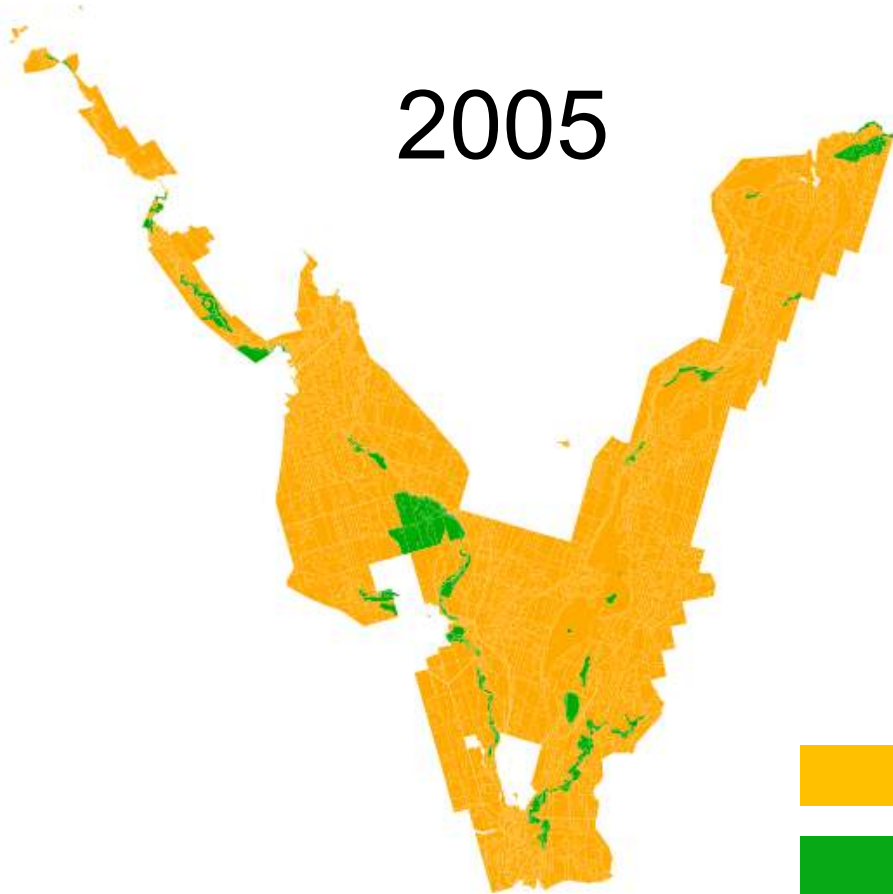


Active conservation – achieving conservation objectives by conservation measures

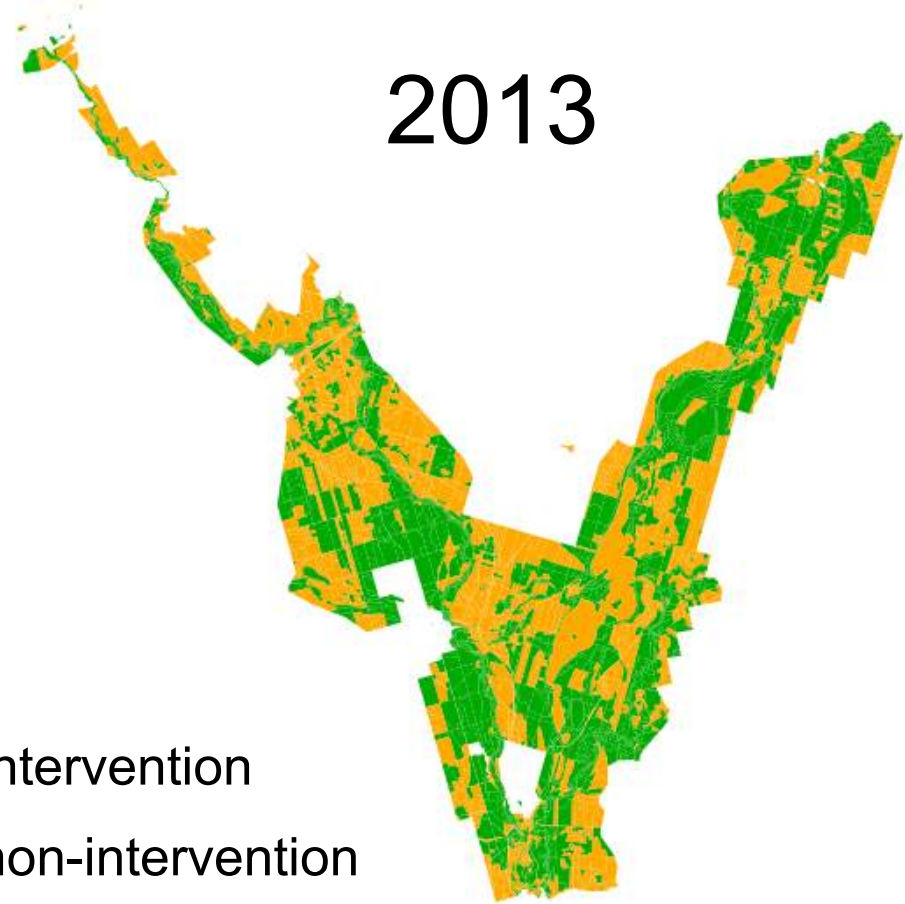


Case: Drawa NP

2005



2013



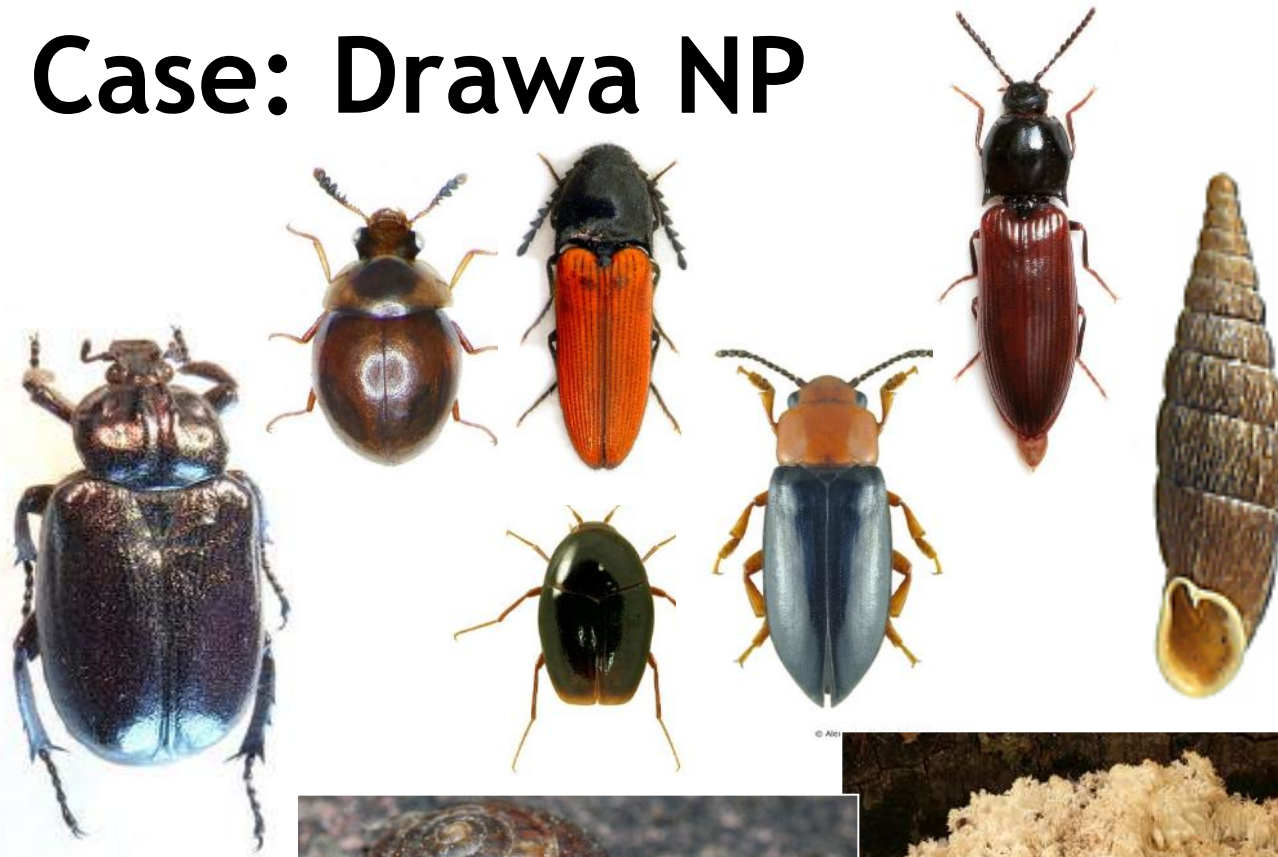
intervention



non-intervention



Case: Drawa NP



Case: Drawa NP

Spectacular
biodiversity &
structural
improvements
where non
intervention
applied



Case: Wigry NP



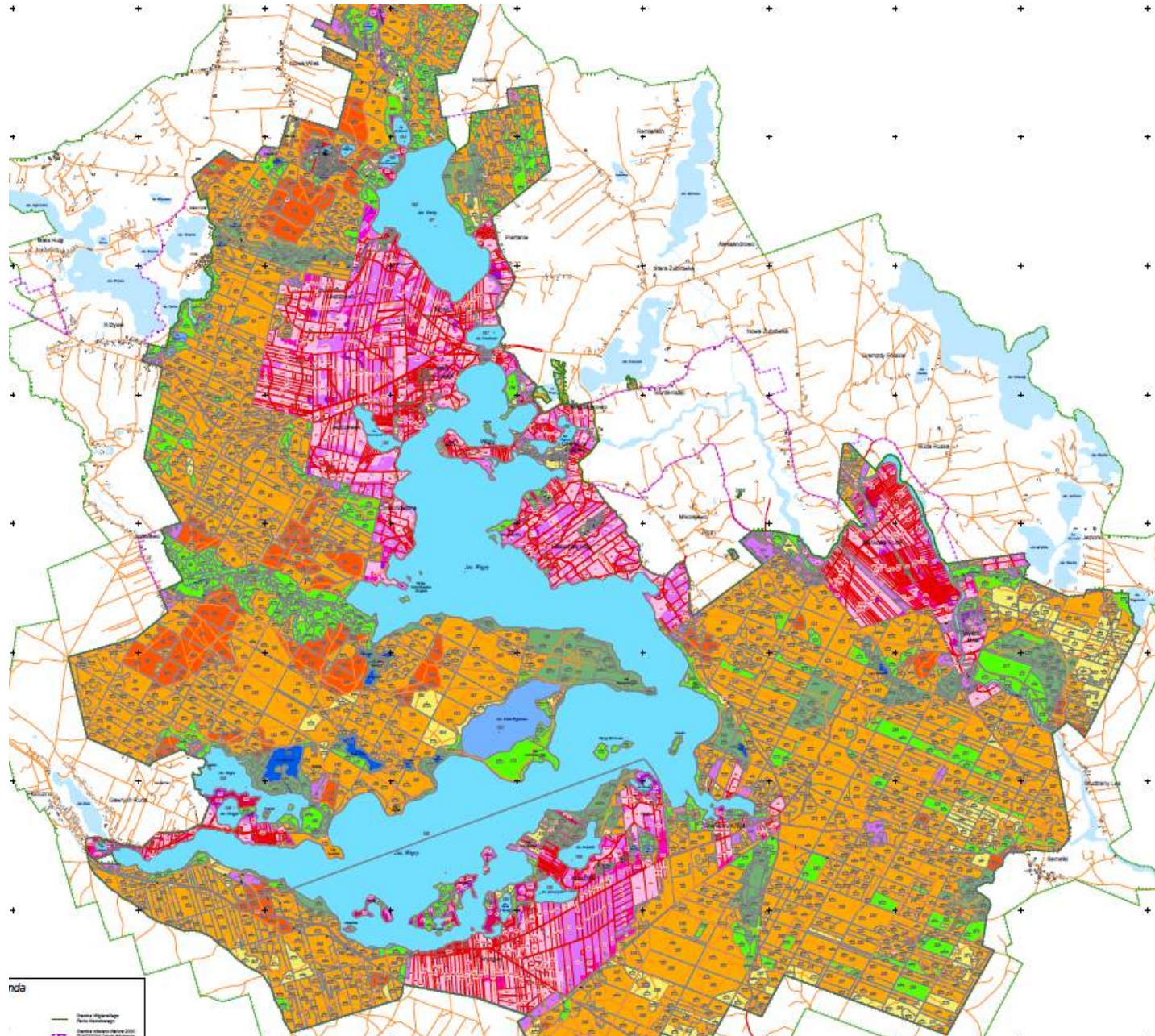
Formally designed non-intervention zone for protection of natural processes



„Non intervention in practice” – achieving conservation objectives by natural processes



Active conservation – achieving conservation objectives by conservation measures



„Non intervention in practice”

- Favourite of park managers (more flexibility in unexpected situations)
- ... by the same reason, not fully secured
- Not easy to estimated the area
- Roughly estimated as increasing „strict protection zones” by additional 60-80%, ca 50 000 ha



General trend in national parks forests

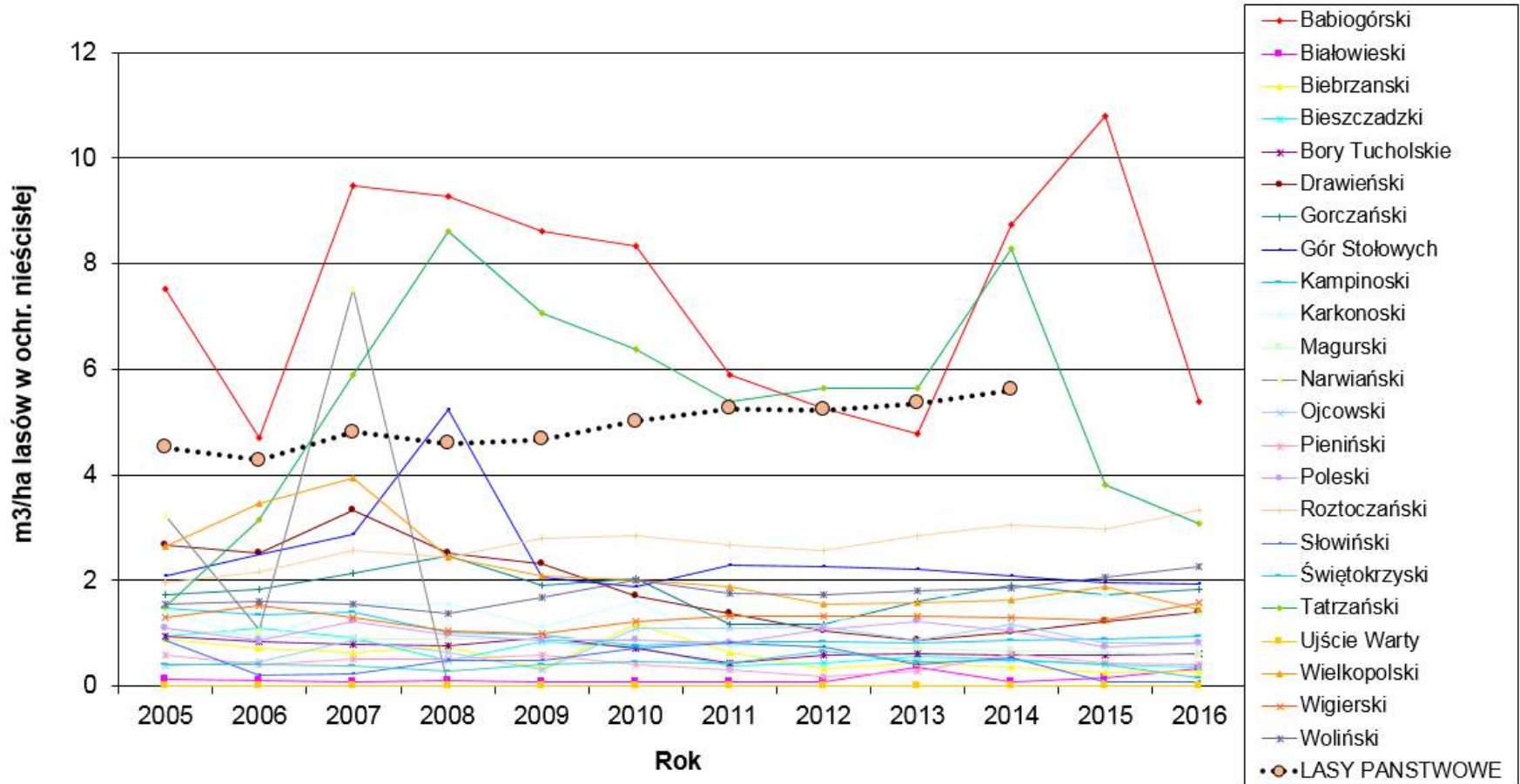


- From „quasi forest management” towards non intervention
- In some parks strategies of extinguishing of forest management in long term (but rather 60-80 years) perspective



General trend in national parks forests

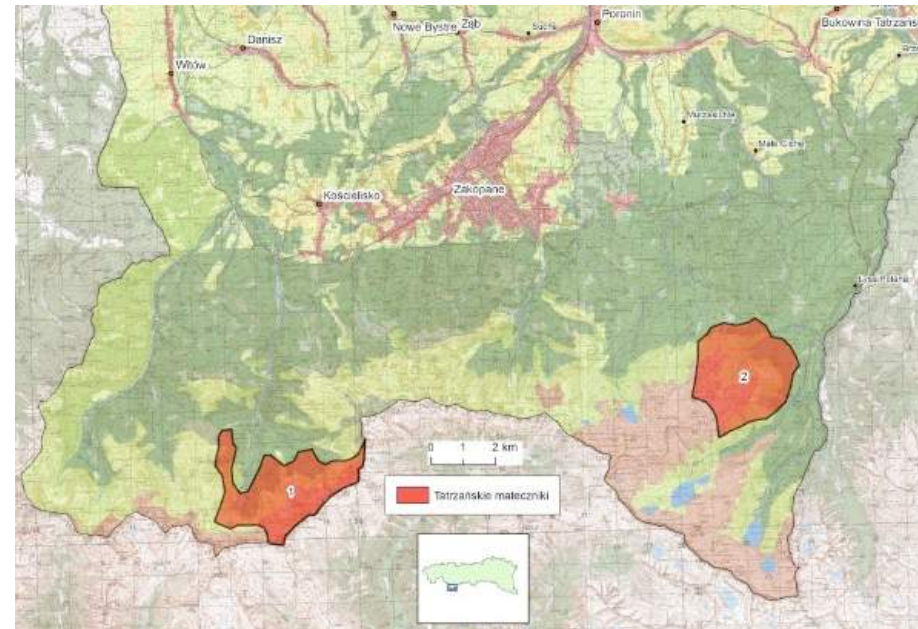
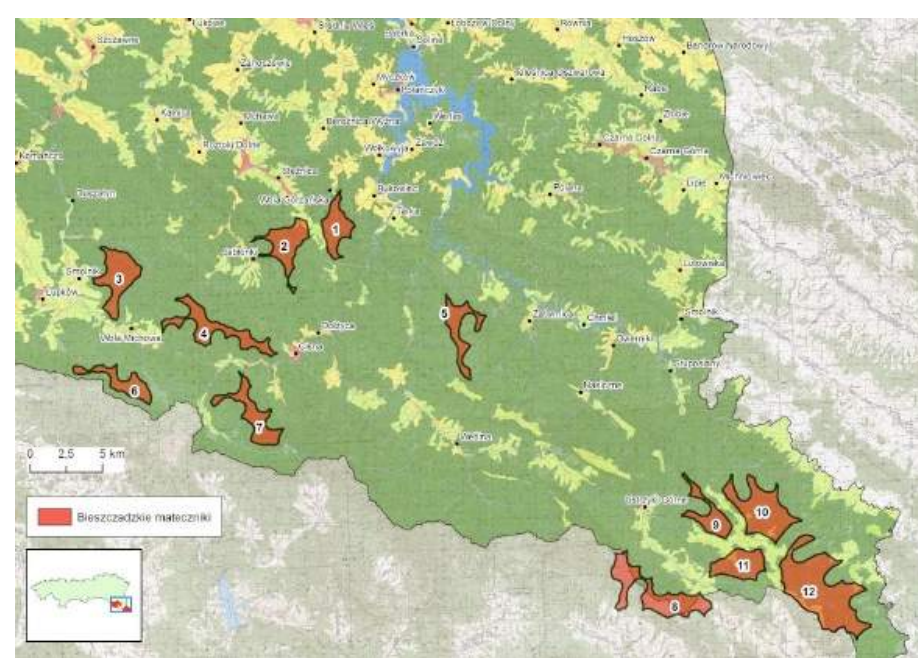
Timber extraction from NPs



But...

Even wider application of non intervention management do not guarantee, even in national parks, compact wild / wilderness areas

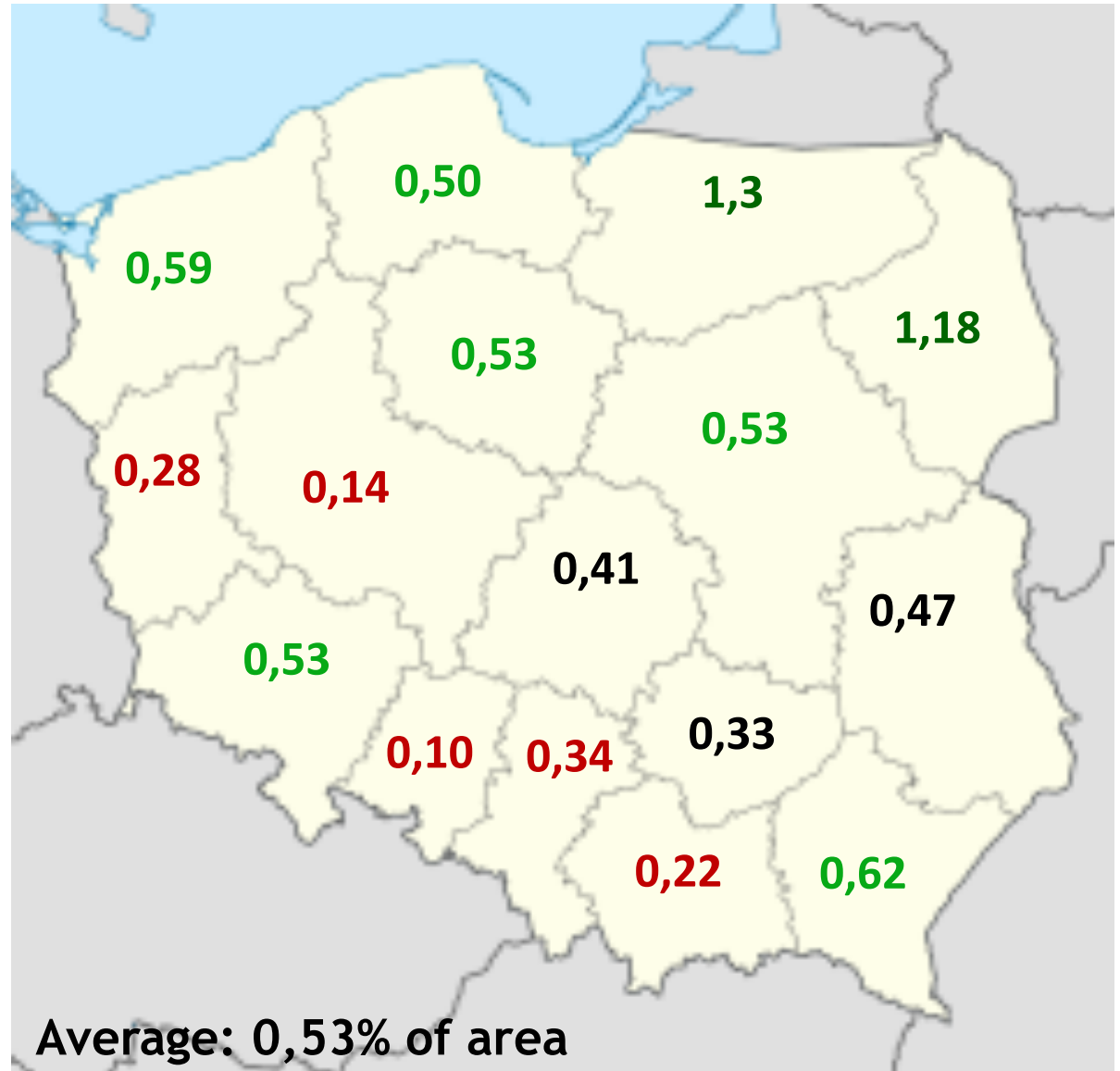
Coherent bigger roadless/pathless areas with no intervention and no human access are extremely rare!



Crucial habitats for brown bear (roadless areas) in Bieszczady and Tatry, by Nuria Selva, Tomasz Zwijacz-Kozica, Agnieszka Sergiel, Agnieszka Olszańska, Filip Zięba 2012

Nature reserves

- 166 918 ha in total
- only 5792 ha formally designated as „strict protection zones”
- ca 100 000 ha = „non intervention in practice”



Nature reserves

- Ca 5 areas of non-intervention bigger than 1000 ha
- Ca 40 areas of non-intervention bigger than 500 ha



Other areas

Areas designated by forest management decisions:



- Representative Sample Areas required by FSC standard
- Other similar, designated by own decisions



Other areas

various quality

but probably > 100 000 ha in total



- RDLP Białystok - 6%
- RDLP Zielona Góra - 5,8%
- RDLP Łódź - 5%
- RDLP Poznań - 5%
- RDLP Gdańsk - 5%
- RDLP Toruń - 5%?
- RDLP Szczecinek - 4,9%
- RDLP Wrocław - 4,8%
- RDLP Kraków - 3,9%
- RDLP Olsztyn - 3,1%
- RDLP Szczecin - 3%
- RDLP Krosno - 2,8%
- RDLP Lublin - 1,9%
- RDLP Warszawa - 1,9%
- RDLP Katowice - 1,6%
- RDLP Piła - 0,39%



Other areas



- various quality
- some extremely small
- no centralised data
- even local data needs very careful interpretation
- but probably additional area > 100 000 ha in total



Las Szast - 475 ha after windfall

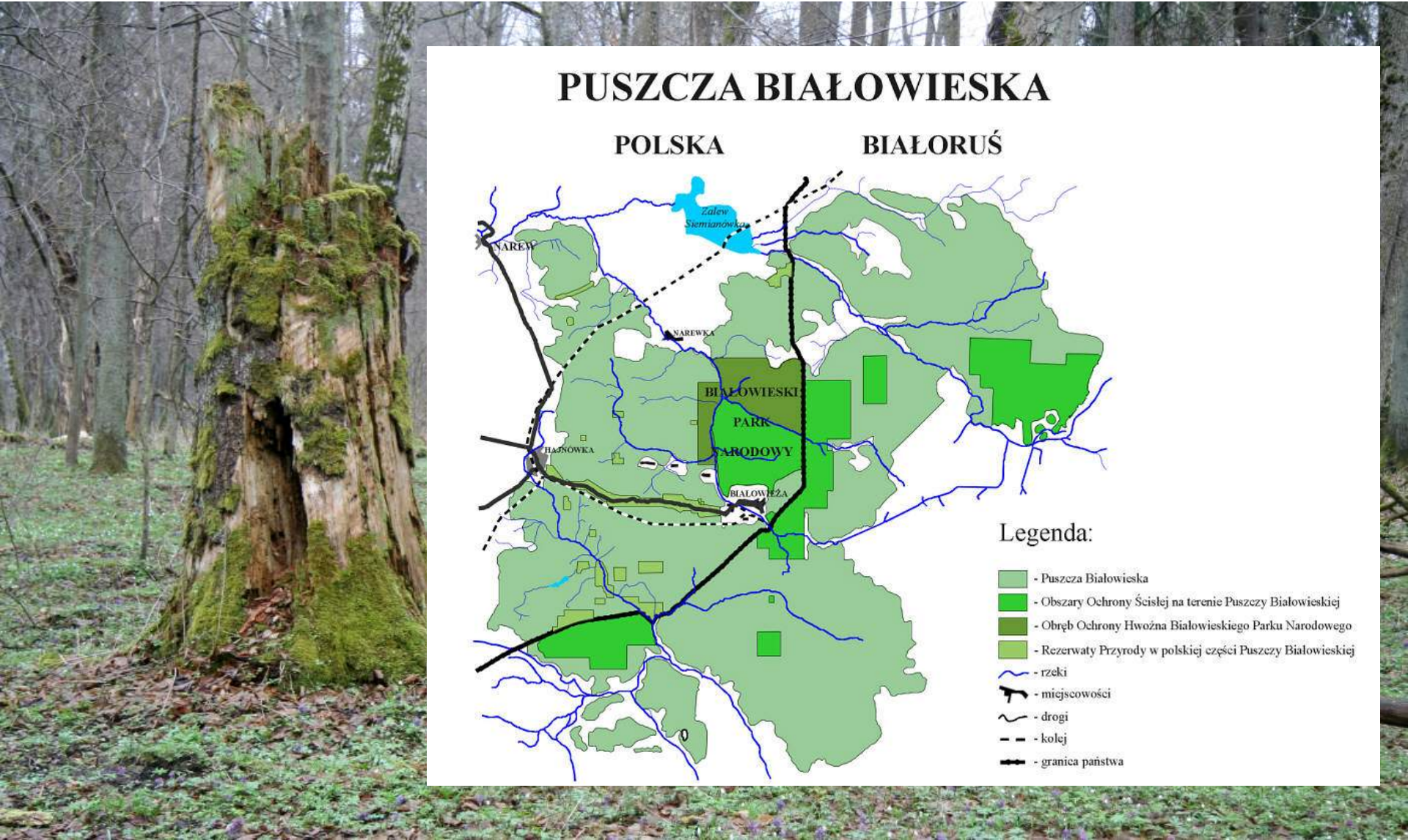


Dachowskie Ługi - 288 ha after windfall



Białowieża Great Forest case

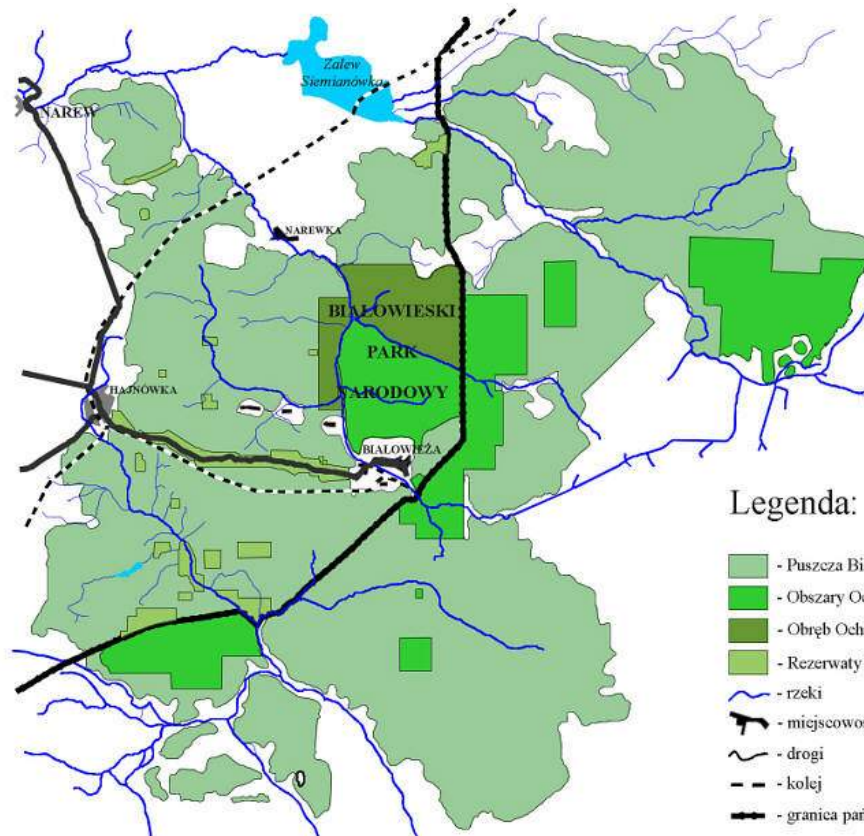
Big forest complex with high naturalness, with biodiversity (including Natura 2000) generally benefiting non-intervention



PUSZCZA BIAŁOWIESKA

POLSKA

BIAŁORUŚ



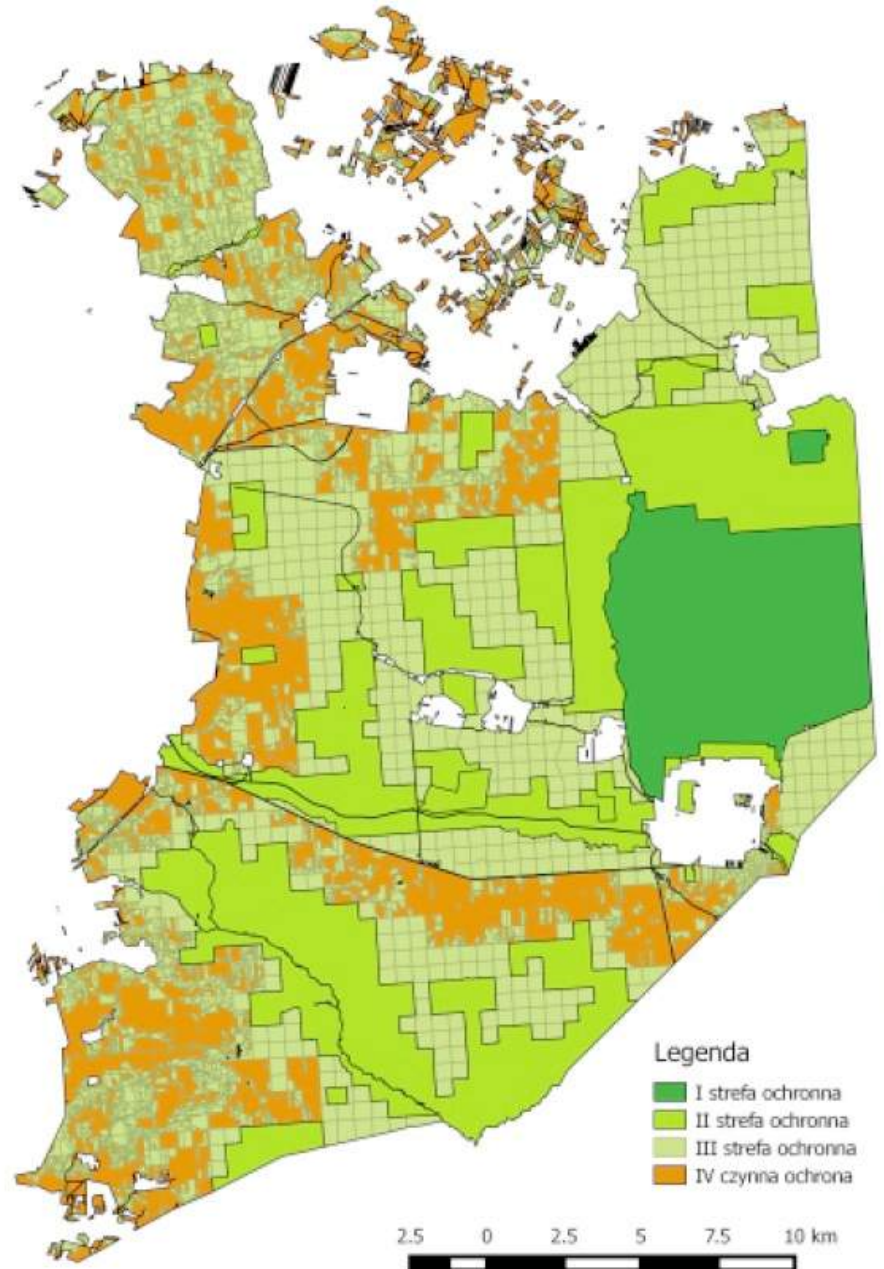
Legenda:

- Puszcza Białowieża
- Obszary Ochrony Ścisłej na terenie Puszczy Białowieżskiej
- Obręb Ochrony Hwożna Białowieżskiego Parku Narodowego
- Rezerваты Przyrody w polskiej części Puszczy Białowieżskiej
- rzeki
- miejscowości
- drogi
- kolej
- granica państwa

Bialowieża Great Forest case

Solution' 2012: model of zones with wide application of non-intervention approach provided by various areas:

- national park
- nature reserves
- areas designated in forest management plan

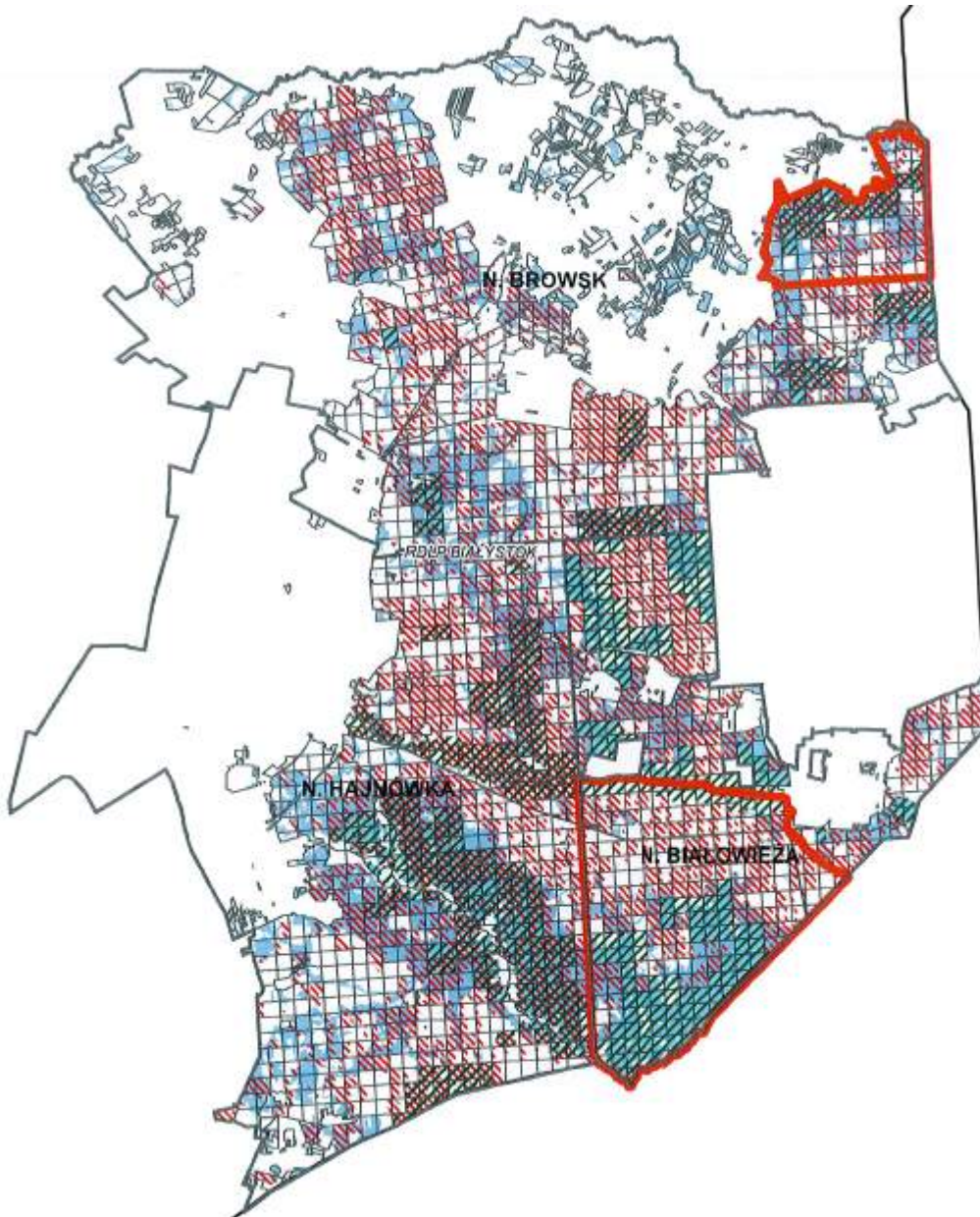


Białowieża Great Forest case

Test = bark
beetle
outbreak 2013-
2016-?



Białowieża Great Forest case



- National Park & nature reserves = secured non-intervention
- Areas designated in forest management plan - modified in 2016
- Nevertheless, still non intervention „reference areas” exists, but how stable will be?

Other areas

Simply, areas
difficult to access

At least some
hardly accessible
wetland complex
bigger than 1000
ha

But no centralised
data



Summary:

- 0,24% of area of Poland is formally and officially designated for protection of natural processes
- Other forms allowing natural ecosystem dynamics exists, although protection is not fully secure
- Difficult to calculate area of other forms (no centralised data exists). We are working for improvement of estimation
- Nevertheless, the area manager by natural processes may be estimated as between 0,5% and 0,8% of the territory of Poland
- Definitely too small



IUCN Categories

- Is there any relation between a natural processes protection and the Protected Area categorisation of the IUCN?



Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories

Edited by Nigel Dudley



IUCN Categories

Is there any relation between a natural processes protection and the Protected Area categorisation of the IUCN?

IUCN category	% of officially designated strict protection zone
Wilderness area and strict reserves designated as I IUCN category	n/a
National parks categorised as II IUCN category	28,5%
National parks categorised as V IUCN category	8,2%
National parks not categorised	8,8%
Nature reserves (IV IUCN category)	3,5%

The requirement of 75% natural processes for category II is not followed at all



Stakeholders

What is a role of NGO sector, or municipality or regional/local authorities?



Stakeholders

What is a role of NGO sector?

- Not
- NGOs: comments to management plans, pressure for more space for natural processes
- But dispersed effort, input to a lot of dispersed plans is necessary
- Capacity problems

Municipalities or regional/local authorities?

- Rather not supportive for non intervention management
- Prefers manager nature



Stakeholders

2016-2018?

- Shadow List of nature reserves
- Catalog of existing and potential wild areas
500 ha threshold





pro

www.zaadoptuj.rzeka.pl
www.tvn.warszwa.pl
www.polskieradio.pl
www.puszcza.pracownia.org.pl



against

<http://puszcza-bialowieska.blogspot.com>



**SABOTAŻ GOSPODARCZY
-POD SĄD WINOWAJCÓW!!!**



Details



Details

National parks & reserves in general

Impact	No elimination	Case by case approach	Regular elimination
Wildfire			+
Bark beetle		+	
Invasive alien species		+	
Game management		+	



Details

Strict protection zones

Impact	No elimination	Case by case approach	Regular elimination
Wildfire			+
Bark beetle	+		
Invasive alien species		+	
Game management	+		



Wildfire

- Usually not considered as natural factor, but as external anthropogenic threat
- Eliminated everywhere



- National fire preventing legislation overriding nature conservation rules
- Fire preventing infrastructure (roads) may even fragment strict protection zones
- Only some starting experiments with fire as conservation tool



Bark beetle

- Case by case basis
- Not in strict zones - but on other hand spruce stands are used as argument against strict zone creation
- Local & ational discussions, what is better, lately inspired by Bialowieza Forest case



Gorce NP case

*Cephalcia
falleni* & *Ips
typographus*
outbreaks

- non
intervention
approach
widely
applied



Gorce NP case

Non intervention = good forest regeneration + biodiversity benefits



Tatry NP case

Ips typographus
outbreak:

- non intervention in strict zone,
- combat against in Active Conservation Zone

Outbreak dynamics similar in both cases



Białowieża Forest

- Bark beetle outbreak
- National Park & nature reserves still under non-intervention
- Strong pressure of State Forest to change non-intervention designations in their responsibility area
- Political context



Wigry NP



Fot. R. Lampasak, www.wigry.org.pl

- Full fight against bark beetle, except strict zones
- But strict zones only small and designated in non-spruce stands
- In the history: the Park director dismissed for non-intervention in case of bark beetle outbreak (20+ years ago but they still remember)



Invasive alien species

- Commonly considered as a problem
- No negation of necessity to fight against
- But often no action because assessed as not feasible



For strict zones, two strategies

- Or accept IAS control also in strict zones (considering IAS as „external threat”)
- Or avoid strict zones designation where IAS control is necessary



Game management

- The background: only national parks and some nature reserves are excluded from common game management / hunting regulations
- In national parks, „the reduction of population” may be applied, if relevant
- NP still responsible for damages in farmers crops
- NP dilemma: hunting considered as not coherent with the NP idea, but sometimes substantial arguments that control is necessary
- Case by case basis
- No in strict zones!



Game management - national parks



Red deer:

- 336 deers shot/year (max. 101 Wielkopolski PN) from 7862 estimated
- Managed in 15/22 parks
- 0%-26% of local population shot yearly



Roe deer:

- 117 deers shot/year (max. 97 Kampinoski PN) from 9999 estimated
- Managed in 7/23 parks
- 0%-6% of local population shot yearly



Wild boar:

- 1899 boars shot/year (max. 1269 Kampinoski PN) from 6965 estimated
- managed in 9/20 parks
- 0%-117% of local population shot yearly



Game management - national parks

- Bialowieza NP
- Bieszczady NP
- Narew NP
- Slowinski NP
- Swietokrzyski NP
- Tatry NP

- no game
management

- Gorce NP
- Karkonosze NP
- Magura NP
- Roztocze PN
- Ujście Warty NP
- Wolin NP.

- a few individuals
yearly shot only,
unclear what for

- Babia Gora NP
- Biebrza NP
- Tuchola NP
- Drawa NP
- Gory Stolowe NP
- Kampinos NP
- Ojców NP
- Pieniny NP
- Polesie NP
- Roztocze PN

- management at least of
one species, justified by
significant ecological
needs

There is no easy explanation of differences,
except „hunting tradition” of the park personnel



**Thank you
for your attention**

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