

A city without an end. Urbanization processes in areas under different forms of natural heritage area protection – selected case studies from countryside around Warsaw and Lodz.

SUMMARY

The dissertation presents changes affecting sites enjoying different forms of natural heritage area protection in the suburban areas of Warsaw and Lodz. Its main goal is to evaluate the effectiveness of the applicable legislation and to identify why some of the aforementioned changes breach the environmental protection rules.

The dissertation' goals are presented in seven chapters. The second and third outline the historical background and constitute a substantive introduction to research described in the dissertation. **Chapter II** gives the historical perspective on the development of the environmental protection rules and describes the present state of environmental legislation. This part of the dissertation looks into the rich tradition of environmental protection and the centuries-old efforts aimed to protect sites of the highest environmental value. **Chapter III** discusses suburban areas contained sites that are analysed in the next part of the dissertation. As well as delving into the history of land-use planning assumptions for the suburban areas of Warsaw and Lodz, it also gives a historical perspective on how the areas were protected in the past.

The next three chapters present investigations underlying the dissertation. Each one looks at a different form of area protection and analyses changes in land use in selected municipalities situated close to the administrative boundaries of the centres of both conurbations. Changes occurring in the analysed protected areas are juxtaposed with the provisions of local spatial policies and the environmental legislation in force. They are shown for entire municipalities and illustrated with case studies presenting situations that are either the most typical or the most astonishing. **Chapter IV** presents processes taking place in the Warsaw Protected Landscape Area through the municipality of Wiązowna. The case studies show a range of inconsistencies between spatial policies implemented at the local level and the environmental protection rules and land-use documents. **Chapter V** analyses the Lodz Hills Landscape Park, an area covered by a protection plan, based on the Municipality of Nowosolna that carries out its spatial policy according to the provisions of local law. The scope of analysis includes spatial policy directions,

planning documents, audit reports, communications from opinion-making bodies and the activities of local governments. The intended purposes of local law are contrasted with actual locations of projects and the manner of their implementation. **Chapter VI** analyses a national park, one of the three forms of environmental protection considered in the dissertation, with respect to the municipality of Izabelin. This chapter has been prepared based on the field research data and a review of archive and current documents, which are compared to contrast planning documents and statutes with the reality.

Chapter VII considers the causes of degradation processes affecting areas environmentally protected areas from three perspectives. Firstly, it analyses discrepancies between the objectives of national and regional policies and of local spatial policies and actual processes taking place in the protected areas. Secondly, it looks at why administrative and legislative mechanisms do not prevent the issuance of building permits for environmentally harmful projects to be sited in areas under different levels of protection. Thirdly, changes in the legislation are presented, which almost two decades ago nullified almost all planning documents and park protection plans. The dissertation concludes with a summation of the findings of the theoretical-and-cognitive research and empirical research and the evaluation of the hypotheses.