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VISITORS: A BLESSING
OR A BURDEN?



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Photograph by Clive Hurford



Visitor management during lockdowns and after actual reducing restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic



**STOWARZYSZENIE
NA RZECZ WYBRZEŻA**

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Some facts from a calendar of restrictions related to Polish legislation during the COVID – 19 pandemic

December 2019	<i>The first confirmed case of the disease</i>
March 2020	Closure of libraries, schools and museums and all “green areas” including National Parks
April 2020	Restoring access to “green areas”, including National Parks, but only for individuals
May 2020	Opening museums with restrictions on the number of people per 1 m ² and the need to wear masks
October 2020	Significant restrictions again: museums closed and outdoor events prohibited
May 2021	Possibility to organize outdoor events with restrictions as to the number of people and the need to maintain a safe distance between participants
September 2021	Possibility to open museum and educational facilities with a limit of people related to the exhibition area



Selected information from the legal acts related to the Covid 19 pandemic



- **Act of March 2, 2020**
about special solutions related to the prevention, counteraction and combating COVID-19, other infectious diseases and emergencies caused by them.
- **Regulation of the Council of Ministers on the establishment of certain restrictions, orders and bans in connection with an epidemic of 6 May 2021 (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 861)**

From June 26, 2021 to November 30, 2021, cultural institutions and other entities operating on the basis of the provisions of the Act of November 21, 1996 on museums, art galleries and other cultural institutions conducting exhibition activities are allowed, under a condition to ensure that:

- 1) there were no more than 15 people at the same time or 1 person per 10 m² of the room area;
- 2) the visitors followed the order to cover the mouth and nose in accordance with § 25 sec. 1 and 2.

- **From May 15, 2021:**
Special events outside - the possibility of organizing, limit up to 25 people
in a strict sanitary regime - incl. kept a safe distance between the groups and tables.

NOW: Until November 30, 2021 open-air events and meetings can be organized for up to 150 people
The number of people vaccinated against COVID-19 does not count.

National Parks in Poland in numbers

Number of Parks: 23

Total surface:
3.168,22 km² (1% of the area of Poland)

Museums and educational centres located at National
Parks: 18

Number of visitors during the year:
more than 10.000.000



Restrictions and bans during the first waves of the Covid-19 pandemic

The ban on entering the trails was introduced by 5 National Parks:

Babia Góra National Park



The Bieszczady National Park



Table Mountains National Park



Kampinoski National Park



Tatra National Park



Restrictions and bans during the first waves of the Covid-19 pandemic

Access restrictions:

Bialowieza National Park



Closed until further notice: the Nature and Forest Museum, Tourist Information Point, European Bison Show Reserve, strict protection area (former Strict Reserve).

Biebrza National Park



Tourist information points in the seat of the Park in Osowiec-Twierdza and in the forester's lodge in Grzędy have been closed, as well as the exhibition room in the seat of the Park. It is forbidden to stay in guest rooms by outsiders.

Karkonosze National Park



It is forbidden to engage in activities other than hiking. The entrance to the waterfalls is closed and the border trail, which leads once on the Polish and Czech side of the border, remains closed.

Magura National Park



A closed part of the picnic areas and the lookout tower on Mount Ferdel.

Ojców National Park



The following car parks have been closed: "Under the castle" in Ojców and "Na Złotej Góra

Pieniny National Park



Closed: the viewing gallery in Trzy Korony and Sokolica, the PPN nature exhibition in Krościenko n.D., the educational pavilion in Szczawnica, the castle in Czorsztyn.

Wolin National Park



The Natural History Museum and the Bison Show Farm of the Wolin National Park will be closed.

Some remarks



- The need to maintain typical restrictions such as: keeping a safe distance (1.5 m) or wearing masks as a typical problem.
- The need to avoid large groups on tourist routes need more control.
- In smaller areas, it was / is easier to control the existing regulations on, for example, traffic on the routes.
- Currently, the number of visitors to educational facilities is regulated by the number of tickets sold.
- In some educational centers / museums of National Parks, on-line pre-sale of tickets is used, what supports visitor management.
- From the June 26 to November 30 of 2021 events for up to 150 people can be organized, but previously it was impossible, which forced the cancellation of many projects.
- There is currently no uniform pandemic reduction strategy. Generally, it is conditioned by legal regulations, leaving the directors of parks with the possibility of individual management. Hence, in some parks, accessibility to usually particularly crowded places has been limited.

The most important insights



- Changing legal conditions and the inability to predict changes as well as the changing pandemic situation in practice excluded National Parks and protected areas from organized educational activities and functioning in the field of visitors management.
- National Park Directors have been given some discretion in making decisions about the gradual restoration of the visiting parks possibilities.
- In the case of some National Parks, their directors introduced additional regulations regarding the organization of work during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Partial opening of national and landscape parks does not mean an incentive for mass trips to such places, but rather for not too long walks - alone or with family members, friends and acquaintances. Small groups preferred.

Society For The Coast case study:

Visitors management immediately after the lifting of some restrictions
related to Covid-19
in Odra Delta Nature Park



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STOWARZYSZENIE
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Society For The Coast (EUCC –

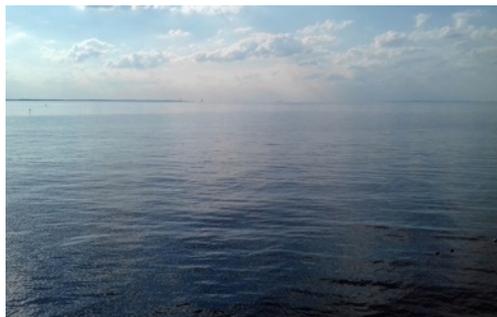
A non-governmental (NGO) organisation established at 1996, according to the Polish Law, to realise the following most important aims:

- realising active nature conservation and creating platform for development of sustainable development in local and regional scale,
- large scale nature education (from separate publication till organized camps and field activities, media campaigns, TV and radio programmes realisations)
- strengthening the importance of Baltic Sea coasts and solving problems connected with wise using, sustainable development and nature conservation, also by creating platforms for co-operation between G.O., NGOs, local communities, scientific organisations and individuals involved in conservation problems of coastal zone;
- creating platforms of cooperation and participating in international movements dedicated to nature conservation and sustainable development,
- supporting local initiatives based on valuable nature areas,
- * creating platforms for co-operation between G.O., NGOs, local communities, scientific organisations and individuals involved in conservation problems of coastal zone

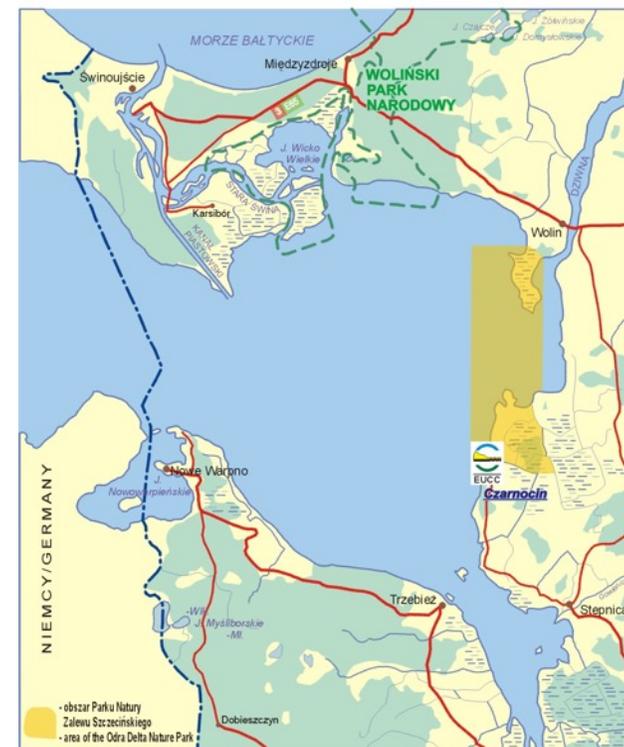


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Odra Delta Nature Park



- nearly 4.000 ha
- established on 7.10.2005 as a result of agreement between:
 - Society for The Coast (EUCC-Poland)
 - Maritime Authority in Szczecin
 - Regional Department of National Forestry in Goleniów
 - Local Community of Stepnica
 - Local Community and City of Wolin
 - Private land owners
- as a model area to implement Natura 2000 where Odra Delta Nature Park is located as a part of 2 sites



Good news from May 15, 2021:

**Special events outside - the possibility of organizing,
limit up to 25 people in a strict sanitary regime –
including keeping a safe distance between groups and
tables**



STOWARZYSZENIE
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Family photo adventure – nature observations in Odra Delta Nature Park

- * May 22, 2021
International Day for Biological Diversity
- We invited children, youth, adults from local communities and cities for a family adventure in the fascinating world of nature.
- * 4 basic assumptions:
 - *Registration of participants via e-mail*
 - *No crowds*
 - *Small family, friends groups*
 - *Safety and joy of being together in nature*





STOWARZYSZENIE
NA RZECZ WYBRZEŻA

Family photo adventure – nature observations in Odra Delta Nature Park

- Groups up to about 5 persons walked from point to point through Park area
- On the route 4 specially we prepared observation points where our experts provided nature information:
 - *Nature conservation and the story of Odra Delta Nature Park*
 - *History of local landscape*
 - *ODNP birds and their observations*
 - *Konik Horses and grazing in ODNP*
- * Photos by cameras and smartphone as a "product" to promote nature





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Family photo adventure – nature observations in Odra Delta Nature Park

Through adventure and fun, we shared a lot of interesting knowledge about biological diversity which shall help in taking care for the condition of the natural environment in future.

With great support of local animators and volunteers, we have prepared family activities and an eco-competition as well as some tasting of local cuisine.

All in small groups with appropriate distances between them.





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Family photo adventure – nature observations in Odra Delta Nature Park

In the time of restrictions and safety precautions related to the pandemic, we managed to increase social involvement in the protection of natural heritage.





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World Oceans Day June 12, 2021

4 basic assumptions:

- *Registration of participants via e-mail*
- *No crowds*
- *Small family, friends groups*
- *Safety and joy of being together in nature*





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World Oceans Day June 12, 2021

Beach activities for participants with 5 educational zones dedicated to the Baltic Sea:

- *The beach ecosystem and protection in the beach and cliff area*
- *Baltic mammals: seal and porpoise*
- *The coast: water, sand and mechanisms on the beach*
- *Arts inspired by Oceans*
- *Beach activities: a zone of healthy relaxation on the beach*





STOWARZYSZENIE
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World Oceans Day June 12, 2021

Society for The Coast organised this initiative
in cooperation with regional Partners:

- Wolin National Park
- Blue Patrol of WWF
- City of Międzyzdroje
- Regional Culture Clubs
- Public Library in Międzyzdroje

and with local volunteers!





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World Oceans Day June 12, 2021

The event in Międzyzdroje engaged people to act for the marine environment through common cleanup the beach and gaining knowledge.

We invited specialists in the field of maritime education - they shared their knowledge about the seas in a fun, interactive and interesting way.

Learning through play - all participants confirmed that the form was very attractive and that they would be willing to take part in next such event.

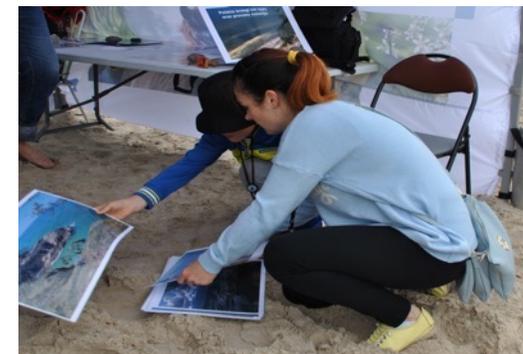




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Conclusion:

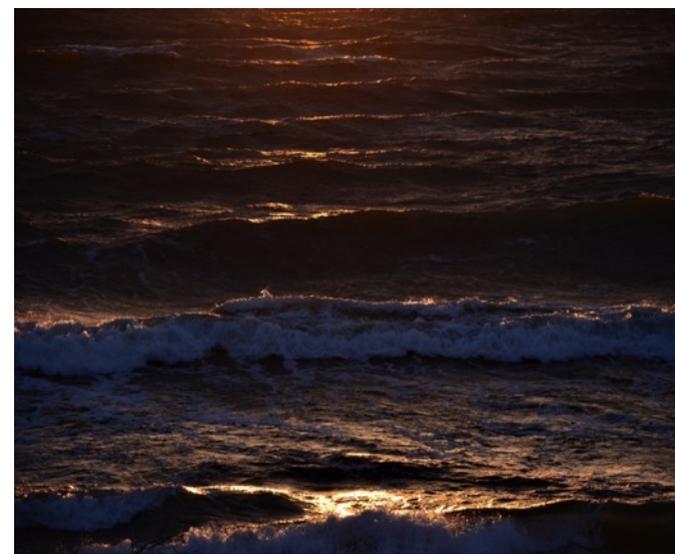
The period of the Covid-19 pandemic has made people understand how precious and important nature is as well as the possibility of enjoying its heritage.





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Thank you
... and let's be healthy
to enjoy nature !!!





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