

The Future of Problemy Ekorozwoju/ Problems of Sustainable Development Journal

Przyszłość czasopisma Problemy Ekorozwoju/ Problems of Sustainable Development

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Abstract

In 2023 *Problemy Ekorozwoju/ Problems of Sustainable Development* turned 18, entering adulthood one could say. The journal debuted on January 1, 2006 as a philosophical journal published only in Polish. From 2008 we begun to publish papers also in English and soon decided to publish only in English. The scope of the journal was expanded and we begun to be multidisciplinary, publishing papers from the humanities, economics and technical sciences (especially environmental engineering). We have always, however, been devoted to sustainable development problematics.

Our wider approach offers a chance for Polish scientists to present their research in an international journal (also from the field of humanities, where there are fewer possibilities for international presentations) to foreign scholars and vice versa. Since there are no fees, the journal also is more accessible for scientists from poorer countries. So far we have published 36 numbers (18 issues) with almost 700 scientific papers.

From 2010 the journal has been fully indexed in the Web of Science and Scopus. The current IF is 1.1 (in the previous year it was 0.864). Other metrics include: CiteScore (Scopus): 1.9, highest percentile: 57%, Index Copernicus Value ICV: 148.59 and SJR Scimago Journal & Country Rank h-Index: 21.

Over the last few years one could observe improvement in all of our international parameters.

We have always been an Open Access journal. In recent years we introduced DOI numbers, Open Access Statement and Copyright Rights, Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement. Soon we will also be visible in the Journal Checker Tool.

From this number we are introducing Open Journal System (OJS).

Currently the journal has the patronage of the European Academy of Science and Arts (Salzburg, Austria). The publisher is and has always been the Lublin University of Technology (Lublin, Poland).

Key words: sustainable development, humanities, economics, technical sciences, Open Journal System

Streszczenie

W 2023 roku *Problemy Ekorozwoju/ Problems of Sustainable Development* kończą 18 lat, można powiedzieć, że wkraczamy w dorosłość. Czasopismo zadebiutowało 1 stycznia 2006 roku jako pismo filozoficzne wydawane wyłącznie w języku polskim. Od 2008 roku zaczęliśmy publikować artykuły również w języku angielskim i wkrótce zdecydowaliśmy się na publikację wyłącznie w języku angielskim. Zakres czasopisma został rozszerzony, czasopismo przybrało charakter multidyscyplinarny, publikując artykuły z zakresu nauk humanistycznych, ekonomicznych i nauk technicznych (zwłaszcza inżynierii środowiska). Zawsze jednak byliśmy oddani problematyce zrównoważonego rozwoju. Nasze szersze podejście daje polskim naukowcom szansę zaprezentowania swoich badań w czasopiśmie międzynarodowym (również z dziedziny nauk humanistycznych, gdzie możliwości

prezentacji międzynarodowych są mniejsze) naukowcom zagranicznym i vice versa. Ponieważ nie ma opłat, czasopismo jest również bardziej dostępne dla naukowców z biedniejszych krajów. Dotychczas opublikowaliśmy 36 numerów (18 numerów) z blisko 700 artykułami naukowymi.

Od 2010 roku czasopismo jest w pełni indeksowane m.in. w Web of Science i Scopus. Obecny IF wynosi 1,1 (rok temu było to 0,864). Inne wskaźniki obejmują: CiteScore (Scopus): 1,9, najwyższy percentyl; 57%, Index Copernicus Value ICV: 148,59 oraz SJR Scimago Journal & Country Rank h-Index: 21.

W ciągu ostatnich kilku lat można było zaobserwować poprawę wszystkich naszych międzynarodowych parametrów.

Zawsze byliśmy czasopismem Open Access. W ostatnich latach wprowadziliśmy numery DOI, Oświadczenie o otwartym dostępie i prawach autorskich, Etykę publikacji i Oświadczenie o nadużyciach. Wkrótce będziemy również widoczni w narzędziu Journal Checker.

Od bieżącego numeru wprowadzamy Open Journal System (OJS).

Obecnie czasopismo jest objęte patronatem Europejskiej Akademii Nauki i Sztuki (Salzburg, Austria). Wydawcą jest i zawsze była Politechnika Lubelska (Lublin, Polska).

Słowa kluczowe: zrównoważony rozwój, nauki humanistyczne, nauki ekonomiczne, nauki techniczne, Open Journal System

Introduction

Problemy Ekorozwoju/ Problems of Sustainable Development (Probl. Ekorozw.) is a scientific journal under the patronage of The European Academy of Science and Arts, Salzburg, Austria, published by the Lublin University of Technology (Politechnika Lubelska), Lublin, Poland. In this paper I want to present our history, as well as current challenges.

The History

The first issue of the journal was published in January 1, 2006. From the very beginning the editor-in-chief has been Artur Pawłowski from the Lublin University of Technology, Poland. Initially the co-editor was Leszek Gawor from Rzeszów University, Poland, however, he retired in 2023. Referencing the editorial board I want to pay tribute to the members that have passed away over the journal's history: Józef M. Dołęga from Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Poland (my personal mentor), Stefan Kozłowski from the Human and Environment Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland and Lesław Michnowski, a former member of The Forecast Committee Poland 2000 Plus, Warsaw, Poland.

The language of this publication was initially only Polish. The scope was also different than it is now. Though sustainable development was visible in the title, the subheading was as follows: Philosophical and Zoological Studies. Indeed, we began as an entirely philosophical journal and in the first number we published only 6 scientific papers. In 2008 we began to publish papers also in English – and since English is the best known international language – soon it was decided to publish only in English. With this move more foreign papers were submitted and published. From the year 2010 the journal has had its own web page. A very important achievement was attaining full indexation in the Web of Science, Scopus, BazTech, Elsevier, the Social Science Research Network and later in the Index Copernicus. The consequences of such was receiving our first Impact Factor.

During the time of the 5th Anniversary of *Problemy Ekorozwoju/ Problems of Sustainable Development* it was estimated, that over 90% of the papers published were indeed connected with sustainable development problems. During the first two years 50% of them were from the field of ecophilosophy, while in the years 2009-2012 this number dropped to 20%. In the meantime we also expanded the scope of the journal; discussion on sustainable development become multidisciplinary. We began to publish papers from the humanities, economics and from the technical sciences; especially from the field of environmental engineering. We have never, however, rejected our philosophical origins and papers of this nature may still be found in the journal.

Our publisher has always been the Lublin University of Technology. Our patronages however have changed over time. Our first affiliation was with the Polish Academy of Science and Man and the Environment Committee (Polska Akademia Nauk, Komitet Człowiek i Środowisko, 2006-2007). Printing of the first few issues (2007-2008) were sponsored by the Provincial Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management in Lublin (Wojewódzki Fundusz Ochrony Środowiska i Gospodarki Wodnej w Lublinie) and then (years 2009-2011) by the State Environmental Council of Poland (Państwowa Rada Ochrony Środowiska). From the year 2008 our patronage is, as already mentioned, the European Academy of Science and Arts. It is worth to mention, that the editor-in-chief is a member of this esteemed academy.

The journal's cover images also warrant mention. All the pictures for such have been taken by Artur Pawłowski. Most of them show mainly protected areas from important parts of Poland. Such highlight Poland's mountains (especially Beskid Żywiecki and Bieszczady), forests (Roztocze region) and lakes (Polesie region). Many cover

pictures have also been taken in other countries, especially in Italy (the Dolomites), but also Switzerland (Eiger mountain, the Bernese Alps) and Ukraine (the Podolia region). Figure 1 presents our first cover.

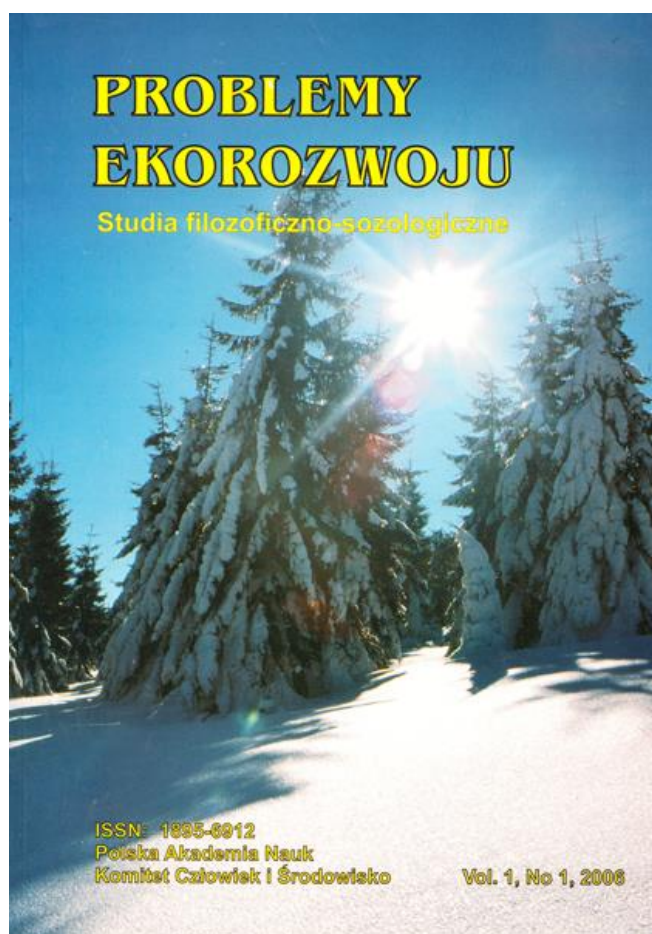


Figure 1. Problemy Ekorozwoju/ Problems of the Sustainable Development – cover for no 1, Beskid Żywiecki, source: photo by Artur Pawłowski

The Present

As one can see on our web page: *Problemy Ekorozwoju/ Problems of Sustainable Development is an interdisciplinary journal, connected with different sciences; from philosophy, economics, to environmental engineering. Every paper should however refer to the basic paradigms of sustainable development (including social, economic and environmental issues and Sustainable Development Goals). We also prefer international comparisons rather than local studies, since problems are usually international or even global* (Ekorozwoj.pollub.pl, 2023). This is our present scope. Ours is a unique multidisciplinary journal devoted to sustainable development problematics. We believe that the sustainable development concept is crucial for the future of our civilization. It was formulated at a time when humankind had the technical means at its disposal to engage in pretty much any transformation of the world it wanted. It is no surprise then that it tends to become lost in the objectives of those transformations of the kinds referred to that meant to serve people.

For many years now, our technical capabilities have been quite up to the task of achieving the biosphere's total destruction, and even if that does not actually happen, there remains the real and immediate prospect of the world's fossil-fuel and other resources being severely depleted or exhausted. Moreover, the state of the natural environment globally is worsening steadily. The disparities between rich and poor countries continue to grow. While global production of food has remained great enough to provide for everyone, millions continue to go hungry. There is also an intensification of social conflicts whose causes must often be sought in poverty. At the same time, increasing automation is encouraging unemployment, and leading to a feeling among entire groups in society that they are somehow surplus to the requirements of others, living on the margins of contemporary civilisation and experiencing progressing exclusion from it. Even these selected challenges are enough to make clear just how complicated and difficult the situation of today's world really finds itself in. Is it possible that the all-too-visible crisis looming over us can be counteracted? It was precisely to do that that the sustainable development concept was formulated – not merely as yet another programme to protect the natural environment, since the scope and

perspectives as regards necessary action extend so very much more widely. While the voice of the naturalist remains an important one, points of view from the philosophical, economic and technical sciences are also to be taken account of.

Such a wide approach is a chance for Polish scientists to present their research (also from the field of humanities, where there are fewer possibilities for international publication than in the technical sciences or in economics) to foreign scholars and vice versa. Since there are no fees, it is also a chance to publish scientific papers in an international journal for scientists from poorer countries. Currently most submissions are mainly from Europe and Asia (especially China).

Annually two issues are published. The submitted papers must be original and have not been published elsewhere, nor been under consideration for publication at the same time by any other journal. The papers are scanned for possible plagiarism.

From 2006 until 2023 we published 36 numbers (18 issues) consisting of almost seven hundred scientific papers. Now in every number there are around 25 papers, which results from hundreds of submissions. The popularity of the journal is growing, as every year we have a record number of submissions. In 2023 alone we believe will exceed 500.

On the editorial board we have now 46 scientists. Almost half of them are from Poland, but also (alphabetically) from: Austria, Brazil, Czech Republic, China, Germany, Italy, New Zealand, Nigeria, The Republic of Korea, Romania, Scotland, The Netherlands, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA.

The journal has stable parameters:

- Impact Factor: 1.1.
- CiteScore (Scopus): 1.9, highest percentile 57%.
- Index Copernicus Value ICV: 148.59.
- SJR Scimago Journal & Country Rank h-Index: 21.

More detailed data from Web of Science and Scopus are presented in tables 1-3. As can be seen, with every year there has been an improvement.

Table 1. Impact Factor of ProblemyEkorozwoju/ Problems of Sustainable Development, source: Web of Science (2023)

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022
IF	1.177	0.859	0.864	1.1

Table 2. Total number of citations from the journal ProblemyEkorozwoju/ Problem of Sustainable Development, source: Web of Science (2023)

Year	2019	2020	2021
Citations	262	220	331

Table 3. Scopus CiteScore, source: Scopus (2023)

Year	2019	2020	2021
CiteScore	1.6	1.6	1.9

In last few years we introduced DOI numbers, Open Access Statement and Copyright Rights Statement, Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement – to fulfill the modern requirements for scientific journals. Soon we will also be visible in Journal Checker Tool.

An important rule of the journal is that we do not print more than one paper of the same author not only in the actual number of the journal, but also in the following number. So, for a given author the publication is possible no more than once a year, which helps to keep diversity both of the authors and subjects for the printed papers. The only possible exception have been unique cases such as recent research concerning topics like COVID-19 or the war on Ukraine or in case of other subjects unique from the World perspective.

We have always maintained a focus on publishing papers addressing current developments.

The first paper on COVID-19 pandemic we published in no 2/2020 at the end of May, so just after the wave of first lock-downs. This far we have published around 40 papers on this subject.

In case of the war on Ukraine the first paper was accepted during the summer of 2022 when we were able to evaluate the first stage of the war.

The Future

In 2016, during our 10th anniversary, assistant editor Leszek Gawor wrote that *during the ten years of its existence, 'ProblemyEkorozwoju/ Problems of Sustainable Development' has acquired an esteemed position among academic journals in the country thanks to its authors. It is also respected abroad. It has become a significant platform of exchanging environmental ideas, especially those focused on the issues of sustainable development. Therefore,*

the future of the journal seems optimistic; we hope that the discussion around sustainable development will continue (Gawor, 2016). We may conclude now that he was right.

Due to hundreds of new submissions, however, we have had to tighten the rules, since we cannot print more papers than we do now. So, for every new submission *we are firstly checking whether the paper meets our basic requirements: so, if the paper was written from the perspective of sustainable development and if it includes international comparisons (...). Secondly, if the submitted paper meets these basic requirements, we arrange to arrange to have two detailed peer reviews to be conducted. Reviews are usually ready within three weeks* (Ekorozwoj.pollub.pl, 2023).

We intend to remain a multidisciplinary journal, publishing papers from the humanities to the technical sciences. Still, the connection with sustainability and an international perspective remains a must for us.

Regarding other important issues.

So far we have been publishing papers for free and we will not stop doing this.

We have published many papers from poorer countries and we will continue to do that.

We have never published special issues or conference numbers and we have no intention to do so.

We also have never had guest editors, relying always on our own resources.

By tightening the rules for submissions we hope to regain an Impact Factor higher than 1. We also hope to be rated higher by the Polish Ministry of Education and Science. We see this journal as a really a good opportunity for Polish scholars to be more visible in the world.

With this number we are introducing Open Journal System (OJS) by joining Lublin University of Technology Publishing House. The journal then will receive a brand new web page: <https://ph.pollub.pl/index.php/preko/index> (for practical reason the old address <https://ekorozwoj.pollub.pl> will still be active).

We want also to continue our cooperation with the European Academy of Science and Arts, which was and is a great honor to us.

Finally, I want to mention that there were many queries about the possible acquisition of the journal by other parties. We have consistently turned down such owing to our wish to remain independent and continue on our own. There are a number of special reasons for this: First of all, we want to keep our heritage. Secondly, because still much more that can be said about sustainable development problematics and there is plenty of room for new papers. On the one hand we are living in an Anthropocene, with huge devastation of our planet (Crutzen, 2006). On the other, we have the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which include not only environment matters, but also important social issues, like fighting poverty, hunger and the assurance of good quality education. This can bring civilizational change to the poorer countries (Huck, 2022). We have also new very ambitious climate and energy policies. Most countries in the world pledged to be carbon neutral by 2050 (regardless of the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the economy). Development of renewable energy sources has never been so fact, especially in the context of solar and wind energy (Pawłowski, Rydzewski, 2023). On the other side of the equation, we continue to have wars, which always create destruction. In case of the present war on Ukraine a new factor has emerged. Many countries have limited or refrained from buying oil and gas from Russia. They are looking not only for alternative sources of these fuels, but also for the substitution of fossil fuels with renewable energy sources, especially in Europe. The programme REPowerEU, introduced by the European Commission in May 2022, assumes 45% energy from renewables in the community in 2030 (European Commission, 2022). So, there are a lot changes and challenges around us. Dealing with them needs also scientific support. *Problemy Ekorozwoju/ Problems of Sustainable Development* is a very important tool on this way.

Conclusion

Problemy Ekorozwoju/ Problems of Sustainable Development journal is now 18 years old. The premise on which it was founded and its track record since has been good. It has maintained stable scientific parameters and has published almost 700 papers this far. The journal is international, but at the same time is Polish, since the publisher (Lublin University of Technology) is in Poland.

We want to continue our discussion on sustainable development problematics and we want to do this together! We encourage and invite You to cooperate with us in creating and shaping this journal!

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