

Pilot project: Silence areas as the tourist attraction SUMMARY



PP5

Województwo Kujawsko-Pomorskie

Polska - Poland

Background

Development of the "Quiet Areas" and implementation of pilot project of the "Silence Route" in landscape parks of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodship, Poland (PP5) were prepared as part of the pilot project entitled "Quiet areas as a tourist attraction" and based on:

- Good practices and experiences of the Finnish partner of the ThreeT project (Regional Council of Central Finland);
- Workshops and consultations with employees of landscape parks of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodship;
- Recommendations prepared by Vision Management & Consulting Ltd. (the author of this study).

Silence as a factor of human health and well-being

Silence is a rarely appreciated, and very much needed by man, an essential value of nature. Silence is used as a significant factor of the tourist and recreational offer of areas referred to as "quiet". This is particularly important in areas of natural value, distant from cities and tourist traffic.

In such places, for example, "forest baths" are possible, i.e. individual and group practices and classes aimed at improving health and well-being through conscious use of the values of the forest and silence.

For nature protection in forest areas, there are established, for example, "silent route" set out in such a way as to limit anthropopressure and interference by tourists in protected areas.

"Silent routes" can be used in organizing group activities for children and adolescents in the form of walks or nature lessons with a tutor / naturalist. For this purpose, there are educational materials and lesson plans, supplemented with signage and information boards. Sound measurements with decibel meters can then be a form of fun. It is also possible for individuals to get to know them independently, with the use of signage, information boards and auxiliary tools, e.g. eco-quests.

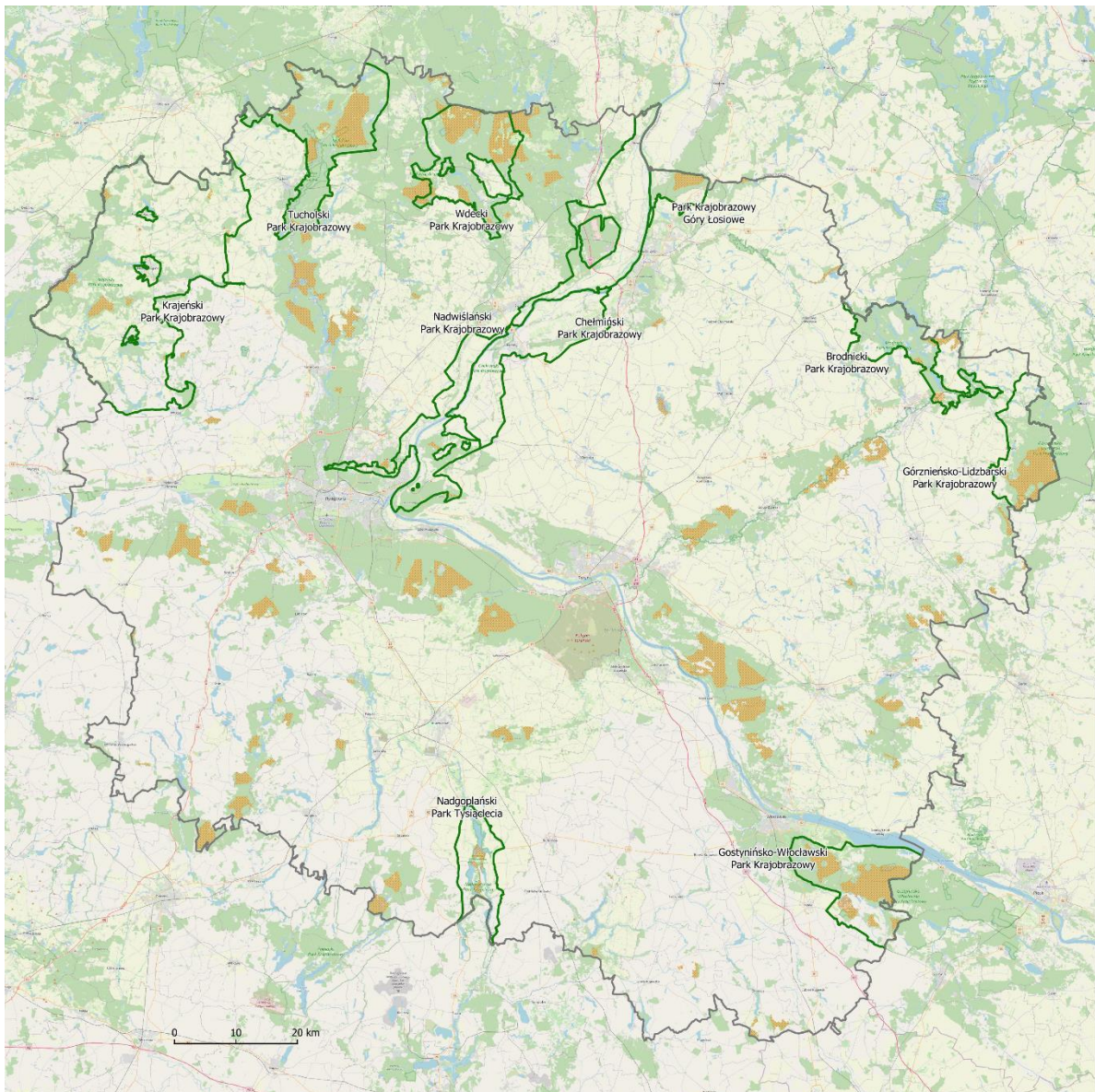
The areas of silence in the landscape parks of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship

"Silent areas" in landscape parks were designated as part of the pilot project "Silent areas as a tourist attraction". It was developed by the Marshal's Office of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship and the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Spatial and Regional Planning Office in Włocławek, Toruń Branch.

As a result of such verification, 7 landscape parks were identified, in which "silent areas" meeting the above-mentioned criteria have been designated. On the basis of the modified maps with the delimitation of silence areas, each of the parks designated min. 3 measurement points in predisposed areas as potential quiet areas. At the measuring points indicated in this way, the noise level was verified. The measurements confirmed that the sound intensity in the "silence areas" identified on the maps generally does not exceed the assumed limits, and that the sound sources in these places are of natural origin.

The mapping carried out as part of the ThreeT project allowed for the preliminary designation of 28 quiet areas in 7 out of 10 landscape parks in the voivodeship. In the case of three parks, it was not possible due to the formation of a settlement and communication network and the overriding premise for the protection of naturally valuable places.

The analysis of the potential of such designated areas in terms of tourist attractiveness, transport accessibility and convenient location in the vicinity of sources of tourist traffic allowed for the identification of 24 areas of recommended development of "quiet areas".



*„Silence areas” in the landscape parks of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodship
(green lines: borders of the landscape parks, “silence areas” marked in yellow)*

At the same time, 4 areas with too small an area were eliminated, located in places inconvenient or not attractive for tourists and visitors, without tourist facilities (parking lots, marked hiking trails).

In such separated areas, a total of 21 potential locations of "silence paths" were proposed, i.e. those places in "silence areas" that require the construction of additional infrastructure in the form of a marked walking route, supplemented with information boards and possibly additional equipment.

In addition, the analysis allowed to add 1 locations where it is recommended to delineate "paths of silence", in addition to the pre-mapped "areas of silence". This is justified by their exceptional attractiveness or tourist potential as well as the relatively low intensity of sounds coming from anthropogenic sources, despite the lack of indication of such areas in the planning analysis.

In some cases, such routes extend beyond "quiet zones" as they are assumed to start and end in places with good transport accessibility. They are to be an element of directing tourist traffic in a planned manner that interferes with the natural environment as little as possible and does not harm nature.

It was assumed that such routes use the existing tourist routes and small infrastructure (forest car parks and rest areas) to the greatest possible extent, especially in forest areas.

The recommendations for individual parks are as follows:

Brodnicki Landscape Park

3 „silence areas” mapped / 3 „silence areas” recommended / 3 „silence paths” recommended.

Gostynińsko-Włocławski Landscape Park

5 „silence areas” mapped / 4 „silence areas” recommended / 4 „silence paths” recommended.

Górznieńsko-Lidzbarski Landscape Park

1 „silence area” mapped / 1 „silence area” recommended 1 „silence path” recommended.

Krajeński Landscape Park

6 „silence areas” mapped / 4 „silence areas” recommended / 5 „silence paths” recommended.

„Góry Łosiowe” Landscape Park

1 „silence area” mapped / 1 „silence area” recommended / 1 „silence path” recommended.

Tucholski Landscape Park

7 „silence areas” mapped / 7 „silence areas” recommended / 5 „silence paths” recommended.

Wdecki Landscape Park

5 „silence areas” mapped / 4 „silence areas” recommended / 3 „silence paths” recommended.

Other landscape parks

According to the adopted methodology, it was not possible to designate quiet areas their designation in three parks. Thus, the development of "paths of silence" in them was not recommended. However, the existence and tourist destination of areas which have the characteristics of "silent areas" are not excluded in this connection.

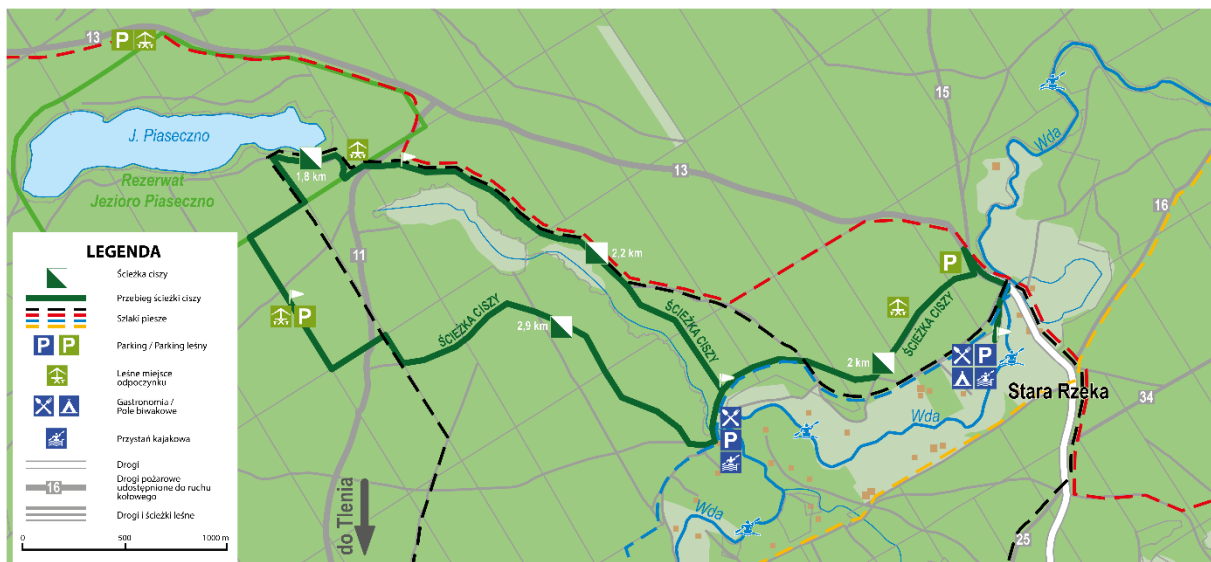
Pilot implementation: "path of silence" in Wdecki Landscape Park

The pilot implementation under the project covered the Wdecki Landscape Park. It is one of 10 landscape parks in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship, located in its northern part. "Silence path" was situated in one of the 4 recommended "silence areas"

Arrangements of the investment

In order to obtain permits enabling of marking the route and construction the small infrastructure on the planned "silence route", the following arrangements were made:

1. Consultation and agreement of State Forests Administration
2. Notification of construction works to the regional county administration.



„Silent route” in Wdecki Landscape Park (green line – the “silent route”)



Signposting of the „silence route”

There are more than 170 painted signs on the route. It was made with accordance to national singposting standard. Signs were marked each 100-200 meters, what allow to walk through the route without the risk of missing the path.

Three information tables were placed on the route. Each table includes the map of the route, basic information and the QR code directing to the English version of the route description.



Information table

Workshop for the product stakeholders

In August 2022 two-day workshop was organized to the product stakeholders in Tleń. On the first day, general information about the “silence path” and the project were presented and “forest bath” training was prepared to the participants. On the second day the participants visited the route – total 33 persons, including: park administration, Marshal’s Office staff, consultants and local entrepreneurs.





Project training in Tleń, August 2022.

Products offered as part of "paths of silence" and "areas of silence"

Three main types of activities related to the use of the "silent areas" offer were distinguished, dedicated to target groups:

1. **EDUCATIONAL AND INFORMATION CLASSES** related to silence, focused on the issues of environmental education and health-promoting aspects of silence for people.
2. **INDEPENDENT LEARNING, EXPLORATION AND EXPERIENCING OF "SILENCE AREAS"** in the form of walking along the "path of silence" or "forest bathing".
3. **ORGANIZED LEARNING, EXPLORING AND EXPERIENCING "AREAS OF SILENCE"** in the form of walking along the "path of silence" or "forest bathing"

Target groups of the products

The main target groups (recipients of the product) are:

- **SCHOOL YOUTH**
- **REGION RESIDENTS**
- **TOURISTS - INDIVIDUALS**
- **TOURISTS - ORGANIZED STAYS**

Product stakeholders

Stakeholders are persons or institutions that are involved and / or benefit directly or indirectly from the functioning of a given product or offer. Usually these are partners, without whose participation it is impossible to create and operate a given product.

In the case of "silent areas", apart from the initiators of their creation (i.e. the voivodeship self-government and the administration of landscape parks), the most important partners / stakeholders are:

- **EMPLOYEES OF LANDSCAPE PARKS AND TOURIST INFORMATION POINTS, TOURIST GUIDES**
- **TOURIST ENTREPRENEURS**
- **FOREST PLANNERS AND MANAGERS, SUPER-LOCAL PARTNERS FOR PROMOTION**

Product marketing

Marketing of "silence areas" and "silence paths" covers the activities carried out by all stakeholders of this initiative. There are promotional, information, public relations and activities related to the commercialization of the tourist offer:

- Preparation of maps and descriptions of the use of "silent areas";
- Printed materials in the form of leaflets, brochures and maps;
- Online materials;
- Placing information on the "path of silence" on the Internet on the websites of parks;
- Information posters;
- Providing information to local and regional media;
- Organization of study visits;
- Establishing cooperation with accommodation facilities;
- Preparation of tourist packages for individual clients;
- Periodic posting of information about the "path of silence" on social media;
- Distribution of maps and possible leaflets about the route at the tourist information points;
- Establishing cooperation with employers and entities interested in organizing tourist recreation;
- Cooperation with universities in the field of tourism and health protection;
- Training of tourist guides.

Product monitoring

General supervision over activities related to the functioning of the "silence area" in landscape parks is exercised by the Marshal's Office of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship (Department of Sport and Tourism and Department of Environment).

The proposed monitoring activities on a regional scale are:

1. Annual collection of information from local partners;
2. Monitoring of information and promotion activities carried out at the voivodeship level by the Marshal's Office and the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Tourist Organization;
3. Monitoring the number and scope of planning and related development activities.

Ongoing supervision:

It is assumed that the proper landscape park, which is responsible for collecting data on the functioning of the "silence area" and the annual meeting with local partners cooperating in the promotion and operation of the "silence area", will be responsible for the monitoring of activities on a local scale.

Maintenance of the route infrastructure

Maintaining the infrastructure of the paths - technical inspections, renewing signage and information boards, signposts and furnishing rest areas is the own task of the landscape park where the path is located. During the warranty period, the costs are borne by the infrastructure contractor of the given path, after the warranty expires - the park management unit.

Therefore, before setting out the path in each location, it is necessary to secure appropriate financial resources and organizational resources in a given unit, in agreement with the institutions supervising the functioning of the parks - ie the Marshal's Office.