



BUSINESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

editors

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PREFACE

Social and economic development exerts an increasing pressure upon the environment and is the source of numerous environmental threats. Being aware of these issues leads to concrete steps that can be taken by the government (e.g., adopting laws that help reduce pollution), as well as by enterprises (e.g., through exercising corporate social responsibility, environmental management or the eco-labelling of products). It means that business activities, until relatively recently ago juxtaposed with environmental attitudes, more and more often need to take account of the consequences they have on the environment.

The textbook *Business and the Environment* discusses current pertinent issues connected with making businesses more environmentally friendly. It is addressed to Polish and foreign students but also to managers, consulting companies staff, business environment organisations and public administrators at various levels. The authors have assumed that the readers are acquainted with the basics of economics and management, familiar with the processes that take place in global economy, realise the environmental threats connected with human activity, and are interested in reducing them. Hence, we make little reference to the theory as our intention was to present, in a concise form, only practical issues with as many real-life examples as possible.

The publication is the result of a project which involved the authors who are research staff of the Department of International Trade of the University of Łódź¹ and consists of six chapters. The first one identifies major global environmental threats that result from the intensification of international trade, which is the effect, but also the root cause, of increasing production and consumption. These include overexploitation of soils by agriculture, predatory mining, cutting down tropical forests or intensive fishing.

The second chapter explores corporate social responsibility. It describes the practical inclusion of the idea in business management. It also gives arguments for socially responsible business and the benefits of adopting such an approach.

¹ The project „The creation of new interdisciplinary curricula in the field of economics of environmental protection (in Polish and English) at the University of Łódź” implemented in the years 2015-2016 and supported by a grant from Norway through the Norway Grants and co-financed by the Polish funds.

The third chapter explains the system of eco-certification, its types, major characteristics and the business effects of eco-labelling products and services. Increasing social environmental awareness has made eco-labelling one of the main determinants of consumer choices and, in response to that, enterprises build up their environmentally friendly image and eco-label their products.

The fourth chapter is devoted to environmental management systems. It outlines benefits of management strategies that enable the negative environmental impact of corporate activities to be monitored, evaluated and minimised. Such strategies are favoured by, inter alia, the formalised environmental management system, EMAS, applied by the EU.

Chapter five discusses the environmental marketing strategies of enterprises. They are increasingly often the vehicle for the implementation of corporate social responsibility. That is why we have identified the types and characteristics of these strategies in concrete applications.

The sixth chapter explains basic terms connected with the market of public procurement in Poland in the light of binding EU regulations. The rest of the chapter focuses on the so-called green public procurement, i.e., procurement that respects environmental protection requirements.

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the valuable comments of the reviewer, Professor of the Cracow University of Economics, Dr hab. Edward Molendowski, and thank the experts in the project, Professor of the Warsaw School of Economics, Dr hab. Mirosław Jarosiński, and Dr. Edward Karasiński, from the Lodz Society of Science.

Considering environmental protection requirements in business operations may, in the long run, determine if a lasting comparative advantage can be achieved. That is why our textbook, rich in case studies, identifies not only the threats a business may pose to the environment but stresses the ways of reducing its negative impact. It discusses, among other things, the concept of corporate social responsibility, environmental management systems, methods and the importance of eco-labelling goods and the so called green public procurement in the private and public sectors. The book is addressed primarily to students of courses in economics and management. We hope it will also make interesting reading for entrepreneurs, representatives of business environment organisations and the staff of public administration at different levels.



Project: The creation of new interdisciplinary curricula in the field of economics of environmental protection (in Polish and English) at the University of Łódź. Project supported by a grant from Norway through the Norway Grants and co-financed by the Polish funds.

The aim of the project is to improve the knowledge and awareness of Polish and foreign students, the faculty and alumni of the University of Łódź in the fields of sustainable development, ecology, international business and finance.

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