

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**The Address by Professor Jan Szyszko, the Minister of Environmental Protection,
Natural Resources and Forestry of the Republic of Poland to the Fourth Session of the
Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate
Change**

Buenos Aires, 12 November 1998

Madam President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I should like to congratulate you, Madam President, on your election to this distinguished function. I should also like to express my gratitude to the Government and the people of Argentina for their warm hospitality with which they welcomed the participants at our Conference.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Poland pays great attention to environmental protection, at all levels: national, regional and global. Poland is committed also to participate in the global effort to save our common environment. I should like to inform you that on 15 July my country signed the Kyoto Protocol.

The greenhouse gas emissions in 1996 in Poland were lower by about 20% than the base year level. This considerable reduction of emissions was brought about by the quick restructuring of the Polish economy combined with the introduction of modern, energy-saving technologies. The Government programme to increase the afforestation is also implemented, thus increasing the greenhouse gas removal. In this context we pay special attention to regeneration of forests. However, the continuing economic growth of the country may result in increase in the demand for energy in the future, possibly rising greenhouse gas emissions. Hence, the strategy for Poland's economic growth in the nearest years must take into account commitments under the Kyoto Protocol.

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We expect CoP 4 to take decisions on the flexibility mechanisms contained in the Kyoto Protocol. It is essential to elaborate a work programme, which would allow prompt decisions on their implementation. Let me make an appeal to all colleagues - from both developed and developing countries - to conclude this work - here, in Buenos Aires. It is important that we send a message to the public opinion that we take our commitments seriously. In our view it should be possible to reach conclusion on specific guidelines concerning all flexibility mechanisms at COP 5. Poland believes that all those three flexibility mechanisms should be considered at the same time. With respect to methodological issues related to them,

we believe that it is essential that the concept of additionality be clearly specified. In our view it should refer to actions that are supplemental to the actions taken domestically. Developing unambiguous methodological guidelines for monitoring and verification of both projects themselves and the effects in the scope of emission reduction is also indispensable. As far as CDM projects are concerned, we believe that it is necessary to ensure verifiable accounting system of the amount of emissions reduced so as to prevent "leakages".

With regard to emission trading we would opt for introducing a pilot phase so as to gain appropriate experience.

From Poland's point of view, the joint implementation mechanism seems to be more useful than emissions trading because of its unambiguity and much lower institutional and organizational costs related to its implementation, supervision and verification. Therefore, we attribute great hopes to it and, in order to gain more experience, we support the extension of the JI pilot phase until the Kyoto Protocol becomes effective.

I would also like to stress the importance of discussion on the compliance issue. I am afraid that for many countries the lack of a clear understanding of Article 18 of the Protocol would entail major problems to successfully conclude the ratification processes.

I would also wish to stress the importance of all Parties' involvement in achieving the ultimate objective of the convention.

Concluding, I should like to express my hope that the Fourth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Convention will mark an important step towards the active protection of climate and will contribute to the efficient implementation of the Kyoto Protocol.