

Foreword

The 25th volume of *Ecological Questions* contains eight scientific papers, including four papers written by Polish authors and another four by foreign authors. Most of the papers (6) relate to issues of plant ecology and vegetation science. Papers from this group present the results of analysis of lichen biota and vascular flora in the studied areas and compare the structure and functioning of plant populations occurring in phytocoenoses with varying degrees of naturalness and transformation resulting from the economic activity of man. One paper presents changes in the standing crop and carbon accumulation in the plant biomass in the process of non-forest ecosystem transformation into forest. Most of the presented vegetation analyses were carried out on a micro- or mesoscale based on direct field observations, and one analysis was conducted on a macroscale – over large areas using satellite remote sensing methods. The analysis conducted on the basis of satellite images assesses whether the study area is suitable for the implementation of agroforestry to increase the plant biomass production and consequently to enhance the livelihood and reduce the poverty of the local human community.

Of the two other articles included in the 25th volume of our journal, one article presents the results of animal grouping analysis and the other one relates to more general ecological issues, i.e. services provided by ecosystems for the biosphere and man. The objective of the research presented in the former paper is to assess the species diversity of bats in the area of intensive exploitation of aggregates in an open-pit mine in the Philippines. The latter paper shows the role that ecosystem services play in bridging the ecological and economic concepts, and thus support the implementation of sustainable development principles in the economic activity of man.

We hope that the results of studies presented in the scientific articles published by *Ecological Questions* No. 25, while seeking answers to two questions mostly: 1 – how natural and anthropogenic factors affect the functioning of systems at different levels of ecological organisation and 2 – how to create the harmony between man and nature, provide further data that can serve as a reference point for comparisons of observations made by ecologists in other places and other times.

Editorial Board