



## **Activity of the local authorities as a perspective for creation the Oil & Gas Geopark in Carpathian Mts**

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Local government in Poland is only about 20 years, and continuously transforms and evolves. Polish accession to the European Union helped to finance many valuable local initiatives and gave possibilities to learn from the experience of other EU countries. The consequence is creation of Local Action Groups (LAG) combining private, social and economic sectors, to improve the efficiency of the projects on larger areas.

Carpathian region in Poland is the birthplace of the global oil industry. Here, the first refineries were created and in the mid-nineteenth century Ignacy Lukasiewicz (1822 – 1882) established the first oil company.

Against the background of the long tradition, local activities aim to the preservation and promotion of the oil heritage are initiated. There is the museum of Oil and Gas Industry in Bóbrka village, established on one of the oldest oil mines. Two oil trails have been marked out in recent years: Cross-Border Oil Trail and Carpatho-Galician Oil Trail. Several open-air museums of oil mining and numerous exhibitions in regional museums were designed. Precious mining heritage, waiting for development, are the nineteenth century oil wells, natural flows of oil and drilling equipment.

The local government interest of oil heritage, developed objects, places as well as high natural and cultural values of the region, allow to start work towards the creation of Oil & Gas Geopark in the Carpathians.

Assess the natural and historical heritage of the Malopolska Oil Province, geologists, familiar with geopark idea, can better perceive possibilities of its application in geotourism. Complicated Carpathian geology, thanks to knowledge of specialists can be transformed into easy and interesting way. Genesis of oil, types of source and reservoir rocks, possibilities of oil production nowadays and a century ago and many other issues may become a tourist product. Cooperation with local governments, Local Action Groups, and private organizations can help to define, organize and carry out actions aiming to promote this local heritage. Developed objects, places as well as high natural and cultural values of the region, allow to start work towards the creation of Oil & Gas Geopark in the Carpathians Mts.

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