SCOUTS WELCOME IN NEMOLAND POLAND!

We invite scouts to contribute energy and enthusiasm to build a community that sees earth as source of inspiration.

In 1998 the Dutch nature association Nemo founded Nemoland as a non-profit cooperative and autonomous zone to live with what nature, the Polish village and volunteers could attribute. Nemoland is a free space in the middle of nature with 36 ha land and many facilities for groups and creative activities. The aim is to offer an ecological alternative to threatening mining plans and other threats to nature, landscape and local community. The project is set up by volunteers and since 1999 with the positive energy of many scouting groups. Without this 'scouting spirit' Nemoland would not exist…

Back2Earth

This year we welcome scouting groups who want to share their creative skills and pioneer talents within the Nemo-cooperative. This year Nemoland will be 'reset' with a new concept and new activities with the motto "back to earth", meaning:
- Building a self-supporting 'earthship' by eco farm/ garden activities , using natural energy, building huts, cutting wood, caring animals and making natural products
- Recovery of historical landscape, restoration of footpaths, making natural fences and bridges
- Exchange with Polish village organizations and local schools, organizing a village festival and setting up a village centre for weaving, music/storytelling and theatre/film

Side program

Nemoland offers many possibilities to combine the stay in Nemoland with other activities:
- Adventurous hikes all over the region, nearby and in mountains and nature-reserves
- Excursions to monumental cities, castles, war monuments (KZ-camp Gross Rosen, complex Riese, Theresienstadt)
- All kind of sport facilities nearby (rock climbing, swimming in nature)
- Educational workshops

Offer for scouting groups

In and around Nemoland there are different possibilities for setting up a camp.
- Bushcraft camp in the woods with only natural facilities.
- Using the big meadow of Nemoland near the river, and make facilities yourselves (toilet, kitchen, fire place etc).
- Using Nemoland facilities (toilets, washing rooms, kitchen, meeting places, fire places).
- Using dormitories

For using facilities (depending what you like to use), Nemo is asking only the cost-prize because the project is not commercial and there is no other income. For using tools/materials and supporting the projects, we ask a voluntary donation.

Preparation

For Nemo it is important to prepare the stay very good, so that there are no wrong expectations. We could communicate by skype or fb, and set up a program together, taking in account age, skills and motivation of the group. Scouting groups could write in French, German, English, Dutch or Polish. Most scouting groups stay for 1 or 2 weeks, and work for half days (negotiable). They combine working with hikes in the mountains or excursions in the neighbourhood. Groups coordinate their stay, work and activities themselves. Nemo could help in finding cheap transport and organizing excursions. Communication and afterwards a good evaluation is most important. Nemoland is a "learning organization" and wants to use all experiences to involve more scouts in future.

Where

Nemoland, meaning 'no man's land', is situated in the heart of Europe, between Prague, Dresden and Wroclaw, in the Sudety area of Polish Lower Silesia. It is hidden between Izermountains (Góry Izerskie), Giant Mountains (Karkonosze) and the Bóbr Valley Landscape Park (Park Doliny Bobru). Nearest town (19 km) is Jelenia Góra. Nemoland is easy to reach by public transport. The nearest railway station is Stara Kamienica, 3 km.

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The region

The region of Nemoland received, contrary to the Giant Mountains little attention from tourists and historians, even though the traces of the oldest glassworks, pagan worship places, the most beautiful half-timbered weaver houses and many natural and agricultural monuments are located here. Nowhere else is in immediate reach such a rich variety of nature, culture and landscape.

The special features of this region are traces of early middle age cultivation (such as stone walls, terraces, millbrooks, fords and paths), which are mostly still intact.

The richness of nature is unique. Plants that are already extinct in Western Europe, are still to be found here. Like many other border regions in Europe, this area runs into danger due to lack of care and the threat of devastating mining projects.

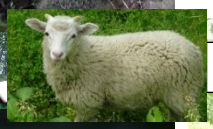
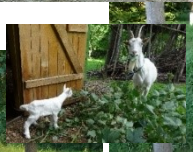
Once the area was known as a big landscape park; the "Toscane of Middle Europe". Borders changed here all the time. The area was once part of Great Moravia, the Polish Piast kingdom, the Silesian county, Bohemia, the Holy Roman Empire, the Austrian and German empire, and till 1945 Nazi Germany. After the war, Stalin decided the German area had to become Polish and the Germans were forced to leave for the Polish, who were forced to leave eastern Poland (now Ukraine and Lithuania). The area became a 'lost land', because the people who lived here and the people who came to live here both lost their native land, while the landscape lost its names, monuments and memory. Because of protests against the recent mining plans, local inhabitants became much more beware of their cultural and natural heritage and started all kinds of initiatives to protect nature and value the history of landscape, community-building and local economy.

Organization

Nemo as a non-profit NGO/association founded in 1988, is independent of any government, fund or institution. The Nemoland project is financed by shares of members of the association. The income of the project is spent on the aim of the association: to promote and strengthen sustainable and ecological development of Nemoland and the region. Management of Nemoland is in hands of volunteers. For the administration of Polish Nemoland Nemo founded a separate Polish NGO: Fundacja Nemo.

The philosophy of Nemo is that members, volunteers and guests attribute some of their talents to Nemoland. Thus Nemoland is created in an organic way and is developed by involvement of visitors and participants.

Since 1998 Nemo brought more than 3500 people from Holland and Belgium to Poland to learn and taste the Polish village life and build Nemoland. From them more than 100 students from Dutch colleges and universities followed internships, workshops and did research to sustainable and ecological development. Nemo also got (Matra) subsidy from the Dutch government to support Polish village associations and to strengthen local community. 12 times already Nemo organized the 'Dutch Day' (as a village festival) in Nemoland to exchange Dutch and Polish culture. Since 2009 Nemo organized 3 times the Crossroads Festival in Jelenia Góra, as a cultural event focused on Polish and Dutch literature and poetry.

Meanwhile Nemo collected stories and legends of the former German and present Polish inhabitants, because Nemo feels that oral memories are much more real than official history. Especially the region of the Kamienica river is a book of unknown stories. Storytelling, walking and theatre could be a way of discovering, reading and experiencing these stories.

Discovering the past; building the future!