Apendix III
Exemplary storyline

AGENT 016 - NARRATIVE STORYLINE

I LAND USE

LAND USE CHANGE

He has been farming here since 1977, started with 1,3ha, than increased acreage to 35ha. They rented also 20ha from Agency, but resigned due to high rental. Next they decreased acreage, because there were floods every two years and droughts in the meantime and no help from the State was provided. In 2001 they didn't cut whole grain because of stagnating water (result of declined LR). They did not get any help, so decided it was not profitable.

They got help from local authorities only once: dolomite lime in 1997.

Previously they had lot of potatoes, because they could sell it. Surplus yield could be sold to Dolpasz (folder factory next to Rogow) or to a distillery.

In 1987 they rented their meadows to someone, because they didn't hale enough cattle and in 1997 they ploughed them.

They afforestated 25 ares; they liquidated the old forest so they had to renew it, because the land is to poor for fields and they didn't want to hale wastelands. They planted also trees around the house "for protection".

LAND USE NOW

At the moment he cultivates potatoes, pumpkin, some charlock (up to 1 ha) and grains. He has 40 ares of fallow land but it is not profitable for him to participate in agri-environmental scheme.

LAND USE PLANS

He will plant more strawberries if he finds a buyer.

II LANDSCAPE CHANGE PERCEPTIONS

He claims that farmers themselves have ploughed land reclamation cause they found it disturbing. This fact promoted the changes in landscape because water stagnation appeared under the lack of outflow conditions. Droughts influence the landscape as well.

New fish-ponds were created.

Fallow lands are being afforestated partly by farmers, partly by outsiders who treat it as a kind of investment.

The acreage of meadows decreases due to ploughing. According to his opinion it happens because demand for hay diminished as a result of decrease in cattle stock. Some meadows were ploughed (and land reclamation destroyed), since farmers felt they did not have enough arable lands. Some meadows are fallowed at the moment.

III LAND RECLAMATION

GENERAL OPINIONS

He voted for WP restoration, but other people refused to vote in this way, since they expect the State to deal with everything. He thinks that both farmers and field administration should take care of LR but adequate law is required. He says landowners who ploughed drainage should restore it and even get an official order to do it. He claims that more serious

work should be done for a whole village every few years but everyday LR conservation is a job of landowners.

FLOODS/DROUGHTS

He has problems both with flooding and droughts. In case of flooding the losses are up to 40% usually and 80% if ditches are plugged. Part of his field is located on the floodplain. In case of drought losses are from 20-30% to 60% depending on grain type and drought intensity.

Yields were higher before fishponds were created. Now water stagnates in basins and the reaction of plants is immediate. In times he rented land from Agency, whole LR from few villages came together on his land, so he was flooded if ditches were not cleaned.

PERSONAL CARE

He has ditches and German drainage on his fields. He cleans ditches himself and has them clear. To protect his crops against flooding he has been cleaning ditches on the fields of other farmers as well as State Forests since 1997. They did not help him and justified the lack of help with the lack of money. He says one needs a shovel, a spade, a hatchet and gum boots to take care of own LR - "everyone has this staff, but they are too lazy to use it".
But it may be hard to clean sluice gates (illegal by the way), when water level is high.
There is no co-funding of LR maintenance. There were promises to spray reed with herbicides but they were broken.

WATER PARTNERSHIP

According to his opinion WP doesn't exist, because nobody wanted. Personally he wants the WP to be created. He declares to do manual work for WP, to clean ditches, because he is aware of the importance of such work.

IV SOCIAL ISSUES

SOCIAL CHANGE PERCEPTIONS

He believes that relations between people were more closer in former times and the will to help each other was greater. At the moment this kind of attitude vanishes and people are not so interested in their neighbours' affairs anymore, "the block of flats system comes, as in the city". He finds reasons of this situation in social factors, namely in the fact that previous generations were alien in this region and newcomers had to support each other. Now people "crawl into their shells"[1].

NETWORKS

He asks a daughter and a son-in-law for advice, because they studied agriculture and are aware of changes, so they can help. He reads guidebooks, asks professional advisers from Advisory Centers and participates in trainings. He exchanges information with 2-3 persons from a village, who are educated and willing to help.

When his potatoes were flooded a colleague helped him by giving new seedlings.
He does not exchange products with anybody but provides his family with potatoes, milk, and poultry.

1 It is common that people idealize the past, we should not fall for the myth of "golden ages" – the perception of an agent that social networks were stronger formerly IS NOT the reliable information about the real evolution of networks.

PERSONAL SOCIAL ACTIVITY

He participates in village gatherings, in order to know what's going on. He likes to share his knowledge with others too. He thinks most meetings are hopeless, too general.

OPINIONS ABOUT COOPERATION IN THE VILLAGE

He thinks no leader in the village exists. There is only one active person, but passive behavior of others stops his invention. Once people restored field roads together, but other ones destroyed them at once. There are fests for children like Santa Claus.

OPINIONS ABOUT DECISION MAKING REGARDING THE WHOLE VILLAGE

People meet occasionally at the hustings meetings, when a mayor or village chairman has to be elected. There is not enough informational meetings and the ones that bring something new are not too often as well.

OPINIONS ABOUT FARMERS' INDIVIDUAL DECISION MAKING

Some farmers read magazines on agriculture. There are trainings organised by local authorities.

He thinks, that the innovation in farming would arouse interest and people would ask about details.

V COMMENT

Interview with a husband, but land belongs to a wife. Well informed and "enlightened" people in comparison with other inhabitants. However despite the lack of demanding attitude, expectations of external help are still strong. Strong will to cooperate and work for common good.

OTHER COMMENTS AND REMARKS OF THE AGENT

At the election meeting they asked the mayor about the support for farmers. She advised them to ask a deputy from their village for money.

They believe there are no sufficient conditions for tourism development in the area due to lack of attractions, big forests, monuments, trails and water basins. The Odra valley is neglected. Moreover there is "forest silence time" from April till October because of the rare animals, so tourist activities could cause the conflict with a local forest ranger. Another problem is connected with a fact, that the floodplan covers most of the area, so it would be risky to place tourist objects here due to floods possibility.