



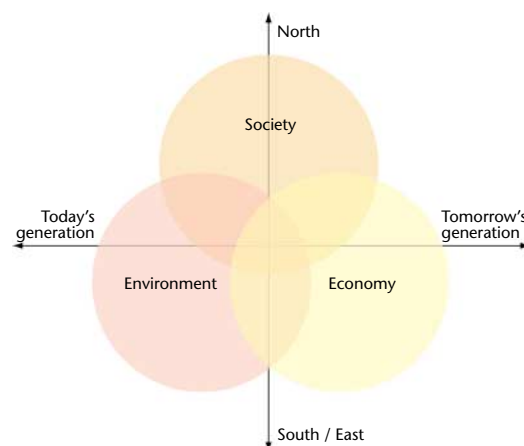
Interdepartmental Committee IDC Rio (ed.)

# A future for Switzerland

Sustainable development as an opportunity for the economy, environment and society

# Contents

Contents	Overview of contents and imprint	
Editorial	From thoughts to action	1
Part 1	<b>Starting point</b>	
	Switzerland is not an island	2
Part 2	<b>Objectives and conflicts of aim</b>	
	Living off the interest, not the capital	6
Part 3	<b>Perspectives</b>	
	Six keys to sustainability	12
Conclusion	The time is ripe	26
Materials	Literature, links and ordering information	28



Sustainable development covers the three dimensions of the environment, economy and society. Consideration for the generations to come and solidarity with disadvantaged countries of the South and East are further core elements of the concept.

## Imprint

**Interdepartmental Committee IDC Rio:**

**Popular version of Expert Report:**

**Concept, text and production of this version:**

**Translations:**

**Graphic design:**

**Photo credits:**

### A future for Switzerland

Sustainable development as an opportunity for the environment, economy and society, Bern, 2001

Interdepartmental Committee IDC Rio:

**Politik der Nachhaltigen Entwicklung in der Schweiz: Standortbestimmung und Perspektiven.**

Produced by MAUCH Consulting / INFRAS / Ernst Basler + Partner AG, Bern, 2001

The text of the original Expert Report is valid (for ordering information see page 29).

ecos.ch AG, Basel; Daniel Wiener, Edda Greiner-Schuster, Ursula Freiburghaus.

Anne Anderson (f), Monica Buckland (e), Chantal Gianoni / Giovanna Planzi (i).

rébus, Sybil Weishaupt, Hans Sommer, Basel

Cover photo: Emanuel Ammon, AURA Lucerne  
Other photos: AURA Lucerne, KEYSTONE, Zurich



DIREKTION FÜR ENTWICKLUNG UND ZUSAMMENARBEIT **DEZA**  
DIRECTION DU DEVELOPPEMENT ET DE LA COOPERATION **DDC**  
DIREZIONE DELLO SVILUPPO E DELLA COOPERAZIONE **DSC**  
SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION **SDC**  
AGENCIA SUIZA PARA EL DESARROLLO Y LA COOPERACION **COSUDE**

© SDC, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Bern, 2001  
[www.johannesburg2002.ch](http://www.johannesburg2002.ch)

# From thoughts to action

The popular understanding and media presentation of sustainable development usually equates it with environmental protection. But as early as 1992, at the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), the term was expressly used to include economic and social development as well. In professional circles the comprehensive 1987 definition of the World Commission for Environment and Development is globally accepted. According to this, «sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.» What does this definition mean in concrete terms? Obviously, future generations have the same right to an intact environment as we have. But this is not adequate for a long-term survival strategy. To satisfy our material needs, prosperity is as much a prerequisite as natural resources – today and in the future. And only a society that is peaceful, free and in solidarity with others can ensure the just distribution of the goods, opportunities and social values it acquires, or protect natural resources efficiently and effectively. Sustainable development thus relates to all three sectors: the economy, environment and society.

The conditions for sustainable development must be created not only in Switzerland but also throughout the world. In striving for sustainable development in Switzerland, we must also take care to support, not hinder, the endeavours of other countries.

What appears simple in principle, broadens out into a more complex whole when looked at more closely, an interweaving of causes, effects, conditions and interactions. The detailed study\* on which this short version is based has analysed the most important relationships influencing sustainable development in Switzerland. For the first time, this report

- clarifies the basic ethical principles involved and demonstrates that the conclusions are only valid if this normative framework is accepted;
- emphasises that sustainable development is not a harmonious construct, but includes conflict of aims that must be dealt with;
- treats the three dimensions of sustainable development – the environment, society and economy – equally and takes into consideration the potential for conflict between the three dimensions.

The comprehensive study will foster and enliven the discussion of sustainability in Switzerland. This is already happening in anticipation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg

(South Africa), which will take place in September 2002, ten years after Rio. The Federal Council will be able to use this study as the basis for its National Assessment Report for the second Earth Summit.

In addition to the Confederation, cantons and communes, private organisations, institutions and associations, politics and culture, business and science are all challenged to take part in the discussion of Switzerland's sustainable development. To make the authors' main statements accessible to a broad public, the Interdepartmental Committee Rio (IDC Rio), the publisher of the detailed (over 100 pages) Expert Report, is also publishing this brief popular version. IDC Rio is an internal platform for the implementation of the decisions of Rio.

Both publications aim to inspire the reader to thought and action. The Expert Report's conclusions are an encouragement: although we still have a long way to go along the path to sustainable development in Switzerland, the first milestones have already been achieved.

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)



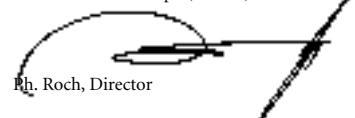
W. Fust, Director

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco)



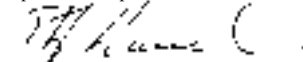
State Secretary D. Syz

Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL)



Ph. Roch, Director

Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE)



P.-A. Rumley, Director

\* Interdepartmental Committee Rio (IDC Rio): Politik der Nachhaltigen Entwicklung in der Schweiz: Standortbestimmung und Perspektiven, produced by MAUCH Consulting / INFRAS / Ernst Basler + Partner AG, Bern, 2001



# Switzerland is not an island

An analysis of the measures taken so far shows that the implementation of sustainable development in Switzerland is still at an early stage. A central role is played by five characteristic trends, which are sometimes rooted in global questions.

An initial analysis of the trends makes it clear that there are no magic recipes for sustainable development. Many problems are closely interwoven with each other or share com-

mon causes. Only a combination of harmonised measures can therefore achieve the final goal. The following five trends form the background to Swiss sustainability policy:



Consumer paradise Switzerland: The industrialised nations live too profligately – at the expense of the poor and of the generations to come.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA

## Population and migration: Integration is vital

### Worldwide trend

Because of the global increase in population and the persistent, marked economic differences between rich and poor countries, the number of potential immigrants to Switzerland is on the increase.

### Development in Switzerland

By 2020 the proportion of pensioners in the Swiss population will have grown by 70 per cent or 0.6 million people. Swiss migration policy suggests that during this period the majority of the newcomers will come from EU countries, and most of them will have high to very high professional abilities. The immigration from EU countries, however, has no influence on the average age of the population. Migrants from non-European countries are on average younger, but less well qualified. This poses greater challenges to their integration in the Swiss population.

## Social development: Threat to solidarity

### Worldwide trend

Liberalisation and privatisation of previously state-owned services such as the postal service, railways, telecommunications, electricity and water supply, and hospitals.

### Development in Switzerland

Social solidarity is under threat in several sectors: social provisions such as old age pensions or public education are being dismantled, or their importance diminished through the promotion of individualised alternatives. The increase in the number of old age pensioners places a financial burden on the shrinking number of wage earners, which can lead to social tensions. Deregulation may produce gains in efficiency; alternatively, the concentration on profitability may threaten the provision of basic services in marginal areas, or to sections of the population with weaker purchasing power.

## Economy and globalisation: Radical changes lead to insecurity

### Worldwide trend

Increasingly, international competition is developing not only between private providers of goods and services, but between economic locations as well. While the nation state is becoming less influential, multinational corporations and multinational economic institutions such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are gaining in significance and power. In the 1990s financial crises shook the economies of many poorer countries, and as a result, suggestions for reform are being discussed. The international division of labour is increasing: the economically stronger countries are developing into «knowledge societies», whose prosperity is based on the transmission of knowledge and the application

of the new information and communication technologies; industrial production is being outsourced to developing and threshold countries. These radical economic changes mask major insecurities and risks, which can disrupt the plans of both individuals and entire nations.

### Development in Switzerland

In order not to endanger their material prosperity, the Confederation, cantons and communes feel obliged to approve financial incentives for companies to establish bases in Switzerland, without consideration for other concerns that are important for sustainable development. Thus, ecological taxation has been successfully countered in various countries, including Switzerland, with the argument that it reduces international competitiveness and thus general prosperity.

## Development and poverty: 700 000 people in Switzerland are poor

### Worldwide trend

In 1960, the average income of the poorest fifth of the world's population was 30 times smaller than that of the richest fifth. In 1995, the poorest fifth earned 82 times less than the richest fifth. This development is not just «an outrage», as Federal Councillor Joseph Deiss said at a reception for UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in Switzerland, but is an obstacle to sustainable development. A positive, worldwide economic development can only benefit those people who have access to education, credit, democratic participation and human rights. To create these conditions, we need a long-term and honest partnership for development cooperation.

### Development in Switzerland

Even in Switzerland there is poverty – although at a materially high level. According to how it is defined, 6 to 15 per cent of the population is considered to be poor – this is about 700 000 people. The long-term unemployed, people on low wages («working poor»), single parent families and households with many children are disproportionately affected. This contradicts the criteria of sustainable development.

## Environment and resources: Nature in need

### Worldwide trend

The most important global environmental problems of the 21st century have been recognised, at least since the Rio Conference: climate change, the hole in the ozone layer, shortage of fresh water, endangered biodiversity, polluted oceans and coasts, loss of agricultural land, and chemical, gene technological and nuclear hazards. Many of these threats are linked to each other. The loss of agricultural land may be a consequence of climate warming; this puts pressure on the tropical rain forests, which are being felled to release more agricultural land, which then endangers biodiversity. A conclusive and consistent policy of sustainable development,

on the other hand, can approach several of these problems simultaneously using measures that are harmonised with each other.

### Development in Switzerland

The sensitive environment of the Alpine area and the Jura, and the endangered natural spaces in densely settled areas, are especially severely affected by these global problems. For instance, it is predicted that global warming will cause a substantial proportion of the Swiss glaciers to disappear over the next 50 years. Biodiversity in Switzerland continues to decrease because of the intensive demands made on the landscape by farming, infrastructural installations and other buildings. There is a need for this trend to be reversed, both in Switzerland and globally. This challenges the policy sectors of the environment, energy, transport, regional planning, technology, economy, regional economic policy, finance and taxes.

### Switzerland's policy: Progress and setbacks

At the Rio Earth Summit 1992, Switzerland committed herself to implementing Agenda 21. This wide-ranging document points the way to worldwide sustainable development in all areas of society and at all levels of government. The signatory states also approved the Climate Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

In the revised Federal Constitution, which was approved by the population and cantons on 18 April 1999, sustainable development is included for the first time as an express national objective, both in the Preamble and in an Article devoted to it, as well as in several further provisions.

In 1997 the Federal Council approved a first Strategy containing concrete measures for implementing sustainable development in Switzerland. In spring 2002 – ten years after Rio – the government will evaluate its policy to date in terms of sustainable development, and propose a new programme. In the opinion of the authors of «Politik der Nachhaltigen Entwicklung», Switzerland has made progress since Rio in all five policy sectors, but has also suffered some setbacks:

#### Economy

- The Swiss economy continues to be strong and internationally competitive, even though some economic reforms were introduced only after «understanding» foreign models. Sometimes, however, there is a lack of venture capital. The framework conditions for innovation, especially in cutting-edge technologies, are poorer than in other countries.
- Tighter and more globalised competition leads to greater pressure on costs for companies. Social compensation and investment in environmental protection are at risk.
- Calls for tax cuts and public savings also restrict the State's room for manoeuvre in this and other sectors.
- The accelerated changes in technology exert additional pressure on the economy.
- Growing differentials between people's incomes, and the increase in stress-related illness among employees as a

consequence of the intense competition between companies, lead to increased social and healthcare costs.

- An ecological tax reform failed at the Swiss ballot boxes in 2000.

#### Environment, land use and infrastructure

- As the result of persistent efforts, environmental protection in Switzerland saw a number of successes. One good example is the protection of waters, where recent renaturation and the opening up of stream courses in villages and towns have made substantial contributions to a more harmonious relationship between humans and nature.
- In air pollution control policy, some goals were not achieved (for example, for ground-level ozone and fine particulates), but in many places the levels of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) pollution fell.
- Preventive measures, such as the result of Environmental Impact Assessments and the selective application of the polluter-pays principle, were successful.
- Urban sprawl, however, continues almost unchecked.
- The continuing growth in mobility of people and goods has a particularly heavy impact on the Swiss environment. The result is noise, air pollution, land consumption and high healthcare costs. Further investment in an efficient and socially acceptable transport system is urgently needed. The extension of local public transport and railways (New Alpine Railway Axis NEAT and Bahn 2000), together with the introduction of the Distance-related Heavy Vehicle Fee (HVF), are not enough to keep the harmful impacts of transport growth under control.
- In energy policy, motorised transport is the main threat to Switzerland achieving the Federal Council's goal of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 10 per cent by 2010, without having a CO<sub>2</sub> tax.
- The reform of agricultural policy has allowed the first steps towards more ecological farming to be made. This trend was supported by growing consumer demand for food produced in an environmentally friendly way.

#### Society

- Financial bottlenecks occur and new forms of poverty endanger social security.
- Technological progress prompts questions that must be discussed and resolved by society – as, for example, in the use of gene technology in food production or medicine.
- The cultural policy of the Confederation, cantons and communes must increasingly consider the role they play as mediators between different interests in fostering Swiss coherence.
- There is a danger that economic pressures will distance education and science from a holistic education that equips for life by, for example, teaching social skills.
- Equality of men and women exists only on paper. In practice, women still face discrimination in many areas of their lives – in unequal salaries and in access to positions of leadership in business, in politics, the media or education. This is largely because models for a more equal partnership in family life are slow to spread. One reason for this is company cultures that make it difficult for fathers with a career to work part-time.



- As well as all the opportunities they create for business and society, the new information technologies also create new social contradictions – for example, between users and non-users of the Internet and computers.

### Foreign policy

- Until the end of the 1980s, Switzerland was economically active abroad but did not often play a major political role. This imbalance was rectified to a certain extent during the 1990s, for example by membership in the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the WTO, and thanks to project-oriented cooperation with several UN organisations.
- Development cooperation often faces unfavourable conditions in the target countries, which are characterised by widespread poverty, corruption and armed conflict. Switzerland is therefore placing increasing emphasis on creating the preconditions for sustainable development, using programmes of debt write-off and democratisation.
- Swiss foreign policy lacks the means to support or initiate measures to prevent civil war or promote peace. The coordination of governmental activities, and sometimes coordination with the non-governmental activities as well, is unsatisfactory.
- Swiss foreign environmental policy is recognised as innovative.

### Government and institutions

- The tried and tested structures of federalism no longer keep up with the dynamic pace of change in society and business. Thus, the institutions of the Council of States and the required majority of cantons give the rural cantons disproportionate weight in referenda, which is difficult to reconcile with the principles of democracy.
- Direct democracy disadvantages large sectors of the population, in particular non-Swiss residents.
- Financially strong cantons, regions and communes can afford to lower taxes and still maintain a high level of public services, while the financially weaker areas must go into debt, raise taxes or cut services. This competition is leading to growing imbalances.
- Parliament is becoming less influential in the running of the State, while the government and administration are becoming stronger. This contradicts the democratic understanding of the State.
- There is a high level of coordination between different sectors in the Federal Administration, but implementation of measures for sustainable development suffers from the overt or covert tolerance of lack of enforcement. Thus we have not managed to achieve the pollutant limits of the Federal Council's Ordinance on Air Pollution Control within the set deadline.

- Switzerland practises a sophisticated consultative procedure before government decisions are made. The institutions and the formal and informal procedures are structured so that organisations that are directly involved can represent their own economic interests very effectively. Developing countries, by comparison, have more difficulty, as do disadvantaged fringe groups or the environment, represented by development and environmental organisations.



Forestry as a role model: : By consuming only as much as can be regrown, resources are conserved.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA

## Living off the interest, not the capital

Partners or partner countries who recognise each other as equals should solve conflicts of aim by applying legitimate rights, and not through the application of power. This principle results from the ethic of rights and duties, which serves as a normative framework for sustainable development. Criteria for sustainable development can be drawn from this ethical-philosophical basis. Further principles for evaluation are provided by the revised Federal Constitution of 1999 and Agenda 21, which was approved in 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit. Both documents refer to norms in line with this ethic of duties and responsibilities.

People alive now and those who will exist in the future have the same right to opportunities to live and flourish. Both globally and locally, therefore, society's interactions, production and consumption must be organised so that resources and human dignity are never put at risk, either at home or abroad.

But the right to flourish has limits. The golden rule says: «Do unto others as you would have them do unto you», and this is, in a nutshell, the ethical-philosophical basis of sustainable development. Such an ethic of rights and duties confers the right to flourish only on those people who recognise the duty of the stronger to take care of the weak-



er and to act accordingly. Sustainable development serves this aim.

In a sustainably developing world, what we do should not be determined by having the power to achieve our own interests. If «might is right» prevails, the core human rights – a prerequisite for sustainable development – are violated. One consequence is a further widening of the gap between rich and poor, North and South, present and future generations. This development is not sustainable. Only a fair process of negotiation between all those affected and involved can achieve the goal of balanced interests and so a long-term, justifiable, free and democratic world order, that makes a dignified life within an intact environment possible for all. All negotiations should take particular note of the people who are already disadvantaged, whose share of human achievements would be unacceptably diminished by even a tiny loss.

Just distribution of resources can thus mean that the poorest countries have a significant temporary increase in their (so far very small) per capita energy consumption, while Switzerland and other industrialised nations decrease their consumption of fossil fuels by half or more through investment in energy-saving technology and renewable energies. The industrialised societies currently fail to recognise, or recognise only inadequately, the legitimate rights of the peoples of the South and East.

### Suppressed potential conflict is the core problem

Sustainable development is often thought of as a magic formula that will solve all conflicts between the three dimensions of the environment, society and economy. This ignores the substantial, uncomfortable conflicts of interest that exist between the three dimensions, along with all the long-term interests that they have in common. We prefer to suppress these conflicts. Nevertheless, sustainable development will only be possible if a coherent policy is implemented in accordance with clear criteria. This path may be arduous and politically risky, since it must relegate powerful, short-term interests to a less influential place.

Negotiation rather than the exercise of power – this challenge to decision makers calls for new forms of cooperation, at local, national and international levels. All actors – from governments, NGOs, the private sector, associations, down to the individual – are challenged to consider how conflicts of interest between the demands of the environment, economy and society can be solved together in accordance with sustainable development.

As an example: if the public transport service is increased to help control air pollution and save energy, but at the same time new high-speed roads make driving more attractive, nothing will have been gained either in terms of air quality, energy savings or preventive healthcare.

### The savings book model

The study «Politik der Nachhaltigen Entwicklung in der Schweiz» suggests that the progress of sustainable development should be evaluated using the «capital stock model». This grid was developed in 1994 by a working group of World Bank experts. The basic idea is taken from the financial market: if we live only off the interest and not the capital, the basis of prosperity is maintained – but if we consume the substance, our means of existence is endangered in the long term.

The capital stock model considers not simply economic capital, but also ecological and social capital as values that we must conserve and, wherever possible, increase.

Ecological capital includes biodiversity, the landscape, mineral resources, clean air and healthy water. Social values are health, social security, social cohesion, freedom, justice, equality of opportunity and peace.

To represent the capital stock model the authors of the study use a simple formula:

$$\text{capital stock of sustainable development (CSD)} = \text{capital stock environment (CEn)} + \text{capital stock economy (CEc)} + \text{capital stock society (CS)}$$

Theoretically, when evaluating measures, this formula may be used in two ways:

1. For the principle of «strong sustainability», none of the capital stocks may decrease over a longer period.
2. For the principle of «weak sustainability», the sum of the capital stocks may not decrease over a longer period.

«Weak sustainability» would therefore permit the environmental capital to decrease as long as a social and economic upswing compensates for it.

But even by the principle of weak sustainability, the simple addition of the capital stocks is limited: if, for example, non-renewable energies such as petroleum or gas are being exhausted, they must urgently be replaced by renewable energies such as solar energy or geothermal heat. Otherwise, the shortage in the environmental sector can have a harmful impact on the social and economic capital stocks.

This example shows that the three capital stocks cannot be evaluated independently of one another. Other criteria for sustainable development are similarly interconnected. Today's conflicts within society, for example, will often have negative consequences for the generations to come.

Striving for weak sustainability can still be worthwhile, because society gains freedom of choice without fundamentally endangering sustainable development. For example, this model permits one pressurised capital stock to be «rehabilitated» at the cost of the other two. Nevertheless, weak sustainability requires particularly careful planning, as shown by the example of non-renewable energies.

For this reason, the authors of the study assume a model of «weak sustainability PLUS» in their evaluation of Swiss policy. They wish to maintain or increase the sum of the capital stocks, but impose a few extra conditions. For example, they demand strict adherence to regulations on minimum stand-

ards for the environment, human rights, unequal distribution and the handling of major hazards.

To evaluate the Swiss environmental, economic and social sustainable capital stocks according to the weak sustainability PLUS model, the following grid, with a total of 28 criteria in the three target sectors of ecological responsibility, economic performance and social solidarity, may be used:

**For example:  
security and peace policy**

Here the procedure is illustrated using security and peace policy (see page 9):

#### Criteria for the evaluation of sustainable development

##### Environment Environmental quality and natural resources

1. Biodiversity
2. Climate, ozone layer
3. Emissions
4. Landscape, cultivated and natural space
5. Water
6. Chemicals, organisms, wastes
7. Energy
8. Soil, area, fertility

##### Economy Prosperity and sustainability

1. GDP per capita
2. Quality and efficiency of infrastructure and public services
3. Level of value-added investment
4. Level of national debt acceptable in the long term
5. Efficient use of resources
6. Competitiveness
7. Potential workforce with appropriate qualifications and in the required numbers
8. Innovation and efficient research
9. Framework for political order to benefit the whole economy
10. Economic development of the South and East

##### Society Human and social capital

1. Education, learning potential
2. Health, welfare, security
3. Freedom, independence, individuality, personal responsibility
4. Identity, culture
5. Values
6. Solidarity, community, social cohesion, justice
7. Openness, tolerance, adaptability
8. Social security, poverty levels
9. Legal security
10. Equality of opportunity, gender equality, participation

Living off the interest and not the capital: the criteria shown above allow a general evaluation of the environmental, economic and social capital stocks. They are derived from the interpretive documents that define sustainable development. These include the Federal Constitution and Agenda 21.

Using the capital stock model, the importance of individual federal policy sectors in terms of sustainable development can be evaluated. The authors of the report «Politik der Nachhaltigen Entwicklung in der Schweiz» analysed a total of 25 policy sectors with the aid of their 28 criteria, looking especially at the interdependencies between the sectors. This detailed procedure makes the expert evaluation as reliable and transparent as possible. For the evaluation, the authors also called upon a large number of external specialists.

## Significance of security and peace policy for sustainable development

Capital stock criterion		Influence of security and peace policy on the criterion	Relevance to sustainable development*
<b>Environment</b>			
En1	Biodiversity	Armed conflicts can endanger biodiversity (↔ foreign environmental policy).	•
En2	Climate, ozone layer		
En3	Emissions		
En4	Landscape / cultivated and natural space		
En5	Water	See E8. Water (conflicts over access, questions of survival). The shortage of natural, productive resources is currently one of the main causes, as well as the consequence, of acute conflicts. This affects indispensable renewable resources. Security and peace policies have the potential to influence such conflicts both negatively and positively (e.g. the Gulf War). Wood, productive farmland, water (conflicts over distribution), fossil fuels, oil, gas. (↔ development policy).	• •••+
En6	Chemicals, organisms, wastes	For chemicals as resources, see E8, wastes: wars pollute soils.	•
En7	Energy	Main conflict potential over fossil fuels. See E5.	•••
En8	Soil, area, fertility	Land (land reform conflicts), destruction of soil fertility.	••
<b>Economy</b>			
Ec1	GDP per capita	Domestic (and international) security and stability are core economic factors.	•••
Ec2	Quality and efficiency of infrastructure and public services	Peace and human security are a condition for functioning State infrastructure.	
Ec3	Level of value-added investment	Only political stability attracts investment (↔ foreign economic and development policy).	••
Ec4	Level of national debt acceptable in the long term	High defence spending can cause insolvency.	••
Ec5	Efficient use of resources	A functioning order influenced by security and peace policy is required (↔ development policy).	••
Ec7	Potential workforce with appropriate qualifications and in the required numbers	Cannot be guaranteed in acute conflict situations.	••
Ec8	Innovation and efficient research	A functioning order, which can be promoted through technological technological cooperation, is required.	•
Ec9	Framework for political order to benefit the whole economy	Is central to a positive attitude towards peace; in conflict zones such conditions can be neither created nor respected.	•••
Ec10	Economic development of the South and East	A functioning order is required, security and peace are central prerequisites.	•••
<b>Society</b>			
S1	Education, learning potential	Increase in level of education through basic social stability, ensured by peace and security.	•••
S2	Health, welfare, security	Impossible without peace and security.	••
S3	Freedom, independence, individuality, personal responsibility	Both a condition and a consequence of peace and security.	•••
S4	Identity, culture	A constructive, positive attitude towards one's own country can only exist in security.	••
S5	Values	See S4.	••
S6	Solidarity, community, social cohesion, justice	Functioning political order and security are conditions for, and the result of, justice and social cohesion. Good governance approach.	•••
S7	Openness, tolerance adaptability	See S4.	••
S8	Social security, poverty levels	Poverty cannot be combated successfully in the absence of peace and security (↔ foreign economic and development policy).	••
S9	Legal security	Positive peace is a condition for (and result of) the rule of law.	•••
S10	Equality of opportunity, gender equality, participation	See S6.	

\* The relevance of this sectoral policy for sustainable development is indicated by points on a scale of 0–3 points, i.e. from unnoticeable to strong.

For example security and peace policy: How important are possible measures of security and peace policy for sustainable development? A detailed analysis using the capital stock model gives some indication. This analysis was undertaken for a total of 25 policy sectors. The symbol ↔ means that there is a close correspondence with another policy sector, indicated elsewhere. The symbol + means that this capital stock is particularly endangered, close to the acceptable minimum.



## Education and science takes first place

The other policy sectors can also be investigated in the same way as peace and security policy. In many cases the results are surprising: education and science policy proved to be the most important policy sector for sustainable development, even ahead of energy policy.

It should be remembered that cultural policy, for example, which plays a prominent role in sustainable development, is rather distant from politics and understandably does not top the Federal Council's «to-do list». Which sectors are in greatest need of catching up is also important in the ranking, as well as how relevant any one sector is for sustainable development. Finally, the impacts of global or national trends will also influence the priority given to solving the problem (see also Part 1).

## Policies for and against sustainable development

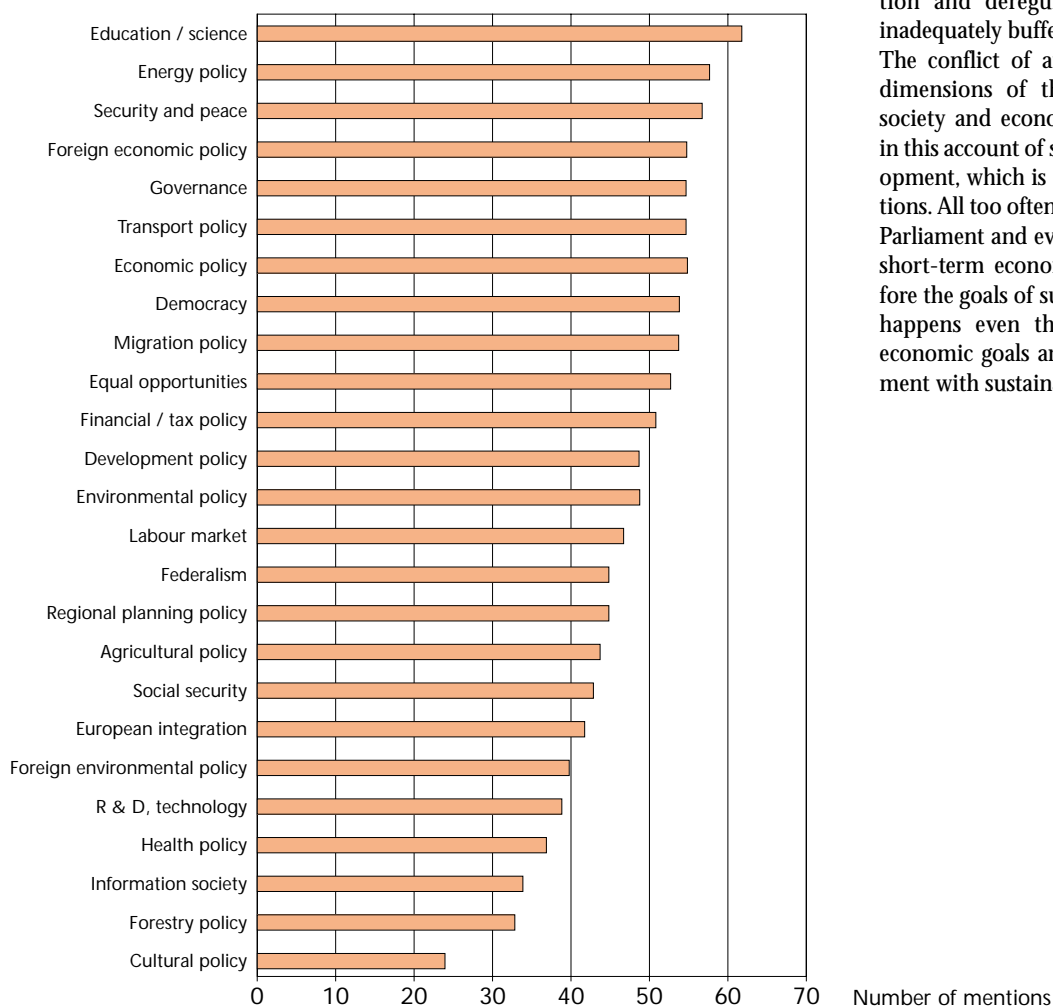
The Swiss policy of sustainable development has both light and dark aspects. In comparison with other countries of the North, Switzerland's position is relatively good. She has nevertheless not been entirely consistent in following the path to sustainable development. For example, Switzerland's high consumption of resources and energy could not possibly be extrapolated to the rest of the world; the environmental capital would soon be exhausted.

The three main dimensions of sustainable development show a very differentiated picture (see also Part 1):

- The performance of the Swiss economy is overall very high
- Environmental consumption has stabilised in some areas, but in others, such as climate protection and biodiversity, the capital stock is dwindling.
- Social resources are increasingly under pressure, partly as a consequence of the recession of the 1990s, partly because of increased international competition, technological change and the current wave of privatisation and deregulation, which is inadequately buffered.

The conflict of aims between the dimensions of the environment, society and economy are reflected in this account of sustainable development, which is full of contradictions. All too often the government, Parliament and even the voters put short-term economic interests before the goals of sustainability. This happens even though long-term economic goals are often in agreement with sustainability concerns.

Relevance of policy sectors for sustainability



Expert analyses suggest that federal policy sectors with long lines are particularly important for sustainable development in Switzerland.

### Setting course towards sustainable development (SD)

Political decisions and events	Institution	Year/date	Impact on CEn CEC CS		
Energy 2000 and its successor SwissEnergy for rational energy consumption	Federal Council Parliament	1990, 1999	+	+	
Revision of Water Protection Law: polluter-pays principle	Parliament	1991	+	+	
Referendum on Switzerland's membership of Bretton Woods Institutions; Switzerland gets the opportunity to influence SD globally	Citizens	1991	(+)	+	(+)
Approval of Alpine Protection Article in the Federal Constitution	Citizens and cantons	1994	+		(+)
Guidelines North-South: improvement of political framework conditions in the developing countries as priority	Federal Council	1994	+	+	+
Army Reform 95	Parliament	1994			+
Report on security policy	Federal Council	1999			+
Revision of Environmental Protection Law: economic instruments	Parliament	1995	+	+	
Change of direction in transport investment policy: refurbishment of public transport since 1980s (Bahn und Bus 2000; Alptransit, financing of public transport, railways reform)	Federal Council Parliament	1990s	+	+	
Recognition of unpaid work in social security approval of 10th AHV Revision (with family and carer credits) by referendum	Citizens	1995		+	+
Distance-related Heavy Vehicle Fee (HVF), approved by referendum	Citizens	1998	+	(+)	
Agricultural policy 2002: ecologisation of farming, extension of multifunctionality and market prices	Citizens	1998	+	+	+
Revised Federal Constitution with commitment to SD approved by referendum	Citizens and cantons	18 April 1999	+	+	+
Law to reduce CO <sub>2</sub> emissions	Parliament	1999	+	+	

Decisions in a positive direction were usually not taken consciously to achieve the goal of sustainable development, but as part of good Swiss policy.

### Setting course away from sustainable development (SD)

Political decisions and events	Institution	Year / date	Impact on CEn CEC CS		
Stagnating resources for creating human capital in the 1990s	Parliament	1990–2000		(–)	–
Rejection by cantons alone of constitutional provision for simplifying naturalisation of foreign nationals who grew up in Switzerland	Citizens and cantons	1994			–
Decisions to guarantee export risk for Swiss companies involved in the Ilisu and Three Gorges dam construction projects, with tens of thousands of local people displaced	Federal Council	1997, 1998	–	+	–
Rejection by referendum of constitutional anchorage of maternity insurance	Citizens	1999			–
Revision of Regional Planning Law	Citizens	1999	–	(+)	(–)
Federal Council's target for development cooperation: 0.4%; political reality: 0.32–0.35%	Federal Council Parliament	1990s	–	+	–
Rejection of first steps towards ecological tax reform (three energy proposals)	Citizens	2000	–	(–)	(–)
Federal Council Decision in favour of higher noise thresholds for Zurich Unique Airport in defiance of expert committee recommendations	Federal Council	2000	–	+	
Referral of National Council Motion for the construction of a second Gotthard road tunnel	National Council	2000	–		
Postponement of ratification of European Social Charter	Parliament	2000		(–)	–
Unlimited liability for nuclear power station operators missing from the Federal Council's Message on the revision of the Nuclear Power Law	Federal Council	2001		–	–
Unchecked growth of land consumption despite opposite federal objective	Confederation cantons	until today	–	–	–

Such decisions can be avoided only if the federal government, Parliament and the voting population increasingly assess proposals containing conflicts of aim in terms of sustainability.

# Six keys to sustainability

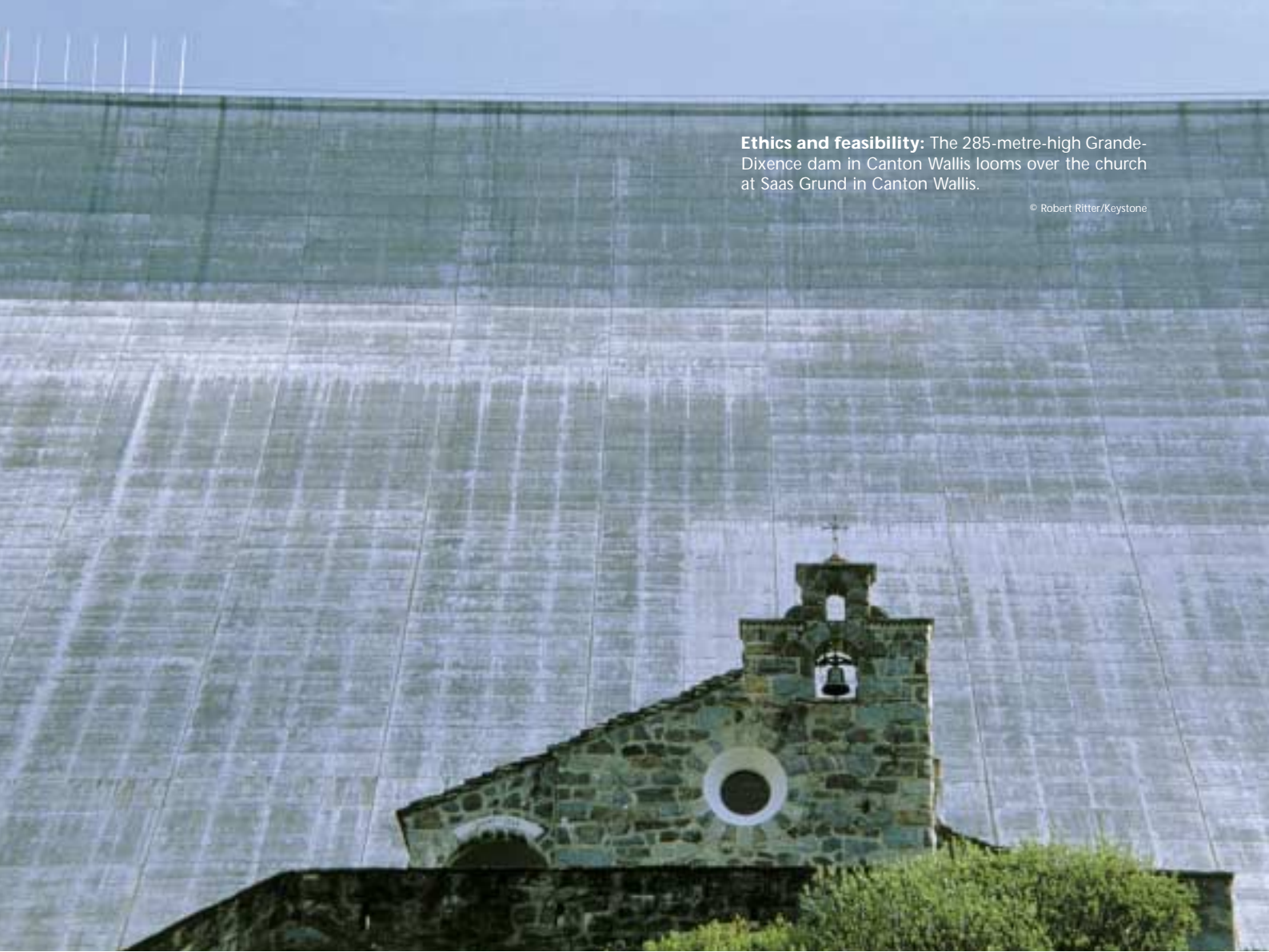
Sustainable development means resolving conflicts in ways that ensure Switzerland and the world are sustainable. Such decisions are not always popular in the short term, but the principles behind them are finding growing acceptance by the population.

The keys to sustainable development in Switzerland face conflicts of aim in six sectors:

1. Competition and solidarity within Switzerland
2. Globalisation and worldwide solidarity
3. Commodification and culture
4. Environment, ethics and feasibility

5. Openness and integrity
6. Power and partnership

Expert opinion is that, to become sustainable and to conserve and maintain her environmental, economic and social capital stocks, Switzerland must urgently take further measures in these areas of conflict.

A large concrete dam with a stone church in the foreground. The dam is a massive, grey concrete structure with a grid-like pattern of vertical and horizontal lines. In the foreground, the stone church is visible, featuring a bell tower and a circular window. The church is built with dark, rough-hewn stone. The background shows a clear blue sky and some distant hills.

Ethics and feasibility: The 285-metre-high Grande-Dixence dam in Canton Wallis looms over the church at Saas Grund in Canton Wallis.

© Robert Ritter/Keystone



## Area of conflict 1: Competition and solidarity within Switzerland

The most basic conflicts lie in the tension, from the view-point of sustainability, between deregulation and social integration in Switzerland. Often only a few actors benefit economically – at least in the short term – from a measure, while the general public and the environment suffer. The laws of competition and the pressure to cut costs have penetrated fields that were previously regulated by solidarity, community spirit and general public interest. This is the case, for example, for the electronic media, or basic services such as mail or healthcare. Economic and social change also

uncovers new forms of poverty, against which protection is still inadequate (see also Part 1).

Conversely, deregulated markets often lead to prices that do not cover all costs, although true costs would correspond better to the free market principle on which liberalisation is based. Thus, those who sell and consume petrol are able to pass the damage caused by petrol production and consumption to the climate, human health and buildings, on to the general public and the environment and to future generations.

**Recommendation 1:**  
Social compensation and environmental quality must not be sacrificed to increased global competition

- International competitiveness must not be maintained at the cost of social compensation/equality. Employees at the lower end of the pay scale also have the right to an income that is enough to live on.
- Safety nets must be prepared for the socially weak that nevertheless respect their human dignity.
- The educational system should cater for the challenges and opportunities of the new technology and science-based economy, without neglecting the higher goal of an education that equips for life.



Social equilibrium: Cost-cutting must not remove the safety nets for the weaker members of society.

© Keystone



Working Poor: Single parents and families with several children are particularly badly hit.

© S.Schroter/AURA

**Recommendation 2:**  
Avoiding new forms of poverty

- The social security system must focus more strongly on the needs of the working poor, long-term unemployed, and families with several children, to avoid or compensate for their risk of poverty.
- The burden of children should be distributed more fairly throughout society than it is today, and should be socially secured.
- Both mothers and fathers should find it easier to combine family and career, for instance with good child care and flexible employment patterns.

**Recommendation 3:**  
Continue deregulating the markets, as long as this can be done in a socially and environmentally acceptable way



Public transport: «Service public» is equally important in isolated areas.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA

- Cartels and monopolies of former public operations such as Swisscom or the Swiss federal railways (SBB) should be further liberalised, but more thoughtfully: the social and regional impacts should be carefully observed and given greater weight.
- The whole population, even in isolated areas, should benefit from innovation and efficiency – for example in telecommunications and public transport. We should not pay lip service to the idea of the service public, while in reality cutting costs by reducing the quality of service.
- Without disadvantaging her own producers, Switzerland must be more open to the import of agricultural products and food from poor countries.
- The access of small and medium-sized businesses to foreign markets should also be improved.

**Recommendation 4:**  
Government functions that have a decisive effect on sustainable development must be financed and performed efficiently

- The social security system should be tailored to foreseeable future trends: health-care costs can be expected to continue to rise, and the percentage of older people to increase.
- Education will become more important and will be confronted with new challenges. Substantial extra costs can be anticipated here.
- Models for a supplementary non-profit making social service should be explored.
- Models of flexible pension age have a positive effect both on older people and on the public purse, and should be encouraged.
- Public finances should be collected in a way that is more broadly based and in harmony with the principles of sustainability. A social and ecological tax reform would be appropriate for this, for example through a fiscally neutral increase in the price of various forms of energy.

- Nucleated towns in the bigger conurbations (Zurich, Geneva, Basel) carry the greatest burden of modern life in terms of transport, education, healthcare, environment and culture. They need greater support here, just like the regions with little infrastructure.



Education for all: Costs will rise because demand is growing.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA



## Area of conflict 2: Globalisation and worldwide solidarity

Global and local environmental problems are becoming more acute throughout the world. The gap between rich and poor is increasing, both between the industrialised and the developing world, and within developing countries. This is one of the side effects of tighter global competition.

Switzerland's short-term economic interests appear to run counter to a stronger political and economic commitment to global sustainable development, particularly in the poorest developing countries. These have hardly benefited at all from the liberalisation of world markets.



Tropical rain forest under threat: Global competition threatens habitats and biodiversity.

© Rutschi/Keystone



**Recommendation 5:**  
Switzerland should take more consistent responsibility for global environmental and poverty issues

- Switzerland should work towards a globalisation of the economy that brings greater benefits to the poorest and to the environment. The economic sectors that benefit the poorest countries should be liberalised more rapidly. Essentially, these are agriculture and the textile industry.
- Switzerland's export promotion should align itself with the long-term goals of sustainable development. For large-scale projects, coordination with other countries and substantiated assessment by unbiased experts are recommended.
- When drawing up Statements or proposals for international organisations, the Federal Council and the administration must involve the organisations of civil society, especially development organisation, more systematically and at an earlier stage. There should be better coordination of the various Departments' foreign policy at Federal Council level.



Schooling in South Africa: The deregulation of world trade should primarily help developing countries' export trade. Only a thriving economy can afford good education for all.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA

**Recommendation 6:**  
Developing countries require better conditions to help them help themselves

- International debt write-off for the poorest countries should be accelerated and strengthened, national debt write-off should be continued consistently and simpli-

fied. The conditions of debt write-off should be in harmony with sustainable development.

- At least 0.4% of Switzerland's gross domestic product should go to development (currently: 0.3 to 0.35%), and this money should be used to promote the policy conditions for sustainable development such as debt write-off, democracy and human rights.
- Foreign economic, development, security and peace policies should be aligned more coherently and consistently with the objectives of sustainable development.
- The diplomatic service should also be involved in this new orientation.



Working thanks to debt write-off: The conditions of debt write-off for the poorest countries should be in harmony with the concept of sustainable development.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA

## Area of conflict 3: Commodification and culture

«Switzerland has become harder, faster and more self-centred,» wrote the «Neue Zürcher Zeitung» in August 2000. The coherence of society, particularly the national cultural community we have achieved, is under threat. Increasing competition in all areas of life places greater value on the paid services of the individual than on his/her voluntary

involvement in and service to the community. Free market logic not only dominates economic areas, but increasingly sectors such as education, healthcare and the arts as well. Experts refer to this development as «the commodification of culture».

From the «Neue Zürcher Zeitung»: «Switzerland has become harder, faster and more self-centred.»

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA



#### Recommendation 7:

Education should be organised efficiently, but prepare people for all aspects of life



- A balance between professional skills, vocational training, social skills and personal development should be achieved at all levels of schooling.
- Improved coordination and cooperation between the cantons should contribute to a more rational design of the education system (sustainable development calls it «efficiency of resources»). But efficiency must not prevent education from equipping for life.

Learning is for life: Education must be organised so that it is not simply academic, but equips for all aspects of life.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA

#### Recommendation 8:

Responsibility and consensus are cultural achievements and should be maintained and extended

- The whole of society is called upon to strengthen and support the community. The elites of business, science, culture and politics have a particular responsibility here.
- Solidarity, openness and tolerance should be cultivated consciously.



A spirit of community: Solidarity is taught at school.

© Keystone



## Area of conflict 4: Environment, ethics and feasibility

The technologies developed by modern science have far-reaching impacts on humans and on nature, which may be irreversible. Every day between 50 and 100 animal and plant species disappear. Gene technology is able to modify life forms or create new ones. Furthermore, technologies such as nuclear energy, gene technology and certain sectors of the chemical industry are controversial because of the unfore-

seen consequences of industrial accidents. In all these cases we face the question: what, really, is progress? Or: what kind of progress do we want? From the viewpoint of sustainable development, we must develop principles for how to handle what has become possible. The precautionary principle and the reinforcement of the polluter-pays principle and liability law are steps towards sustainable development.



Controversial nuclear energy (Gösgen power station): What kind of progress do we want?

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA



Pause for breath: Incentives for sustainable lifestyles help to protect the environment.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA

#### Recommendation 9:

The shift in values in favour of a lifestyle that is ecologically sustainable should be supported by incentives. This is a significant supplement to orders and prohibitions, which have their limits, and to steering through taxes, which is effective only in the long term. We should make particular efforts not to hinder moves towards sustainable behaviour by regulations or other hurdles

- Socially acceptable ecological tax reform should be pursued.
- People and groups who wish to cultivate a lifestyle that consciously protects the environment and reduces social costs should be supported. One possibility is the labelling of environmentally friendly products, such as foods.
- The necessary services, such as good networks of hiking or biking trails, should be provided for people who wish to spend their leisure time in environmentally friendly ways.
- Strategies for sustainable mobility should be implemented, even in aviation.

#### Recommendation 10:

Regional planning and infrastructure policy can contribute more in the medium term to protecting the environment and resources

- The innovative «inwards» urban growth, rather than new settlement and urban sprawl, should be consistently encouraged, especially around nodes of public transport.
- Instruments of regional planning should be more binding, offering more effective protection and care to natural areas.
- Regulations can and should lower the energy consumption of both new and existing buildings considerably, to at least the level of the «Minergy» standard.

- The incentives for ecological performance in agriculture should be more efficiently targeted towards sustainable development.



Motorway slip roads at Emmen (Canton Lucerne): Urban sprawl creates more traffic.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA

**Recommendation 11:**  
Switzerland need a broadly based,  
accessible discussion of ethical issues in  
healthcare policy

- Controversial subjects can be handled only after expressly ethical evaluation. These include the application of very costly and complex medical interventions with questionable chances of success, life-prolonging measures in certain situations, euthanasia, some forms of animal experiments, and organ donation.
- To evaluate these questions, higher-level criteria aligned with the ethical principles of sustainable development must be established.
- In addition, preventive and alternative medicine – as a complement to orthodox (curative) medicine – should be promoted.
- An overall health policy plan must record, discuss, evaluate and monitor the interests and activities of all those involved (hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, doctors, patients).



Cutting-edge medicine: The cost of medicine is an ethical issue.

© Hulda Jossen/AURA

**Recommendation 12:**  
Research and development require  
ethical framework conditions

- The culture of discussion between researchers, interested business and civil society, and appropriate procedures to encourage it, should be developed further.
- Technology impact assessments should be more visible and more effective. In this context, the social sciences should be strengthened.
- Research and development must have greater transparency.
- The polluter-pays principle should be applied more consistently to major hazards, for example by strengthening liability regulations.

Comprehensible research: Transparency is a prerequisite for public participation in setting goals.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA





## Area of conflict 5: Openness and integrity

Peaceful collaboration between peoples and populations is a decisive factor for sustainable development. The more strongly she is integrated within the international community, the better Switzerland can contribute her point of view. The international community is also growing in influence. The world is increasingly globally linked not just in economic terms, but also socially, culturally, politically and

ecologically. This rapid global change is causing widespread anxiety. Fear makes many people defend themselves against being overwhelmed by the new with a return to conservatism. This reflex leads to Switzerland closing herself off from solidarity with other countries. Similar reactions can also be detected in the way foreigners, asylum seekers for example, are treated in Switzerland.



The gnomes of Zurich: Switzerland, cosmopolitan and professional when it comes to managing money, scarcely glances over the garden fence at other issues.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA

**Recommendation 13:**  
The federal machinery should be reconsidered

- To foster sustainable development effectively, some cantonal institutions must be better coordinated or combined.
- The consideration of new political structures, such as a merging of cantons or regional alliances, should be possible.
- The required majority of cantons in referenda and the Council of States leads to small, rural cantons having a disproportionate political weight. The interests of the heavily populated conurbations are therefore underrepresented.
- Cantons or communes should not try to outbid or undercut each other, for instance with tax cuts for high earners.
- The integration of the non-Swiss population should be fostered.



Hornisser from Sri Lanka: Integration means not just joining in, but participating in decision-making.

© Emanuel Ammon/AURA



Waving the European flag: Switzerland is part of Europe.

© Rüttschi/Keystone

**Recommendation 14:**  
Switzerland should emerge from her political isolation

- Membership of the UN and integration into Europe are important objectives of security and peace policy, and thus of sustainable development.
- Coming out of political isolation can succeed only with the fullest participation of the Confederation, cantons and communes, and NGOs and organisations and associations from the worlds of business, science and culture.
- Public information and intellectual/emotional engagement with this subject play a central role, especially among young people.

**Recommendation 15:**  
An urgent need for a better linking of security, peace and development policy

- Significantly more funding is required for civil peace promotion.
- This areas must be better coordinated with security policy, especially between departments in the Federal Administration.

Stenkovac refugee camp, Macedonia: Security policy begins with conflict prevention.

© Oliver Heeb/AURA





## Area of conflict 6: Power and partnership

This area concerns the issue of how to manage and resolve conflicts of interest in a spirit of partnership and with respect for human dignity. The ethical principles of sustainable development require decisions to be negotiated in part-

nership between all those involved, rather than through personal, economic or political power, and to consider the legitimate rights and needs of all.

Glarus People's Assembly: Democracy means balancing the interests of all those involved, not exercising power politics.

© Oliver Heeb/AURA





**Recommendation 16:**  
The equality of men and women  
should be put into practice

- All policies, programmes and organisations must actively practice and promote the equal rights of men and women.
- Women's access to education should be improved; equality in managerial positions in education and science, business and politics must be strengthened.
- The labour market must not discriminate against either gender; in particular, it should be possible for both fathers and mothers to combine having a career with having a family.



The 1991 Women's Strike: Equality of the sexes is still not a reality.

© Keystone



We're on the top – you're at the bottom: Such ideas belong to the past. Widely acceptable solutions to problems are the outcome of negotiation between equal partners.

© Emanuel Ammon/AU

**Recommendation 17:**  
The same opportunities to participate in  
political processes should be offered to all

- Even highly experienced NGOs are generally less able to develop and represent their point of view than business or the administration. This disadvantage should be corrected, if necessary with financial support.
- The rules of participation, for example in consultation procedures or in drawing up a statement, should ensure that all those concerned are equally able to represent their point of view.
- The whole population, including foreign nationals, should be involved in democratic decision making.

**Recommendation 18:**  
Actions, not just words,  
are needed

- Sustainable development is a frequently stated principle in the Federal Constitution, in laws and programmes and in international organisations' interpretive documents; it should also be implemented.
- The monitoring and evaluation of policy must be based on known criteria of sustainability that are clear to all.
- Institutions and bodies that are responsible for promoting sustainable development must be equipped with the necessary funding and competencies, and given precise instructions.
- Outside the administration, a commission for sustainable development should be established, answering directly to the Federal Council and equipped with the necessary means and competencies.
- The Interdepartmental Committee Rio (IDC Rio) must have access to an appropriate budget earmarked for sustainable development.



Cooperation for sustainable development: Cooperation requires constant examination of what has been achieved, targeted action programmes, and adequate funding for implementation.

© Jenő Gósi/AURA

# The time is ripe

Sustainable development is a sophisticated concept, addressing hearts and minds in equal measure. Its vision is also a leitmotiv of the Federal Constitution. Solidarity and the balance of interests are the order of the day. In most sectors, Switzerland does not have to wait for other countries to catch up before implementing her sustainability strategy. Here she can act independently.

Which topics do the authors encounter repeatedly in their attempt to measure the Swiss reality of sustainable development?

## The value system as a necessary foundation

Sustainable development is only possible if the golden rule is used as a principle in environment, society and economy: «Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.» Together with the Federal Constitution and Rio's Agenda 21, this ethical principle forms the basis of all the experts' considerations. They write: «Those who cannot accept this normative framework will also consider the conclusions invalid.»

## Competition as a universalised measure

The authors of the book recognise that the industrialised world, especially the North and West, believes in technological progress. This often creates the expectation that technology can provide the solution to all problems, even those that are themselves caused by technology. Growing material prosperity is being revealed as an overwhelming objective in the rich countries, to be achieved universally through deregulated market freedom and competition, helped by technological progress.

This magic formula leads to the gradual perception of the free market economy not just as a means to an end, but as the goal of all human activity – with maxims such as competitiveness, high market capitalisation, labour efficiency, the highest possible return on investments.

It is easy to forget that there are other values and spheres, which if they are to flourish should be driven not by competition but by community interests – for example, education or the arts. Furthermore, the material achievement of a poorer population group in the privileged North and West is inadequate for their needs. With a more just distribution of the economic goods available, most of the problems of poverty in both the North and the South would be solved.

## Sustainable development – a question of power

Conflicts between the economic, ecological and social requirements of long-term sustainable development characterise interactions

- within Switzerland, and within other countries
- between Switzerland and other countries
- between the North and the South or East
- between the generations.

Such conflicts must be made more visible, and solved in partnership according to principles of fairness. Far too often it is competition alone that decides the outcome – in other words, the rights of the party with most power. In the long term, this is just as damaging to the short-term victors.

## Money is not the only capital – so are the environment and society

In Switzerland and other industrialised nations, decisions often favour further short-term increases in economic prosperity, at the expense of ecological and social values. This has been particularly intensive over past few decades, so that economic capital is generously available. Meanwhile, environmental resources and social solidarity are under threat. For example, the expansion to four lanes of the motorway through the Gotthard creates jobs during the construction phase, and will shorten driving time when traffic is heavy. The profits of the construction companies will thus increase and more business will be brought to car importers, as driving becomes more attractive. The construction workers themselves also participate to a small extent in the economic success. But on the other hand the competitiveness of the more environmentally friendly railway suffers, and healthcare costs rise as a result of air pollution – and these burdens also affect the one third of households, who do not possess a car. Instead of extending the motorway, a decision favouring ecology and social balance could lead to some of the Gotthard car traffic being shifted onto the railway that is currently under construction (NEAT), although even the NEAT cannot unequivocally be described as sustainable. While such comparisons and decisions are rarely simple, following the recommendations of a policy of sustainable development will help to restore the disadvantaged capital stocks.

## Might is right

If something is invented and developed and has profit potential, it is likely to be used. This is the experience of the 20th century, which had an almost unconditional belief in the benefits of technological progress. Questions concerning the technology of war, medicine, the chemical industry, gene technology and nuclear energy were and still are – because of their potential hazards – controversial. In reality these debates have not prevented the risks of these technologies being passed on to the general public. The applicability of the polluter-pays principle with corresponding liability is often limited. Moreover, as a rule the burden of proof is on the plaintiffs to demonstrate the harmfulness of a technology and not on the manufacturer to prove they are not liable according to the polluter-pays principle. This deflects the dominance of economic considerations and is disadvantageous for sustainable development.

## Switzerland's performance

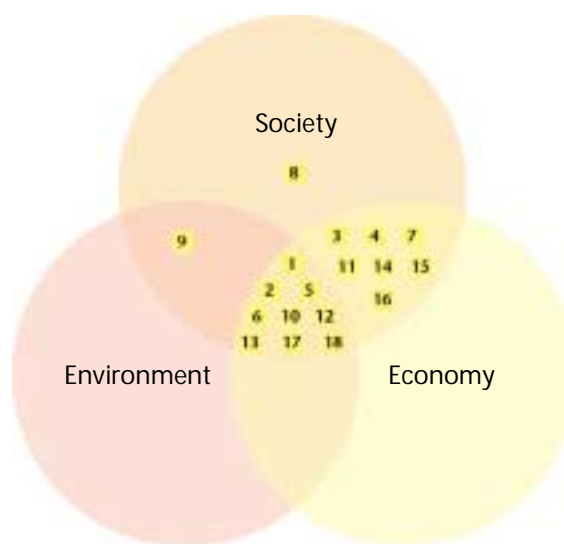
Depending on the viewpoint from which the evaluation is made, Swiss sustainable development policy varies considerably: in comparison with other, rich and highly industrialised countries, Switzerland comes off rather well. This applies not only economically but also in relation to national and international solidarity and environmental quality. Nevertheless, there is still a need for action. The path of development that Switzerland is taking could not simply be transferred elsewhere, and in this sense it is not sustainable. For example, Switzerland's per capita consumption of soil, energy and other global natural resources is too high.

## Implementation, observation and monitoring

A key problem is that major decisions in various sectors of federal policy have contradictory impacts on sustainable development. In other words, there is a great problem of coordination. These contradictions prevent sustainability objectives being realised, but the Federal Constitution, Parliament or population often ignores, represses or tolerates them. Independent observation and monitoring could help the Federal Government and Administration design a more systematic, uniform and effective policy of sustainable development. In particular, the conditions (incentives such as tax advantages, orders and prohibitions, public information policy) affecting private and state actors should be designed so that they serve sustainable development. But to implement strategies we also need institutions that are willing to do so, and to do so efficiently. One means would be a closer or more binding linkage of the different governmental policies, as recommended and sometimes practised by IDC Rio. Appropriate impulses could also be provided by an additional institution, not tied to the Federal Administration, for example an independent sustainability commission with a small staff, responsible only to the objectives of sustainable development. Its tasks would include:

- continuous early monitoring of important business and coordination with other policy sectors (including those of cantons, regions and cities).
- advising the Federal Council on objectives, conflicts of aim and decisions relevant to sustainability.
- annual examination of policy, reporting to the Federal Council, Parliament and public.

In summary, all the analyses in this study agree that the root causes of Swiss policy deficits in sustainable development lie in all 18 fields of action (see Part 3). In some sectors, especially in development cooperation and in security and peace,



Sustainable development is social, environmental and economic policy. Of the 18 priority measures, 18 can be assigned to society, 16 to economy and 10 to environment. This emphasises that assuming sustainable development is essentially the same as environmental policy is mistaken. Sustainable development relates equally to all three sectors: the environment, economy and society.

international policy should also be considered. But fundamentally Switzerland is in a position to take the path to sustainable development, without waiting for the others to act. The time is ripe.



## Glossar

Field of action	The 18 core recommendations of the Report relate to 18 priority subjects (fields of action), which are grouped into 6 areas of conflict (see Part 3, from page 12)
Coherence	From the Latin «to cling»; the definition used here is lack of contradiction (consistency), compatibility
Area of conflict	Tension between two fundamentally antagonistic values or positions relevant to sustainability (e.g. competition and solidarity). These areas of conflict are so defined that they can include a number of related subjects in a single category. The areas of conflict may also overlap.
Legitimate rights	Morally justifiable rights of each person.
Sustainable development	is a development «that meets the needs of the present without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.»
Sustainability criteria	Qualitative parameters that are important for evaluating sustainable development in the three dimensions of the environment, society and economy. Some of these parameters may also be quantifiable, but this is not a requirement.
Relevance for sustainability	Significance of a policy sector for sustainable development, taking into consideration current policies and effective trends.
NGO	Nongovernmental organisations. This term covers all organised institutions of civil society (including business associations, professional societies, trades unions and so on), and both profit-orientated enterprises and non-profit organisations in the private sector.
Weak sustainability PLUS	Weak sustainability means that in the capital stock model, substitution between and within the environmental, economic and social capital stocks may occur. The PLUS indicates that certain conditions are imposed (see also pages 7/8)
Trends	Developments that are under little or no political influence, such as natural climate change, global population, research impetus. There are also political trends (e.g. deregulation and globalisation of markets).
Civil society	In the broad sense, all nongovernmental organisations (including companies and business associations), and individuals and groups who are not institutionally organised. The literature also uses the term «subpolitical».

## International institutions for sustainable development

At the international level the following institutions are concerned with implementing the objectives of sustainable development:

- **UNCSD (United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development)**

The UNCSD is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was created in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of UNCED; to monitor and report on implementation of the Earth Summit agreements at the local, national, regional and international levels. In recent years the Commission has increasingly developed into a multi-stakeholder institution (i.e. a body in which the most important interest groups are represented). The CSD brings together 53 environmental, social and economic ministers, representatives of NGOs, business and trades unions.

- **NCSD (National Councils for Sustainable Development) and the Earth Council**

The National Councils for Sustainable Development have the task of overseeing and driving national progress towards sustainable development. The NCSD should be understood as multi-stakeholder participatory bodies, in which – as required by Agenda 21 – representatives of government and civil society are involved ([www.ncsdnetwork.org](http://www.ncsdnetwork.org)). Some general roles of the NCSD are given below:

- The NCSD advises the government and ensures that the social, economic and environmental objectives of sustainability are integrated into political decision-making.
- The NCSD is concerned with the integration of local, national, regional and global sustainability activities.
- The NCSD draws up indicators or criteria by which to measure the implementation and progress of sustainable development.

The **Earth Council** supports the NCSD, particularly in developing countries. It is committed to networking and transferring knowledge between countries and regions, with the aim of strengthening the NCSD. The Earth Council is also responsible for publishing the NCSD Report, which presents the experiences of different countries and evaluates barriers to and forces favouring sustainable development (Earth Council 2000).

- **OECD Initiative on Sustainable Development**

The OECD Initiative on Sustainable Development was launched in 1998. Its goal is to make the OECD into a key international organisation supporting governments in sustainable development ([www.oecd.org/subject/sustdev/](http://www.oecd.org/subject/sustdev/)). The initiative is supported by a Round Table on Sustainable Development, comprising various environmental and economic ministries, the World Bank, the WTO, the European Commission, UNEP, UNCTAD, UNDP and various NGOs and business representatives. An «Analytical Report on Sustainable Development» is being prepared for the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting 2001.

- **International Conferences**

Since the Rio Earth Summit, various follow-up conferences on the implementation of Agenda 21 have been held. Important conferences include the **Rio+5 Forum** (1997), for which all signatory states produced country profiles to review and appraise the implementation of Agenda 21. ([www.un.org/esa/earthsummit/ga97nat.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/earthsummit/ga97nat.htm)).

### Selected relevant multilateral environmental Agreements since the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro

Agreement	Sector	Purpose	Agreed	Entry into force
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate change (UNFCCC)	Climate protection	Stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere	1992 (Rio)	1994
Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC	Climate protection	Limitation of greenhouse gas emissions	1997 (Kyoto)	not yet (approx. 2002)
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	Nature and landscape protection; sustainable use of natural resources	Conservation and sustainable use of global biological diversity; fair and equitable access to genetic resources	1992 (Rio)	1993
Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CBD)	Control of hazardous substances	Safe transfer, handling and use of genetically modified organisms	January 2000 (Montreal)	–
Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)	Nature and landscape protection; sustainable use of natural resources	Combating desertification; sustainable development in affected areas.	1994 (Paris)	1996
Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal	Control of hazardous substances	Reducing wastes to a minimum, control of exports of hazardous wastes, environmentally sound disposal	1989	
Protocol on Liability & Compensation (Basel Convention)	Control of hazardous substances	Introduction of comprehensive regime for liability for disposal (export) of hazardous wastes	1999 (Basel)	–
Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (PIC)	Control of hazardous substances	Establishing a control system that requires explicit approval of the import of hazardous chemicals (protection of developing countries)	1998 (Rotterdam)	–
Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer	Protection of the ozone layer	Phasing out (banning) CFCs	1987	1989
Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	Control of hazardous substances	Reduction or elimination of the most hazardous POPs (DDT, Dioxin, PCB)	2001 (Stockholm)	–

### Important publications by the Swiss Confederation on sustainable development since 1995

- IDCRio 1995: Elemente für ein Konzept Nachhaltiger Entwicklung, Diskussionsgrundlage für die Operationalisierung (Elements for a sustainable development plan, discussion paper for operationalisation, in German)
- IDCRio 1996: Nachhaltige Entwicklung in der Schweiz, Bericht (Sustainable development in Switzerland, Report, in German)
- SAEFL 1997: Conseil du développement durable, Sustainable Development, Action Plan for Switzerland
- Federal Council 1997: Sustainable Development in Switzerland, Strategy
- IDCRio 1997: Sustainable Development in Switzerland, State of Implementation
- Federal Council 2000: Überblick über den Stand der Umsetzung der Strategie «Nachhaltige Entwicklung in der Schweiz», Zwischenbericht des Bundesrates (Overview of the status of implementation of the «Sustainable Development in Switzerland» Strategy, Interim Report, in German)

### Ordering information

#### Ordering the popular brochure

Further copies of this brochure **IDCRio (ed.): A future for Switzerland**, Bern, 2001 (32 pages) can be obtained free of charge in English, German, French and Italian from:

DEZA-Verteilerzentrum, Postfach, 3000 Bern 23, Fax ++41/+31 324 13 48, E-Mail [info@deza.admin.ch](mailto:info@deza.admin.ch), [www.deza.admin.ch](http://www.deza.admin.ch)

For all orders please give: title of publication, the number of copies and the language required.

#### Ordering the Federal Council's National Assessment

The Federal Council's Report on the status of sustainable development in Switzerland, approved by the Federal Government on 3 July 2001, is also available as a brochure (in English, German and French) from the same address.

Federal Council (ed.): From Rio to Responsibility – Switzerland towards a Policy of Sustainable Development, Bern, 2001 (32 pages).

#### Ordering the Expert Report

The Expert Report, on which the popular brochure is based, can be obtained from the same address free of charge.

It is available only in the original language (German).

IDCRio (ed.): Politik der Nachhaltigen Entwicklung in der Schweiz: Standortbestimmung und Perspektiven, MAUCH Consulting / INFRAS / Ernst Basler + Partner AG (ed.), Bern, 2001 (290 Pages).

#### Internet

The popular brochure «A future for Switzerland» can be found on the Internet in all languages, the Federal Council's National Assessment can be found on the Internet in English, German and French at [www.johannesburg2002.ch](http://www.johannesburg2002.ch). PDF versions of this popular brochure, the National Assessment and the expert report can be downloaded from this website.

The website [www.johannesburg2002.ch](http://www.johannesburg2002.ch) also contains a list of links to important sources of information on sustainable development, and details of the availability of interpretive documents and other literature related to the present publication.





#### Johannesburg 2002

*«Humanity stands at a defining moment in history. We are confronted with a perpetuation of disparities between and within nations, a worsening of poverty, hunger, ill health and illiteracy, and the continuing deterioration of the ecosystems on which we depend for our well-being. However, integration of environment and development concerns and greater attention to them will lead to the fulfilment of basic needs, improved living standards for all, better protected and managed ecosystems and a safer, more prosperous future. No nation can achieve this on its own; but together we can – in a global partnership for sustainable development.»*

So begins Agenda 21, the Action Plan to implement sustainable development, agreed at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. The recognition by the heads of government of the whole world, as well as high-ranking delegates from culture, business and nongovernmental organisations, of the need for a new way of thinking and behaving, made the Earth Summit a historical milestone.

A second Earth Summit on sustainable development will take place from 2 to 11 September 2002, this time in Johannesburg (South Africa). All countries are preparing for this major event – including Switzerland. The expert report, summarised in the present brochure, provides an important basis for discussion. The central question is: how can Switzerland contribute to sustainable development at home and around the world?

The answer will be multifaceted and is vital to the survival of the generations to come. The website on sustainable development, [www.johannesburg2002.ch](http://www.johannesburg2002.ch), provides regular information on the status of the debate.

