Protected Areas in Switzerland

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Switzerland

A small country in the middle of Europe
Biogeography - climatic influences

Atlantic → Alpine

Mediterranean

Central European (continental)
Six main biogeographical regions

- Jura
- Central Plateau
- Northern Alps
- Eastern Central Alps
- Western Central Alps
- Southern Alps
Some facts about Switzerland

- 7.5 million inhabitants – 41285 km²
- from Lago Maggiore, 193 m a.s.l., up to Monte Rosa, 4634 m a.s.l.
- part of the catchment areas of rivers Rhine, Rhone, Danube and Po.

Not an island, but an open system

- an estimated 50000 plant and animal species, of which:
  - 352 vertebrate species
  - 3000 vascular plant species
  - 1000 bryophytes
  - 400 lichens
  - 5000 macrofungi
Land use

Surface: 41’285 km²

- Forests: 31%
- Agriculture: 37%
- Habitat and infrastructures: 7%
- Non productive: 25%
  (High mountains, water surfaces, etc.)
Milestones in Biotopes and Landscape protection

- 1914: Creation of the Swiss national Park
- 1966: Nature and Cultural Heritage Protection Act
- 1977: First Federal inventory: Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance
- 1987: Rothenturm initiative - popular referendum on wetland protection
- 1991 – 1996: Inventories and protection of wetlands, mire and alluvial forests
- 2007: Revision of the Nature and Cultural Heritage Protection Act – introduction of National and Regional nature Parks
From the Swiss National Park…

(1914)

… to the Parks of national Importance

(2007 – 2011)
Federal Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance - 1977

162 sites with an area of 7'800 km² (18.9 % of the country)
UNESCO World heritage

10 sites inscribed on the list

• 3 natural sites
• 7 cultural sites – of which 2 cultural landscapes
• 2 candidates (serial)
Dry meadows inventory

Number of sites: 3143
Surface: 237 km²
(0.57 % of the country)
Federal Hunting reserves

41 hunting reserves; surface: 1500 km² (3.9 % of the country)
Water and migratory birds reserves

- 11 Ramsar sites
- 11 sites of international importance
- 27 sites of national importance
Creation of protected areas - two different processes

Federal authorities – Federal Office for the Environment

Legal framework

National and Regional nature Parks
- Evaluation / certification
- Project preparation
- Local initiative
- Bottom-up

Biotopes and Landscape inventories
- Label & financial contribution
- National inventories
- Consultation at cantonal and local level
- Ordinance
- Top down
- Implementation

Local authorities and population
Parks of national importance

- Established on a voluntary basis;
- Democratic process (« bottom-up approach »);
- Established within the framework of existing legal instruments (e. g. land use planning);
- Support from the Federal Government (Label & financial contribution)
- Based on compelling agreements between the Confederation and the Canton(s).

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Principles of Park policy:

- Conservation and promotion of high quality landscapes, based upon existing legislation
- Promotion of sustainable development in rural areas
- Encouragement of democratic processes in the regions
- Guarantee of high quality standards
Parks of national importance: 3 categories

• National Parks

• Regional Nature Parks

• Nature Discovery Parks (Sub-urban Nature Parks)
National Parks

Core zone: >100 km² «natural zone»
Free development of nature (natural processes)

NB: The core zone can be divided

Surrounding zone: sustainable use; buffer to core zone
National Parks
Core zone: free development of nature
National Parks
Surrounding zone: landscape conservation and sustainable use
Regional Nature Parks

Promotion of natural and cultural elements in rural areas

Sustainable use of cultural landscape

>100 km², without zoning, but inclusion of the whole territory of the communes.
Regional Nature Parks
Nature and landscape in harmony with regional economic development
Nature Discovery Parks
(sub-urban nature parks)

Zone centrale >4 km² « espace naturel »

Restriction d’utilisation

Zone périphérique vouée à la découverte de la nature, >6 km² en total
Nature Discovery Parks
Nature discovery and environmental education in the vicinity of urban areas
Parks – fundamental requirements

High quality of natural and landscape values

• Well preserved habitats of indigenous plant and animal species
• Characteristic rural landscape and traditional settlements maintained
• Infrastructures and land uses compatible with conservation objectives
Long term guarantee

- Support of local populations, authorities and other stakeholders
- Local communities (communes) and regional user's groups are represented in the park authority
- Financial commitment of local communities, cantons and third parties
- Professional structure of the park authority
- Long term economic viability of the park project
- Territorial guarantee (land uses);

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Fostering instruments from the Confederation

• **Global financial contributions** for the creation and operation of the park, based on programme agreements between the Confederation and the cantons (4 years periods)

• **Park Label** : Awarded by the Confederation for a 10 years period when fundamental requirements are fulfilled

• **Product Label** : the park authority shall award the product label to products and services provided in accordance to agreed ToR (sustainable production, use of local products, etc.).

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Label « Swiss Parks »
(Park Label)

- Allows the local people and visitors to identify the territory of the park and its projects
- All products and services will take benefits of this visibility
- The **Product Label** will be closely linked to the park label.
## Current situation of Parks and projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park categories (2010)</th>
<th>Operational</th>
<th>Creation phase</th>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Preliminary ideas</th>
<th>Expected Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>National Parks</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>3-4</td>
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The CBD commitments:

- Drafting of a national **biodiversity strategy** (Art. 6 CDB)
  - is currently under preparation
- Establishment of an **information exchange platform**
  - www.sib.admin.ch
- Periodic reporting
  - Last national report presented in September 2010
Important steps to be undertaken in Switzerland (Aichi-Targets):

- Until 2020 the principle of biological diversity are integrated in national and local strategies and planning processes

- Until 2020 at least 17% of the national territory is protected and organized in a well-structured and effectively connected network of protected areas
Swiss Protected Areas

Gross surface (without considering the overlapping of different categories)

- **Nagoya 17%**
  - Gap (increase of existing or establishment of new PAs; potential: giving a legal status to agricultural ecological compensation surfaces = 1.4%)
  - River expansion zones (agriculture land)
  - New national parks (core zones)
  - Increase forest reserves

- **Forseen or expected by 2020**
  - Federal hunting reserves (until now only for game species)
  - PAs for biodiversity; Local (canton) forest reserves, Biotopes of regional and local importance, buffer zones, private PAs

- **Current state**
  - PAs for biodiversity at national level (National Park, Federal inventories, Emerald network)

- **11.7%**
  - 4.4%
Conclusion

- The Nagoya decisions constitutes a strong basis for the preparation and implementation of the national Biodiversity Strategy
- Biodiversity must be secured as fundamental living support at national and local level
- The Nagoya 17 % target for PAs can be met in Switzerland
- Connectivity and corridors are additional central elements for a "green infrastructure"; they can and should be used also for economic purpose (multifunction)
- Biodiversity must also exist outside green infrastructures
Some examples of Swiss Parks

Thank you