

# 2022

## 02

Territory and  
environment

Neuchâtel 2022

# Environment

Pocket Statistics 2022



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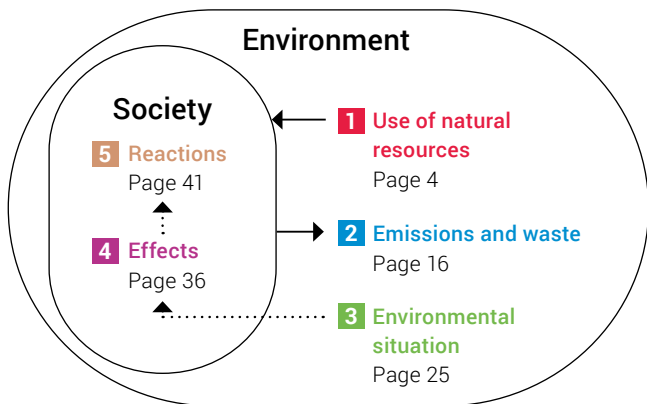
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## Contents



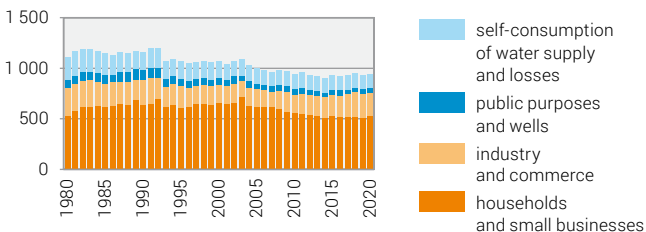
People change the environment by using natural resources and generating waste and other emissions. On the other hand, environmental conditions also have an effect on people and can prompt them to respond to certain circumstances. The present Pocket Statistics highlights such interactions by means of indicators.

## 1 Use of natural resources

On the one hand, ecosystems produce services that are useful to people. On the other hand, human activities require natural resources such as water, soil, energy or material. The way in which resources are used affects the supply available, particularly in the case of non-renewable resources.

### Consumption of drinking water<sup>1</sup>

Millions m<sup>3</sup>



<sup>1</sup> corresponds to the quantity from the public water supply (own supply from commerce, industry and agriculture are not included)

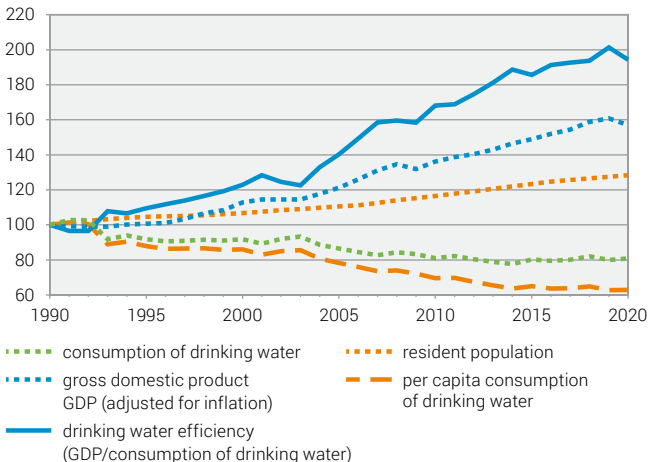
Source: Swiss Association of Gas and Water Suppliers

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Around 80% of drinking water comes from groundwater sources, approximately half of which is spring water. The remaining drinking water is taken from lakes and rivers. In 2020, 939 million cubic metres of drinking water were produced. The consumption of drinking water in Switzerland has decreased by 19% since 1990.

## Drinking water efficiency

Index 1990=100

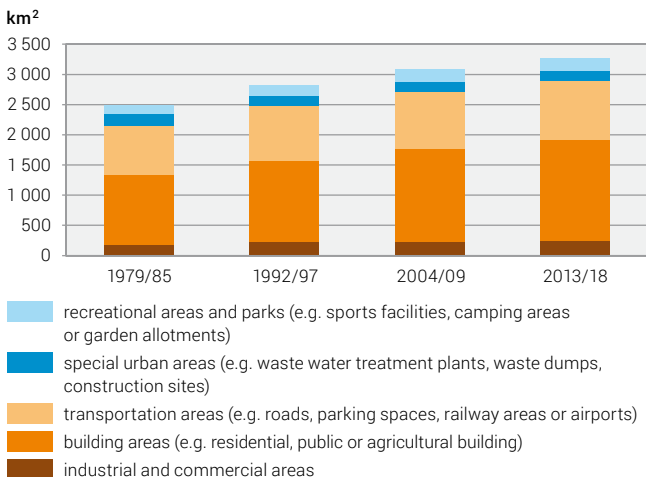


Sources: Swiss Association of Gas and Water Suppliers;  
FSO – SNA, ESPOP/STATPOP

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The consumption of drinking water has become more efficient since 1990 – the needs of a growing economy were able to be covered by the use of less drinking water. The per capita requirement for drinking water has also decreased: in 1990, daily consumption was 472 litres per person, in 2020, this figure was 297 litres. The water that is used abroad to produce imported products is, however, not included in this figure.

## Settlement and urban areas



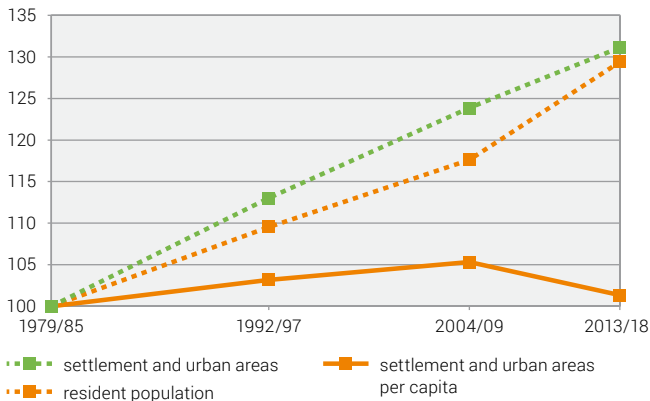
Source: FSO – Land use statistics

© FSO 2022

7.9% of Switzerland is covered by settlement and urban areas. Within 33 years, the settlement and urban areas have grown by 31% or 776 km<sup>2</sup>, mainly at the expense of agricultural areas. This is equivalent to an area increase of nearly 0.75 m<sup>2</sup> per second.

## Use of settlement areas

Index 1979/85=100



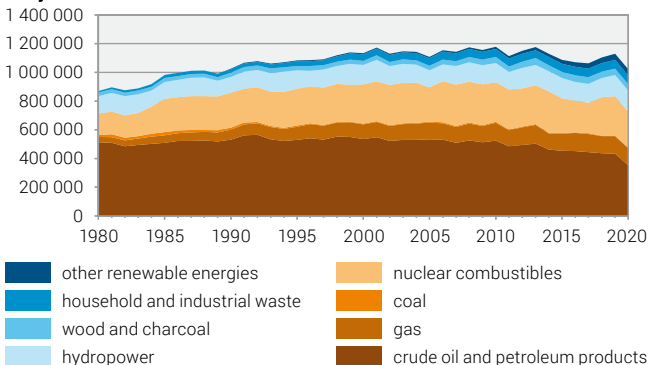
Source: FSO – Land use statistics, ESPOP/STATPOP

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Between the periods 1979/85 and 2004/09, settlement and urban areas grew faster than the residential population, meaning that the settlement and urban area requirement per person increased. After that, the population increased more than the settlement areas. Accordingly, there was a decline in the settlement and urban area requirement per person, which was 396 m<sup>2</sup> in 2013/18.

## Energy use<sup>1</sup>

### Terajoules



<sup>1</sup> Energy use corresponds to the gross energy consumption minus the import/export balance of electricity which, depending on the year, may be positive or negative and usually accounts for a few percent of the gross consumption. In 2020, more electricity was exported than imported. The energy use was approximately 2% higher than the gross consumption. Neither energy use nor gross consumption take into account conversion and distribution losses which can vary greatly depending on the energy carrier. It is assumed, for example, that when producing electricity from hydropower, no losses occur whereas when converting nuclear combustibles, roughly two thirds of the energy escapes in the form of heat that is, however, partly used in district heating.

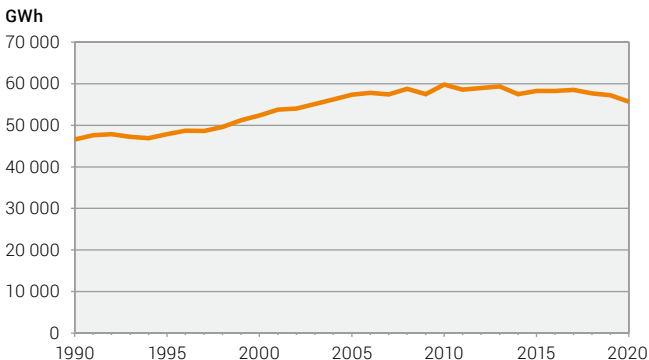
Source: SFOE – Overall energy statistics

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In the short term, energy consumption is dictated by the economic situation and weather conditions. In the long term, however, population and economic trends as well as technological and lifestyle changes are also important influencing factors. In 2020, approximately 72% of the energy used in Switzerland came from abroad. Gross energy consumption stood at around 1 million terajoules.



## Electricity consumption



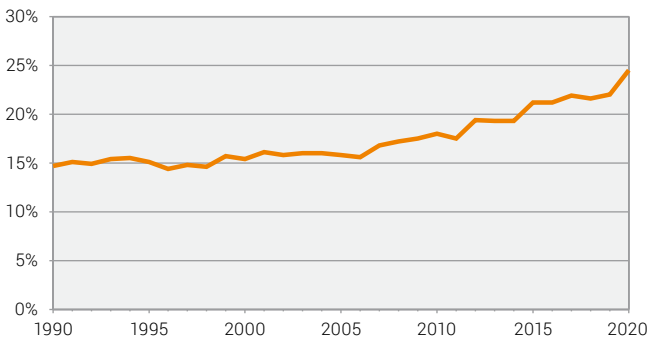
Source: SFOE – Electricity statistics

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Between 1990 and 2020, electricity consumption in Switzerland increased by 20%, although since the mid-2000s this has been seen to stabilise. In 2020, around 55 700 gigawatt hours of electricity were consumed, corresponding to approximately 6430 kilowatt hours per person. By way of comparison, this figure was 6900 in 1990. In 2020, 58% of domestically produced electricity came from hydropower and 33% from nuclear energy. The remainder came from conventional thermal power plants (4%) and various renewable sources (5%), such as biogas, as well as solar and wind energy.

## Renewable energies

Share of renewable energies in gross energy consumption



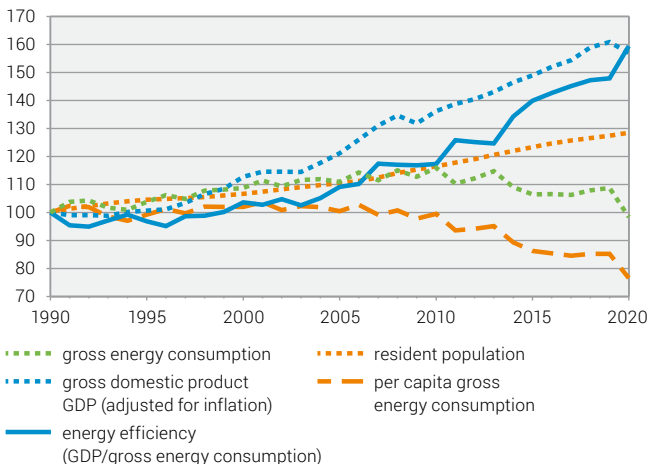
Source: SFOE – Renewable energy statistics

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In 2020, 24.5% of gross energy consumption came from renewable sources. 60% of renewable energies were obtained from hydropower, followed by wood with 18% and energy generation from renewable waste with 11%. Ambient heat (7.6%), solar energy (4.9%), biofuel (3.0%), biogas (2.3%), and wind energy (0.2%) were involved to a lesser extent in the production of energy. Between 1990 and 2020 the consumption of renewable energies rose by 64%, a greater increase than that seen for total energy consumption which even fell by nearly 2% in the same period.

## Energy efficiency

Index 1990=100



Sources: SFOE – Overall energy statistics; FSO – SNA, ESPOP/STATPOP

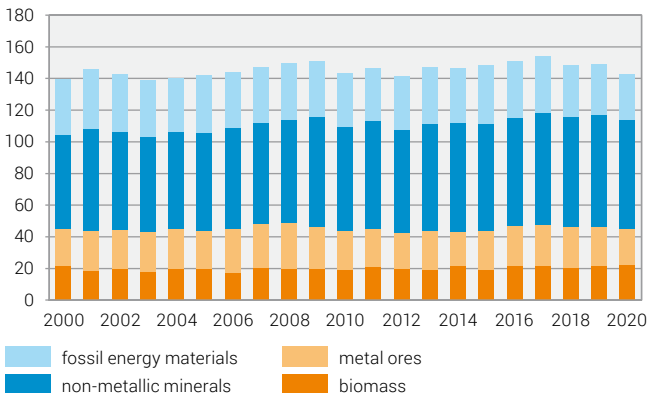
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Since 1990, both the gross domestic product (GDP) and the resident population have grown more considerably than gross energy consumption: In 2020, less energy had to be used to generate one Swiss franc and less energy was used per capita than in 1990. However, this does not include so-called “grey energy”, i. e. the energy that has been used abroad for the production and transport of imported products.

## Material footprint

Raw material consumption (RMC)<sup>1</sup>

Million tonnes



<sup>1</sup> modelling estimates

2020: provisional

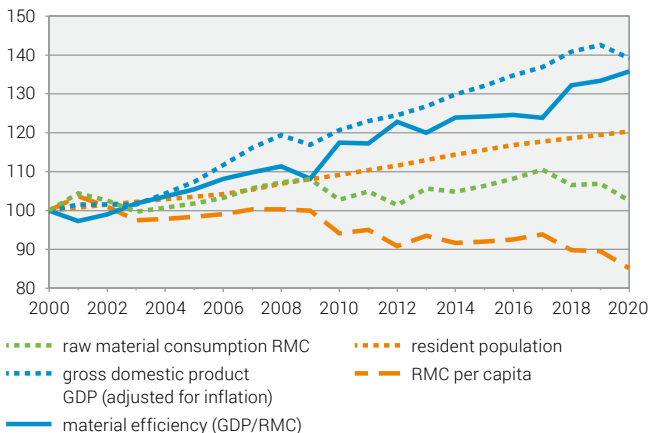
Source: FSO – Environmental accounting

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Since 2000 Switzerland's material footprint – measured by domestic raw material consumption (RMC) – has risen by approximately 2%. This corresponds to the amount of raw materials extracted in Switzerland or abroad to meet Swiss final demand. In 2020, the material footprint was 143 million tonnes. Over this period raw material extracted in Switzerland accounted on average for 41% of the footprint. Expressed in tonnes of raw material, imports increased by 9% between 2000 and 2020.

## Material efficiency

Index 2000=100



Source: FSO – Environmental accounting, SNA, ESPOP/STATPOP

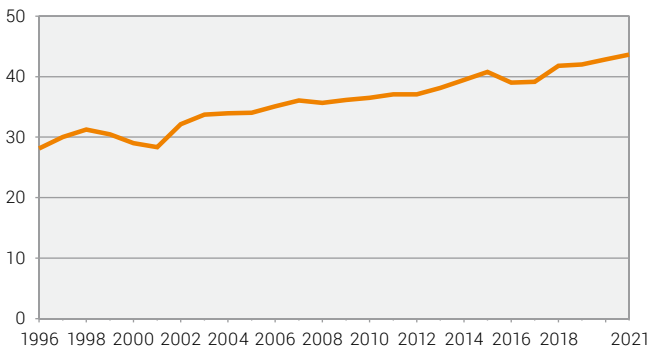
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Switzerland's raw material consumption (RMC) or material footprint was around 16 tonnes per capita in 2020 and was therefore lower than the level measured in 2000. However, the gross domestic product (GDP) has increased more than material consumption since 2000: This means that in 2020, a higher value added was attained per material amount used than in 2000.

## Pollination in agriculture

Farmland for which pollination by animals contributes to production

Thousand hectares



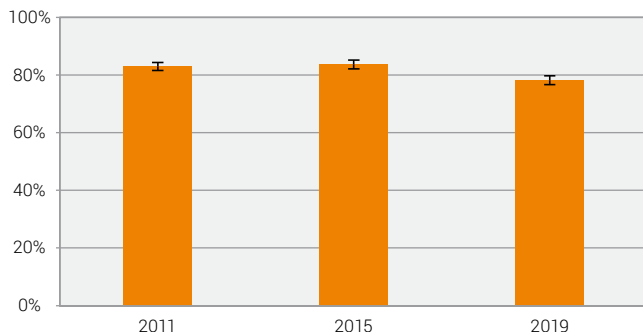
Source: FSO

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In 2021, around 44 000 hectares of cultivated area benefited from pollination by animals, corresponding to 4% of utilised agricultural area and 15% of arable and perennial crop areas. Particularly in the case of fruit or berries, but also rapeseed and sunflowers, production is stimulated by pollinators. The remaining arable land is used mainly for cereal crops whose pollination takes place by the wind.

## Leisure time of the population that is spent outdoors

Share of the population that spends time outdoors at least once a week



2019: series break due to a change of method

Source: FSO – Omnibus surveys 2011, 2015 & 2019

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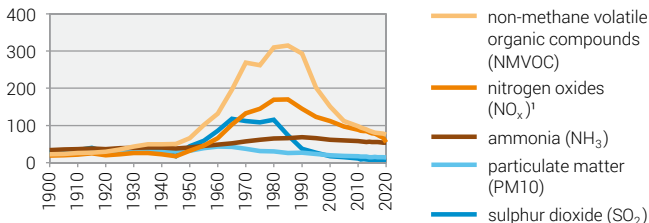
In 2019, 39% of the Swiss population indicated that they spent their leisure time outdoors, every day or almost every day. Another 39% do this at least once a week. Only 6% of the population says they spend their leisure time outdoors less than once per month.

## 2 Emissions and waste

Human activities generate waste and other emissions that enter the air, soil or watercourses. The higher the emissions, the greater the impact on the environment.

### Emissions of air pollutants

Thousand tonnes



<sup>1</sup> NO<sub>x</sub> comprises NO and NO<sub>2</sub>. Emission values are given in NO<sub>2</sub>.

Source: FOEN – EMIS

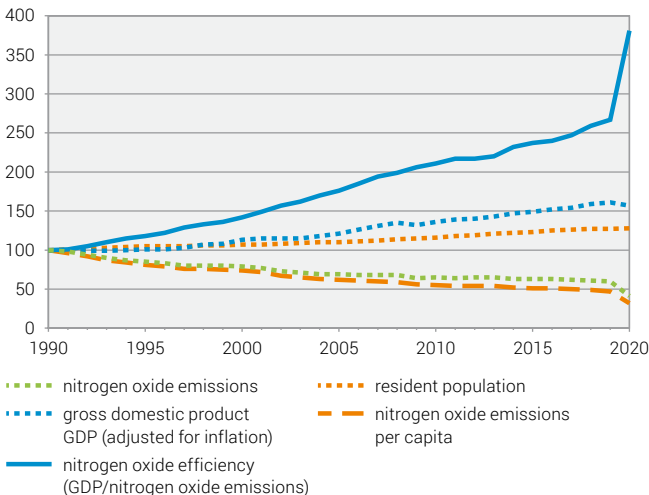
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Nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) are released during the combustion of fuels, with motorised transport being the main source. NO<sub>x</sub> and volatile organic compounds (NMVOC) are precursors for the formation of ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and particulate matter. NO<sub>x</sub> together with ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) lead to the acidification and the over-fertilisation of natural ecosystems such as fens and forests. Emissions of most air pollutants in Switzerland have decreased since the 1990s.



## Nitrogen oxide efficiency

Index 1990=100



Sources: FOEN – EMIS; FSO – SNA, ESPOP/STATPOP

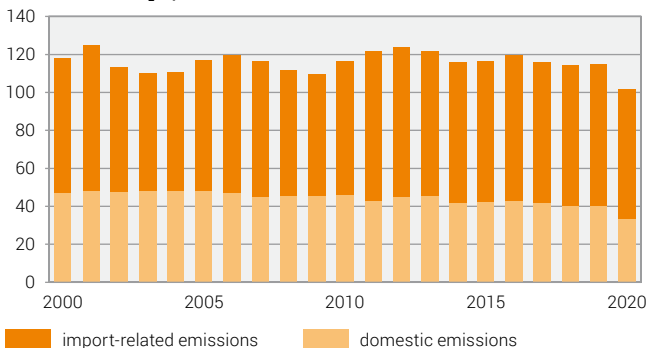
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Although the gross domestic product (GDP) has grown since 1990, nitrogen oxide ( $\text{NO}_x$ ) emissions have fallen – particularly markedly in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic – so that nitrogen oxide efficiency has increased. This means that in 2020, less  $\text{NO}_x$  was emitted per Swiss franc generated than in previous years. The resident population also increased between 1990 and 2020. Consequently, less  $\text{NO}_x$  is released per capita today than several years ago.

## Greenhouse gas footprint

Greenhouse gas emissions due to final domestic demand

Million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents



2020: provisional

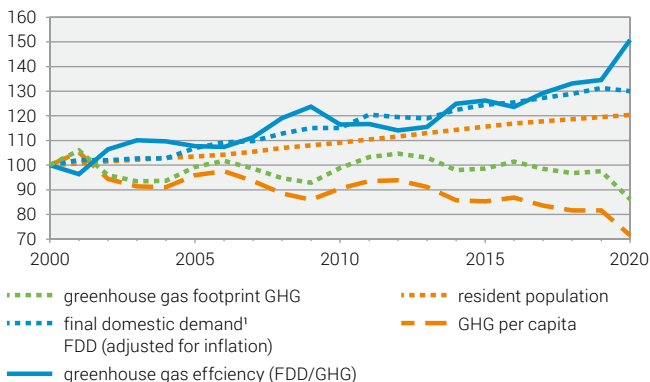
Source: FSO – Environmental accounting

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Due to greenhouse gas emissions, humans intensify the natural greenhouse effect and influence the climate in this way. The majority of these greenhouse gas emissions come from the burning of fossil energy carriers. The greenhouse gas footprint corresponds to the total greenhouse gas emissions caused in Switzerland and abroad to cover final domestic demand. In 2020, Switzerland's greenhouse gas footprint was 103 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents, 66% of which was emitted abroad.

## Greenhouse gas efficiency

Index 2000 = 100



<sup>1</sup> aggregate of final consumption expenditure and gross capital formation

Source: FSO – Environmental accounting, SNA, ESPOP/STATPOP

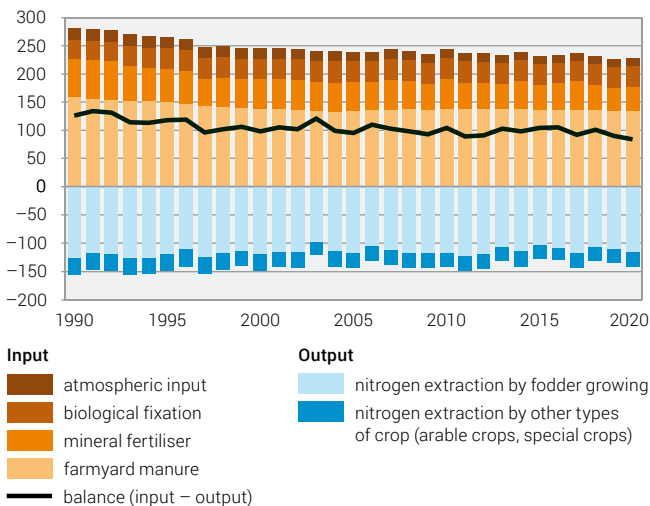
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Greenhouse gas efficiency is the ratio of final domestic demand to the greenhouse gas footprint. Final domestic demand is the aggregate of private household and government consumption expenditure as well as gross capital formation and changes in inventories. As this has risen since 2000, and the greenhouse gas footprint has remained fairly stable, the result has been an increase in greenhouse gas efficiency. The resident population has also grown since then; consequently the greenhouse gas footprint per person has declined. In 2020 it was 11.9 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents.

## Nitrogen balance of agricultural areas

Amounts of nitrogen entering agricultural soils or extracted from them

Thousand tonnes



Source: FSO – Environmental accounting

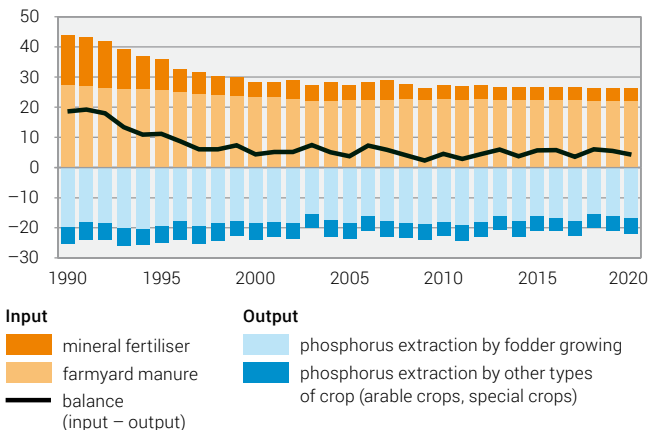
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Nitrogen (N) is used as a fertiliser in agriculture. From the excess amount, a part is released into the air as ammonia ( $\text{NH}_3$ ) and another part is leached as nitrate ( $\text{NO}_3$ ) into groundwater. In the last ten years, the nitrogen surplus of agricultural areas has been around 95 000 tonnes per year on average.

## Phosphorus balance of agricultural areas

Amounts of phosphorus entering agricultural soils or extracted from them

Thousand tonnes



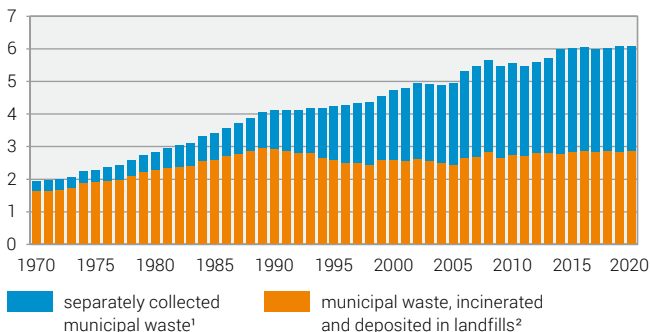
Source: FSO – Environmental accounting

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Phosphorus (P) is one of the main nutrients of plants and is used in agriculture as a fertiliser. Excess phosphorus can enter surface water through soils and stimulate algae and plant growth, particularly in lakes. When this biomass dies off and decomposes, there may be a shortage of oxygen and thus a disruption of the ecological balance. In the last ten years, excess phosphorus of agricultural areas has been around 5000 tonnes per year on average.

## Municipal waste

Million tonnes



<sup>1</sup> Total comprising compost, paper and cardboard, glass, tin, aluminium, PET, textiles, batteries (since 1993), electrical and electronic devices (since 2001)

<sup>2</sup> The figures from 2004 include only domestic waste without imports.

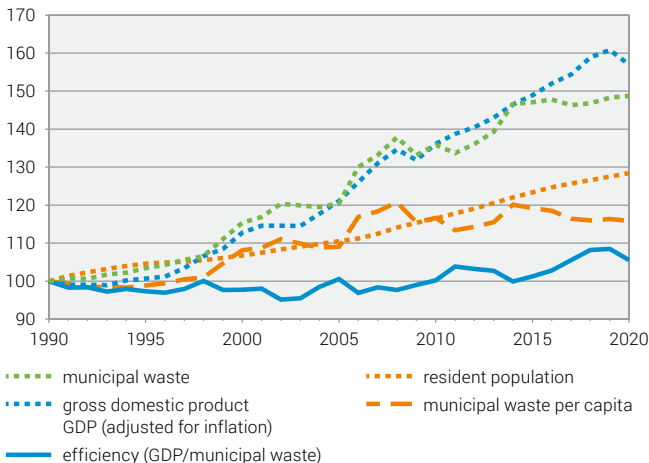
Source: FOEN

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In 2020, roughly 6.1 million tonnes of municipal waste was generated in Switzerland. Around 53% of this was separately collected and recycled. In 1990, the corresponding share was 29%. The remainder was burnt in waste incineration plants or (before 2005) burnt or land-filled. The heat generated by incineration is used for district heating or the production of electricity.

## Efficiency in municipal waste

Index 1990=100



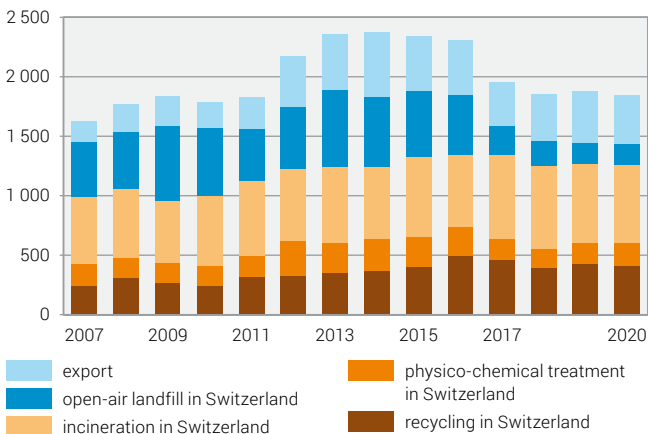
Sources: FOEN; FSO – SNA, ESPOP/STATPOP

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The increase in municipal waste since 1990 is roughly in line with the gross domestic product GDP: in 2020, roughly the same amount of waste per Swiss franc generated was caused as in 1990. However, municipal waste has increased more considerably than the resident population: in 2020, municipal waste per capita was 704 kg, nearly 100 kg more than in 1990. This does not, however, include waste that is generated abroad during the manufacture of imported goods.

## Hazardous waste

Thousand tonnes



Source: FOEN

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Hazardous waste requires special technical and organisational measures for disposal due to its composition and characteristics. Of the approximately 1.8 million tonnes of hazardous waste generated in Switzerland in 2020, 78% was recycled, treated, burned or landfilled, 22% was exported. The increase a few years ago is mainly due to contaminated matter excavated during the clean-up of brownfield sites.

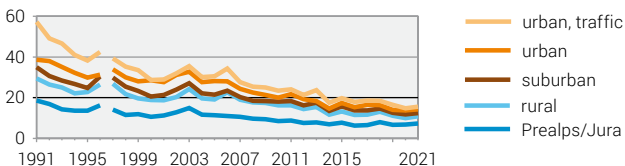


### 3 Environmental situation

The environmental situation is influenced by human activities among other things. In addition to the quality of air, water-courses, soils, ecosystems or landscapes, the supply of these resources is also of interest.

#### Concentration of particulate matter (PM10)

Annual mean in micrograms per cubic metre



Data prior to 1997 was collected by a different method.

Threshold limit (annual mean): 20 micrograms per cubic metre

Source: FOEN – NABEL

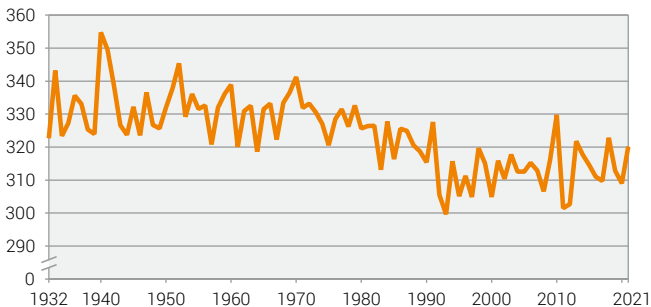
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Pollution from particulate matter (PM10) has declined in recent decades. The daily limit values are still occasionally exceeded in cities and along heavily used roads or during Saharan dust events. Particulate matter comes from combustion processes, mechanically due to abrasion and resuspension or is formed from precursors. Particulate matter can cause diseases of the respiratory tract and of the cardiovascular system and may also lead to an increase in the risk of cancer.

## Ozone layer

Total amount of ozone measured in the air column<sup>1</sup> (annual average values)

### Dobson units



<sup>1</sup> above Arosa (until 2020), above Davos (since 2021)

Source: MeteoSwiss

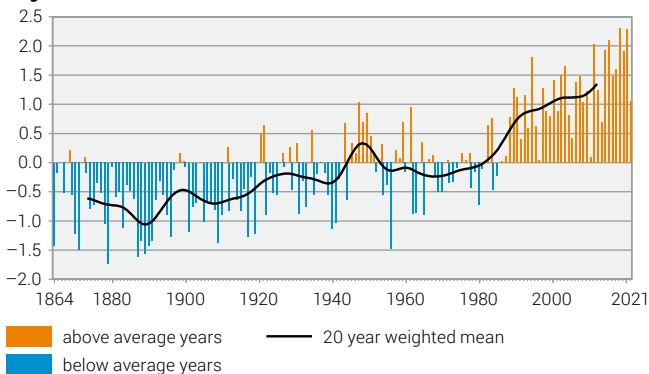
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The stratospheric ozone layer is found at an altitude from 20 to 40 km and protects the earth from UVB rays which can lead to skin damage and even skin cancer among humans. Various substances contribute to the depletion of the ozone layer. The implementation of the Montreal Protocol signed in 1987 for the protection of the ozone layer has been able to reduce the use of such substances. The overall concentration of substances which deplete the ozone-layer in the stratosphere has decreased since 1997.

## Mean annual temperature

Deviation from the long-term mean (1961 to 1990)

Degrees Celsius



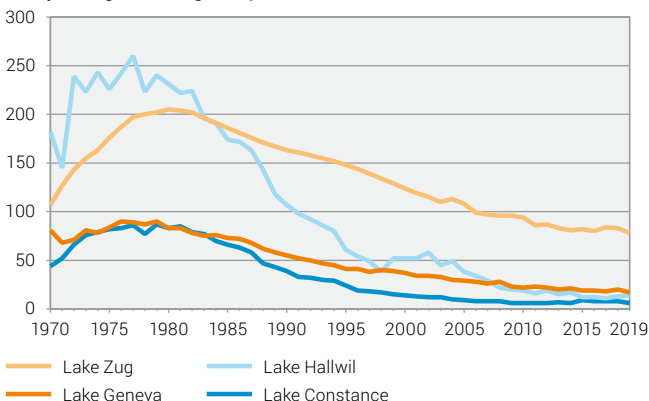
Source: MeteoSwiss

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The air temperature varies from year to year and is characterised by colder and warmer periods. Since the start of the 1990s, above average annual temperatures have been recorded in Switzerland: The six warmest years since the start of temperatures recordings in 1864 were all registered after 2010 and 2018 was the warmest year yet.

## Phosphorus levels in selected lakes

Yearly average in micrograms per litre



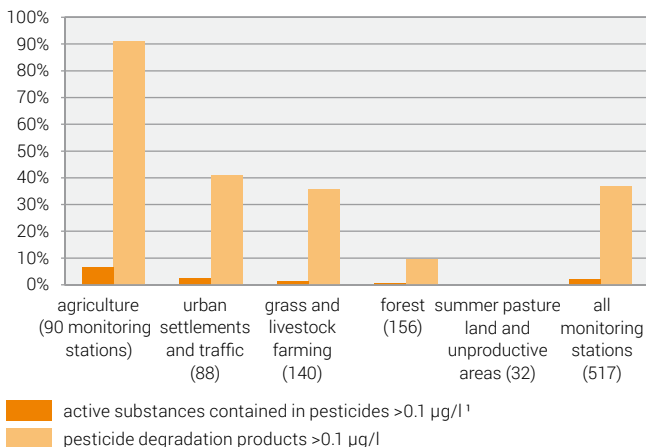
Source: FOEN – NAWA

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In particular, phosphorus (P) is used as a fertiliser whereby the excess accumulates in the soil. If the latter is subject to leaching, run-off or soil erosion, phosphorus is discharged into surface waters which can stimulate algae and plant growth, particularly in lakes. In the decomposition of this biomass, there may be a lack of oxygen, presenting a threat to fish and other creatures. In Switzerland, high concentrations of phosphorus are found notably in watercourses in catchment areas with intensive animal production.

## Pesticide residues in groundwater, 2020

Share of measuring stations with excessively high concentrations, by main land use



<sup>1</sup> value required by the Water Protection Ordinance (WPO)

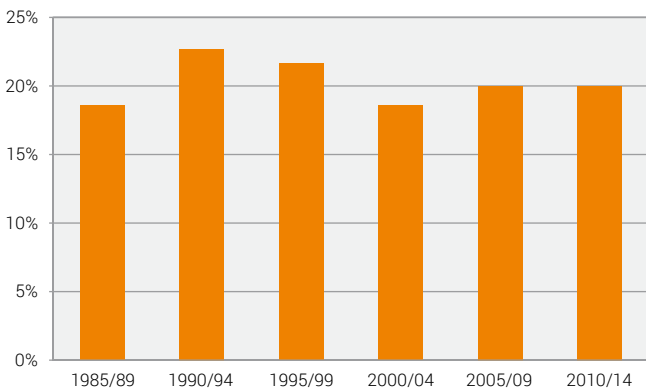
Source: FOEN – NAQUA

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Active substances contained in pesticides exceed the limit value of the Waters Protection Ordinance of 0.1 micrograms per litre at about 2% of groundwater measuring stations of the NAQUA National Groundwater Monitoring. This percentage has remained largely unchanged for over 10 years. Pesticide degradation products are found at one third of national measuring stations in this concentration. Particularly under arable land, pesticide residues are found in elevated concentrations.

## Heavy metal soil pollution

Percentage of 97 monitoring stations with at least one measurement above benchmark limits for lead, copper, cadmium or zinc



2010/14 includes the measurements at 53 sites from this survey period as well as the 2005/09 values for the remaining sites.

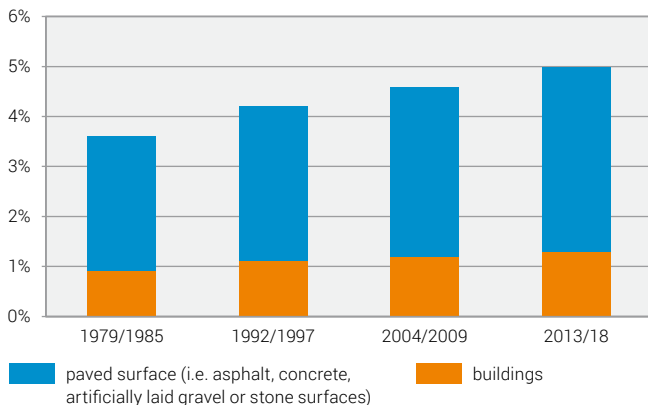
Source: FOEN/FOAG – NABO

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Pollutants, such as heavy metals and organic compounds which are difficult to break down, accumulate in the soil where they may obstruct important functions of the soil and enter the food chain through plants. During the survey period 2010 to 2014, the benchmark values were exceeded for at least one heavy metal in 20% of the soil samples tested.

## Soil sealing

Proportion of sealed areas as a percentage of total area



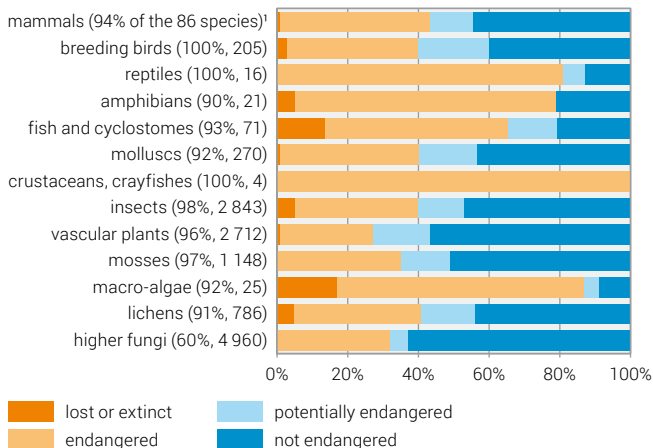
Source: FSO – Land use statistics

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Buildings and roads in particular are considered as sealed areas. Due to the sealing, the soil loses its natural ecological function as habitat, reservoir and filter as well as the ability to transform and degrade substances. In the space of 33 years, sealed soils have increased by 40% in Switzerland. According to latest figures, 5% of Switzerland's surface area is sealed.

## Endangered animals and plants (Red lists)

Status 1994 to 2022, depending on the species group



<sup>1</sup> Reading aid: The endangerment status was assessed for 94% of the 86 mammal species. Data are deficient for the remaining species.

Source: FOEN

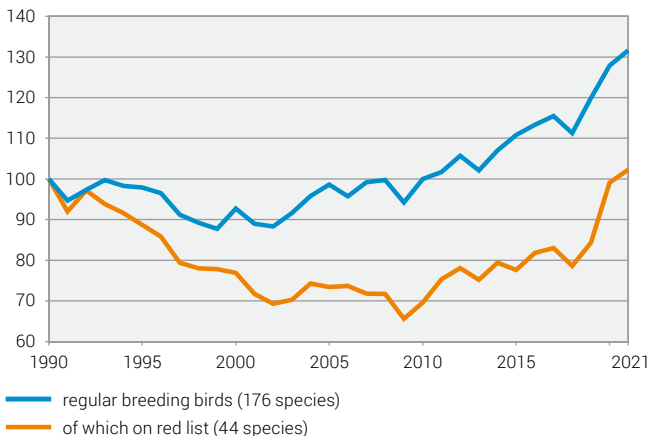
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There are around 56 000 known species of flora, fauna and fungi in Switzerland (excluding unicellular or oligocellular organisms). Of the 10 844 assessed species, 35% are on the red list, i.e. they are considered endangered, missing or extinct. At least 49 of the endangered animal and plant species in Switzerland are classified as endangered worldwide.



## Breeding birds – Swiss Bird Index®

Index 1990=100



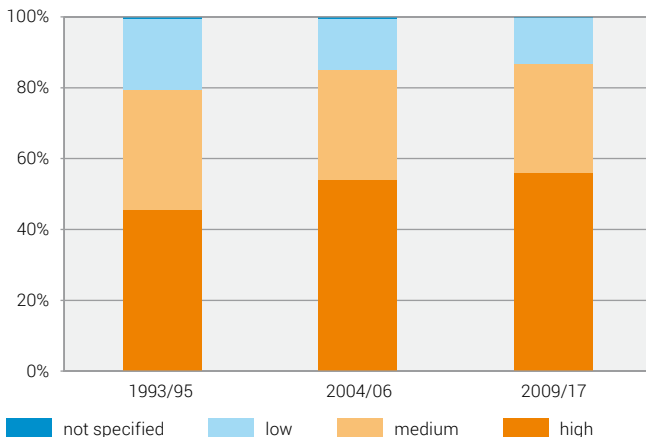
Source: Swiss Ornithological Institute Sempach

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The index of bird species that regularly breed in Switzerland (179 species, 176 of which can be evaluated) has increased since 1990. Having declined by around 35%, the index of the 44 endangered species on the red list has almost recovered the initial value of 1990. Since 1990, 12 of these endangered species have increased, 16 have decreased, 9 show no significant trend and 4 were no longer detected in 2021.

## Ecological quality of the forest

Part of the forest area with low, medium or high biotope value



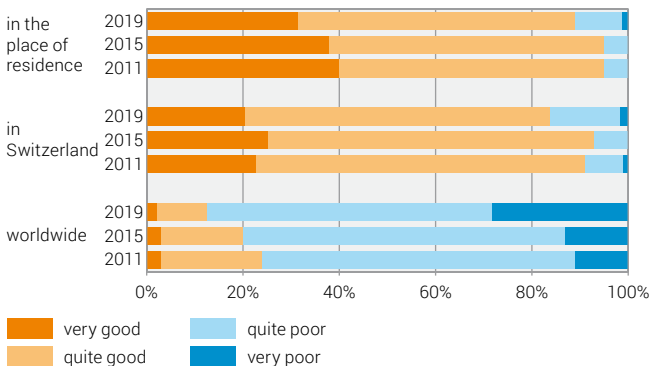
Source: WSL – NFI

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Around a third of Switzerland's surface area is currently covered by forest. Since the survey period 1993/95, the forest area has grown by around 7%. During the same period, the ecological quality of forests has improved: in 87% of forest areas, the biotope value today is rated medium to high. In other words, structural diversity, diversity of species and the closeness to nature of the tree population have increased.

## Assessment of the environmental quality by the resident population of Switzerland

Share of population



Source: FSO – Omnibus surveys 2011, 2015 & 2019

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In 2019, 89% of the population assessed the quality of the environment in their place of residence as very or quite good. Regarding the quality of the environment in Switzerland overall, 84% of the population had this opinion. Only 13% of the Swiss population considered environmental quality worldwide to be very good or quite good.

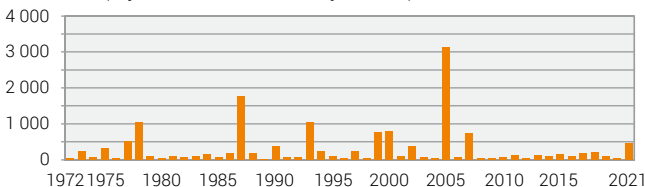
## 4 Effects on society

Environmental conditions can affect the quality of life and the health of the population and may also cause damage to infrastructure and buildings or generate other economic costs.

### Damage caused by natural events

Floods, debris flows, landslides and rockfall<sup>1</sup>

CHF million (adjusted for inflation, base year 2021)



<sup>1</sup> rockfall taken into account since 2002

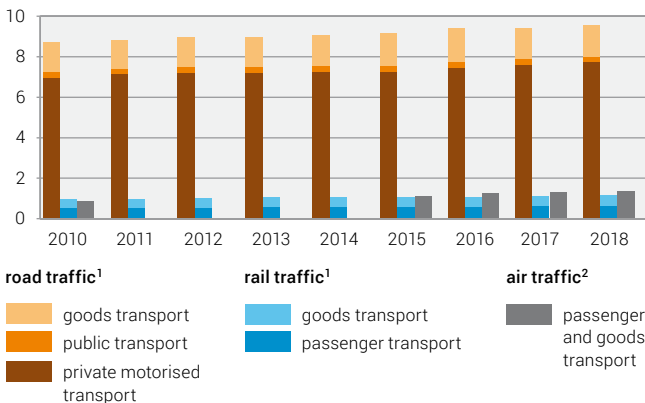
Source: WSL

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Humanity has always been confronted with natural hazards. However, due to the extension of settlement areas in regions at risk and rising property values, the potential damage from natural events is also increasing. Flooding, mudflows, landslides or rockfall are influenced, among other factors, by the climatic conditions.

## External costs of road, rail and air traffic

CHF billion



<sup>1</sup> Territoriality principle: traffic within Swiss borders

<sup>2</sup> Half distance principle: air traffic within Swiss borders and half distances from Switzerland to destinations abroad and vice versa

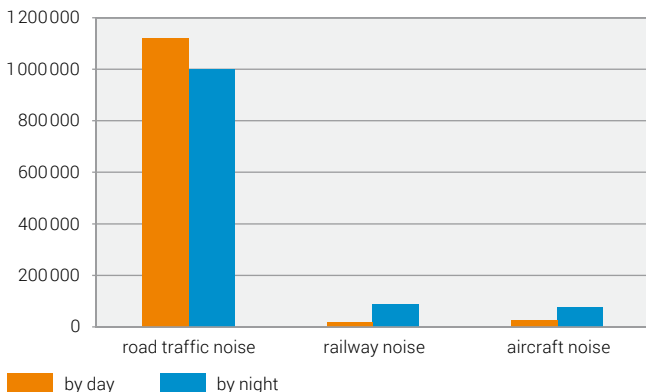
Sources: FSO; ARE

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External costs are not borne by those responsible but by third parties (often by the general public). In transport, these types of costs are usually incurred in the environmental and health sectors, e. g. due to air pollution, noise, climate effects or soil pollution. However, they are also found in costs relating to the damage or depreciation of buildings due to traffic. In 2018, the estimated external costs incurred in Switzerland were CHF 9.6 billion due to road traffic, CHF 1.1 billion due to rail traffic and CHF 1.4 billion due to air traffic.

## Persons affected by noise, 2015

Number of persons exposed to noise immissions over the legal limit



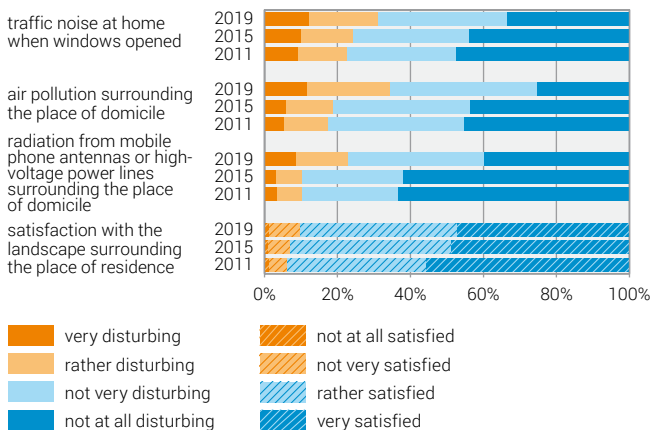
Source: FOEN

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Noise is annoying sound which in addition to its impact on health also has an economic and social dimension (e. g. depreciation of property, social segregation). The main source of noise pollution is road traffic. In 2015, about every seventh person (13% of the Swiss population) was exposed during the day at their place of residence to traffic noise that exceeded the legal limit set by the Noise Abatement Ordinance.

## Perception of environmental conditions in the place of residence

Share of population



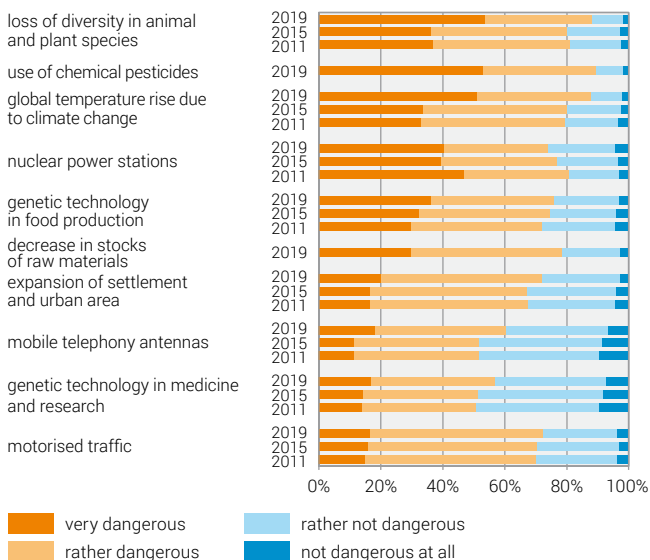
Source: FSO – Omnibus surveys 2011, 2015 & 2019

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In 2019, 31% of the population said they were very or rather disturbed by traffic noise at home, 34% by air pollution surrounding the house and 23% by radiation from high-voltage power lines or mobile phone antennas. 90% of the population were very or rather satisfied with the landscape surrounding their place of residence.

## Assessment of the danger for humans and the environment

Share of population



Source: FSO – Omnibus surveys 2011, 2015 & 2019

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While in 2015 36% considered the loss of biodiversity to be very dangerous, in 2019 54% were of this opinion. For climate change, this value rose over the same period from 34% to 51%. The use of chemical pesticides was also considered as very dangerous for humans and the environment by the majority (53%) of the population in 2019.

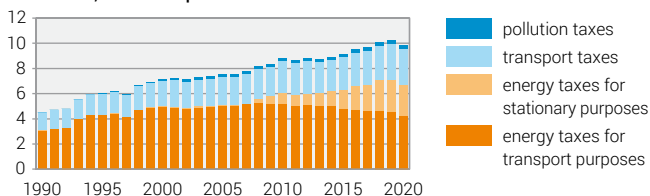


## 5 Reactions from society

Society can respond to modified environmental conditions, for example, by taking protective measures, creating incentives to reduce pollution or changing behaviour.

### Environmentally related taxes revenue

CHF billion, at current prices



2020: provisional

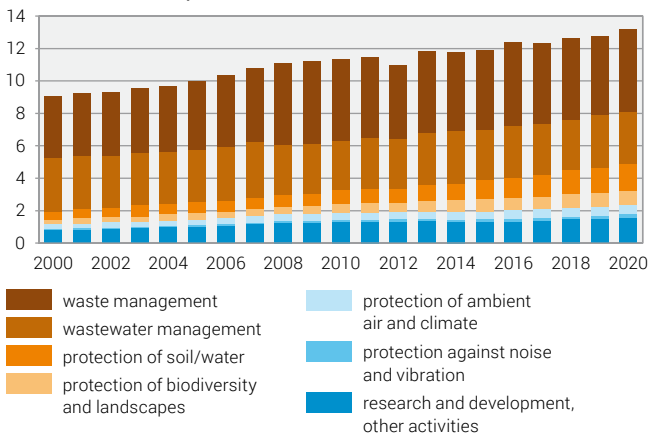
Source: FSO – Environmental accounting

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Taxes are considered as environmental if the taxed object demonstrably has negative effects on the environment, such as motor fuels, for example. The purpose for the introduction of the tax is irrelevant. In 2020, revenue from environmental taxes amounted to CHF 9.8 billion, corresponding to 1.4% of the gross domestic product (GDP) and 5% of the total revenue from taxes and social contributions. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, revenue from environmental taxes decreased by 3.9% compared with the previous year.

## National expenditure on environmental protection

CHF billion, at current prices



2020: provisional

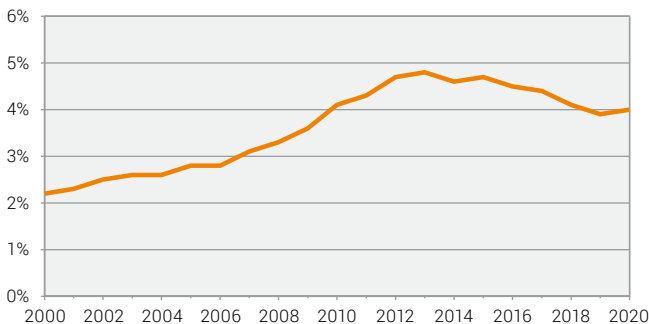
Source: FSO – Environmental accounting

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In 2020, environmental protection expenditure amounted to CHF 13.2 billion, corresponding to an increase of 46% since 2000 (at current prices). During this period, its share of GDP fluctuated between 1.7% and 2%. In 2020, it was 1.9%. Environmental protection expenditure corresponds to the financial outlay of households, businesses and public administrations for the prevention, reduction and elimination of pollution or other damage to the environment, with the majority of this being used for wastewater and waste management.

## Employees of the environmental sector

Share of total employment



2020: provisional

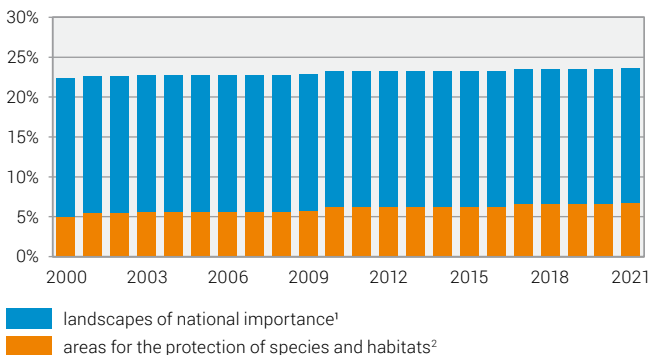
Source: FSO – Environmental accounting, STATENT

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Between 2000 and 2020, employment in the environment sector more than doubled, with the number of full-time equivalents rising from 77 400 to 164 000. This development was due in particular to activities linked with energy-saving measures in the construction of buildings and the production of renewable energy. Overall employment saw growth of around 20% over the same period. Accordingly, the share of the environment sector in total employment increased from 2.2% to 4%. The decline in employment in the environmental sector over the past few years is largely a result of the decrease in activities linked with the construction of certified low energy consumption buildings.

## Protected areas of national importance

Share of national territory (areas with multiple protection counted only once)



<sup>1</sup> landscapes and natural monuments of national importance and moorland that do not come under the areas described in 2

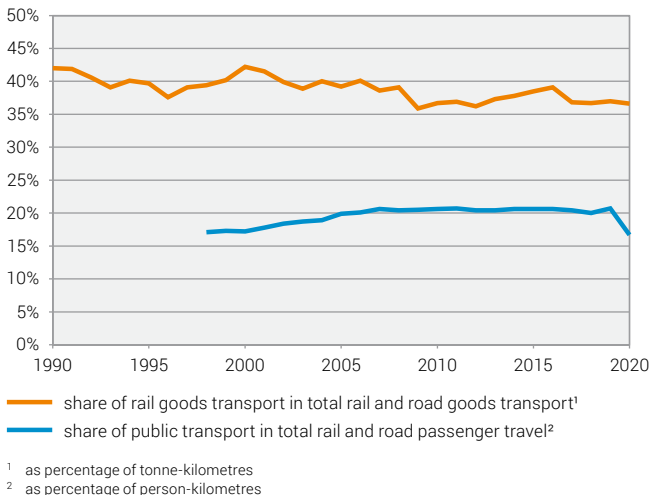
<sup>2</sup> national park, core zone of parks, raised bogs and fenlands, alluvial zones, amphibian breeding areas, dry meadows and pastures, water and migratory bird sanctuaries, federal game reserves

Source: FOEN

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Areas of national importance for the protection of biodiversity and the landscape together cover just under 24% of Switzerland's surface area. 7% are areas that primarily benefit the protection of species and habitats.

## Modal split in passenger and goods transport

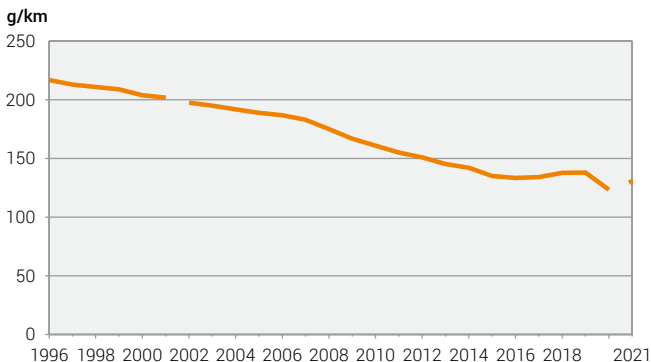


Source: FSO

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The transport performance of goods transport has roughly remained constant since the mid-2000s. The development of passenger transport has, however, been rather different: its transport performance increased year by year from 1995 until it declined again for the first time in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. After a period of stagnation, the share of public transport in passenger transport also decreased in 2020. In 2020, it amounted to 17%. In goods transport, the share by rail stabilised from 2009. In 2020, it was 37%.

## Average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from new passenger cars



Method change 2002 and 2021

In line with the CO<sub>2</sub> Act, average emissions should have been reduced to 130 g/km by 2015, which has not happened. The new aim from 2020 is 95 g/km.

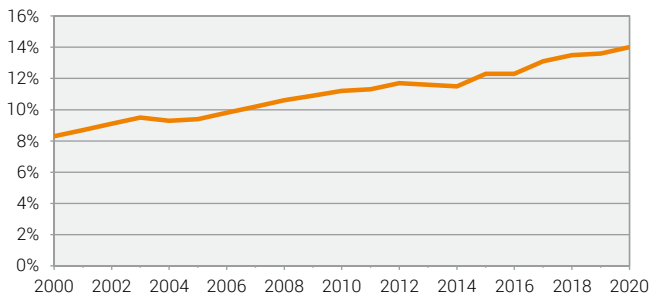
Source: SFOE

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According to test-bench measurements, average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from new passenger cars fell between 1996 and 2021 by 40% and in 2021 were 130 g per kilometre. However, the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from all passenger cars decreased by 7.3% between 1996 and 2020. This difference is due to the inclusion of older passenger cars, the increase in traffic volume as well as the growing gap between test-bench measured CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and those actually arising in road traffic. On average this gap was 13% in 2005. By 2015 it had risen to 41%.

## Circular material use rate<sup>1</sup>

Share of waste recovery streams in total material consumption



<sup>1</sup> estimates

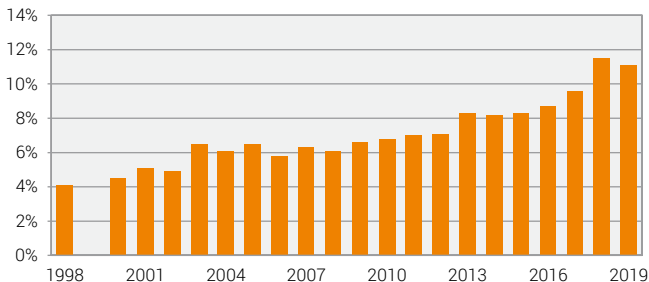
Source: FSO – Environmental accounting

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In a circular economy, materials are kept in use for as long as possible and raw material consumption, waste and other emissions are minimised in this way. Since 2000, the circular material use rate has steadily increased and was around 14% in 2020. Minerals accounted for the highest share of recovered material at 71%. Biomass made up 17%, metals 10% and fossil energy carriers 2%. Even if all waste could be recovered, it would only cover one-fifth of our current material needs.

## Consumption of organic products

Share of private household expenditure on products with an organic label out of the total expenditure for food and drink



Source: FSO – HBS

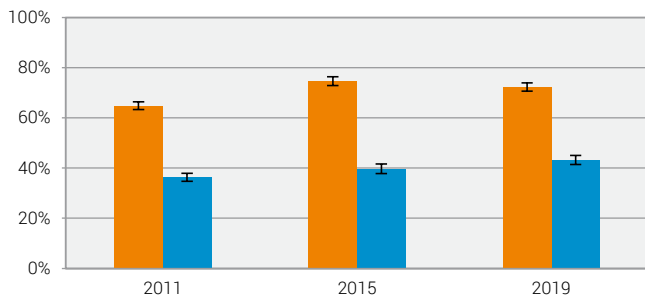
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Products that are produced in accordance with the ordinance on organic farming are labelled as organic. Among other things, the principles apply that no chemical-synthetic pesticides and no genetically modified organisms are used and that livestock are kept according to specific regulations. In 2019, 11.1% of the total expenditure on food and drink was spent on organic products.



## Environmental behaviour in everyday life

Share of population



consideration, always or often, of energy consumption when buying small electrical devices

consumption, always or often, of food from organic production

2019: series break due to a change of method

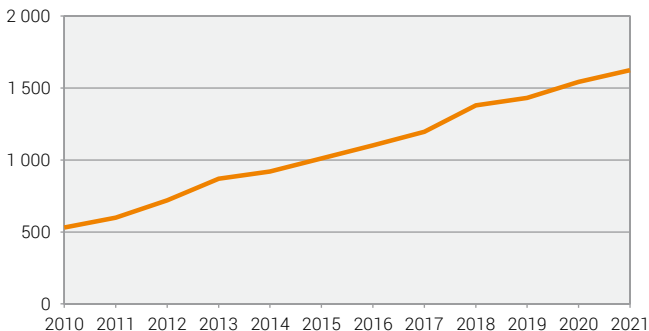
Source: FSO – Omnibus surveys 2011, 2015 & 2019

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In 2019, 72% of the population always or often paid attention to electricity consumption when buying small electrical devices or lamps. This value is at the same level as it was in the last survey four years ago. In food consumption, the trend for more organic products continued in 2019: Although the share of people who claimed to buy organic products always or often in 2019 was not significantly higher than in 2015, the share of people who rarely or never did so declined.

## Remediation of contaminated sites

Number of remediated sites



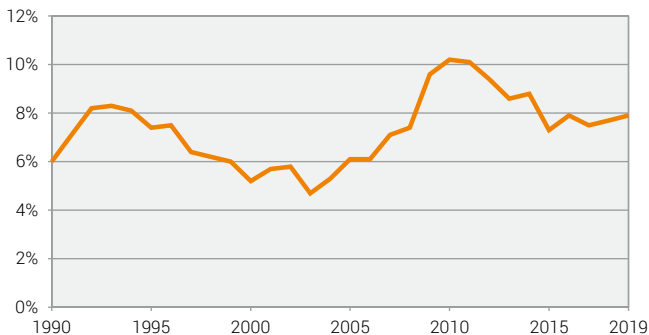
Source: FOEN

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Contaminated sites are polluted sites (factories, shooting grounds, landfills, accidents) that have been proven to cause a harmful impact on the environment (groundwater and surface waters, soil, air) and thus pose a risk to human health, animals and plants. There are around 4000 contaminated sites in Switzerland, with around 40% of these sites having been cleaned up by the end of 2021. In addition, there are around 34 000 other polluted sites throughout Switzerland, but these have no harmful or noxious impacts on humans or the environment and therefore do not need to be cleaned up.

## Environment-related patents

Share of environment-related patents of the total number of patents filed by Swiss inventors



Source: OECD

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In 2019, 297 environment-related patents were filed by Swiss inventors. As a percentage of all filed patents, this corresponds to a share of 7.9%. Environment-related patents include innovations in the sectors of renewable energy production, energy efficiency, environmental management and emission-reducing technologies.

## International comparison

	AUT	BEL	CH	DEU	DNK	ESP
Share of forest areas, 2019	47.2%	22.8%	32.0%	32.7%	15.7%	37.2%
Share of organic farming area in total utilised agricultural area, 2020	25.3% <sup>3</sup>	7.3%	17.0%	9.6%	11.5%	10.0%
Gross energy consumption, 2020 (t oil equivalent/person)	3.6	4.5	2.8	3.4	2.7	2.4
Share of renewable energies in gross energy consumption, 2020	32.6%	9.6%	24.5%	16.5%	39.1%	17.1%
Emissions of greenhouse gases, 2019 (t/person)	9.3	10.6	6.1	10.1	8.1	7.1
Domestic material consumption (DMC), 2020 (t/person)	19.1	13.3	10.5	13.3	23.9	9.0
Household waste, 2020 (kg/person)	588 <sup>3</sup>	416	706	632	845	455
Share of separately collected municipal waste (recycling and compost), 2020	58.2% <sup>3</sup>	54.2%	52.8%	67.0%	53.9%	36.4%
Average CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from new passenger cars, 2020 (g/km)	113	108	124	114	95	112
Share of environmental taxes in total tax and social contribution revenue, 2020	5.0%	5.8%	5.0%	4.3%	6.8%	4.7%
Threatened bird species as percentage of all known bird species <sup>2</sup>	29%	28%	35%	34%	35%	10%
Share of environment-related patents of the total number of patents filed, 2019	14.0%	8.4%	7.9%	13.3%	22.0%	10.9%

<sup>1</sup> composition of the EU according to data status

<sup>2</sup> latest data available

<sup>3</sup> status 2019

Sources: FSO; Eurostat; OECD

FIN	FRA	GBR	GRC	IRL	ITA	LUX	NLD	PRT	SWE	EU <sup>1</sup>
73.7%	31.4%	13.2%	30.3%	11.3%	32.2%	34.5%	10.9%	36.2%	68.7%	...
13.9%	8.7%	2.6% <sup>3</sup>	10.2%	1.7%	16.0%	4.6%	4.0%	8.1%	20.3%	9.1%
5.8	3.3	2.7 <sup>3</sup>	1.9	2.7	2.4	6.2	4.1	2.1	4.4	3.0
37.4%	12.8%	12.0% <sup>3</sup>	16.4%	12.9%	20.7%	10.0%	9.4%	29.8%	51.3%	17.9%
10.1	6.8	7.3	8.4	12.8	7.2	20.3	11.1	6.6	5.2	8.2
33.1	10.3	8.5 <sup>3</sup>	9.3	22.4	7.7	21.6	8.0	16.3	24.6	13.5
596	535	463 <sup>4</sup>	524 <sup>3</sup>	555	503 <sup>3</sup>	790	534	513	431	505
41.6%	42.2%	44.1% <sup>4</sup>	21.0% <sup>3</sup>	40.4%	51.4% <sup>3</sup>	52.8%	56.8%	26.5%	38.3%	47.8%
100	99	112	107	106	109	120	82	98	93	108
6.5%	4.8%	...	9.7%	6.0%	7.1%	3.6%	8.0%	6.8%	4.7%	5.6%
34%	27%	17%	14%	27%	24%	20%	24%	28%	21%	...
13.0%	12.5%	11.3%	7.1%	6.3%	9.6%	10.2%	9.5%	6.7%	12.2%	11.9%

<sup>4</sup> status 2018

## Glossary

**Biodiversity** Biodiversity spans the various species of animals, plants, fungi and bacteria, genetic diversity within the species and the different habitats in which the species live.

**CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalents** Emissions of greenhouse gas emissions other than CO<sub>2</sub> (CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O, HFKW, PFKW and SF<sub>6</sub> and NF<sub>3</sub>) are converted into CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalents according to their global warming potential (GWP) to ensure better comparability. 1 kg CH<sub>4</sub> corresponds to 25 kg CO<sub>2</sub>, 1 kg N<sub>2</sub>O corresponds to 298 kg CO<sub>2</sub>.

**Eco-efficiency** Measure for the economic performance (e. g. GDP) in relation to the environmental impacts (e. g. the resources used or the emissions released).

**Emissions** The release of pollutants, noise or radiation from natural sources or by humans into the environment.

**Energy carriers** Any substance which can be used to generate energy, whether directly or after transformation. Fossil energy carriers are all primary energy carriers which have come from organic substances in the soil (petroleum, natural gas, various hydrocarbons, coal etc.)

**Energy use** Corresponds to the gross energy consumption minus the electricity import/export balance.

**External costs** Costs incurred during production or consumption that are not borne by those responsible but a third party.

**GDP (Gross Domestic Product)** GDP is used for measuring a country's economic performance over a period of one year.

**Greenhouse effect** The greenhouse effect is a natural phenomenon. It originates from various gases in the atmosphere (water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide etc.) which reflect part of the heat radiation leaving the earth. An increase in the concentration of such greenhouse gases leads to the heating of the atmosphere.

**Greenhouse gases** Natural or man-made gaseous substances in the air which contribute to the greenhouse effect. The Kyoto Protocol considers the following greenhouse gases or groups of gases: carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulphur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>) and nitrogen trifluoride (NF<sub>3</sub>).

**Gross energy consumption** The gross energy consumption consists of the domestically produced primary energy, the foreign trade totals of various energy carriers as well as changes in stocks.

**Immissions** Levels of air pollutants, noise, vibration or radiation at their point of impact.

**Limit values** Limit values are used to evaluate harmful or noxious impacts. They consider the effects of emissions on the environment and more sensitive groups of people such as children, the sick, the elderly and pregnant women. Thresholds are defined in terms of air pollution, noise pollution, vibration and radiation.

**NMVOC (Non Methane Volatile Organic Compounds)** Volatile organic compounds that exclude methane and FCKW. They are precursors for the formation of ozone, summer smog and PM10.

**PM10 (Particulate Matter < 10 µm)** Dust particles with a diameter of less than 10 microns. These particles are caused by combustion processes, mechanically due to abrasion and resuspension or are formed from precursors. The main sources of PM10 are motorised transport, agriculture and forestry, industry and commerce (including construction sites).

**Renewable energy** Energy sources that are available for an unlimited period in principle. This includes the use of hydropower, solar energy, ambient heat, biomass, and wind energy, renewable energy from waste as well as energy from waste water treatment plants.

## Further information

### **Federal Statistical Office (FSO) website:**

[www.statistics.admin.ch](http://www.statistics.admin.ch) → Look for statistics → 02 – Territory and environment

### **Data relating to the graphs shown:**

[www.statistik.ch](http://www.statistik.ch) → Statistiken finden → 02 – Raum, Umwelt → Umweltindikatoren

### **NewsMail subscription:**

[www.statistik.ch](http://www.statistik.ch) → Dienstleistungen → NewsMail-Abonnement

**Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN):** [www.foen.admin.ch](http://www.foen.admin.ch)

**Swiss Federal Office of Energy (SFOE):** [www.sfoe.admin.ch](http://www.sfoe.admin.ch)

**MeteoSwiss:** [www.meteoswiss.ch](http://www.meteoswiss.ch)

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