The practice of protecting biodiversity in Switzerland on governmental and NGO levels

Situation, needs, activities

National conference on promoting biodiversity conservation
Budapest, November 6, 2012
Friedrich Wulf, Head, International Biodiversity Policy
Content

1) Switzerland –
   a. A few key facts about Switzerland
   b. History of nature conservation in Switzerland
   c. Present Challenges and Activities
   d. The role of NGOs - the example of Pro Natura

2) The Role of NBSAPs

3) On the road to adoption: the Swiss Biodiversity Strategy

4) On the road to implementation: Germany’s National Biodiversity Strategy

5) Challenges
Switzerland - some key facts

Swiss Confederation:
23 Cantons
41285 km²
7.9 Mio inh. (193/km²)

Old democratic tradition
Govt: 7 federal councillors
Parliament: 2 houses
Switzerland is NOT part of the EU (but surrounded by it)
Switzerland - some key facts

Swiss Confederation:
3 regions:
60% Alps
30% Central plateau (450/km²)
10% Jura

Alpine and Continental biogeographic region
Switzerland - some key facts

Swiss Confederation:
Lowest point:
Lago Maggiore (190m)
Highest Point:
Dufour Peak (4600m)

Landlocked,
rich in water
Situation and protection of biodiversity in Switzerland
Swiss landscape

Natural habitats
Situation in Switzerland

History:
- 1800s: many large animals extinct
- Swiss National Park (1909) - Starting point for Pro Natura
- Seat of IUCN (1950s); Pro Natura is founding member
- Reintroduction activities: Ibex, Lynx, Beaver (20th century)

Constitution (1999): Nature conservation is role of Cantons (Art. 78.1) but Confederation can Support
- Nature conservation law / NHG (1966)
- Rothenturm initiative (1987)
- 1990-2010: National inventories
- Right for popular initiatives important instrument
Peat bogs in Switzerland
Peat bogs in Switzerland
Peat bogs in Switzerland

- „Rothenthurm Initiative“ 1987 -> Peat bogs protected by national law, registered as federal inventory
- Development 1997 -> 2006:
  - minus 1/10 area
  - 1/4 drier
  - 1/3 increased in Nutrients
  - 1/3 more woody plants

![Pie charts showing changes in Feuchtezahl and Nährstoffzahl](chart.png)
Peat bogs in Switzerland
Present Situation in Switzerland

Overview:
• Red Lists: 36 % of species +- threatened (IUCN), return of large predators (lynx, wolf, bear) not accepted
• Habitat loss: 90% of floodplains and marshlands, 82% of peatlands and 95% of Dry grasslands lost since 1900
• Forest area increasing constantly since 19th century, Forestry law internationally acclaimed
• Intensification of Land use, pollution, removal of structures cause habitat and species decline
• Urban sprawl and infrastructure cause habitat destruction and fragmentation, especially in the Mittelland and valleys
• Only 54 % of Swiss water courses in near natural state (hydropower)
• Less than 10% of surface is protected, only one national park
Ex. 1: Agriculture

Oh, how nice! Really?
Ex. 1: Agriculture  

Flowers don’t lie...

Dombresson 2000  
© Ernest Gfeller

Dombresson 2010  
© Pro Natura / Nathalie Renevey
Die Situation der Brutvogelbestände im Kulturland ist nach wie vor kritisch.
Ex. 1: Agriculture Nitrogen loading in sensitive Ecosystems

Einheit: kg Stickstoff pro Hektar und Jahr

Quelle: BAFU/Meteotest 2010
Ex. 2: Landscape Swiss landscape is threatened by...

- Growing demands of the people
- A growing population (189 persons/km²)
- Settlements and traffic infrastructures
- Industrial agriculture
- Intensive tourism
Ex. 2: Landscape  Nearly 1 m²/second is being used

- 38% alpine pastures, mountains, lakes
- 31% wood
- 31% habitable surface

22% of the habitable surface is already used

Total surface of Switzerland = 41’285 km²
The federal popular initiative

*Space for Man and Nature* (‘Landscape Initiative’)

The Landscape Initiative wants to add to the Swiss Constitution:

- More federal competence in spatial planning
- Better protection of the arable land
- Urban development by densification
- The total surface of the zones for construction not to be enlarged for 20 years
- Public vote in March 2013
Ex. 3: protected areas status of the Protected areas
Ex. 3: protected areas status of the Protected areas

- Switzerland will be the First country to have official Emerald sites (November 2012)
- 37 areas = 1.6% of Switzerland; all are already otherwise protected
Role of NGOs - the work of Pro Natura
Who and what we are

- A private, non governmental organisation
- Founded in 1909
- 108’000 members (1.4% of the Swiss population)
- An idealistic organisation
- An enterprise with 120 staff, 1’200 volunteers
- Mainly funded by members and donations
- Organised on the cantonal, national and international level (IUCN, Friends of the Earth International)
What we want

„Natural diversity of species, habitats and landscapes is maintained or increased (...).
Where Man uses nature resources, it is in a careful and sustainable way.“

Pro Natura Vision
How we achieve our objectives

Nature conservation in the field

- We own, maintain or manage 735 nature reserves and protected landscapes
- Total surface of protected areas is 1’020 km², of which 60 km² are owned by Pro Natura
- We conserve and promote endangered species
How we achieve our objectives

Political nature conservation

- Lobbying, Consultations
- Popular Initiatives
- Right to go to Court
How we achieve our objectives

Environmental education

- Education Centers
- Youth groups
- School projects
- Children journal

Pro Natura Education Center Aletsch
How we achieve our objectives

Awareness Raising

- Campaigns
- Pro Natura Magazine
- Media work
- www.pronatura.ch
2. National Biodiversity Strategies

CBD Article 6: Parties shall, in accordance with national circumstances and possibilities:

- a) develop **national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs)** for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity
- b) **Integrate** this into sectoral policies and plans

- In 2007, ca. 140 out of 192 countries had a national biodiversity strategy
3. The Swiss Biodiversity Strategy

Government work plan for legislation period 2007-2011:

• “Development of a strategy for maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity”

• Overall target (2009): “Biodiversity is rich and able to adapt towards changes. Biodiversity and its Ecosystem services need to be maintained in the long term.”

• First efforts in 2009/10 failed due to insufficient internal support

• In October 2010, the CBD adopted the new strategic plan with the 20 Aichi targets
3. The Swiss Biodiversity Strategy

• Pro Natura, BirdLife CH and WWF commissioned expertise and made a list of necessary national measures to achieve the Aichi targets
  • New draft spring 2011
  • Stakeholder consultation Fall 2011
  • Adopted by Federal Council (Government) on April 25, 2012
  • Contains assessment of measures up to now - and is in line with the Aichi target 17
  • Main chapter: 10 strategic Targets, with description of challenges and action areas
3. The Swiss Biodiversity Strategy

The 10 targets:
1. Sustainable use (with 9 subtargets)
2. Ecological infrastructure
3. Improve Status of national priority species
4. Maintain and improve genetic diversity
5. Check financial incentives
6. Assess Ecosystem services
7. Generate and disseminate knowledge
8. Support biodiversity in urban areas
9. International Support
10. Monitor changes in Biodiversity
3. The Swiss Biodiversity Strategy

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Example:

• Target 2 (Ecological infrastructure):
  “To secure the space needed for the long-term conservation of biodiversity, an ecological infrastructure of protected areas and connectivity areas is established. The Status of threatened habitats is improved.”

• 😞 Quite general, few numbers and timeline
## 3. The Swiss Biodiversity Strategy

- Action Plan with 26 action areas - to be developed within 24 months after biodiversity strategy
- Stakeholder consultation process to start Nov. 9, 2012

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4. Germany’s National Biodiversity Strategy

- Main Implementation Instrument for the CBD in Germany
- Starting Point: Wilhelmshöhe talks (2005) with experts and stakeholders
- Consultation in 2007
- Adopted by Federal Government on November 7, 2007
4. Germany’s National Biodiversity Strategy

- Comprehensive
- Binding for the whole Federal Government
- 330 Qualitative targets and Action targets
- Targets are quantified (%s named etc.)
- Targets set for achievement (instantly - 2010 - 2015 - 2020)
- Clear Implementation process
- Involvement of as many different actors as possible
- Decade of Biodiversity
4. Germany’s National Biodiversity Strategy

- Some targets are very ambitious and go beyond the CBD strategic Plan, e.g.:
  - B 1.1.2 Species diversity:
  - By 2020, species for which Germany has a particular conservation responsibility will have achieved viable population sizes. By 2020, the threat situation will have improved by one level for most of the species on the Red List.
4. Germany: Indicator report

Assessments at regular intervals

The 19 indicators in the revised indicator set are arranged under five main headings:

• Components of biological diversity (7 indicators)
• Settlement and transport (2 indicators)
• Economic activities (8 indicators)
• Climate change (1 indicator)
• Public awareness (1 indicator).
4. Germany: Indicator report

**Increase in land use for settlement and transport**

- **Current value still very far from target range**
- **Statistically significant trend towards target**

**Thematic areas**
- B 2.7 Land use for settlement and transport
- C 9 Settlement and transport

**Definition**
Average increase in land use for settlement and transport in ha per day (four-year rolling average)

**Target**
The increase in land use for settlement and transport is to be reduced to an average of 30 ha per day by 2020.

**Core assessment**
The four-year running average fell from 129 ha per day in 2000 to 94 ha per day in 2009. Despite the positive trend, the current value is still very...
4. Germany: Other means for implementation

- National, regional and thematic conferences with all kinds of stakeholders
- «Decade of biodiversity project»: Awareness raising campaign with famous persons as «biodiversity ambassadors»
- Competition for projects which help to implement the Biodiversity strategy
UN-Dekade Biologische Vielfalt Newsticker

1. November 2012 - Aktuelles und Überblick
Liebe Freundinnen und Freunde der biologischen Vielfalt, Mal wieder macht eine
natürlich...

30. Oktober 2012 – Nina Ruge ist UN-Dekade-Botschafterin
Nina Ruge ist Verlechterin eines naturvertraglichen Lebensstils. Seit...

UN-Dekade Biologische Vielfalt von 2011 bis 2020

Die Vereinten Nationen haben die internationale UN-Dekade Biologische Vielfalt von
2011 bis 2020 ausgerufen. Die Dekade bietet auch die große Chance, mehr Menschen
für die Erhaltung der biologischen Vielfalt, unserer natürlichen Lebensgrundlage, zu
sensibilisieren.

Was bedeutet "Biologische Vielfalt" und warum brauchen wir sie?

Biologische Vielfalt ist alles, was zur Vielfalt der belebten Natur beiträgt: Arten von Tieren, Pflanzen, Pilzen und
Mikroorganismen – einschließlich der Wechselwirkungen
4. Germany’s National Biodiversity Strategy

Implementation Status March 2012
(according to German Environment Aid):

Of 330 Quality targets (QT) and Action Targets (AT):

- 15 QT / AT have reached their goal, implementation is completed or close to completion
- 60 QT / AT: Implementation is advanced
- 120 QT / AT Initiatives have been taken
- For 135 QT / AT, actions are still pending
5. Challenges

1) Implementation

2) Finance: Both the Swiss and the German Biodiversity strategy have no official cost estimates and are not national households

- Swiss NBSAP will be cost-estimated when Action plan is adopted
- Research estimates German NBSAP at 1 - 3.26 bn EUR per year