

Main points of the OECD report

Switzerland is one of the leading countries in the OECD in efforts to combat pollution (air, water, noise, waste). It should intensify its efforts due to the degradation of biodiversity and its agricultural and natural land and in order to honour its international commitments. In order to achieve sustainable management of the environment and natural resources, it needs to increase its use of economic instruments and analysis. It should reinforce the integration of environmental considerations in the energy, agriculture, transport, tourism and spatial planning sectors.

Detailed evaluation of the results

Concerning environmental management:

- Lowest emissions of sulphur and nitrogen oxide of all industrialised countries
- Good quality of drinking water. 97% of the population is connected to waste water infrastructure (70% in France, 92% in Germany, 71% in the USA)
- Advanced policies in waste management and noise abatement
- Good progress in sustainable forest management

Concerning sustainable development:

- Good progress in the application of the polluter-pays principle
- Increased use of economic instruments
- Economic benefits (health, tourism, eco-industry, agro-food)
- Agro-environmental measures in agriculture
- SwissEnergy programme and the environment/health plan

Concerning international cooperation:

- Very proactive attitude to international environmental issues
- Implementation of several international agreements
- Extensive cooperation with neighbouring regions and the EU

Detailed evaluation of scope for progress

Concerning environmental management:

- 'New' forms of atmospheric pollution, fine particulates, ozone
- Water basin management and management of aquatic ecosystems (renaturation of rivers, flood control, minimum flows)
- Need to halt the degradation of biodiversity; adoption of a national strategy
- Rapid loss of agricultural and natural land; reform of Spatial Planning Act
- Need to strengthen the network of protected spaces

Concerning sustainable development:

- Green tax reform (tax on fuels, stop to harmful subsidies)
- Reinforced application of the polluter-pays principle in the fields of climate (tax on CO₂), air pollution and traffic noise
- Development of more sustainable consumption patterns (land use, transport, leisure)

Concerning international cooperation

- Achieve its climate change commitments (CO₂ tax)
- Engage in ratification of the Aarhus Convention, Alpine Convention Protocols
- Strengthen the environmental dimension of development assistance