

# PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH TARGETS SET IN SWITZERLAND

ESTABLISHED IN 2017

IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 6.2 OF THE PROTOCOL



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office FSVO

Federal Office for the Environment FOEN

# Implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health in Switzerland

## Targets set in 2017 in accordance with Article 6.2

### Preamble

The Protocol on Water and Health aims at improving water management to reduce and prevent the spread of water-related diseases. Good management of the entire water cycle is vital to ensure that water intended for human consumption is of good quality and does not endanger the health of consumers.

The implementation of this Protocol, which was ratified by the Swiss Parliament in 2008 lies primarily in the responsibility of the Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office (FSVO) and the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN). These two bodies work closely together in this field and have established the targets referred to in article 6 paragraph 2 of the Protocol.

Most of these targets are linked to regular activities set out in the actual legislations. These activities are described in the Swiss Water Protection Act or in the Swiss Food Act. Consequently, many targets are linked to on-going activities with no corresponding deadlines. In some other cases, the activities have been declared as achieved (i.e. access to drinking water) or not relevant for Switzerland (i.e. aquaculture).

By publishing this document we assume to be in accordance with the requirements of the Protocol.



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### 1. Classification of targets and target achievement

The targets described in the following sections are set differently. The following classification applies:

Target (A): A target that was discussed and laid down definitively by the Federal offices and established on a legal basis.

Target (B): A target decided by the authorities but which will require the law to be amended. However, not all the steps associated with amending the corresponding act or ordinance (consultation process, referendum, possible vote) have yet been completed.

Target (C): A target proposed by an authority but which has not yet been discussed with all the stakeholders concerned.

## 2. National targets and targets achievement of Switzerland in respect of the Protocol on Water and Health

No.	Protocol ref. (art., para. and let.)	Subject	Defined target (classification)	Deadline	Responsibility	Target indicator
1	6.2 a	Quality of drinking water supply	Setting of national evaluations based on an optimal drinking water data management. (C).	1.1.2020	FSVO	National evaluation on drinking water
2	6.2 b	Reduction of the number and scale of outbreaks of water-related disease	Developing a reporting system for incidents and outbreaks of disease caused by water, in collaboration with the Reporting systems for infectious diseases (B)	1.1.2022	FSVO in collaboration with FOPH	Nb. of registered cases for drinking water
3	6.2 c	Access to drinking water	Creating emergency infrastructure to improve water supply in exceptional situations. Revision of the Ordinance on Safeguarding the Drinking Water Supply in Emergencies (B)	2019	FOEN	Approval of the new ordinance
4	6.2 d	Access to sanitation	97 % of the Swiss population is connected to a central Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP). No further targets	Target completed	FOEN	% of the Swiss population connected to a central Waste Water Treatment Plant
5	6.2 e	Levels of performance in water supply	Conserving the value of infrastructures (water supply network, catchment areas, reservoirs, laboratories) (A). Encouraging regional planning and cross-linking of water suppliers. (C)	On going	FOEN	Implementation of regional plans for water supply
6	6.2 e	Levels of performance in sanitation	In order to protect plants and animals in waters as well as in drinking water resources, the largest WWTPs, large WWTPs in the drainage basin of lakes and other WWTPs for waters that are polluted are to be upgraded with additional processes targeted at eradicating organic trace elements. (A) Ensuring the value of infrastructures is conserved (sewage system, sewage treatment plants) (B) Promoting the regionalisation of municipal drainage (C)	Long term task 2040  On going On going	FOEN	Nb of WWTPs upgraded  Not applicable Not applicable

No.	Protocol ref. (art., para. and let.)	Subject	Defined target (classification)	Deadline	Responsibility	Target indicator
7	6.2 f	Application of recognised good practice to the management of the water supply	Producing good practice guidelines in accordance with the HACCP-Concept defined in the art. 78 of the ordinance on food safety and utilities (A) Preparing and distributing drinking water in line with the detailed guidelines issued by the SGWA trade association, the FSVO and the FOEN (B)	2018 On going	FSVO	Nb of non-conformities during inspections of cantonal the DW-Inspectorates
8	6.2 f	Application of recognised good practice to the management of the water supply	In accordance with the Water Protection Act, allowing over-extraction of groundwater resources to occur for limited periods only (A) Implementation of the recommendation for strategic planning of the water supply, published by the SGWA. (A) Phasing out the water protection areas and groundwater protection zones as defined in the water protection legislation and the FOEN implementation aids in order to protect the quality and quantity of the groundwater, while systematically enforcing the restrictions on use within the groundwater protection zones and areas in accordance with the Water Protection Ordinance and, where applicable, far-reaching regulations for groundwater protection zones (enforcement of groundwater protection planning). (A) Safeguarding groundwater reserves for future water requirements. The cantons designate appropriate groundwater protection areas (future reserves) to safeguard the water supply for future generations (A) Sustainable agricultural production; conserving natural resources. (A)	On going On going On going	FOEN	Not applicable Not applicable Not applicable
9	6.2 f	Application of recognised good practice to the management of sanitation	Recognised practice for communal sanitation is defined in, and ensured by, the FOEN recommendations and Swiss Water Association (VSA) guidelines. For industrial wastewater, the latest technology according to the Water Protection Ordinance and the decisions and recommendations of international water protection commissions apply (A) Draining the total sealed surface area in housing areas	On going Completed	FOEN	Not applicable Not applicable Recommendations published Not applicable

No.	Protocol ref. (art., para. and let.)	Subject	Defined target (classification)	Deadline	Responsibility	Target indicator
			according to GDPs (A)	On going		
10	6.2 g (i)	Discharges of untreated wastewater	Not allowing contaminated wastewater to be discharged untreated or allowed to leach into water bodies in Switzerland (A)	On going	FOEN	Not applicable
11	6.2 g (ii)	Storm water	Putting appropriate measures in place to prevent direct infiltration of agricultural pesticides and nutrients in runoff from farmyards and open fields and from drainage systems. (A) Carrying out a data survey of untreated storm water overflows (C)	2023 2021	FOAG FOEN	Implementation of the national pesticide action plan Completed by 2021
12	6.2 h	Quality of discharges from treatment plants	100 % of wastewater treatment plants fulfilling the requirements for discharges of communal wastewater specified in the Water Protection Ordinance. Treating industrial wastewater according to the latest technology (A) Optimising central data capture with respect to wastewater treatment at federal level. (B)	On going 2021	FOEN	Not applicable Not applicable
13	6.2 i, first part	Disposal or reuse of sewage sludge	The agricultural use of sewage sludge has been banned in Switzerland since 2008	None	FOEN	Not applicable
14	6.2 i, second part	Quality of waste water used for irrigation purposes	According to Art. 7 of the Water Protection Act (GSchG) and Art. 8 of the Water Protection Ordinance (GSchV), contaminated wastewater may not be used for irrigation purposes in Switzerland. Therefore no targets are set in this regard	None	FOEN	Not applicable
15	6.2 j, first part	Quality of waters used as sources for drinking water	The quality of groundwater used or intended for use as drinking water meets the requirements of Annex 2 GSchV (A) Reducing the nitrate levels in groundwater (projects according to Article 62a GSchG) (A) Improving water protection enforcement: increasing information and supervision (B) Fulfilling the quality requirements of the Water Protection Ordinance, Annex 2 (A)	On going On going On going On going	FOEN	Not applicable

No.	Protocol ref. (art., para. and let.)	Subject	Defined target (classification)	Deadline	Responsibility	Target indicator
			Comprehensively recording surface water quality in Switzerland by means of the harmonised "Methods for assessing the ecological status of rivers" and by corresponding methods for the lakes (A)	2022		Not applicable
16	6.2 j, second part	Quality of waters used for bathing (rivers and lake)	Revising the existing recommendation on recording and assessing the quality of the water in bathing lakes and rivers, in line with EU Directive 2006/7/EC (B)	Earliest 2024	FOEN	Not applicable
17	6.2 j, third part	Quality of waters used for aquacultures	Since no significant aquacultures exist in Switzerland, no targets are set for this parameter.	None	FOEN	Not applicable
18	6.2 k	Application of recognised practice to the management of enclosed waters used for bathing	Lay down a Swiss Bathing Water Ordinance at national level (A).	2018	SFVO	Adoption of the new legislation
19	6.2 l	Identification and remediation of particularly contaminated sites	Recording, investigating and remediating contaminated sites. The cantons fulfil their obligations in accordance with the Ordinance on Contaminated Sites concerning local pollutants that could jeopardise waters, soil and air (A)	2007 2025 2040	FOEN	All the polluted sites are registered Investigations of the sites are finished Remediation are finished
20	6.2 m	Effectiveness of systems for managing, developing, protecting and using water resources	The federal government promotes integrated river basin management (A) Transforming some of the heavily engineered waters into as natural a condition as possible within a few generations, and defining an adequate area for all waters which may only be managed extensively as an ecological compensation area (biodiversity promotion area from 2014). In addition, eliminating the negative effects on waters of hydroelectric power generation (hydropeaking, bed-load balance, accessibility for fish) as far as possible within 20 years	2090  2040	FOEN	25% of waters in a bad morphological condition must be transformed  Not applicable

No.	Protocol ref. (art., para. and let.)	Subject	Defined target (classification)	Deadline	Responsibility	Target indicator
			(A)			

## Glossary and list of abbreviations

EU/EC	European Union
FOAG	Federal Office of Agriculture
FOEN	Federal Office for the Environment
FOPH	Federal Office of Public Health
FSVO	Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office
GSchG	Water Protection Act
GSchV	Water Protection Ordinance
SGWA	Swiss Gas and Water Industry Association
VSA	Swiss Water Association
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant



### **3. Publication of the national targets**

This targets are publicly available on the homepage of the FSVO. The last status concerning the implementation of these targets has been provided in the corresponding Swiss Status Report from April 2016. This status report is also published on the same homepage.

### **4. Information on the authors of the report**

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