



Landscape 2020 – Guiding Principles

SAEFL's Guiding Principles for Nature and Landscape

The following publications (available in French and German only) have also been produced as part of the “Landscape 2020” project:

SAEFL (2003), *Landschaft 2020 – Erläuterungen und Programm, Synthese zum Leitbild des BUWAL für Natur und Landschaft* [Landscape 2020 – Explanations and programme; synthesis on Guiding Principles of SAEFL for Nature and Landscape], Berne.

STREMLOW, M.; ISELIN, G.; KIENAST, F.; KLÄY, P.; MAIBACH, M. 2003, *Landschaft 2020 – Analysen und Trends, Grundlagen zum Leitbild des BUWAL für Natur und Landschaft* [Landscape 2020 – Analyses and trends; foundations for Guiding Principles of SAEFL for Nature and Landscape] SAEFL Environment series, no. 352, Berne.

Website:
www.environment-switzerland.ch > Issues > Landscape > Landscape 2020



Diverse and attractive landscapes... ...cannot be taken for granted.

Commitment is required from all parties.

The Guiding Principles "Landscape 2020" represent SAEFL's strategy for nature and landscape. They outline a vision for the period up to 2020, which is based on the aims of sustainable development: it should be possible both for the human population and for the roughly 45,000 species of animals and plants in Switzerland to thrive in our shared living space, today and in the future.

As a set of guiding principles, this strategic document provides a technically sound basis for SAEFL's decision making. It is designed as an instrument for cooperation with federal and cantonal agencies, and also with associations, research and educational establishments, and the various groups that utilize nature and landscape. With its "Landscape 2020" project, SAEFL is fulfilling a task assigned to it by the Federal Council (Federal Spatial Planning Policy Measures, Implementation Programme for 2000–2003).

SAEFL advocates living landscapes, which promote well-being and are accessible. In the future, careful development – and if necessary also protection – of nature and landscape will continue to make an important contribution to the quality of life, recreation and sustainable use of natural resources.

The dialogue with the various user groups that was initiated by the Swiss Landscape Concept (SLC) is now being continued and expanded.


Philippe Roch
Director

What is landscape?

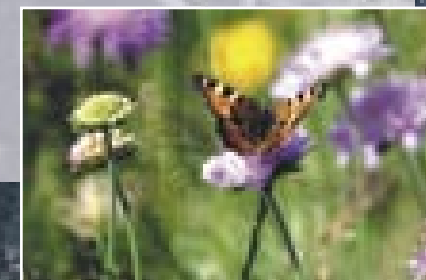
The term "landscape" refers to an entire area, as it is perceived and experienced by people (cf. European Landscape Convention and Swiss Landscape Concept/SLC). The "Landscape 2020" Guiding Principles draw attention to the close interactions existing between people and their surroundings.



Landscape can be better understood by comparing it to a poem.

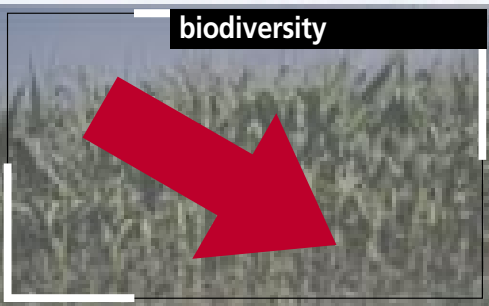
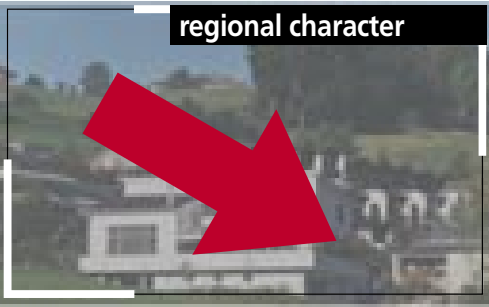
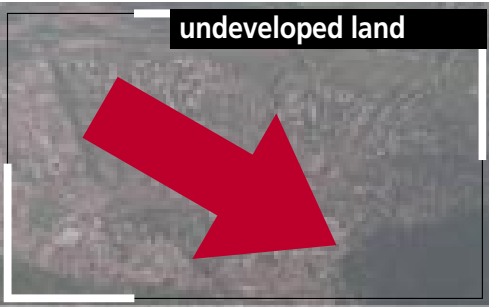
A poem consists of letters and individual words, which correspond to the individual natural and cultural elements and habitats that make up a landscape. The laws that govern natural processes and social influences correspond to grammatical rules. But a poem is greater than the sum of its component letters, words and rules: it is expressive and significant. As with landscape, the meaning

of a poem is only revealed to us when we take an active interest and consciously or subconsciously seek to interpret it. Thus, individual elements are perceived as combining to form a whole.



Landscape: caught between past and future

Today's landscape is largely shaped by human activities and settlements, and by the work of previous generations. The transformation of technological, economic and social conditions that has occurred in recent decades has placed persistent pressure on our natural environment, as indicated by a number of key trends: the quality of landscapes and habitats is constantly declining.



Is this the type of landscape we and our children wish to live in in the 21st century?

The vision espoused by SAEFL is different.

Landscape in the year 2020 is alive. People recognize that they are only a part of nature. Diversified and inspiring landscapes, home to 45,000 animal and plant species, contribute to people's physical and emotional well-being. This vision of a "living landscape" involves a type of landscape development that is based on sustainability.

The Guiding Principles "Landscape 2020" indicate, with the aid of specific quality objectives, how SAEFL visualizes landscape in the year 2020. This provides the basis for a comprehensive official nature and landscape policy, divided into eight action areas. Programme elements specify the form that implementation is to take.



Sustainably used landscape – sustenance for body and spirit

Landscapes reflect the development of land use and of ways of life. Cultural landscapes serve a variety of functions – food production, recreation and the promotion of local/regional identity. To ensure that future generations are also able to satisfy their fundamental needs, their options should not be closed off. Agricultural and forestry uses that are appropriate to local conditions have a key role to play in this respect. On the basis of Switzerland's biogeographical diversity, a rich patchwork of different cultural landscapes can thus be maintained.



Landscape
quality objectives

The forest structures characteristic of a region have been preserved or are recognizable; their various functions are guaranteed over the long term.

Alpine farmers' livelihoods are based on high-quality produce, services provided in the public interest and supplementary activities.

Alpine farming is compatible with ecological carrying capacity and the character of the cultural landscape.

The forests exploited are near-natural, and their margins comprise different types of vegetation of different heights.

All agricultural enterprises provide evidence of environmental performance; a significant proportion employ organic farming methods.

In agriculture, priority areas of guaranteed extent and quality are reserved for sustainable management.

Programme elements

1.1 To pursue sustainable landscape management for forests and fields through an integrated land use policy.

1.2 To adopt near-natural silviculture in all forested areas and promote forest reserves.

1.3 To promote sustainable landscape management in agriculture and Alpine farming.

1.4 To implement ecological compensation measures in agriculture.

Switzerland, a green metropolis – an attractive patchwork of settled and undeveloped areas

As more than two thirds of the Swiss population live in cities and agglomerations, the amenity value and use of the country's settled areas deserves particular attention. The fundamental idea of "Switzerland, a green metropolis" places new demands on the management of living spaces and of centres of economic activity. In the year 2020, "Switzerland, a green metropolis" is to be characterized by variety, high aesthetic quality and ecological value. Cities and agglomerations are to have a distinctive character, living spaces are to display cultural and ecological diversity, and their attractiveness is to be enhanced by near-natural areas.



Landscape
quality objectives

Programme elements

Close to cities, nature
is allowed to develop
spontaneously within areas
of various sizes.

People's living
environment includes
oases of tranquillity.

Ecological compensation
areas in settlements are
diverse and interconnected.

Undeveloped areas are to
be found between settle-
ments; the edges of settled
areas are visible.

Settlements are developed by
means of concentration, with
a space-saving infill approach.

2.1 To intensify cooperation
in spatial planning policy.

2.2 To incorporate the nature and
landscape dimension into the
new federal agglomeration
policy; in particular, to develop
a plan for open spaces.

2.3 To develop a concept
for landscape, sport
and tourism.

Water is life-giving – waterbodies are our landscapes’ lifeblood

Water is life-giving – an indispensable element for plants, animals and humans. Water has been the source of entire civilizations and cultures. Waterbodies are of particular importance to humankind: for economic activity, transport, and culture. Today, lakes and rivers remain the lifeblood of our landscape. To serve this function, they require sufficient space and the capacity for regeneration.





Switzerland, a green network – spaces for plants and animals

Animals and plants bring our planet to life. Allowing room for nature is a sign of our respect for the natural world, of which we are a part. The idea of “Switzerland, a green network” is based on responsible management of the habitats of the country's diverse flora and fauna.



Landscape
quality objectives

Programme elements

Sufficient large-scale protected areas exist where priority is accorded to nature.

In cases where a specific type of land use is no longer economically viable, nature can be allowed room to develop spontaneously.

Ecological compensation areas supplement and interconnect natural habitats and can serve as buffer zones around protected areas and as retention areas in the event of flooding.

Irreplaceable landscape elements and habitats are conserved.

Protected biotopes help to preserve the diversity of species and habitats; such biotopes are interconnected.

In every region, forest reserves safeguard forest communities and forms that are of particular importance for species and landscape diversity.

4.1 To preserve landscape features that bear witness to the earth's history (geotopes).

4.2 To develop a plan defining organizational aspects and setting priorities for species protection.

4.3 To pursue national and international biotope protection efforts.

4.4 To promote nature and landscape parks.

4.5 To enhance near-natural habitats in settled areas.

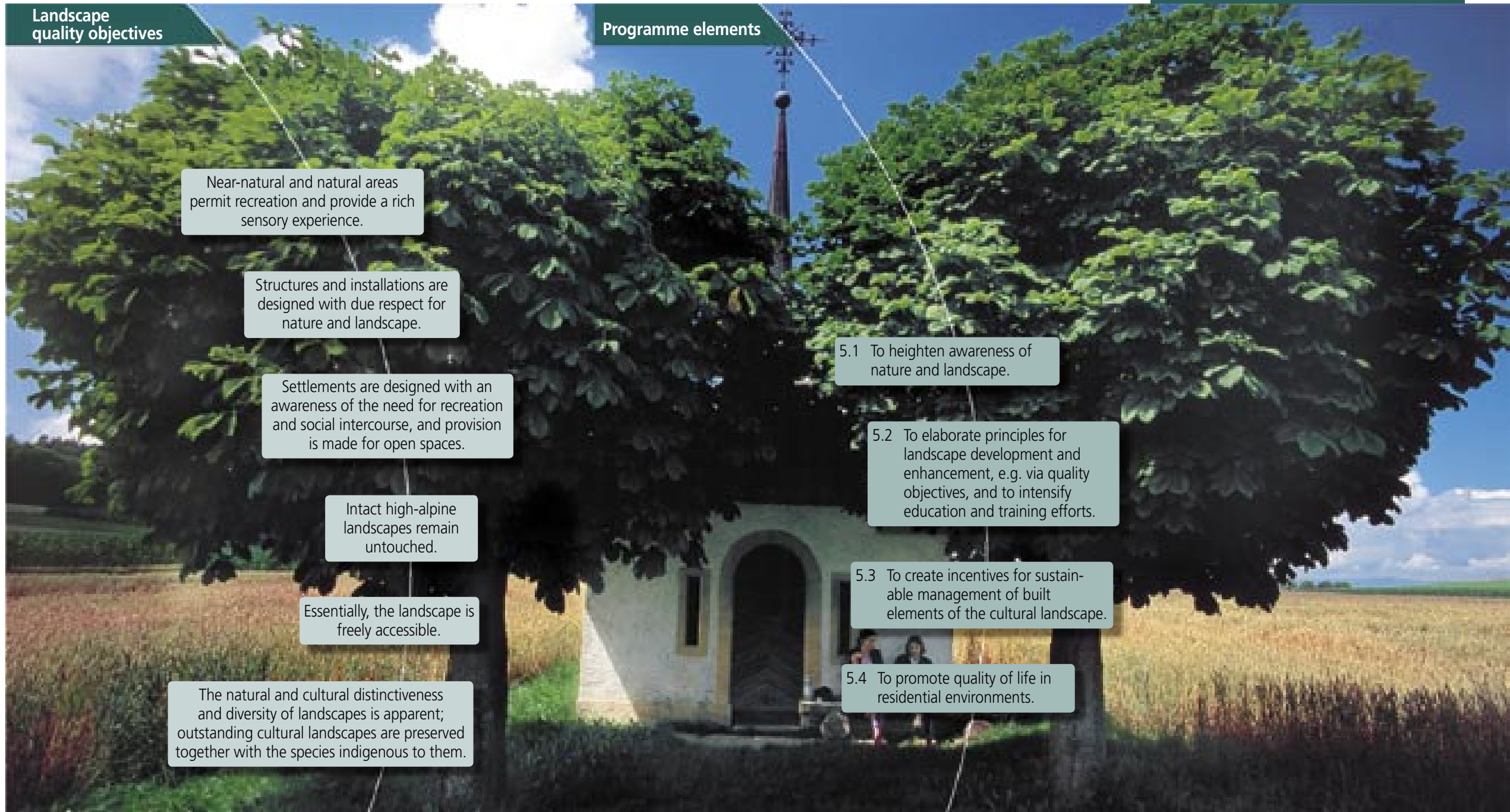
4.6 To complete and implement the National Ecological Network (REN) project.

4.7 To improve the permeability of transport infrastructure.

Moving away from homogenization – towards landscapes to be experienced

An intact natural world and beautiful landscapes are not assets that can be taken for granted – even if they are now frequently regarded as such. Diverse cultural landscapes arose over a period of centuries. Landscapes are thus the embodiment of society's memory and a significant component of its identity. In addition, people's personal experience of landscape is important for their physical and emotional well-being. The protection and careful development of nature and landscape will help to ensure that people can continue to enjoy natural products such as fish, game and mushrooms, and that tranquillity and relaxation can be found in stimulating surroundings. Varied and aesthetically pleasing landscapes are also economically significant.





Everyone shapes the landscape – one way or another

The involvement of the population is the very basis of democracy. People's ties to their local environment are strengthened by being able to take part in the setting of objectives, planning and implementation. Participation is based on an acute awareness of landscape and the provision of information for all stakeholders. People's appreciation of the wider ecological context is enhanced by opportunities to experience nature and landscape with all five senses during activities such as nature walks, fishing or picnics in urban parks.



Landscape
quality objectives

Programme elements

People feel at ease
in a landscape that is part
of their heritage.

Local residents take their share
of responsibility for shaping their
living space.

Human-induced changes to landscape
are such that people, animals and
plants are able to keep pace with
developments, despite differences in
their adaptability.

6.1 To improve awareness-
raising and public
education efforts.

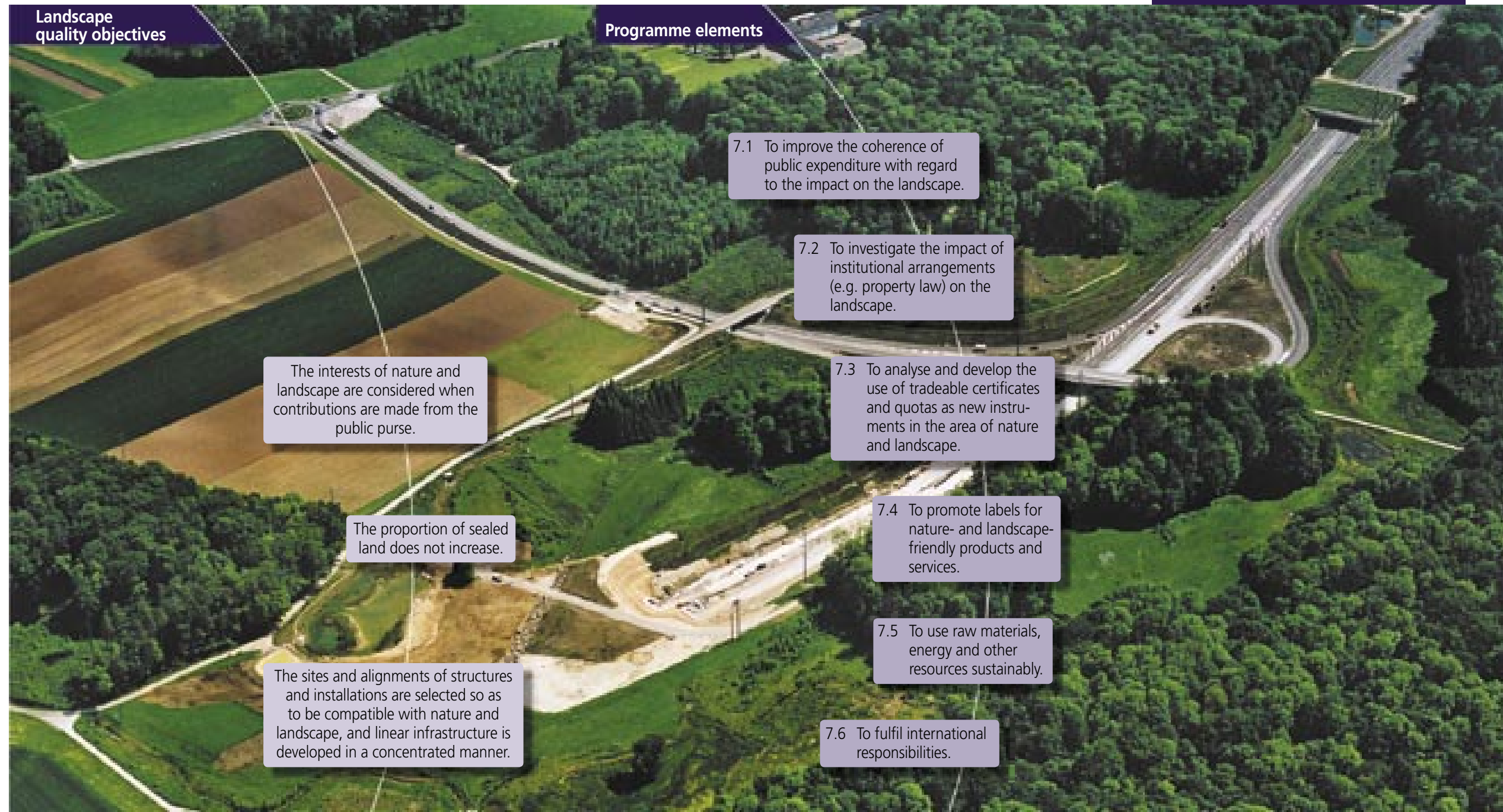
6.2 To strengthen participatory planning
instruments, such as Landscape
Development Concepts and Agenda 21,
and promote cooperative forms of
landscape management.



Consuming resources at the expense of future generations?

Fertile soil, like most other natural resources, is finite. Only by preserving this “natural capital” can we ensure that the interest will be available to future generations. Soil and other natural resources are public goods, and controlling their use is a matter of public policy.





Monitoring developments, so as to focus protection efforts

Studies of current trends indicate that nature and landscape are still subject to growing pressures. Careful and continuous monitoring of developments will be essential if appropriate control measures are to be taken. The earlier problematic trends are recognized as such, the greater the opportunities for action. A close dialogue between all parties is therefore indispensable.



Action area 8

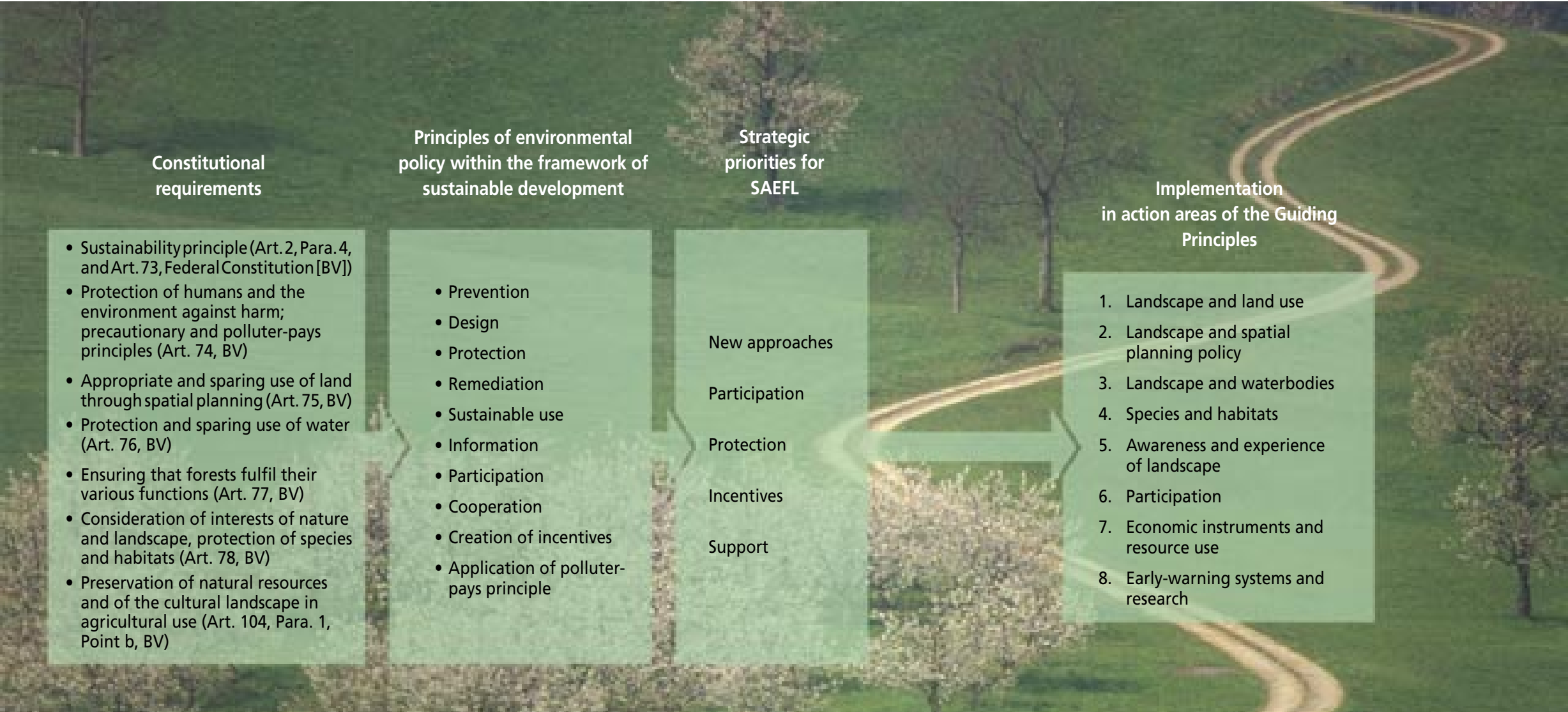
Early-warning systems and research

cf. Explanations and programme, SAEFL (2003), Section 5.8



Strategies

Strategic priorities for SAEFL in the implementation of the Guiding Principles are “New approaches”, “Participation”, “Protection”, “Incentives” and “Support”. Communication is addressed in particular to the following partners: federal and cantonal agencies, associations, research and educational establishments, and other groups with an interest in nature and landscape.



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Editor
Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), CH- 3003 Berne, www.environment-switzerland.ch
SAEFL is an agency of the Federal Department of Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC)

SAEFL project team
Gilbert Thélin (Project management), Pia Kläy, Meinrad Küttel, Benoît Magnin, Heinz Pfister, Andreas Stalder, Matthias StremLOW

Advisory board
Jocelyn Bottinelli, Federal Office of Culture (BAK) ■ Paul Imbeck, Cantonal Nature and Landscape Officer (KBNL), Canton Basel-Landschaft ■ Philippe Jacot-Descombes, Cantonal Nature and Landscape Officer (KBNL), Canton Neuchâtel ■ Felix Kienast, Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research (WSL) ■ Raimund Rodewald, Swiss Foundation for Landscape Protection (SL) ■ Otto Sieber, Pro Natura ■ Willi Zimmermann, Federal Commission for the Protection of Nature and Cultural Heritage (ENHK)

Editors
Matthias StremLOW and Heinz Pfister

Graphic design
Hanspeter Hauser, AVD, Berne

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Acheson Translations & Editing, 4104 Oberwil.

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Orders
BUWAL, Dokumentation, CH-3003 Berne
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