

Swiss Landscape Concept

Landscape and nature in federal policy areas



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Swiss Confederation

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Concepts and sectoral plans under Article 13 of the Spatial Planning Act of 22 June 1979 (SPA; SR 700) are the main spatial planning instruments of the Swiss federal government (Confederation). They enable it to comply with the obligation to plan and coordinate its activities that have a spatial impact and help it to address the increasingly complex spatial problems involved in carrying out its tasks with a spatial impact. In concepts and sectoral plans, the Confederation shows how it intends to carry out its tasks that have a spatial impact in a particular sector or thematic area, the objectives it will pursue and the requirements and specifications that will guide its actions. Developed in close partnership between the federal agencies and the cantons, the concepts and sectoral plans support the spatial planning efforts of authorities at all levels.

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Abstracts

The Swiss Landscape Concept (SLC) consolidates the coherent landscape policy of the federal government. It is based on a comprehensive and dynamic notion of landscape as defined in the European Landscape Convention. As a federal planning instrument, the SLC defines the framework for a coherent and quality-based development of the Swiss landscapes. The overall orientation for a coherent federal landscape policy is defined in the strategic objectives and landscape quality objectives binding on the authorities. Spatial planning principles and factual objectives concretize these for the various sectoral policies of the federal government. Through its strengthened territorial approach, the SLC aims to improve its spatial effectiveness.

Das Landschaftskonzept Schweiz (LKS) festigt die kohärente Landschaftspolitik des Bundes. Es basiert auf einem umfassenden und dynamischen Landschaftsbegriff im Sinne des Europäischen Landschaftsübereinkommens. Das LKS definiert als Planungsinstrument des Bundes den Rahmen für eine kohärente und qualitätsbasierte Entwicklung der Schweizer Landschaften. Die übergeordnete Ausrichtung für eine kohärente Landschaftspolitik des Bundes wird in den strategischen Zielsetzungen und in den Landschaftsqualitätszielen behördenverbindlich festgelegt. Raumplanerische Grundsätze und Sachziele konkretisieren diese für die einzelnen Sektoralpolitiken des Bundes. Mit dem gestärkten räumlichen Ansatz zielt das LKS auf eine bessere Wirkung in der Fläche.

La conception «Paysage suisse» (CPS) consolide la politique fédérale cohérente du paysage. La CPS repose sur une notion globale et dynamique du paysage au sens de la Convention européenne du paysage. Instrument de planification de la Confédération, la CPS définit le cadre d'un développement des paysages suisses axé sur la qualité. Les objectifs stratégiques et les objectifs de qualité paysagère, contraignants pour les autorités, concourent à une politique fédérale cohérente. Ils sont concrétisés par les principes régissant l'aménagement du territoire et les objectifs des différentes politiques sectorielles de la Confédération. Par son approche spatiale renforcée, la CPS vise à améliorer concrètement son efficacité dans le territoire.

La Concezione «Paesaggio svizzero» (CPS) rafforza la politica paesaggistica coerente della Confederazione. Essa si basa sul concetto di paesaggio nella sua accezione più ampia e dinamica secondo la Convenzione europea sul paesaggio. In qualità di strumento di pianificazione della Confederazione, la CPS definisce il quadro per uno sviluppo dei paesaggi svizzeri coerente e basato sulla qualità. L'orientamento generale in vista di una politica paesaggistica coerente della Confederazione è fissato in modo vincolante negli obiettivi strategici e qualitativi del paesaggio, concretizzati da principi di pianificazione del territorio e da obiettivi specifici per le singole politiche settoriali della Confederazione. Sottolineando l'approccio basato sull'incidenza territoriale, la CPS è volto a migliorare l'effetto degli obiettivi della CPS sul territorio.

Keywords:

Landscape policy, Landscape Concept, Landscape quality, Spatial planning, Landscape development

Stichwörter:

Landschaftspolitik, Landschaftskonzeption, Landschaftsqualität, Raumplanung, Landschaftsentwicklung

Mots-clé:

Politique du paysage, Conception paysage, qualité du paysage, aménagement du territoire, développement du paysage

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Foreword

Switzerland has a diverse range of landscapes, which enhance the country as a place to live and as business location. The great natural and cultural values of the landscape provide the basis for a good quality of life. Landscape is also important to the economy, most notably for tourism. The people of Switzerland feel connected to the landscape and for visitors it is the country's biggest draw. However, our landscapes are under pressure. Regional landscape elements and natural habitats for plants and animals are increasingly being lost, and a plethora of economic and social activities and their effects, such as the climate crisis, are changing landscapes at a rapid pace.

The updated Swiss Landscape Concept (SLC) addresses these challenges. It sets out binding objectives for the authorities, aimed at quality-oriented development of the landscape as a place for living, working, business and recreation, and shows how the Confederation intends to focus on landscape preservation and quality in its planning and construction activities and in the funding and authorizations it awards. In settlement areas, for example, a diverse range of near-natural, well-designed and usable open spaces are key. Buildings and installations must be designed to take account of the landscape distinctiveness of their location, and valuable natural and semi-natural habitats must be conserved, enhanced and connected in order to promote landscape quality and safeguard biodiversity and its important ecosystem functions.

Switzerland needs a landscape policy that is backed by all levels of government, is based on common objectives and delivers tangible outcomes. Actors in all policy areas that affect the landscape must play their part. The cantons and communes, for example, have an important role in managing a quality-oriented landscape development through their structure and land use planning. The SLC fosters the necessary cooperation between the Confederation, cantons and communes, and shows how we can enhance the quality of landscape throughout Switzerland – in towns and cities as well as the countryside – for the benefit of current and future generations.

Christine Hofmann, Director a. i.
Federal Office for the Environment FOEN

1 The Swiss Landscape Concept – in context

The Swiss Landscape Concept (SLC) is a federal planning instrument that provides the framework for coherent, quality-oriented development of the landscape as a place for living, working, recreation, exercise, cultural and economic activity, as well as the spatial foundation for biodiversity. It was first adopted by the Federal Council on 19 December 1997 as a concept within the meaning of Article 13 of the Spatial Planning Act (SPA). This updated version includes a comprehensive analysis of the topic, including a clarification of the term “landscape” and of the legal framework on which the SLC is based. The updated SLC explicitly assumes a dynamic understanding of the concept of landscape and is therefore more strongly embedded in spatial planning.

1.1 Objectives and purpose

Ensuring high-quality planning and design in Switzerland

The SLC is a concept under Article 13 SPA. As a federal planning instrument, it sets out how the Confederation aims to comply with the planning principle of preserving the landscape (Art. 3 para. 2 SPA) when carrying out its tasks that have a spatial impact. Drawing on a vision, it sets out the overarching thrust of a coherent federal landscape policy in a series of strategic and landscape quality objectives that are binding on the authorities. These are fleshed out by spatial planning principles and sectoral objectives for the Confederation’s various sectoral policy areas. The SLC thus provides the framework for the development of Swiss landscapes, and the natural and cultural values they represent, with a focus on long-term coherence and quality.

Landscape quality objectives and sectoral objectives binding on the authorities:

... to be implemented by federal agencies

On 27 Mai 2020, the Federal Council approved the SLC’s objectives as binding on the authorities and tasked the

federal agencies with implementing them. They must do so in particular when further developing their policies, balancing interests and fulfilling federal tasks under Article 2 of the Federal Act on the Protection of Nature and Cultural Heritage (NCHA; SR 451). In updating the SLC, the Confederation is giving effect, within the limits of its competence, to the commitment made under the European Landscape Convention to integrate landscape into spatial, regional and town planning policies and cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies, to define landscape quality objectives and to increase awareness of the value of landscapes (European Landscape Convention, Art. 5 and 6).

... to be taken into account by cantons, regions and communes

The relevant cantonal authorities must implement the SLC’s objectives and spatial planning principles in the federal tasks delegated to the cantons and in projects carried out with financial assistance from the Confederation. The cantons must also take account of the SLC in cantonal structure planning within their assigned scope (Art. 6 para. 4 SPA). There are good examples of cantonal landscape concepts and structure plans that deal appropriately with the landscape. Regional and communal authorities must also take account of the SLC when fulfilling their tasks, within their assigned scopes and in accordance with cantonal requirements.

Recommendations and measures for implementing the objectives

The explanatory report on the SLC explains the objectives and planning processes for authorities at federal, cantonal and communal level. The SLC also includes a set of measures for federal agencies, containing recommendations to help these agencies achieve the SLC objectives.

Strengthening cooperation

The SLC promotes coordination and cooperation between federal agencies and with the cantons, regions and communes in the areas of landscape, nature and *Baukultur*

(building culture). It thus contributes to coherent spatial development by boosting knowledge transfer, enhancing expertise and promoting awareness of landscape-relevant decision-making in sectoral policy areas.

Coordination and balancing of interests in spatial planning

Planning instruments are central to the implementation of the SLC, serving to plan and coordinate activities that have a spatial impact. The Confederation, cantons and communes coordinate these activities. Spatial planning has the cross-cutting task of balancing competing interests in the fulfillment of tasks and coordination of activities with a spatial impact (Art. 3 of the Spatial Planning Ordinance [SPO]); spatial planning principles are therefore included in the SLC. Spatial planning is formative policy in the area of spatial development, taking into account use and protection interests. The SLC therefore also includes sectoral objectives for spatial planning. The cantons have primary responsibility for implementing spatial planning rules, while the Confederation defines spatial planning principles.

1.2 What is landscape?

Landscape is the product of a physical environment and the way in which people perceive and experience that environment. Landscape encompasses all space and so includes peri-urban and urban areas of Switzerland as well as the countryside. This understanding of landscape underlies the European Landscape Convention, which Switzerland ratified in 2013. It forms the basis for this update to the SLC.

Landscapes are constantly evolving, whether in response to natural processes, climatic changes, human uses and interventions, or because of the changing way that we perceive and value them. Landscape thus mirrors the natural, historical and cultural evolution of a region. It encompasses the spatial aspects of *Baukultur* and biodiversity, in particular the diversity of valuable natural and semi-natural habitats with their species and spatial connectivity (ecological infrastructure). The diversity, distinctiveness and beauty of landscape are fundamentally shaped by these natural and cultural values.

Where the term “landscape” is used in the SLC, it refers to landscape in this broad sense. Biodiversity is an important qualitative component of landscape. For this reason, the term “nature” is also used in the SLC where the spatial aspects of functional biodiversity are explicitly addressed.

1.3 What services do landscape provide?

With its natural and cultural values, landscape is both the spatial foundation of life and also a space for living, working, recreation, exercise, cultural and economic activity. High-quality landscapes make for an attractive living environment: they promote a high quality of life, strengthen people’s sense of identity and enhance an area’s international, national and regional reputation as a business location. The interplay of regional characteristics, both natural and cultural, over the course of centuries has endowed Switzerland with great beauty, distinctiveness and diversity of landscape, including a rich biodiversity. Most of Switzerland’s landscapes are inhabited and have been shaped by human activity. Being used can enhance the quality of a landscape. A diversity of uses will remain essential for ensuring high-quality landscape development in the future. In this regard, the SLC clarifies the legal requirement to preserve the landscape, stating that such uses must respect landscape qualities. Landscape, with its diverse functions, can only be developed through joint efforts.

Given the overarching importance of the landscape for individuals, society and the economy, legislation has been passed to enhance landscape qualities and protect specific landscapes and habitats. Based on the statutory mandates and the European Landscape Convention, the Federal Council, in its Sustainable Development Strategy, stipulates that the goal of landscape policy is to continue to develop the landscape while preserving its character, to promote a rich biodiversity capable of adapting to change, and to recognise and secure ecosystem and landscape services (*Federal Council Decree FCD 27.1.2016, Sustainable Development Strategy [SDS]*). This also helps to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular Goal 3 (Good health and well-being), Goal 11 (Sustainable cities and commu-

nities) and Goal 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems) (*UN 2030 Agenda of 25 September 2015*).

1.4 How is landscape quality coming under pressure?

For decades, Swiss landscapes have been subject to ever faster change: settlement areas have grown steadily to cover 7.5% of total land area (FSO 2013, Land use in Switzerland), and transport infrastructure has expanded. Landscape fragmentation and urban sprawl have increased. In the process, agricultural land, open spaces and recreational spaces have been lost, along with landscape elements and structures typical of individual regions (FOEN/WSL 2017, *Wandel der Landschaft*). Switzerland is also losing natural and semi-natural habitats due to changes in land use resulting from agricultural intensification and structural changes in agriculture. The number of species on the Red Lists of threatened animal and plant species is growing (FOEN 2017, *Biodiversity in Switzerland*). The Federal Council's 2018 environmental status report concludes that, despite some improvements, including the restoration of watercourses and the slowing of negative trends such as land use per person, Switzerland's landscape quality remains under pressure (FOEN 2018). This is increasingly affecting the services that landscapes provide to society and the economy.

Going forward, the challenges will remain considerable. Current megatrends such as globalisation, digital transformation, individualisation, demographic change (including migration) and climate change are having an impact on landscape development. Climate change in particular impacts the landscape at two levels. On the one hand, it is changing natural site conditions in various ways, including glacier retreat, thawing permafrost, shifting vegetation zones and urban heat islands (see the report *Brennpunkt Klima Schweiz*, ProClim, 2016). On the other hand, societal measures to adapt to climate change can have a significant impact on the landscape, such as stronger protection measures against natural hazards or population displacement. At the same time, enhancing landscape quality can also be a societal answer to cli-

mate challenges, with mires helping to store CO₂ and green spaces and trees helping to cool towns and cities, for example (see also Federal Council 2020, *Adaptation to climate change in Switzerland – Action plan 2020–25*). All in all, the landscape will continue to change. The SLC therefore explicitly assumes a dynamic understanding of landscape.

1.5 Legal bases

The Federal Constitution (Cst.; SR 101) addresses the issue of landscape, explicitly or implicitly, in a number of areas. Article 2 Cst. (Aims) states that the Swiss Confederation, i.e. the Confederation and the cantons together, shall promote sustainable development and is committed to the long-term preservation of natural resources. Article 73 Cst. stipulates that the Confederation and the cantons shall endeavour to achieve a balanced and sustainable relationship between nature and its capacity to renew itself and the demands placed on it by the population. The articles on protection of natural and cultural heritage (Art. 78 Cst.) and on agriculture (Art. 104 Cst.) deal explicitly with landscape, while the articles on spatial planning (Art. 75 Cst.) and forests (Art. 77 Cst.) do so implicitly. A number of laws give legislative shape to these constitutional mandates.

The **Federal Act on the Protection of Nature and Cultural Heritage** (NCHA; SR 451) covers both the natural and cultural aspects of landscape. It requires the Confederation to support the cantons in fulfilling their tasks in nature protection, cultural heritage protection and monument preservation (NHCA Art. 1b) and obliges it, in the fulfilment of its tasks, to carefully manage heritage landscapes and sites of local character, historical sites and natural and cultural monuments, and, where there is an overriding public interest, to preserve them undiminished (NHCA Art. 2ff.). The NHCA enables the Confederation to provide support for nature protection, cultural heritage protection and monument preservation efforts (NHCA Art. 13ff.). It also regulates the protection of indigenous flora and fauna and their habitats (Art. 18ff.). Further provisions on habitat and species protection are contained in the **Federal Act on the Hunting and Protection of Wild Mammals and Birds** (HuntA; SR 922.0), the **Federal Act**

on **Fish and Fisheries** (FishA; SR 923.0) and the **National Park Act** (SR 454). Parliament created the Swiss Landscape Fund in 1991 to help conserve and manage near-natural cultural landscapes. The fund is independent of the Federal Administration and is financed by time-limited funding (Federal Decree on Financial Assistance for the Conservation and Management of Near-Natural Cultural Landscapes; SR 451.51; Federal Decree on Financing of the Fund for Conservation and Management of Near-Natural Cultural Landscapes; BBI 2010 7521).

The **Federal Act on Spatial Planning** (SPA; SR 700) attaches great importance to landscape. As its primary aim, the SPA requires the Confederation, cantons and communes to use the land economically and to separate building areas from the areas where building is not permitted (Art. 1 para. 1 SPA). By means of spatial and regional planning measures, the Confederation, cantons and communes shall in particular support efforts to protect natural resources such as soil, air, water, forests and the landscape (Art. 1 para. 2 SPA). Authorities responsible for planning shall take account of the planning principle that the landscape must be preserved (Art. 3 para. 2 RPG). Accordingly, sufficient areas of suitable arable land, in particular crop rotation areas, should be reserved for agriculture (Art. 3 para. 2 let. a SPA). Settlements, buildings and installations should integrate well into the landscape (Art. 3 para. 2 let. b SPA). Lakesides and riverbanks should be kept free and accessible to the public (Art. 3 para. 3 let. c SPA). Natural landscapes and recreational areas should be conserved and forests should be able to fulfil their functions (Art. 3 para. 2 let. d and e SPA).

The primary aim of the **Federal Act on Forest** (ForA; SR 921.0) is to conserve the forest – a key component of the landscape – in its area and spatial distribution. To this end, static forest boundaries may be established, even outside of development zones, to curb the spread of forest into open meadows and pastures. The forest should also be able to fulfil its functions, in particular its protective, social and economic functions (forest functions). The cantons ensure that the forest is accessible to the general public.

The **Federal Act on Agriculture** (AgricA; SR 910.1) instructs the Confederation to ensure that the agricultural sector makes a significant contribution towards the upkeep of the countryside. Among other things, subsidies for farmland are intended to prevent the forest from encroaching further into meadows and pastures. In order to maintain, promote and further develop a varied regional landscape, the AgricA provides for subsidies for the quality of the landscape. Other agricultural policy instruments that can help to improve the quality of the landscape are biodiversity subsidies, connectivity subsidies, subsidies for production systems, regional development projects and structural improvement measures.

There is also the **Federal Act on the Protection of Waters** (WPA; SR 614.20), which serves, among other things, to preserve and enhance waters as an element of the landscape. Of central importance is the space provided for waters, which the cantons are required to stipulate. Where waters have been damaged, the cantons must ensure that they are rehabilitated in terms of both ecomorphology and dynamics, taking account of the benefits to the landscape and nature, especially for local recreation. The importance of waters as an element of the landscape must also be taken into account when establishing the residual flow from hydropower plants.

The aim of the **Federal Act on Footpaths and Hiking Trails** (FHTA; SR 704) is to plan, build and maintain comprehensive networks of footpaths and hiking trails. In settlement areas, footpath networks provide access to and connect, in particular, residential areas, workplaces, nurseries and schools, public transport stops, public institutions, leisure facilities and shops. Networks of hiking trails give access to, in particular, areas suitable for recreation, scenic landscapes (viewpoints, riverbanks/lakesides, etc.), cultural sights, public transport stops and tourist facilities. The amendment to Art. 88 Cst. relating to cycle paths was adopted on 23 September 2018, and work on the relevant legislation is under way.

In addition, various **other laws** in landscape-relevant policy areas contain provisions on dealing with and preserving the landscape. The **Energy Act** (EnA; SR 730.0), for example, stipulates the careful use of natural resources and the minimisation of harmful or troublesome impacts

on people and the environment. The **Federal Act on Regional Policy** (RPA; SR 901.0) states that regional policy must take into account the requirements of sustainable development. Both the **National Highways Act** (NHWA; SR 725.11) and the **Railways Act** (RailA; SR 742.101) contain provisions requiring the interests of nature protection and cultural heritage protection to be taken into account. Finally, the **Swiss Civil Code** (CC; SR 210) regulates access to the landscape: any person has the right to enter woodlands and meadows to the extent permitted by local custom, except where the competent authority enacts specific limited prohibitions in the interests of conservation. Art. 702 CC regulates public law restrictions on ownership, for example to conserve antiquities and natural monuments or to preserve areas of natural beauty and scenic vantage points.

The Confederation has a special responsibility for the inventories of landscapes of national importance (Federal Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance [ILNM], Inventory of Swiss Heritage Sites [ISOS] and Federal Inventory of Historic Swiss Transport Routes [IVS]), the biotopes of national importance, the water bird and migratory bird reserves and the federal game reserves. The federal inventories of fens, raised and transitional bogs and mire landscapes are based directly on the Federal Constitution and have great legal force, including a wide-ranging ban on changes to such areas. In the parks of national importance, the NHCA provides an instrument for promoting areas with high natural and landscape values. The Confederation has an international responsibility for UNESCO World Heritage Sites, which must be preserved for humanity, and for Ramsar sites. In the **Swiss Biodiversity Strategy** (2012) and the associated Action Plan (2017), the Federal Council set out a series of biodiversity targets and measures. Taking these as its basis, the SLC specifies spatially-relevant aspects in more detail.

1.6 Coherent landscape policy

As the overview of legal bases makes clear, dealing sensitively with the landscape is a collective responsibility. When it comes to such collective action, ensuring coherence is a major challenge. A meaningful overall outcome,

i.e. landscapes of high natural and cultural quality, can only be achieved if the many actors involved work together. Coherent landscape development requires actors to be aware of the importance of their own instruments and actions for the landscape. Landscape concepts, and the landscape quality objectives they contain, are a useful tool for developing a common target vision. Consciously observing and describing a landscape is crucial for assessing the opportunities and risks associated with high-quality landscape development. This creates a comprehensive understanding of the landscape, with its existing natural and cultural values, while also empowering actors to take account of the landscape in decision-making. Involving the relevant actors enables instruments to be used efficiently, synergies to be exploited and conflicting objectives to be resolved by balancing different interests (FOEN 2016, Den Landschaftswandel gestalten). As part of this process, use and protection interests must be determined and assessed. In particular, compatibility with the desired spatial development, as well as the possible landscape impacts, need to be addressed. When balancing interests, other federal strategies and policies, such as the energy strategy, must also be considered. Based on the assessment, the various interests have to be taken into account as fully as possible in the decision (Art. 3 SPO).

1.7 SLC effect and application

The Confederation draws up concepts and sectoral plans for planning and coordinating its tasks, insofar as these have a significant impact on the use of space and the environment (Art. 14 para. 1 SPO). In its concepts and sectoral plans, the Confederation shows how it intends to make use of its planning discretion, in particular the sectoral objectives it is pursuing and according to what priorities, how and with what resources the federal tasks are to be spatially implemented (Art. 14 para. 2 SPO). Concepts help it to address the increasingly complex spatial problems involved in carrying out its tasks with a spatial impact. They do not contain any space- or time-specific pronouncements (see Art. 14 para. 3 SPO) but rather support the spatial planning efforts of authorities at all levels, particularly as regards coordination. For this reason, the concepts are developed in close partnership between

the federal agencies and the cantons (Art. 13 para. 2 SPA; Art. 18–20 SPO).

Concepts do not create new law but firm up the application of existing legal provisions. Similarly, they do not alter the division of powers within the Confederation or between the levels of the federal system. Both the NHCA and other specific legislations in the various policy areas continue to form the legal basis of the SLC.

The SLC is a planning and coordination tool for implementing the legal bases of relevance to landscape (see section 1.5). It firms up the legal requirements in the areas of landscape, nature and *Baukultur* by means of objectives that are binding on the authorities (Art. 22 SPO). The aim of this is to ensure coherent spatial development. The SLC also makes it easier to determine and assess issues of landscape quality in the event of conflicting objectives between use and protection interests. In this way, it helps the responsible lead authorities at all federal levels to balance competing interests in a comprehensive, transparent and legally sound way.

Confederation

The SLC's objectives are binding on the federal authorities entrusted with landscape-relevant tasks. These authorities must implement the objectives when further developing their policies, balancing interests and also fulfilling federal tasks under Article 2 NHCA. Furthermore, the SLC's objectives must be taken into account when enacting legislation and when developing or updating concepts and sectoral plans. When assessing and examining the cantonal structure plans, federal agencies examine the extent to which the cantons have taken the SLC's objectives into account in these plans. In their other activities, the federal authorities must observe the SLC's objectives with a view to ensuring a coherent landscape policy.

Working in partnership to update the SLC, the competent federal offices have jointly identified measures that will help to achieve the SLC's objectives. These are listed in a separate set of measures and represent focal points in the respective sectoral policies (see Annex, only available in German, French and Italian). The competent federal offices are responsible for fleshing out these

measures and implementing them together with the cantons, the communes and relevant landscape actors. Implementation takes place within existing organisational structures and using existing resources. In addition, many existing measures initiated by federal offices also help to achieve the SLC objectives (e.g. measures contained in the Action Plan for the Swiss Biodiversity Strategy or the 2020–25 Action Plan for Adapting to Climate Change in Switzerland). Federal agencies are asked to flesh out and implement the measures outlined in the plan as far as possible in the first implementation period (2020–23). A report on the SLC's implementation is submitted to the Federal Council every four years. As well as assessing achievement of the sectoral objectives and progress in implementing the measures, these reports may also appraise the need for an update to the SLC. General reporting on landscape quality development takes place as part of the Federal Council's environmental reporting.

Cantons

The cantons implement the SLC when fulfilling delegated federal tasks in accordance with Art. 2 para. 1 NHCA (e.g. exceptions under Art. 24 SPA) and in projects carried out with financial assistance from the Confederation (Art. 2 para. 2 NHCA).

The cantons must also take account of the SLC in their cantonal structure plans within their assigned scope (Art. 6 para. 4 SPA, according to which concepts must be taken into account when devising guidelines). In so doing, they must identify the implications for the tasks performed by the canton and communes, take additional precautions and formulate the necessary coordination steps. They decide which objectives are relevant to them and how they will incorporate them into their structure plans. The cantons also have an important role to play in developing cantonal landscape concepts and raising awareness.

Regions and communes

Planning authorities at regional and communal level take the SLC's objectives into account in accordance with cantonal requirements and within their assigned scope, for example when developing regional structure plans, landscape concepts and, in particular, land use plans.

Private individuals

Concepts are binding on authorities. They do not entail any rights or obligations for private individuals. However, the SLC may provide guidance for landowners and other landscape actors. The Confederation involves them in the SLC's implementation.

2 Vision, strategic objectives and spatial planning principles

2.1 Vision of the Swiss Landscape Concept

The beauty and diversity of Swiss landscapes, with their region-specific natural and cultural characteristics, offer a high quality of life and of location, for both current and future generations.

The SLC's vision constitutes the guiding framework for the long-term, quality-oriented development of the landscape as a place for living, working, recreation, exercise, cultural and economic activity, as well as the spatial foundation for biodiversity. It is based on a dynamic understanding of the landscape, combining protection, accessibility and

use. This vision forms the basis for the SLC's objectives, which are binding on the authorities.

2.2 Strategic objectives

Swiss landscapes have distinctive natural and cultural characteristics that vary from region to region. They are shaped by many actors, in particular at the federal, cantonal and communal levels. Landscape policy mandates are therefore underpinned by a variety of legal bases at all levels of the federal system. This makes the coherent design of landscape-relevant sectoral policies particularly challenging. In order to achieve high-quality landscapes, the Federal Council is committed to the following process objectives:

I. Manage landscape change with a focus on quality.

Coherent landscape policy actively addresses the landscape-related challenges that arise from constant changes in land use and from influences such as climate change. It fosters the potential of the landscape to provide a high-quality living, economic and cultural space. To avoid a fragmented approach across landscape-relevant policy areas at all levels of government, a firm and forward-looking commitment on the part of landscape actors is required. Quality-oriented landscape development can only be achieved by working in partnership and with common objectives. Well-coordinated national laws as well as international agreements on the protection and sustainable use of landscape, nature and built heritage have an important role to play.

II. Integrate the SLC's objectives into federal sectoral policies.

In all its activities, the Confederation must carefully manage the landscape with its region-specific natural

and cultural characteristics, or preserve it undiminished where this is in the public interest. The Confederation's spatially-relevant sectoral policies must systematically take account of these statutory mandates in decision-making. Through the SLC, the Confederation seeks to strategically align federal government activities with the maintenance and promotion of natural and cultural landscape qualities and to make optimal use of synergies.

III. Raise awareness and strengthen operational competences.

Landscape actors at the federal, cantonal and communal levels need to be supported to recognise landscape quality in their areas of activity, to take it into account in spatial coordination and balancing of interests, and to contribute actively to quality-oriented development. Participatory processes enhance landscape expertise and foster a willingness among the population to take responsibility for the sustainable development of the landscape.

2.3 Spatial planning principles

The spatial planning principles are derived from federal legislation, in particular from spatial planning law, legislation on nature, landscape and cultural heritage protection, and the legal framework for planning activities in the areas of landscape, nature and *Baukultur*. They serve to maintain and enhance Switzerland's landscape qualities in the long term. The issue of effective, high-quality land-

scape management is key. This means not only coordinating different land uses with one another but also aligning them with the strategic objectives, the landscape quality objectives and the sectoral objectives within the planning process. A common understanding is needed of how landscape qualities can be preserved and further developed. The following spatial planning principles support the targeted and demand-oriented use of planning instruments at all federal levels.

I. Use spatial planning instruments to implement the SLC's objectives.

The SLC's landscape quality and sectoral objectives are factored into planning from the outset, at the appropriate level, and implemented by means of the spatial planning instruments.

II. Use land sustainably.

Land use is geared towards minimal land take, safeguards soil functions over the long term, promotes eco-

system and landscape services, and takes social and economic developments into account.

III. Take the SLC's objectives into account when balancing interests.

When balancing interests, due account must be taken of the landscape with its natural and cultural characteristics, the landscape quality objectives and the associated services.

An overview of the objectives

General landscape quality objectives



1. *Enhance Switzerland's landscape diversity and beauty*



2. *Strengthen the landscape as a location factor*



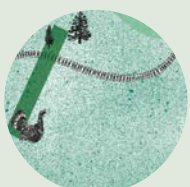
3. *Ensure that land uses are site-appropriate*



4. *Perform interventions carefully and with a focus on quality*



5. *Recognise the cultural and natural heritage of the landscape*



6. *Protect and connect high-quality habitats*



7. *Allow natural dynamics to take place*

Quality objectives for specific landscapes



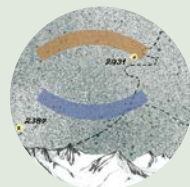
8. *Urban landscapes – consolidate settlement areas with a focus on quality, ensure green spaces*



9. *Peri-urban landscapes – protect against further urban sprawl, design settlement edges*



10. *Rural landscapes – prioritise site-appropriate use*



11. *High alpine landscapes – preserve natural character*



12. *Landscapes used mainly for agriculture – conserve and ecologically enhance agricultural land*



13. *Tourist landscapes – safeguard and enhance landscape and Baukultur qualities*



14. *Outstanding landscapes – enhance regional landscape character*

3 Landscape quality objectives 2040

The landscape quality objectives, which are binding on the authorities, firm up the SLC's vision for 2040. They constitute the content framework of the SLC and help landscape actors at federal, cantonal and communal level to achieve a high level of landscape quality. The *general landscape quality objectives* apply to the entire area of

Switzerland. The *quality objectives for specific landscapes* address spatial challenges based on the distinctions contained in the Spatial Strategy for Switzerland as well as current cantonal spatial development strategies. They ensure that the SLC is more effectively integrated with spatial planning instruments.

General landscape quality objectives:

Objective 1: Enhance Switzerland's landscape diversity and beauty: The diversity and beauty of Swiss landscapes are preserved in terms of their quality and further enhanced by the strengthening of region-specific natural and cultural characteristics.

Objective 2: Strengthen the landscape as a location factor: As a key location factor, the landscape with its natural and cultural values is an attractive and tangible asset. Its benefits in terms of value added, identity, recreation, health and aesthetic pleasure are recognised and safeguarded.

Objective 3: Ensure that land uses are site-appropriate: Land uses are varied and multifunctional, cause minimal disruption and are adapted to the natural conditions of the site and the specific cultural values of the region. They enhance landscape distinctiveness, ensure habitat functionality and promote the design of valuable transitional zones.

Objective 4: Perform interventions carefully and with a focus on quality: Buildings and installations take account of the landscape distinctiveness of their location and are designed with a focus on quality. Land is used economically and adverse impact on ecologically valuable habitats is minimised. The necessary protection and restoration measures and, where required, appropriate

compensatory measures are carried out promptly and secured effectively over the long term. Co-locating infrastructures, concentrating buildings and removing adverse impacts enhances the landscape quality.

Objective 5: Recognise the cultural and natural heritage of the landscape: Landscapes, sites of local character and monuments that are protected or worthy of protection, together with their surroundings, are recognised as valuable evidence of natural and cultural history, and are safeguarded and enhanced through spatial planning processes.

Objective 6: Protect and connect high-quality habitats: Valuable natural and semi-natural habitats are conserved, enhanced and connected in order to promote landscape quality and safeguard ecosystem functions and species. In particular, wildlife corridors of supraregional importance are able to fulfil their function and are protected through spatial planning processes.

Objective 7: Allow natural dynamics to take place: Landscapes in which development dynamics can take place naturally are supported. For example, waters are given sufficient space and allowed to develop in a natural or near-natural way. Such landscapes provide ecologically valuable habitats for indigenous species and, where possible, a setting in which people can experience nature and engage in recreational activity.

1 / *Enhance Switzerland's landscape diversity and beauty*



Quality objectives for specific landscapes:

Objective 8: Urban landscapes – consolidate settlement areas with a focus on quality, ensure green spaces:

Quality-oriented inward settlement development nurtures and strengthens urban qualities and hallmarks of settlements, site-appropriate settlement structures and building types, attractive open spaces, a sense of place and cultural/historical heritage. A wide range of near-natural, well-designed and usable open spaces such as green spaces, river corridors, unsealed surfaces, trees and woodland, bodies of water, ventilation corridors and green roofs and facades add ecological value to urban areas. They help to create a pleasant urban climate, promote good water balance and biodiversity, and enable recreation, exercise and proximity to nature.

Objective 9: Peri-urban landscapes – protect against further urban sprawl, design settlement edges:

Settlement growth is concentrated in central locations that are well served by public transport. High-quality, inwardly developed settlements are clearly demarcated, fit in well with the surrounding landscape and have sufficient open spaces. At the edges of settlements, settlement boundaries are secured in the long term and the transition from the settlement area to the surrounding landscape is designed in a high-quality way. The settlement edge provides local people with inviting exercise and recreational opportunities that are readily accessible by non-motorised transport, while also contributing to ecological connectivity.

Objective 10: Rural landscapes – prioritise site-appropriate use:

Land uses typical of the region and characteristic landscape qualities, including natural values and *Baukultur*, are maintained and promoted. Quality-oriented inward settlement development enhances landscape quality. Buildings and installations outside of building zones are concentrated in locations that are already easily accessible and they blend well into the landscape.

Objective 11: High alpine landscapes – preserve natural character:

High alpine landscapes retain their natural character, allowing people to experience nature and landscape. Development dynamics are allowed to take place naturally, provided that economically important infrastructures or settlements are not threatened. Interventions are optimised in terms of their location, dimensions and materials and are designed to high standards.

Objective 12: Landscapes used mainly for agriculture – conserve and ecologically enhance agricultural land:

Agricultural land is conserved in terms of its quality and quantity and is used sustainably; the expansion of building zones and the use of land outside of building zones are minimised. Special agricultural zones, especially for large-scale, non-soil-dependent agricultural production, are concentrated in less landscape-sensitive areas. Valuable natural and semi-natural habitats are conserved, enhanced and connected; they promote regional landscape character.

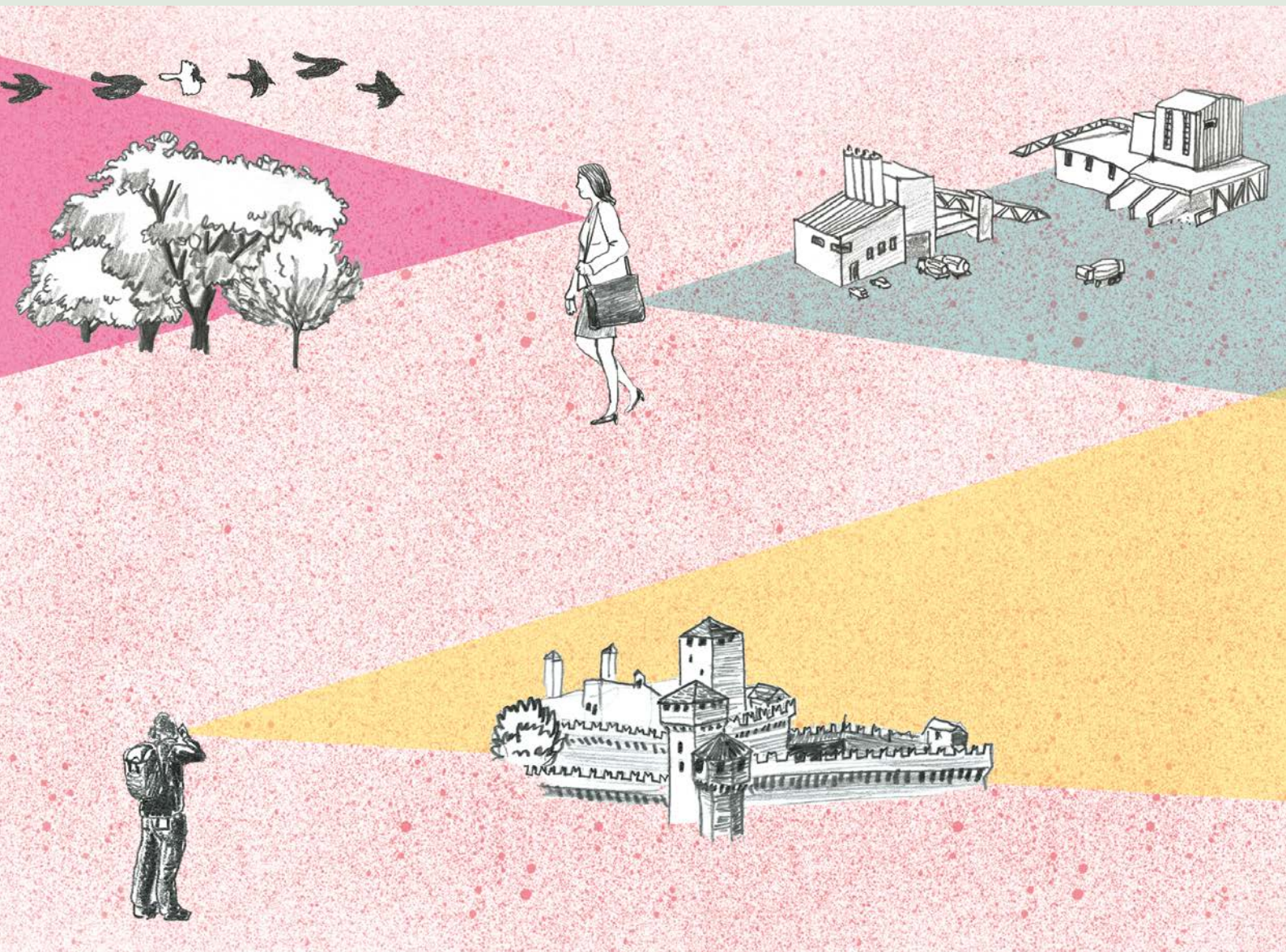
Objective 13: Tourist landscapes – safeguard and enhance landscape and *Baukultur* qualities:

Regional landscape and *Baukultur* qualities are safeguarded and strengthened. New and renovated tourist buildings and facilities are designed to fit in with the overall appearance of a locality as it has evolved over time, settlement structures and building types, cultural/historical heritage as well as landscape and natural values. Through their management, they contribute to the landscape and *Baukultur* qualities of the area. Tourism infrastructure as well as facilities intended for intensive use by tourists and extensions to such facilities are concentrated in suitable locations and spatially limited.

Objective 14: Outstanding landscapes – enhance regional landscape character:

The character of outstanding landscapes, with their cultural and natural values, is safeguarded and strengthened in the long term by the Confederation, cantons and communes. The landscapes are enhanced by means of measures based on the protection and development objectives and their landscape distinctiveness is strengthened.

2 | *Strengthen the landscape as a location factor*



4 Sectoral objectives

The sectoral objectives listed below concretise the landscape quality objectives for federal policy areas that affect the landscape. They take into account specific sectoral legislation, sectoral plans and concepts, enforce-

ment aids and guidelines, as well as strategies, real-life projects and even court decisions. They also reflect the different ways that enforcement has developed in different policy areas.

4.1 Federal buildings

The federal building authorities are responsible for federally owned buildings and their surroundings: the Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics (FOBL) in the civilian domain, the Federal Office for Defence Procurement (armasuisse) in the military domain and the ETH Board in the Domain of the Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology.

Objective 1.A Integration of buildings, *Baukultur*, quality assurance procedures: The value, in terms of *Baukultur*, of existing federal government buildings is recognised and preserved during further development. New and renovated buildings fit into the landscape and contribute through the quality of their architecture and design to a high level of *Baukultur*. Quality assurance procedures for the design and construction of new and renovated buildings help to achieve this objective.

Objective 1.B Quality of surroundings: The design of the surroundings of federal buildings is varied, in keeping with adjacent areas and conducive to ecological connectivity. Near-natural design and maintenance promote biodiversity and a balanced microclimate.

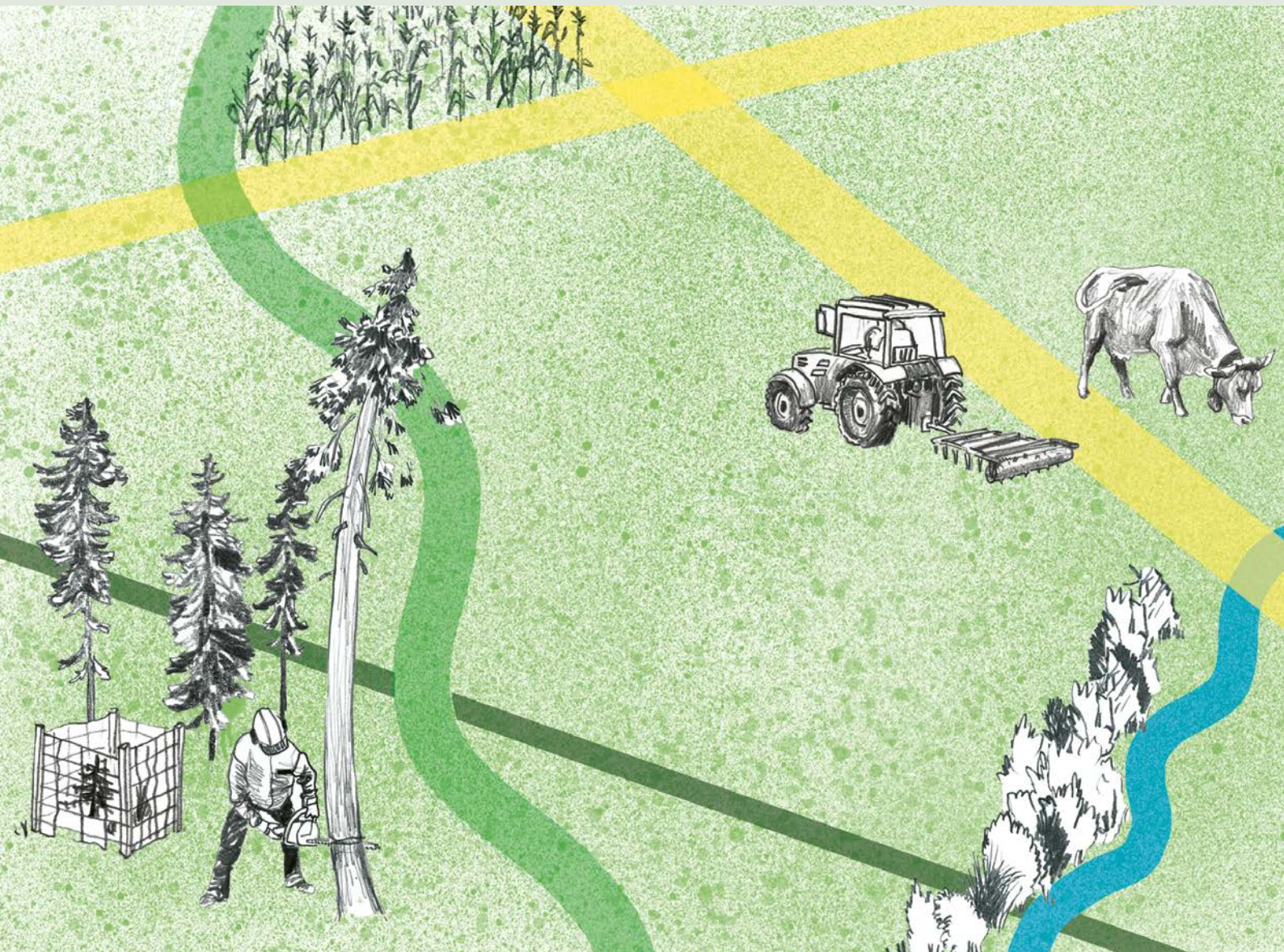
Objective 1.C Accessibility and recreation: The surroundings of federal buildings are accessible to the

public as far as possible. They are pleasant places to spend time and are thus conducive to recreation and relaxation.

Objective 1.D Landscape value, upkeep of heritage gardens: The landscape and heritage values of the surroundings of federal buildings are preserved and their upkeep is ensured. Where interventions take place, these values are enhanced where possible or at least preserved.

Objective 1.E Lease and sale: The high landscape, *Baukultur* and ecological values of federal buildings are preserved where possible, even if the buildings are leased. When selling such buildings, the Confederation ensures that these qualities can be preserved according to their importance.

3 / *Ensure that land uses are site-appropriate*



4.2 Energy

The Swiss Federal Office of Energy (SFOE) and – in the case of utility lines – the Federal Inspectorate for Heavy Current Installations (ESTI) and the Federal Pipelines Inspectorate (FPI) are responsible for ensuring that the Energy Strategy 2050 is implemented in an environmentally sustainable way. The Federal Office for the Environ-

ment (FOEN) efforts to reduce the negative impacts of hydropower use are subject to the sectoral objectives “hydraulic engineering”. The requirements for wind turbines are set out in a separate concept under Article 13 of the Spatial Planning Act (SPA).

Objective 2.A Energy generation and transmission facilities that are sensitive to the landscape and nature:

Energy generation, storage and transmission facilities are designed to be as sensitive to the landscape and nature as possible and take natural dynamics into account. Insofar as technically and operationally possible and financially viable, existing facilities that have a significant adverse impact on landscape quality and nature should be optimised, at every available opportunity, with solutions that are more landscape- and nature-friendly.

Objective 2.B Landscape protection: Energy generation and transmission facilities do not, where possible, adversely impact landscapes protected under federal law and cantonal landscape conservation areas or else preserve them as much as possible.

Objective 2.C Biotope protection: Energy transmission facilities do not, where possible, adversely impact sites listed in the inventories of biotopes of national importance and the inventory of water bird and migratory bird

reserves of international and national importance or else preserve them as much as possible. New renewable energy facilities are built away from these sites.

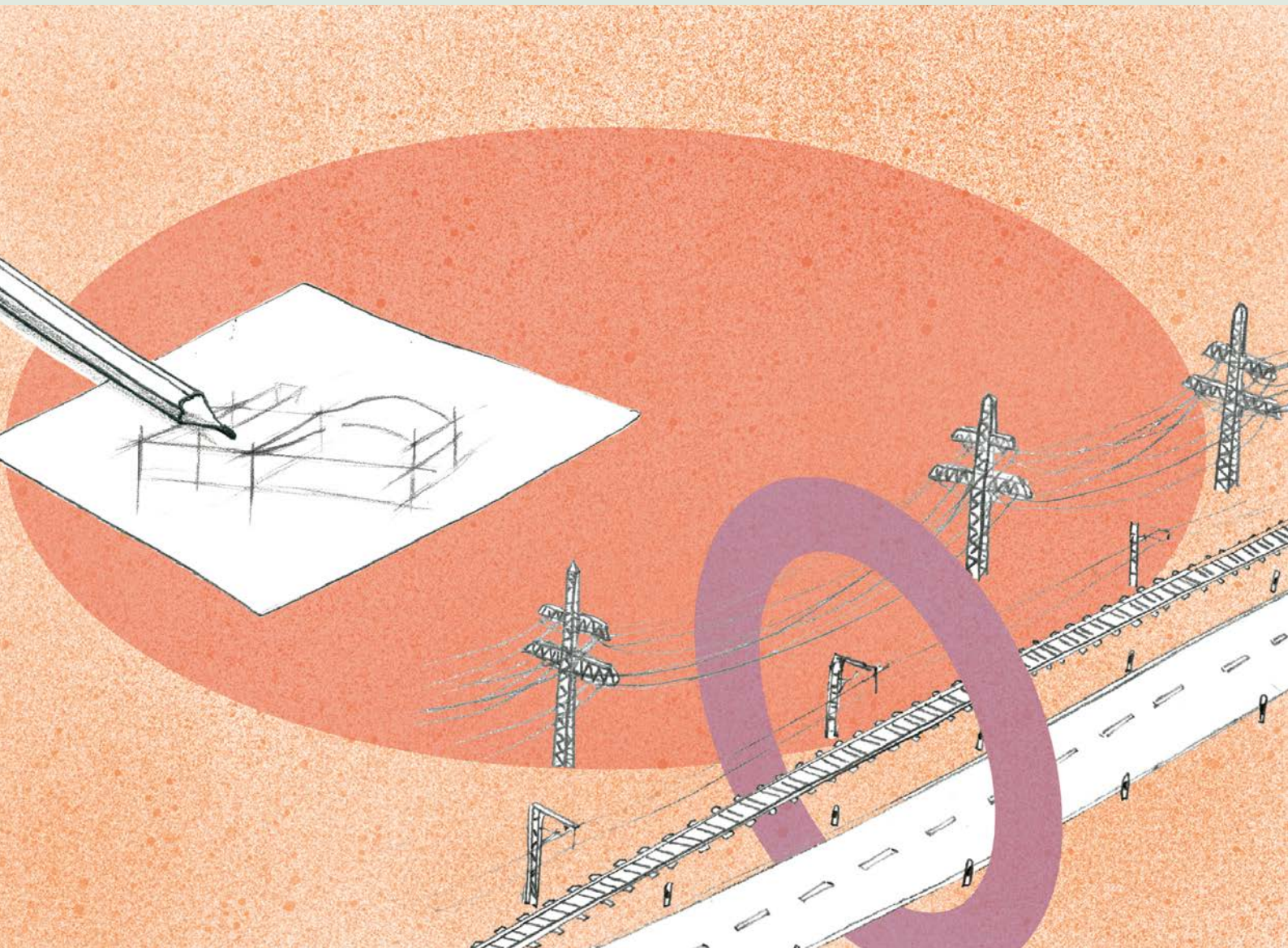
Objective 2.D Examining the co-location and underground cabling of transmission lines:

Where new transmission lines are built or existing lines undergo major modification or expansion, the possibility of co-location is examined, with existing line and infrastructure corridors being used wherever possible. The underground cabling (as part of the Electricity Grid Strategy) is also examined.

Objective 2.E Protection of birds: Birds are protected as much as possible from the dangers of overhead lines.

Objective 2.F Photovoltaic systems: Wherever possible, photovoltaic systems are mounted on infrastructure such as roofs or facades and their design blends into the landscape and heritage sites.

4 | *Perform interventions carefully
and with a focus on quality*



4.3 Health, physical activity and sport

Health promotion and the promotion of physical activity and sport invite a range of synergies between landscape policy and the policy areas of health, physical activity and sport. For many people, being able to spend time in attractive landscapes and experience nature are key motivations for undertaking sport and exercise. The health, physical activity and sport sectoral objectives assist the

Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) and the Federal Office of Sport (FOSPO) with their work to promote health, physical activity and sport. The field of physical activity and sport also ties in with non-motorised traffic, for which the Federal Roads Office (FEDRO) is responsible, and spatial planning, which falls within the remit of the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE).

Objective 3.A Strengthening cooperation and coordination: Coordination and cooperation between physical-activity and sports promotion and landscape policy are strengthened in order to identify and manage landscape-relevant developments at an early stage and exploit synergies.

Objective 3.B Health promotion in settlement and local recreational areas: The landscape quality of settlements is enhanced by the presence of sufficient near-natural open spaces and local recreational areas, which are easily reachable and publicly accessible. Good air quality and acoustic quality are promoted, and nuisance light

emissions reduced. A user-friendly network of non-motorised traffic routes for everyday life and leisure promotes physical activity and sport and exploits useful synergies to ecologically enhance the local area.

Objective 3.C Encouraging responsible behaviour: Attractive and publicly accessible landscapes promote physical activity, sport and leisure activities, thereby enhancing people's experience of and connection with the landscape and improving their health. The population is encouraged to behave in an environmentally responsible way, reducing disturbance and damage to landscape and nature.

General landscape quality objectives

5 / *Recognise the cultural
and natural heritage
of the landscape*



4.4 National defence

The Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (DDPS) is responsible for implementing federal policy on national defence. It can contribute to the SLC's

implementation in a variety of ways, particularly through its management of the property in its sphere of influence.

Objective 4.A Optimising activities: National defence activities and infrastructures are optimised to cause the least possible damage to landscape, nature and the environment.

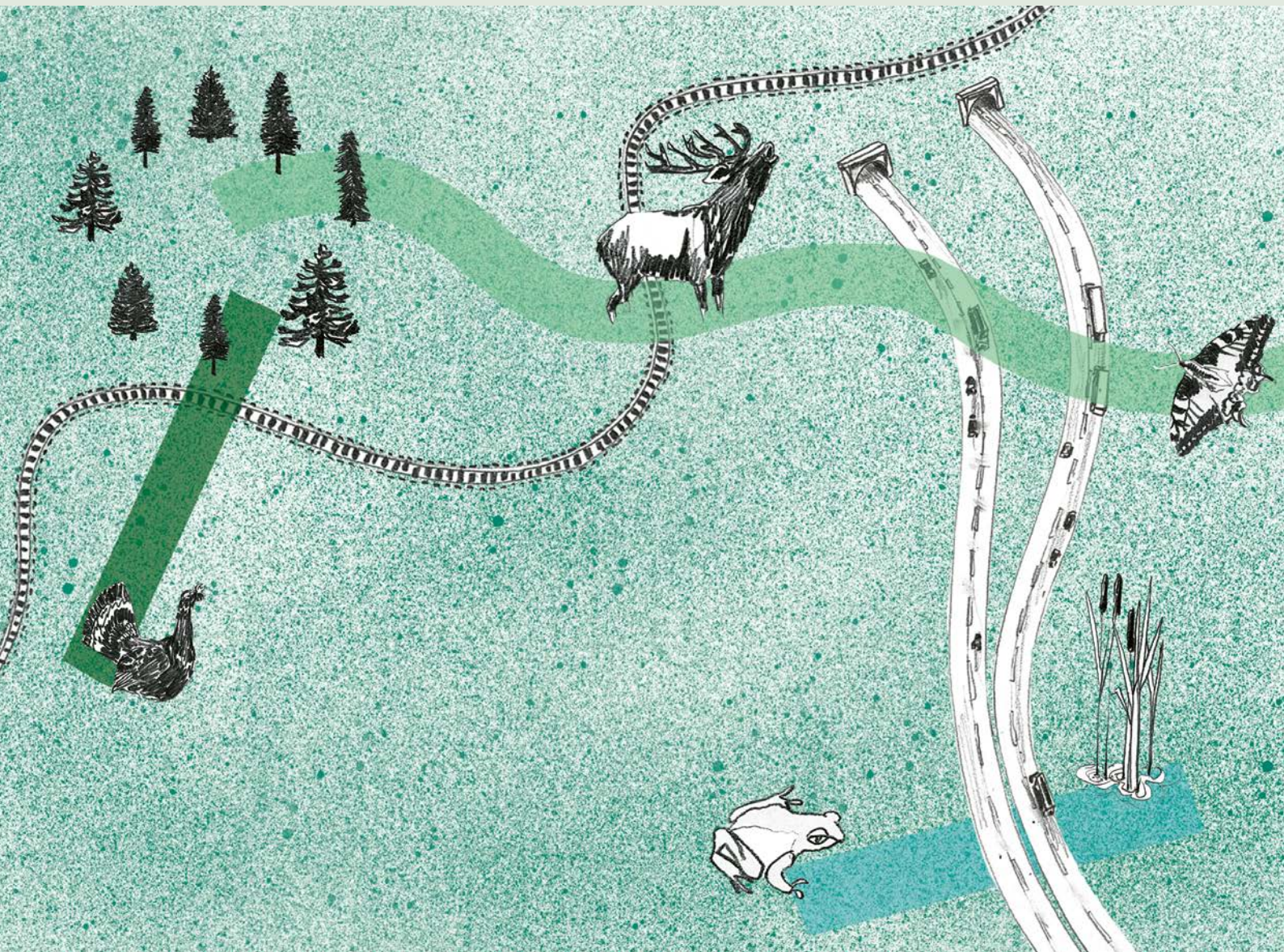
Objective 4.B Preserving and enhancing landscape and natural values: Landscape and natural values are preserved and enhanced by means of suitable measures, which support the diversity of natural and semi-natural habitats and their spatial connectivity. The positive effects of military operations on biodiversity are actively promoted. As far as possible, landscapes and nature in military areas throughout Switzerland are of

above-average quality. The military use of areas contained in the national biotope inventories is regulated.

Objective 4.C Subsequent civilian use: When military areas are handed over for civilian use, the natural and *Baukultur* values of these areas are respected. Efforts should be made to transform suitable areas in a way that enhances their landscape and natural qualities, and to spatially connect these areas.

Objective 4.D Extensive management: Agricultural land within the DDPS's sphere of influence is managed sustainably.

6 | *Protect and connect high-quality habitats*



4.5 Landscape policy, protection of nature and cultural heritage

For the Confederation, landscape policy and the protection of nature and cultural heritage are cross-cutting areas of activity – which is generally the case for all landscape-relevant sectoral policies, as the SLC demonstrates – as well as independent sectoral policy areas.

The “landscape policy, nature and cultural heritage protection” objectives binding on the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), the Federal Office of Culture (FOC) and the Federal Roads Office (FEDRO) are presented in this section.

Objective 5.A Ecological infrastructure: Sectoral policies at federal and cantonal level further the conservation, enhancement, targeted expansion and connectivity of valuable natural and semi-natural habitats, as well as their level-appropriate comprehensive protection, their upkeep and further development, their cross-border connectivity and their restoration in the event of functional impairment. They are supported by expertise, advice and subsidies.

Objective 5.B Landscapes of national importance: Landscapes of national importance are, at the very least, preserved in extent and quality and spatially protected. Measures are taken to further enhance them. Existing adverse impacts are mitigated or eliminated when opportunities arise.

Objective 5.C Assistance for regional and local sites: With federal assistance, regional and local landscapes, habitats, buildings and installations that are protected or worthy of protection are conserved or further developed in a high-quality way.

Objective 5.D Federal government activities: The FOEN, FOC and FEDRO support the sectoral policies by ensuring that their activities are sensitive to the landscape, promote biodiversity and are of a high quality. Synergies are exploited and cooperation strengthened.

Objective 5.E Research and teaching: Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and teaching, as well as dialogue and knowledge transfer between research and practice, are substantially strengthened.

Objective 5.F Empowering the population: The population has up-to-date knowledge of facts, objectives and required actions so that it can engage with the processes of quality-oriented landscape development.

Objective 5.G. Institutional capacity: The Confederation helps landscape actors to develop and expand the institutional capacity they need to take appropriate account of the landscape and its natural and *Baukultur* qualities in their decision-making.

7 | *Allow natural dynamics to take place*



4.6 Agriculture

Through sustainable and market-oriented production, multifunctional agriculture helps to conserve natural resources, manage the landscape, promote decentralised settlement and ensure security of supply for the popula-

tion. The Federal Office for Agriculture (FOAG) is responsible for the further development and implementation of agricultural policy.

Objective 6.A Strengthening regional landscape character: Regional landscape character is enhanced by site-appropriate and resource-efficient agricultural practices. The environmental objectives for agriculture in the areas of landscape and biodiversity are achieved on all agricultural land and summer grazing pastures.

Objective 6.B Safeguarding site-specific landscape qualities: Site-specific landscape qualities such as diversity of use, structural features and agricultural practices of particular landscape or ecological value are preserved and strengthened, taking ecological and economic aspects into account.

Objective 6.C Areas of high ecological quality: To strengthen the ecological infrastructure, sufficient land is managed as areas of high ecological quality (guide values per zone for the share of utilised agricultural area [UAA]: valley zone 12%, hill zone 15%, mountain zone I 20%, mountain zone II 30%, mountain zones III and IV 40%; in summer grazing pastures, the proportion of high-quality areas is 60%).

Objective 6.D Overall regional concepts: Biodiversity promotion is optimised based on an overall regional concept and enhances the diversity of valuable natural and semi-natural habitats and their spatial connectivity. Projects to promote landscape quality strengthen regional landscape character and provide specific incentives in outstanding landscapes.

Objective 6.E Cross-sectoral agricultural planning: Cultivation techniques and spatial planning measures outside the settlement area, which have a major spatial impact, are subject to cross-sectoral, regional or supraregional agricultural planning.

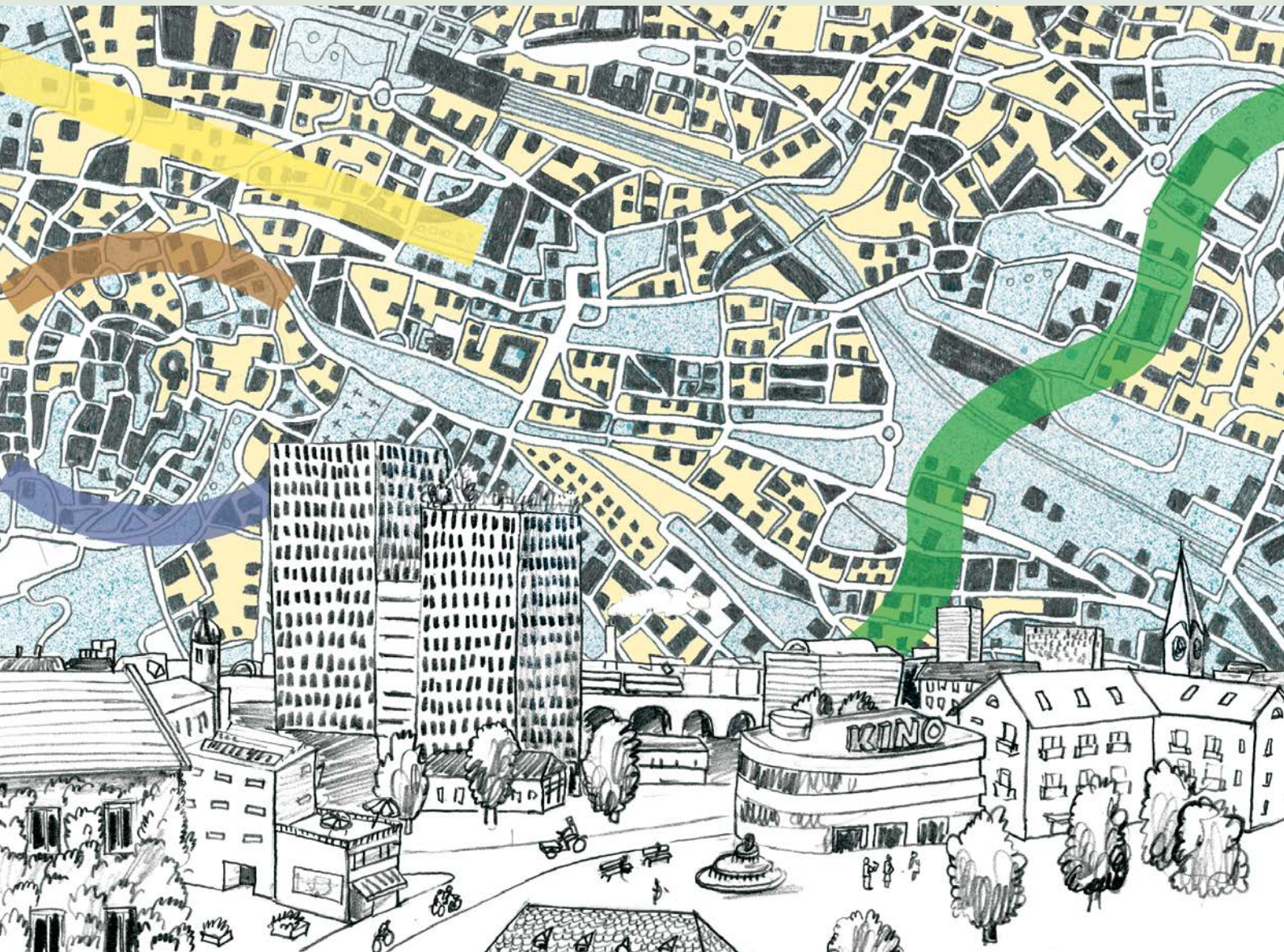
Objective 6.F Land improvement measures: Land improvement measures take account of existing landscape and natural values. They promote sensitive development of the countryside and support the creation of ecological infrastructure. They conserve and enhance species and habitat diversity, the distinctiveness of the landscape and its cultural landscape features, thereby helping to achieve sectoral objective 6.D.

Objective 6.G. Wetlands and drainage: In principle, no large wetland areas are newly drained. Rewetting soils that are less suitable for agricultural production or of great importance for species and habitat diversity and habitat connectivity may be permitted and, where possible, promoted as an enhancement measure. The renewal of existing drainage systems is generally confined to areas that are of prime importance for food security due to their soil quality.

Objective 6.H Agricultural buildings and installations: Especially in outstanding landscapes, the location, dimensions, materials and design of agricultural buildings and installations take account of the distinctiveness of the landscape, as well as the settlement structure and *Baukultur*.

Objective 6.I Protection of agricultural land: Farming practice is exemplary in conserving agricultural land, and especially in protecting crop rotation areas. It minimises land consumption; where possible, agricultural buildings and installations and, in particular, non-soil-dependent production and the associated infrastructure, are located on land that is less suitable for agriculture and of lower ecological priority. Where possible, agricultural buildings and installations that affect the landscape are removed when no longer required.

8 / *Urban landscapes – consolidate settlement areas with a focus on quality, ensure green spaces*



4.7 Spatial planning

The Federal Agency for Spatial Development (ARE) is the federal authority responsible for spatial development, mobility policy and sustainable development matters. As a concept under Article 13 of the Spatial Planning Act (SPA), the Swiss Landscape Concept (SLC) is a federal spatial planning instrument in the areas of landscape and nature. The spatial planning principles set out in section 2.3 of the SLC provide the framework for planning activities in the areas of landscape, nature and *Baukultur*. The

spatial planning sectoral objectives concretise the spatial planning requirements relating to landscape, nature and *Baukultur*, especially with regard to settlement development and construction outside of building areas. The Spatial Strategy for Switzerland, a vision for Switzerland's sustainable spatial development supported by all three levels of government, provides the overall guiding framework for spatial development. It is implemented in cooperation with other federal offices, cantons and communes.

Objective 7.A Quality-oriented inward settlement development: The clear separation of building and non-building areas and quality-oriented inward settlement development strengthen regional landscape character. They contribute to high-quality urban design that attaches great value to the natural environment and *Baukultur*.

Objective 7.B Open spaces and settlement edges: Settlement areas have high-quality open spaces, recreational areas and settlement edges that are accessible and readily served by non-motorised transport. The high-quality design of these areas combines recreational needs with opportunities to experience nature and fosters synergies with ecological connectivity. The design is also sensitive to local buildings.

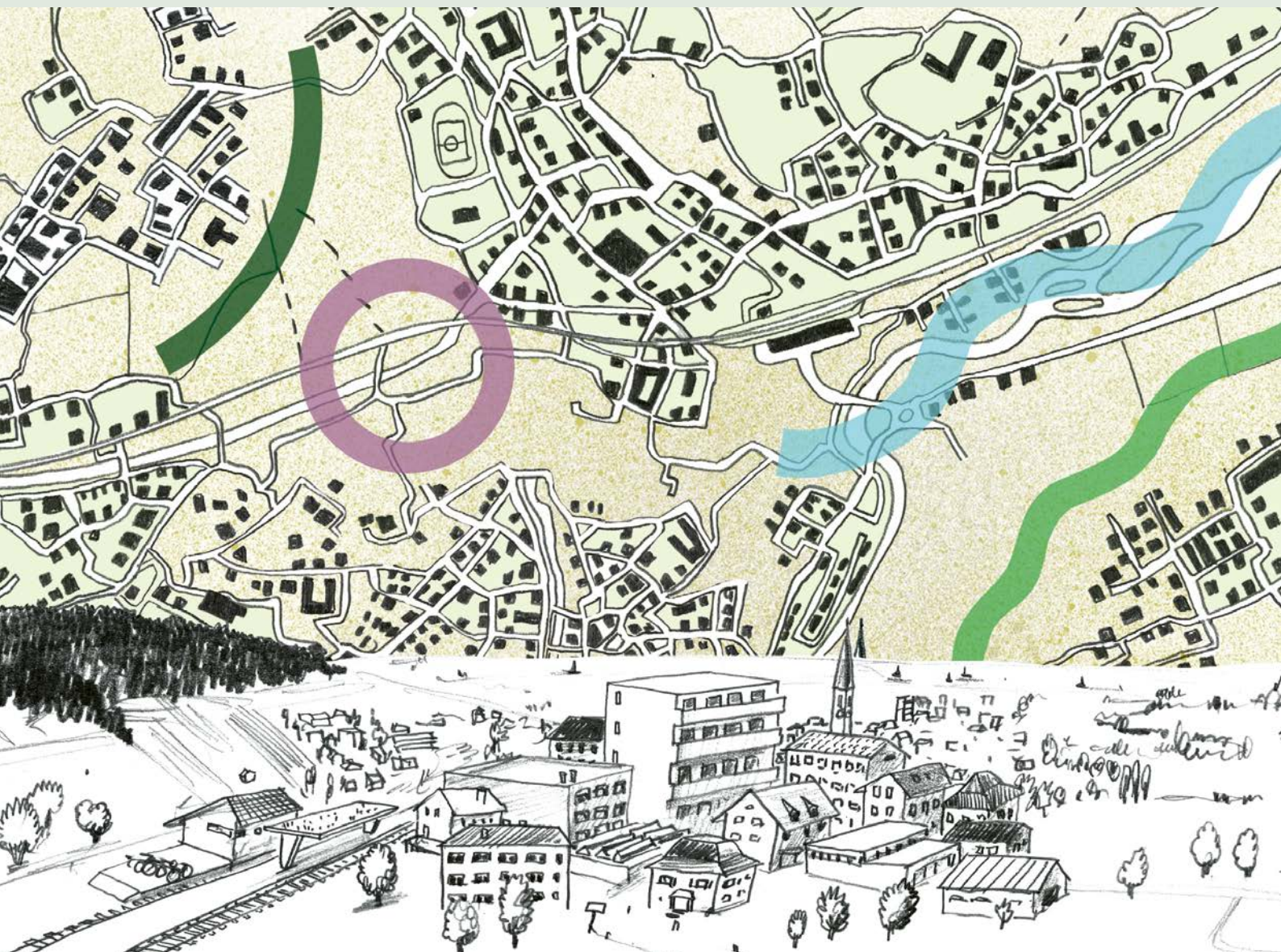
Objective 7.C Buildings and installations outside building areas: Buildings and installations outside building areas take account of the regional landscape charac-

ter: building development is kept to a minimum; the land is used economically; buildings and installations blend well into the landscape and are of high quality in terms of *Baukultur*. Where possible, buildings and installations that affect the landscape are removed when no longer in use.

Objective 7.D Natural and cultural heritage in planning: Outstanding natural and cultural landscapes, natural and cultural sites as well as the diversity of valuable natural and semi-natural habitats and their spatial connectivity are conserved in accordance with the relevant protection and development objectives and taken into account in planning processes at the appropriate level.

Objective 7.E Regional landscape quality objectives: Cantonal and regional landscape quality objectives are defined at the appropriate level and implemented by means of spatial planning instruments.

9 | *Peri-urban landscapes – protect against further urban sprawl, design settlement edges*



4.8 Regional development

Through its policy on rural and mountain areas (P-LRB), the Confederation works to create an attractive living environment, safeguard and develop natural resources, boost competitiveness and actively nurture cultural diversity. For the agglomerations, the Confederation's goals are a high quality of life, attractiveness as a business location, high-quality urban development and effective cooperation (Agglomeration Policy 2016+). As an important federal actor in regional development, the State Sec-

retariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) implements the New Regional Policy (NRP) together with the cantons. SECO is jointly responsible for the Agglomeration Policy and P-LRB with the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE) and implements them in cooperation with other federal agencies. Spatial planning and tourism, agriculture and environmental policy, with their respective instruments, also contribute to sustainable regional development.

Objective 8.A Landscape diversity as potential: Regional development strategies, concepts and programmes take account of the diversity of landscapes with their region-specific natural and cultural values as a key factor in location quality and help to safeguard this diversity while contributing to sustainable economic development.

Objective 8.B Minimising adverse impacts through subsidies: Federal agencies design subsidies and other

direct and indirect incentives so that they minimise adverse impacts on the landscape and nature.

Objective 8.C Empowering actors: Cantonal and regional partners involved in regional development are empowered to use the high quality of the landscape, with its diverse natural and cultural values, as potential for sustainable development, drawing on experience gained from the parks of national importance, among others.

10 | *Rural landscapes – prioritise site-appropriate use*



4.9 Tourism

High-quality landscapes and *Baukultur* are key to making Switzerland an attractive and productive tourist destination. The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) is responsible for the Confederation's tourism

policy. The Federal Office of Transport (FOT) is the licensing authority for cableways, while the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE) is the federal body responsible for implementing spatial planning processes.

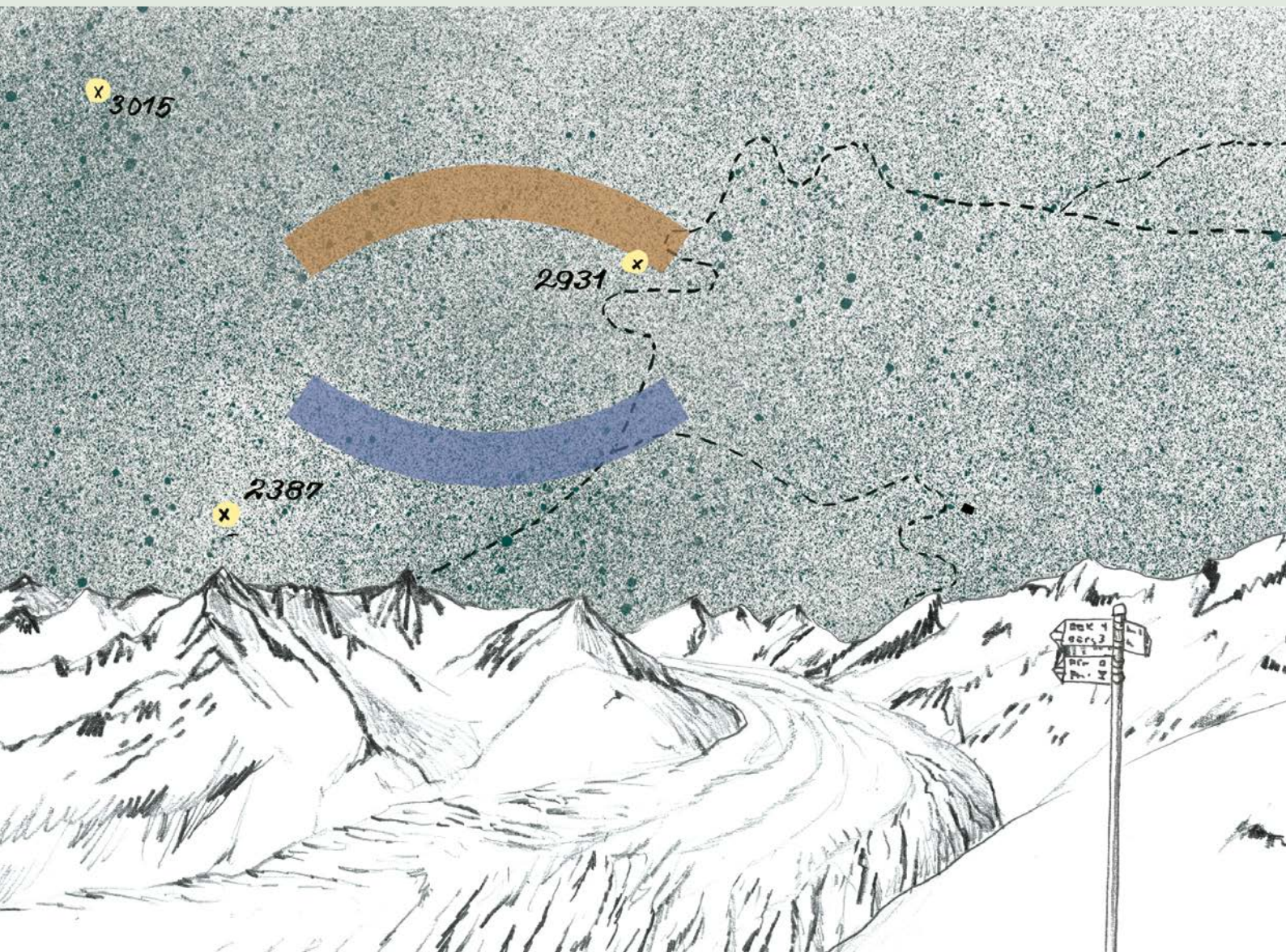
Objective 9.A Strengthening cooperation and coordination: Coordination and cooperation between tourism, landscape and cultural policies are strengthened in order to identify landscape-relevant developments at an early stage and exploit synergies for the enhancement and promotion of landscape and *Baukultur* qualities. This in turn supports cultural and nature tourism.

Objective 9.B Minimising adverse impacts: Adverse impacts of tourist infrastructure on landscape quality and disturbance of wildlife habitats are minimised.

Objective 9.C Safeguarding mountain landscape quality: The quality of mountain landscapes is safeguarded by means of spatial concentration and a limiting of intensive tourism-related land uses.

Objective 9.D Balanced accessibility ratio: The ratio between areas accessible and areas not accessible by tourist transport infrastructure is regionally balanced.

11 | *High alpine landscapes – preserve natural character*



4.10 Transport

The Federal Office of Transport (FOT) and the Federal Roads Office (FEDRO) are responsible for implementing federal policy on road, non-motorised and rail transport.

Objective 10.A Landscape-sensitive infrastructure:

Transport infrastructure is designed and built in a way that conserves space, land and soil, landscape and habitat. It is well integrated into the open countryside and built-up areas and its barrier effect is reduced.

Objective 10.B Co-location of infrastructures: Where major changes are planned, such as the construction of new transport infrastructure or the complete overhaul or expansion of existing transport infrastructure over a total length of (as a rule) at least 5 km, the possibilities of co-locating with new or existing infrastructure are examined.

Objective 10.C Noise control and high-quality open spaces: Traffic noise is minimised at source. As far as possible, open spaces that are perceived as being acoustically pleasant are conserved and new ones created, and lighting for traffic infrastructure is optimised. Noise control schemes and consideration of acoustic factors contribute to higher landscape and habitat quality. They improve the quality of time spent in the places concerned, especially in urban areas.

Objective 10.D Landscape and biodiversity in agglomerations:

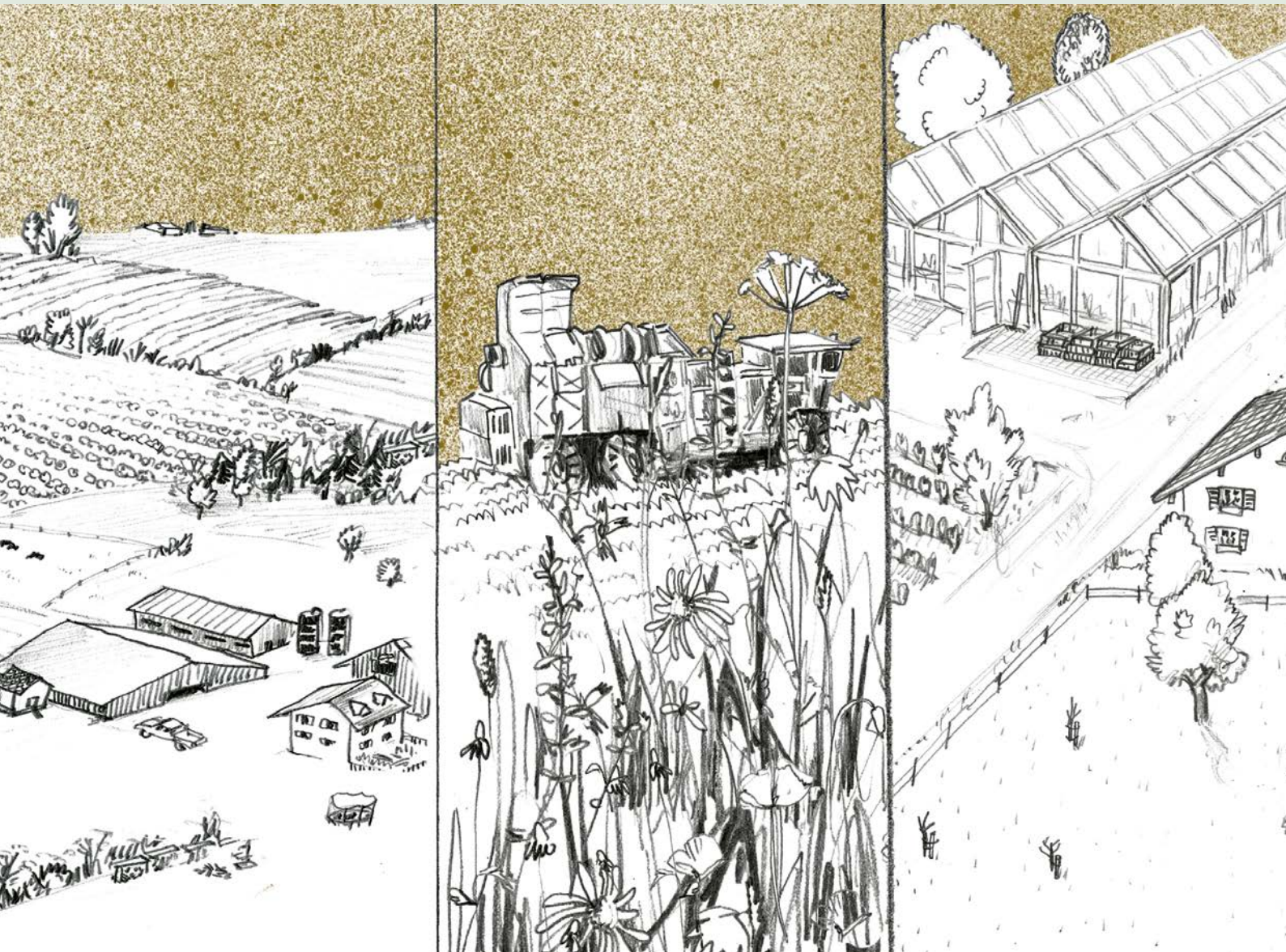
The agglomeration programmes and other regional plans coordinate the long-term preservation and enhancement of landscape and nature quality in agglomerations with transport and urban development and thus help to promote such quality.

Objective 10.E Reducing barrier effects: The landscape and ecological barrier effect of transport infrastructure is significantly reduced during modification, expansion or new construction work, during maintenance or by means of specific individual measures. The measures implemented are given long-term planning protection.

Objective 10.F Near-natural green spaces: Where conditions allow, green spaces in the immediate vicinity of roads and railway lines are designed in a near-natural way (at least 20%) and managed accordingly. Biodiversity priorities are respected, areas with high biodiversity potential are taken into account and appropriate checking and control measures against invasive alien species are applied throughout the green space.

12 |

Landscapes used mainly for agriculture – conserve and ecologically enhance agricultural land



4.11 Forest

Safeguarding the protective, social and economic functions of the forest is at the centre of forest policy, along with near-natural silviculture and conserving the forest in

its area and spatial distribution. The Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) is responsible for forest policy.

Objective 11.A Strengthening regional landscape character: Regional landscape character is enhanced across the entire managed forest area through maintenance and usage practices in keeping with the principles of near-natural silviculture, to ensure that forests provide the expected landscape and ecosystem services on a long-term basis.

Objective 11.B Preserving and enhancing landscape diversity: Development of the forest area is planned cross-sectorally with a view to ensuring landscape diversity, ecological connectivity and the fulfilment of forest functions. The compensation of forest clearing takes into account the objectives of the Federal Act on the Protection of Nature and Cultural Heritage (NHCA). It is undertaken in such a way as to enhance, in particular, biodiversity inside and outside the forest.

Objective 11.C Forests with cultural landscape value: In all regions of Switzerland, forest types with cultural landscape value, such as wooded pastures or chestnut and walnut groves, are present in the appropriate quality and quantity.

Objective 11.D Forest reserves: Forest reserves ensure that sufficiently large natural forest ecosystems are conserved or newly created. They provide core habitats for fauna, flora and other forest-dwelling organisms or have a high landscape value.

Objective 11.E Forest habitats with landscape value: Forest habitats with landscape value such as forest edges (including transition zones), sparse forests, forest wetlands and national priority forest habitats are enhanced and conserved, together with the species that live in them. Such habitats are present to an appropriate degree in all regions of Switzerland, according to their natural potential.

Objective 11.F Exploiting synergies with spatial planning and agricultural policy: Forest planning exploits synergies with spatial planning and agricultural policy instruments.

13 | *Tourist landscapes – safeguard and enhance landscape and Baukultur qualities*



4.12 Hydraulic engineering and protection against natural hazards

The Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) is responsible at federal level for hydraulic engineering and protection against natural hazards. The cantons and the

energy, spatial planning, transport and forest sectors have an important role to play in practical implementation on the ground.

Objective 12.A Landscape importance of water spaces, springs and wetlands: The natural diversity and functionality of waters and the spaces provided for them and of springs and wetlands contribute to regional landscape character. They are conserved, restored and enhanced, and where interventions are unavoidable, rehabilitation measures are implemented in a timely manner.

Objective 12.B Strengthening natural dynamics: The natural dynamics of waters are strengthened. The natural and landscape functions of waters are safeguarded by ensuring that waters have appropriate space, carrying out restoration measures and allowing natural processes to take place.

Objective 12.C Flood protection: Flood protection in accordance with the Hydraulic Engineering Act (WBG) is primarily ensured through spatial planning measures and near-natural river maintenance. Flood protection measures show consideration for the ecological functions of waters and take account of and enhance landscape distinctiveness.

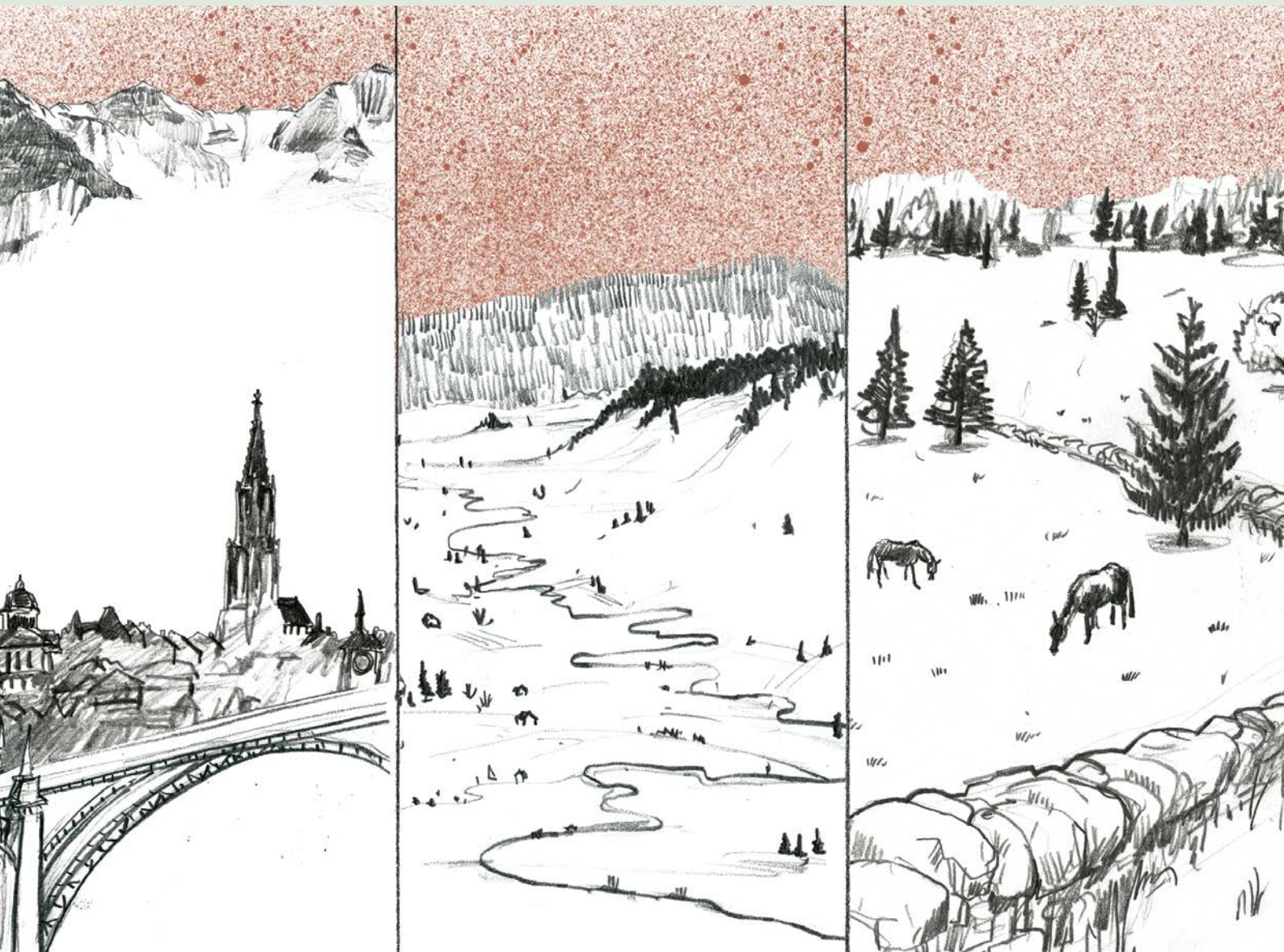
Objective 12.D Ecological connectivity: The ecological connectivity and landscape quality of waters are preserved and where necessary restored. Waters with their natural or near-natural riparian zones structure the landscape and make a significant contribution to the ecological infrastructure. Riparian vegetation provides adequate shade, bearing in mind the effects of climate change. In suitable places it is left to develop undisturbed.

Objective 12.E Hydraulic engineering measures: Hydraulic engineering measures allow people to experience the landscape and use it for recreational purposes while respecting the ecological functions of the waters and the distinctiveness of the landscape.

Objective 12.F Protecting against mass movements: Protection against natural hazards in accordance with the Forest Act (ForA) is ensured in particular by means of spatial planning measures or measures that are well integrated into the landscape.

Quality objectives for specific landscapes

14 | Outstanding landscapes – enhance regional landscape character



4.13 Civil aviation

The Federal Office of Civil Aviation (FOCA) is responsible for Swiss civil aviation operations.

Objective 13.A Coordinated spatial planning of aviation infrastructure: By coordinating the spatial planning of civil aviation infrastructure with the concerns of the population and the interests of the landscape and nature, viable measures are taken to minimise adverse impacts in line with the precautionary principle, subject to safety considerations.

Objective 13.B Landscape and ecological potential of aviation infrastructure: Landscape and ecological potential is taken into account in the spatial coordination of aviation infrastructure.

Objective 13.C Minimising aircraft noise and other harmful impacts: Aircraft noise and other harmful impacts of air traffic on the landscape and nature are minimised, especially above settlement and local recreational areas and in federally protected landscapes and wildlife habitats covered by the protection objectives on tranquillity and minimal disturbance.

Objective 13.D Hang-gliding: Hang-gliding takes place in a manner consistent with the protection of wildlife habitats.

Objective 13.E Unmanned aerial vehicles: Disturbance caused by unmanned aerial vehicles is minimised.

Objective 13.F Tranquillity landscape zones: Tranquillity landscape zones are permanently safeguarded.

Objective 13.G Ecological compensation: Areas within aerodrome perimeters that are not used for aviation purposes are ecologically enhanced subject to aviation safety and security regulations and future expansion requirements. The ecological compensation areas conserve and promote biodiversity. They are protected to a sufficient extent (guideline value: 12%). Where objectively justified and ecologically sound, the compensation may also take place outside the aerodrome perimeter.

Annex

Glossary

Biodiversity: Term denoting the species diversity of animals, plants, fungi and microorganisms, the genetic diversity within the different species, the diversity of habitats and the interactions within and between these levels.

Baukultur (building culture): covers all activities that change the living space. It is present wherever people are shaping their living space in all its diversity. It covers the landscape, the built and unbuilt space and everything in between. *Baukultur* thus combines the past with the future and technical detail with large-scale planning. High-quality *Baukultur* leads to well designed and lively cities and villages equipped to meet changing social requirements while preserving their historical character at the same time.

Ecological infrastructure: A “web of life” for Switzerland, the ecological infrastructure is instrumental in safeguarding the core services that ecosystems provide to society and the economy. It consists of core areas and connecting areas, which are distributed spatially in a suitable configuration and in sufficient quality and quantity, linked together and connected up with ecologically important areas in neighbouring countries. It takes into account the development and mobility needs of different species in their respective ranges, factoring in changing conditions such as climate change. It provides for habitats that can function and regenerate over the long term and thus, together with sustainable use of natural resources nationwide, forms the basis for a rich biodiversity capable of adapting to change.

Landscape: Landscape encompasses all space as perceived and experienced by people. With its natural and cultural values, it is both a habitat for animals and plants (see Biodiversity) and a space for living, working, recreation, exercise, cultural and economic activity. Because of these many and varied functions, the landscape provides important services in terms of well-being and prosperity (see Landscape services). Landscapes are dynamic, interactive systems that are constantly evolving in

response to natural factors and the way they are used and shaped by people.

Landscape beauty: Term denoting the perceived quality of a landscape. While landscape preferences can vary from person to person and according to the situation, especially with small-scale landscapes, there is nonetheless a high level of intersubjective agreement and some general aesthetic principles can be assumed. Highly structured landscapes featuring a mix of open space and trees are considered easy to read and are generally characterised as “beautiful”.

Landscape character: Expression of the landscape comprising its regional distinctiveness, beauty and diversity. It also includes sensory aspects such as tranquillity, colours, smells, light and so on.

Landscape conservation objectives: Stipulations defining the characteristic qualities and land uses to be conserved and promoted in a particular landscape to ensure its sustainable development. In protected areas, the landscape protection objectives perform the function of landscape conservation objectives. Landscape conservation objectives are usually achieved through measures that protect, preserve and promote characteristic, rare, typical and formative aspects of the landscape.

Landscape development objectives: Stipulations regarding the desired future development of a landscape. Landscape development objectives aim to enhance the specific character and the special and potential values of the landscape. Landscape development objectives are usually achieved through active design measures that promote or enhance the characteristic aspects of the landscape.

Landscape distinctiveness: Term denoting the characteristics that typify and shape the identity of a landscape. A landscape’s distinctiveness has evolved gradually over the course of its natural and cultural history and is evidenced in built, use-related or natural features and structures. The term can be used for both near-natural landscapes and those shaped by human activity.

Landscape diversity: Term describing the frequency of occurrence and spatial arrangement of landscape elements and structures such as relief, soil, waters, fauna and flora, uses as well as buildings and installations. Contrasts increase the visible diversity and hence the latter's importance in terms of landscape aesthetics.

Landscape quality: The quality of a landscape is manifested in the way its particular values and characteristics have developed and how it meets the diverse needs of people and the environment.

Landscape services: Name given to landscape functions that provide direct economic, social and environmental benefits to individuals and society. These benefits include material contributions such as value creation due to location factors and food production as well as regulatory contributions such as pollination and water purification. Landscapes also provide non-material services that are experienced within them: they create feelings of connectedness and so help to forge a sense of local or regional identity, they are a source of aesthetic pleasure and promote recreation, physical activity and health. The landscape can only provide its diverse services for society and the economy if it is of a high quality. This depends, among other things, on biodiversity that is able to function sustainably and on the ability of natural resources to regenerate.

Landscapes of national importance: Term denoting mire landscapes, sites contained in the landscape inventories ILNM, ISOS and IVS, parks of national importance, World Heritage Sites and protected areas under the Ordinance on Compensation for Losses due to the Use of Hydraulic Power (CLHPO).

Nature: In the context of the SLC, the term "nature" describes the spatial aspects of functional biodiversity.

Open space: This term refers to spaces that are not developed. It includes green spaces such as the areas around buildings, parks and gardens, forest, farmland, waters and fallow/waste land, but also multifunctional traffic space and publicly accessible spaces.

Outstanding landscapes: Collective term for landscapes of national importance (mire landscapes, sites contained in the landscape inventories ILNM, ISOS and IVS, parks of national importance, World Heritage Sites and protected areas under the Ordinance on Compensation for Losses due to the Use of Hydraulic Power [CLHPO]), large-scale sites contained in the biotope inventories and landscapes that are protected or worthy of protection at cantonal level.

Wildlife corridors of supraregional importance: The set routes that wildlife uses to move across large areas are known as wildlife corridors. Wildlife corridors of supraregional importance connect populations with one another over a wide area, within the range of a particular species.

Set of measures

See separate document at www.bafu.admin.ch/landschaftskonzept (only available in German, French and Italian, see also section 1.7)

