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Federal Act on the Protection of the Environment (Environmental Protection Act, EPA)

of 7 October 1983 (Status as of 1 January 2021)

*The Federal Assembly of the Swiss Confederation,
based on the Article 74 paragraphs 1 of the Federal Constitution^{1,2}
and having considered a Federal Council Dispatch dated 31 October 1979³,
decrees:*

Title 1 Principles and General Provisions

Chapter 1 Principles

Art. 1 Aim

¹ This Act is intended to protect people, animals and plants, their biological communities and habitats against harmful effects or nuisances and to preserve the natural foundations of life sustainably, in particular biological diversity and the fertility of the soil.⁴

² Early preventive measures must be taken in order to limit effects which could become harmful or a nuisance.

Art. 2 Polluter pays principle

Any person who causes measures to be taken under this Act must bear the costs.

AS 1984 1122

¹ SR 101.

² Amended by No II 1 of the FA of 19 March 2010, in force since 1 Aug. 2010 (AS 2010 3233; BBl 2009 5435).

³ BBl 1979 III 749

⁴ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

Art. 3 Reservation of other legislation

¹ Stricter regulations in other federal legislation are reserved.

² Radioactive substances and ionising rays are covered by the legislation on protection against radiation and on atomic energy.⁵

Art. 4 Implementing provisions based on other federal legislation

¹ Regulations on the environmental effects of air pollution, noise, vibrations and radiation that are based on other federal legislation must comply with the principles of limitation of emissions (Art. 11), ambient limit values (Art. 13–15), alarm values (Art. 19) and planning values (Art. 23–25).⁶

² Regulations on the handling of substances and organisms affecting the environment that are based on other federal legislation must comply with the principles governing environmentally hazardous substances (Art. 26–28) and organisms (Art. 29*a*–29*h*).⁷

Art. 5 Exemptions for reasons of national defence

If the interests of national defence so require, the Federal Council regulates exemptions from the provisions of this Act by means of ordinances.

Art. 6⁸**Chapter 2** General Provisions**Art. 7** Definitions

¹ Effects are air pollution, noise, vibrations, radiation, water pollution or other interference in water, soil pollution, modifications of the genetic material of organisms or modifications of biological diversity caused by the construction and operation of installations, by the handling of substances, organisms or waste, or by the cultivation of the soil.⁹

² Air pollution, noise, vibrations and radiation are referred to as emissions when discharged from installations, and as ambient pollution levels at their point of impact.

⁵ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

⁶ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

⁷ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

⁸ Repealed by Art. 2 No I of the FD of 27 Sept. 2013 (Aarhus Convention), with effect from 1 June 2014 (AS 2014 1021; BBl 2012 4323).

⁹ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

³ Air pollution means modification of the natural condition of the air, in particular, through smoke, soot, dust, gases, aerosols, steams, odours or waste heat.¹⁰

⁴ Infrasound and ultra sound are regarded as noise.

^{4bis} Soil pollution is the physical, chemical and biological modification of the natural condition of the soil. Soil means the unsealed top layer of land where plants may grow.¹¹

⁵ Substances are natural or manufactured chemical elements and their compounds. Preparations (mixtures, blends and solutions) and articles containing such substances are also regarded as substances.¹²

^{5bis} Organisms are any cellular or non-cellular biological entity capable of replication or of transferring genetic material. Mixtures and articles containing such entities are also regarded as organisms.¹³

^{5ter} Genetically modified organisms are organisms whose genetic material has been changed in a way that does not occur under natural conditions by crossbreeding or natural recombination.¹⁴

^{5quater} Pathogenic organisms are organisms that can cause disease.¹⁵

⁶ Waste is any moveable material disposed of by its holder or the disposal of which is required in the public interest.¹⁶

^{6bis} Disposal of waste includes its recovery or deposit in a landfill as well as the preliminary stages of collection, transport, storage and treatment. «Treatment» is any physical, chemical or biological modification of the waste.¹⁷

^{6ter} Handling means any activity in connection with substances, organisms or waste, and in particular their manufacture, import, export, putting in circulation, use, storage, transport or disposal.¹⁸

⁷ Installations are buildings, traffic routes and other fixed facilities as well as modifications of the terrain. Appliances, machines, vehicles, ships and aircraft are also regarded as installations.

¹⁰ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445).

¹¹ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445).

¹² Amended by Annex No II 2 of the Chemicals Act of 15 Dec. 2000, in force since 1 Aug. 2005 (AS **2004** 4763, **2005** 2293; BBl **2000** 687).

¹³ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445).

¹⁴ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445).

¹⁵ Inserted by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4803; BBl **2000** 2391).

¹⁶ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445).

¹⁷ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445).

¹⁸ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445). Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4803; BBl **2000** 2391).

⁸ Environmental information is information in the fields addressed by this Act and in the fields addressed by legislation on the protection of nature and cultural heritage, landscape protection, waters protection, protection against natural hazards, forest conservation, hunting, fishing, gene technology and climate protection.¹⁹

⁹ Biogenic motor and thermal fuels are liquid or gaseous motor and thermal fuels that are produced from biomass or other renewable energy sources.²⁰

Art. 8 Assessment of effects

Effects are assessed individually, collectively and according to their actions in combination.

Art. 9²¹

Art. 10 Disaster prevention

¹ Any person who operates or intends to operate installations which, in exceptional circumstances, could seriously damage people or their natural environment must take the measures required to protect the population and the environment.²² In particular, suitable sites must be chosen, the required safety distances must be observed, technical safety measures must be taken and the monitoring of the installation and organisation of the alarm system must be ensured.

² The cantons coordinate the services responsible for disaster prevention and designate a reporting agency.

³ The operator of the installation must immediately report any extraordinary event to the reporting agency.²³

⁴ The Federal Council may prohibit by ordinance certain production methods and the keeping of certain stocks if there is no other way of protecting the population and the natural environment adequately.

¹⁹ Inserted by Art. 2 No I of the FD of 27 Sept. 2013 (Aarhus Convention), in force since 1 June 2014 (AS **2014** 1021; BBl **2012** 4323).

²⁰ Inserted by the Annex to the FA of 21 March 2014 (AS **2016** 2661; BBl **2013** 5737 5783). Amended by No I 3 of the FA of 20 Dec. 2019 on the Extension of the Time Limit for Tax Relief for Natural Gas, Liquid Gas and Biogenic Fuels and on the Amendment of the Federal Act on the Reduction of CO₂ Emissions, in force from 1 July 2020 to 31 Dec. 2023 (AS **2020** 1269; BBl **2019** 5679 5813).

²¹ Repealed by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, with effect from 1 July 2007 (AS **2007** 2701; BBl **2005** 5351 5391).

²² Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445).

²³ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445).

Chapter 3²⁴ Environmental Impact Assessment

Art. 10a Environmental impact assessment

¹ Before taking any decision on the planning, construction or modification of installations, an authority must assess their impact on the environment at the earliest possible stage.

² The requirement of an environmental impact assessment applies to installations that could cause substantial pollution to environmental areas to the extent that it is probable that compliance with regulations on environmental protection can only be ensured through measures specific to the project or site.

³ The Federal Council designates the types of installation that are subject to an environmental impact assessment; it may stipulate threshold values above which the assessment must be carried out. It reviews the types of installation and threshold values periodically and adjusts these if required.

Art. 10b Environmental impact report

¹ Any person who wishes to plan, construct or modify an installation that is subject to an environmental impact assessment must submit an environmental impact report to the competent authority. This forms the basis for the environmental impact assessment.

² The report contains all the information required to assess the project in accordance with the environmental protection regulations. It is drawn up in accordance with the guidelines issued by the environmental protection agencies and includes the following:

- a. the existing condition;
- b.²⁵ the project, including proposed measures for the protection of the environment and in the event of disaster, and an outline of the main alternatives, if need be studied by the applicant;
- c. the foreseeable residual environmental impact.

³ In order to prepare for the report, a preliminary investigation is carried out. If the preliminary investigation conclusively ascertains the effects on the environment and the environmental protection measures required, the results of the preliminary investigation are deemed to be the report.

⁴ The competent authority may request information or further clarification. It may call for expert reports; before doing so, the authority must allow interested parties the opportunity to state their opinions.

²⁴ Inserted by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS 2007 2701; BBl 2005 5351 5391).

²⁵ Amended by Art. 2 No I of the FD of 27 Sept. 2013 (Aarhus Convention), in force since 1 June 2014 (AS 2014 1021; BBl 2012 4323).

Art. 10c Assessment of the report

¹ The environmental protection agencies assess the preliminary investigation and the report and proposes the measures required to the competent decision-making authority. The Federal Council issues regulations on the time limits for the assessment.

² The competent authority must also consult the Federal Office for the Environment (the Federal Office) when the assessment concerns refineries, aluminium smelters, thermal power stations, or large cooling towers. The Federal Council may extend the duty to consult to cover other installations.

Art. 10d Public access to the report

¹ Any person may inspect the report and the results of the environmental impact assessment unless overriding public or private interests require secrecy.

² Trade and business secrecy must be preserved in all cases.

Chapter 4²⁶ Environmental Information**Art. 10e** Environmental information and advice

¹ The authorities shall inform the public adequately about environmental protection and levels of environmental pollution; in particular:

- a. they shall publish studies on environmental pollution and on the success of measures under this Act (Art. 44);
- b. they may, provided it is of general interest and having consulted those concerned, publish:
 1. the results of the conformity assessment of series-produced installations (Art. 40),
 2. the results of inspections of installations,
 3. the information under Article 46.

² Overriding private and public interests in confidentiality and manufacturing and business secrecy are reserved in every case.

³ The environmental protection agencies shall advise the authorities and private individuals. They shall advise the public on environmentally sound behaviour and recommend measures to reduce environmental pollution.

⁴ Environmental information must if possible be made available as open digital data records.

²⁶ Inserted by Art. 2 No I of the FD of 27 Sept. 2013 (Aarhus Convention), in force since 1 June 2014 (AS 2014 1021; BBl 2012 4323).

Art. 10f Environmental reports

The Federal Council shall assess the state of the environment in Switzerland at least every four years and shall submit a report on the results to the the Federal Assembly.

Art. 10g Freedom of information in the case of environmental information

¹ Any person has the right to inspect environmental information in official documents and information relating to energy regulations that relate the environment and to request information from the authorities about the content of these documents.

² In the case of federal authorities, this right is governed by the Freedom of Information Act of 17 December 2004²⁷ (FoIA). Article 23 FoIA applies only to documents that contain information under paragraph 1 relating to nuclear installations.

³ The right to inspect also applies in the case of public corporations and private individuals who have been entrusted with enforcement duties but which do not have the power to issue rulings in accordance with Article 5 of the Administrative Procedure Act of 20 December 1968²⁸. In these cases, the competent enforcement authority shall issue rulings under Article 15 FoIA.

⁴ In the case of cantonal authorities, the right is governed by cantonal law. If the cantons have not issued provisions on the access to documents, they shall apply the provisions of this Act and the FoIA *mutatis mutandis*.

Title 2 Pollution Control**Chapter 1** Air Pollution, Noise, Vibrations and Radiation**Section 1** Emissions**Art. 11** Principles

¹ Air pollution, noise, vibrations and radiation are limited by measures taken at their source (limitation of emissions).

² Irrespective of the existing environmental pollution, as a precautionary measure emissions are limited as much as technology and operating conditions allow, provided that this is economically acceptable.

³ Emissions are limited more strictly if the effects are found or expected to be harmful or a nuisance, taking account of the existing level of environmental pollution.

Art. 12 Limitation of emissions

¹ Emissions are limited by issuing:

- a. maximum emission values;
- b. regulations on construction and equipment;

²⁷ SR 152.3

²⁸ SR 172.021

- c. traffic or operating regulations;
- d. regulations on the heat insulation of buildings;
- e. regulations on thermal and motor fuels.

² Limits are prescribed by ordinance or, in cases where an ordinance makes no such provision, by rulings based directly on this Act.

Section 2 Ambient Pollution Levels

Art. 13 Ambient limit values

¹ The Federal Council stipulates by ordinance the ambient limit values for assessing harmful effects or nuisances.

² In doing so, it also takes account of the effects of pollution levels on particularly sensitive groups such as children, the sick, the elderly and pregnant women.

Art. 14 Ambient limit values for air pollution

The ambient limit values for air pollution must be set so that, in the light of current scientific knowledge and experience, ambient air pollution below these levels:

- a. does not endanger people, animals or plants, their biological communities and habitats;
- b. does not seriously affect the well-being of the population;
- c. does not damage buildings;
- d. does not harm soil fertility, vegetation or waters.

Art. 15 Ambient limit values²⁵ for noise and vibrations

Ambient limit values for noise and vibrations must be set so that, in the light of current scientific knowledge and experience, ambient noise below these levels will not seriously disturb the well-being of the population.

Section 3 Improvements

Art. 16 Obligation to make improvements

¹ Installations which do not comply with the provisions of this Act or with the environmental provisions of other federal acts must be improved.

² The Federal Council enacts provisions on installations, the extent of the measures to be taken, the time limits and procedures.

³ Before ordering major improvement works, the authorities must request the operator of the installation to submit improvement proposals.

⁴ In urgent cases, the authorities must order improvements as a precautionary measure. In an emergency, they may order the shutdown of the installation.

Art. 17 Concessions in individual cases

¹ The authorities must grant concessions if any improvement under Article 16, paragraph 2 is disproportionate in a particular case.

² The ambient limit values for air pollutants and the alarm values for ambient noise levels must not, however, be exceeded.²⁹

Art. 18 Structural alteration or extension of installations requiring improvement

¹ Installations requiring improvement may be altered or extended only if they are improved at the same time.

² Concessions granted under Article 17 may be qualified or revoked.

Section 4 **Additional Regulations for Protection against Noise and Vibrations**

Art. 19 Alarm values

In order to assess the urgency of improvements (Art. 16 para. 2, and Art. 20), the Federal Council may set alarm values for ambient noise levels that are higher than the ambient limit values (Art. 15).

Art. 20 Soundproofing of existing buildings

¹ If ambient noise levels in existing buildings near existing roads, airports, railway installations or other public or licensed fixed installations cannot be reduced to below the alarm values by measures taken at their source, the owners of the buildings concerned are required to protect areas used for long-stay accommodation by providing soundproof windows or by other similar building measures.

² The owners of fixed installations emitting noise bear the cost of the required soundproofing measures unless they can prove that when the planning application was made for the building in question:

- a. the ambient limit values were already being exceeded; or
- b. the installation plans had already been made public.

²⁹ Amended by No I 10 of the FA of 17 March 2017 on the Stabilisation Programme 2017–2019, in force since 1 Jan. 2018 (AS 2017 5205; BBl 2016 4691).

Art. 21 Soundproofing of new buildings

¹ Any person who wishes to construct a building for use as long-stay accommodation must take adequate soundproofing measures to protect it against internal and external noise and against vibration.

² The Federal Council determines the minimum protection required by ordinance.

Art. 22 Building permits in areas affected by noise

¹ Building permits for new buildings intended for use as long-stay accommodation are issued, subject to paragraph 2, only if the ambient limit values are not exceeded.

² If the ambient limit values are exceeded, building permits for new buildings intended for use as long-stay accommodation are issued only if the rooms are suitably arranged and any necessary additional soundproofing measures are taken.³⁰

Art. 23 Planning values

The Federal Council lays down maximum planning values for the planning of new building zones and for protection against noise from new fixed installations. These planning values are lower than the ambient limit values.

Art. 24 Standards for building zones

¹ New building zones intended for residential buildings or for other buildings intended as long-stay accommodation may be planned only in areas where ambient noise levels do not exceed the planning values or in areas where these values can be met by the application of planning, design or structural measures. The rezoning of building zones does not constitute the definition of new building zones.³¹

² If the planning values are exceeded in an existing but as yet undeveloped building zone intended for residential buildings or other buildings intended as long-stay accommodation, it must be reallocated for a use that is less sensitive to noise, unless the planning values can be met in the greater part of the area by the application of planning, design or structural measures.

Art. 25 Construction of fixed installations

¹ New fixed installations may be constructed only if the ambient noise levels emitted from these installations alone do not exceed the planning values in the surrounding area; the planning authority may request a forecast of noise levels.

² Concessions may be granted if the installation is of overriding public benefit, in particular in relation to spatial planning, and compliance with the planning values

³⁰ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

³¹ Sentence inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

would place a disproportionate burden on the project.³² However, subject to paragraph 3, the ambient limit values must not be exceeded in this case.

³ If ambient limit values cannot be met during the construction of new roads, airports, railway installations or other public or licensed fixed installations by measures taken at source, buildings affected by the noise must be protected by soundproof windows or other similar building measures and the owner of the installation must bear the costs.

Chapter 2 Environmentally Hazardous Substances

Art. 26 Self-regulation

¹ The putting into circulation of substances for uses where, when handled correctly, they, their derivatives or waste may present a danger to the environment or indirectly endanger people is prohibited.³³

² To this end, the manufacturer or importer is responsible for their own self-regulation.

³ The Federal Council issues regulations on the nature, extent and supervision of the self-regulation.³⁴

Art. 27³⁵ Information for recipients

¹ Any person who puts substances into circulation must:

- a. inform recipients about their environment-related properties;
- b. provide recipients with instructions so that, when the substances are handled correctly, they do not present a danger to the environment or indirectly endanger people.

² The Federal Council issues regulations on the nature, content and extent of the information given to recipients.³⁶

³² Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

³³ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

³⁴ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

³⁵ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

³⁶ Amended by Annex No II 2 of the Chemicals Act of 15 Dec. 2000, in force since 1 Aug. 2005 (AS 2004 4763, 2005 2293; BBl 2000 687).

Art. 28³⁷ Environmentally safe handling

¹ Substances may only be handled in such a way that they, their derivatives or their waste cannot present a danger to the environment or indirectly endanger people.

² Instructions from manufacturers or importers must be complied with.

Art. 29 Federal Council regulations

¹ The Federal Council may enact regulations on substances which, due to their properties, method of use or the quantities used, may present a danger to the environment or indirectly endanger people.

² These regulations relate in particular to:

- a. substances that enter the environment due to their intended purpose, such as herbicides and pesticides, including wood preservatives and stock preservatives, fertilisers, growth regulators, road salts and propellants;
- b. substances or their derivatives that can accumulate in the environment, such as chlorinated organic compounds and heavy metals.

Chapter 3³⁸ Handling Organisms**Art. 29a** Principles

¹ Organisms must be handled in such a way that they, their metabolic products or wastes:

- a. cannot endanger the environment or people;
- b. do not harm biological diversity or its sustainable use.

² The handling of genetically modified organisms is governed by the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003³⁹.

³ Regulations in other federal acts that serve to protect people's health against immediate danger from organisms are reserved.

Art. 29b Activities in contained systems

¹ Any person who handles pathogenic organisms that he may not release for experimental purposes (Art. 29c) or put into circulation for uses in the environment (Art. 29d) must take all the containment measures required, in particular due to the risk that the organisms represent to the environment and to people.

³⁷ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

³⁸ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445). Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

³⁹ SR 814.91

² The Federal Council shall introduce a notification or authorisation obligation for handling of pathogenic organisms.

³ For certain pathogenic organisms and activities, the Federal Council may provide for a simplification of the notification or authorisation obligation or for exemptions if, in the light of current scientific knowledge or experience, an infringement of the principles contained in Article 29a is excluded.

Art. 29c Experimental releases

¹ Any person who wishes for experimental purposes to release pathogenic organisms that may not be put into circulation for uses in the environment (Art. 29d) requires the authorisation of the Confederation.

² The Federal Council determines the requirements and the procedure. It regulates in particular:

- a. the consultation with specialists;
- b. the financial guarantee for measures by which any effects causing damage or nuisance may be detected, averted or eliminated;
- c. the information provided to the general public.

³ For certain pathogenic organisms, it may provide for a simplification of the authorisation obligation or for exemptions if, in the light of current scientific knowledge or experience, an infringement of the principles contained in Article 29a is excluded.

Art. 29d Putting into circulation

¹ Organisms may not be put into circulation for uses in which the principles contained in Article 29a are infringed despite their being handled in accordance with the relevant provisions.

² The manufacturer or importer carries out its own self-regulation for this purpose. The Federal Council enacts regulations on the nature, extent and supervision of the self-regulation.

³ Pathogenic organisms may be put into circulation for uses in the environment only with the authorisation of the Confederation.

⁴ The Federal Council determines the requirements and the procedure and regulates the information provided to the general public. For certain pathogenic organisms, it may provide for a simplification of the authorisation obligation or for exemptions if, in the light of current scientific knowledge or experience, an infringement of principles contained in Article 29a is excluded.

Art. 29d^{bis} 40 Objection procedure

¹ Applications for authorisations under Articles 29c paragraph 1, 29d paragraph 3 and 29f paragraph 2 letter b shall be published by the issuing authority in the Federal Gazette and made available for public inspection for 30 days.

² Any person who is a party in accordance with the Federal Act of 20 December 1968⁴¹ on Administrative Procedure may file an objection with the issuing authority during the public inspection period. Persons who fail to file an objection are excluded from any further proceedings.

Art. 29e Information to recipients

¹ Any person who puts organisms into circulation must:

- a. inform recipients of properties of the organisms that are of significance to the application of principles contained in Article 29a;
- b. provide recipients with instructions so that handling according to the provisions will not result in any breach of the principles contained in Article 29a.

² Instructions from manufacturers and importers must be complied with.

Art. 29f Further Federal Council regulations

¹ The Federal Council shall issue further regulations on handling of organisms, their metabolic products and wastes if, due to their properties, the form of their use or the quantity used, the principles contained in Article 29a may be breached.

² It may in particular:

- a. regulate the transport and the import, export and transit of the organisms;
- b. declare handling certain organisms to be subject to authorisation, or restrict or prohibit such handling;
- c. stipulate measures to combat certain organisms or to prevent their occurrence;
- d. stipulate measures to prevent any harm to biological diversity and its sustainable use;
- e. require long-term studies into the handling of certain organisms;
- f. require public hearings in connection with licensing procedures.

Art. 29g Advisory committees

The Swiss Expert Committee for Biosafety and the Federal Ethics Committee on Non-human Biotechnology (Art. 22 and 23 of the Gene Technology Act of

⁴⁰ Inserted by No II 1 of the FA of 19 March 2010, in force since 1 Aug. 2010 (AS 2010 3233; BBl 2009 5435).

⁴¹ SR 172.021

21 March 2003⁴²) advise the Federal Council on the issue of regulations and on the enforcement of provisions on organisms.

Art. 29h⁴³

Chapter 4⁴⁴ **Waste**

Section 1 **Avoidance and Disposal of Waste**

Art. 30 Principles

¹ The production of waste should be avoided wherever possible.

² Waste must be recovered wherever possible.

³ Waste must be disposed of in an environmentally compatible way and, insofar as this is possible and reasonable, within Switzerland.

Art. 30a Avoidance

The Federal Council may:

- a. prohibit placing products intended for once-only, short-term use on the market if the benefits of such use do not justify the harm to the environment that they cause;
- b. prohibit the use of substances and organisms that considerably hamper disposal or the disposal of which may represent a danger to the environment;
- c. require manufacturers to avoid production waste where there is no known environmentally compatible process for its disposal.

Art. 30b Collection

¹ The Federal Council may require certain types of waste that are suitable for recovery or that need special treatment to be handed over separately for disposal.

² It may require those who put products into circulation that are suitable for recovery or need special treatment:

- a. to accept the return such products back after use;
- b. to charge a minimum deposit and to refund this when the product is returned.

³ It may arrange for the establishment of a deposit compensation fund and specifically require:

⁴² SR **814.91**

⁴³ Repealed by Art. 2 No I of the FD of 27 Sept. 2013 (Aarhus Convention), with effect from 1 June 2014 (AS **2014** 1021; BBl **2012** 4323).

⁴⁴ Originally Chapter 3. Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445).

- a. those who put products into circulation on which deposits are paid to pay any surplus from the deposit charges into the compensation fund;
- b. the surplus to be used to cover losses from refunding deposits and to encourage the return of products on which deposits are paid.

Art. 30c Treatment

¹ Waste intended for deposit in a landfill must be treated so that it contains as little organic bound carbon as possible and is as insoluble as possible in water.

² Waste must not be burned other than in incineration plants; the foregoing does not apply to the burning of natural forest, field and garden waste provided that this causes no excessive ambient pollution levels.

³ The Federal Council may issue further regulations on treatment for specific types of waste.

Art. 30d Recovery

The Federal Council may:

- a. require certain types of waste to be recovered if this is economically feasible and harms the environment less than other forms of disposal and the manufacture of new products;
- b. restrict the use of substances and products for certain purposes if this will promote the sale of equivalent products made from recovered waste without significant loss of quality or additional cost.

Art. 30e Depositing in landfills

¹ Waste may be deposited only in landfills.

² Any person wishing to set up or operate a landfill requires authorisation from the relevant canton; this will be issued only if he furnishes proof that the site is necessary. The types of waste that may be deposited on the site are specified in the authorisation.

Art. 30f Handling of special waste

¹ The Federal Council enacts regulations on handling of waste whose environmentally compatible disposal requires special measures (special waste). It also regulates the import, export and transit of such waste, paying special attention to the interests of regional cross-border cooperation as well as to the environmental impact of disposal facilities in Switzerland and abroad. It may also enact regulations for companies which from within Switzerland organise or are involved in handling of special waste.

² It requires, in particular, that special waste:

- a. must be marked as such for transfer within Switzerland as well as for import, export and transit;

- b. may be handed over in Switzerland only to companies with authorisation in terms of letter d;
- c. may be exported only with authorisation from the Federal Office;
- d. may be accepted or imported only by companies with authorisation from the canton.

³ These authorisations are granted if environmentally compatible disposal is guaranteed.

⁴ ...⁴⁵

Art. 30g Handling of other forms of waste

¹ The Federal Council may enact regulations in accordance with Article 30*f* paragraphs 1 and 2 on handling of other forms of waste, if environmentally compatible disposal is not guaranteed.

² ...⁴⁶

Art. 30h Waste disposal facilities

¹ The Federal Council enacts technical and organisational regulations on waste disposal facilities.

² The authority may set a time limit for the operation of waste disposal facilities.

Section 2 Waste Management and the Disposal Obligation

Art. 31 Waste management

¹ The cantons draw up a waste management plan. In particular, they establish their requirements for waste disposal facilities, avoid over-capacity, and decide on the sites for the waste disposal facilities.

² They notify the Confederation of their waste management plan.

Art. 31a Cooperation

¹ The cantons cooperate on waste management and disposal. They avoid over-capacity in waste disposal facilities.

² If they cannot agree, they must submit proposed solutions to the Confederation. If mediation by the Confederation does not lead to agreement, the Federal Council may order the cantons:

⁴⁵ Repealed by No 12 of the FA of 21 Dec. 2007 on the Abolition and Simplification of Licensing Procedures, with effect from 1 June 2008 (AS **2008** 2265; BBl **2007** 315).

⁴⁶ Repealed by No 12 of the FA of 21 Dec. 2007 on the Abolition and Simplification of Licensing Procedures, with effect from 1 June 2008 (AS **2008** 2265; BBl **2007** 315).

- a. to determine the areas from which waste must be delivered to the installations for treatment, recovery or deposit in landfills (catchment areas);
- b. to determine sites for waste disposal facilities;
- c. to make suitable waste disposal facilities available to other cantons; where necessary, it determines how costs are to be shared.

Art. 31b Disposal of municipal waste

¹ Municipal waste, waste from the maintenance of public roads and from public waste water treatment as well as waste generated by persons unknown or unable to pay is disposed of by the cantons. For waste that must be recovered by the holder or the return of which must be accepted by third parties in accordance with special federal regulations, the duty of disposal is governed by Article 31c.

² The cantons determine the catchment areas for these forms of waste and ensure that the waste disposal facilities are operated economically.⁴⁷

³ The holder must hand over the waste for collection by the services organised by the cantons or deliver it to the collection points determined by the cantons.

Art. 31c Disposal of other waste

¹ Any other form of waste must be disposed of by its holder. He may instruct third parties to dispose of it.

² Where necessary, the cantons may facilitate disposal of this waste by appropriate means. They may, in particular, determine catchment areas.

³ If the disposal of this waste requires only a few catchment areas in the whole of Switzerland, the Federal Council may determine them.

Section 3 Financing of Disposal

Art. 32 Principles

¹ The holder of the waste bears the cost of its disposal, except for waste for which the Federal Council regulates the bearing of the cost in some other way.

² If the holder cannot be identified or if he cannot fulfil his obligation under paragraph 1 because he is unable to pay, the cantons bear the cost of disposal.

Art. 32a⁴⁸ Financing for municipal waste

¹ The cantons ensure that the cost of disposing of municipal waste, insofar as it is their responsibility, is passed on to those responsible for producing the waste

⁴⁷ Amended by No II of the FA of 20 June 1997, in force since 1 Nov. 1997 (AS 1997 2243; BBl 1996 IV 1217).

⁴⁸ Inserted by No II of the FA of 20 June 1997, in force since 1 Nov. 1997 (AS 1997 2243; BBl 1996 IV 1217).

through fees or other charges. In organising the charges, the following factors in particular are taken into account:

- a. the nature and the quantity of the waste handed over;
- b. the costs of the construction, operation and maintenance of the waste disposal facilities;
- c. the depreciation required to preserve the value of such installations;
- d. the interest;
- e. the planned investment requirements for maintenance, improvements and replacements, for adaptation to statutory requirements and operational optimisation.

² If imposing cost-covering charges on those responsible for the waste jeopardises the environmentally sustainable disposal of municipal waste, disposal may be financed differently to the extent required.

³ The operators of the waste disposal facilities must form the required financial reserves.

⁴ The principles for the calculation of the charges must be made available to the public.

Art. 32a^{bis}⁴⁹ Prepaid disposal fee

¹ The Federal Council may require manufacturers and importers who put products into circulation which, after use by a large number of holders, become waste and have to be given special treatment or are suitable for recovery to pay a prepaid disposal fee to a private organisation appointed and supervised by the Confederation. This fee is used to finance the disposal of the waste by private individuals or public corporations.

² The Federal Council sets the minimum and maximum amount of the fee on the basis of the cost of disposal. Within this framework, the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications⁵⁰ determines the level of the fee.

³ The Federal Council lays down the methods of collecting and using the fee. It may, in particular, require that persons putting products into circulation inform customers in an appropriate manner of the level of the fee.

Art. 32b Financial guarantee for landfills

¹ Any person who operates or wishes to operate a landfill must guarantee that the costs of closure, after-care and remediation are covered by making reserves, by taking out insurance or in some other way.

⁴⁹ Originally Art. 32a.

⁵⁰ The designation of the administrative entity was amended according to Art. 16 para. 3 of the Publication O of 17 Nov. 2004 (AS 2004 4937). This amendment has been made throughout the text.

² If the operator of the landfill is himself the guarantor, he must notify the authority annually of the amount of the guarantee.

³ If a third party acts as guarantor, he must notify the authority of the existence, suspension and termination of the guarantee. The Federal Council may provide that the guarantee must not be suspended or terminated until 60 days after receipt of the notification.

- ⁴ The Federal Council may enact regulations on the guarantee. In particular, it may:
- a. determine its scope and duration or leave this to the authority to decide on a case-to-case basis;
 - b. make provision for the land on which the landfill is situated to become the property of the canton when the site is closed, and enact regulations concerning any compensation.

Art. 32^{bis} 51 Financing in the case of excavation material from polluted sites

¹ If the proprietor of land removes material from a polluted site that does not require to be disposed of in terms of remediation under Article 32c, he may normally claim reimbursement of two thirds of additional costs of the investigation and disposal of the material from the persons responsible for the pollution and the previous proprietors of the site if:

- a. the persons responsible have not paid any compensation for the pollution or the previous proprietors did not grant any reduction of the price on the sale of the land due to the pollution;
- b. the removal of the material is required for the construction or alteration of buildings; and
- c. the proprietor acquired the property between 1 July 1972 and 1 July 1997.

² The claim may be filed in the civil court at the location of the property. The relevant civil procedure code applies.

³ Claims under paragraph 1 may be filed at the latest by 1 November 2021.

Section 4⁵² Remediation of Polluted Sites

Art. 32c Obligation to remediate

¹ The cantons ensure that landfills and other sites polluted by waste (polluted sites) are remediated if such sites lead to harmful effects or nuisances or if there is a concrete risk that such effects may arise. The Federal Council may enact regulations about the need for remediation and on the objectives and urgency of remediation work.

⁵¹ Inserted by No I of the FA of 16 Dec. 2005, in force since 1 Nov. 2006 (AS 2006 2677; BBl 2003 5008 5043).

⁵² Amended by No I of the FA of 16 Dec. 2005, in force since 1 Nov. 2006 (AS 2006 2677; BBl 2003 5008 5043).

² The cantons draw up a register of polluted sites that is accessible to the public.

³ They may carry out the investigation, monitoring and remediation of polluted sites themselves or instruct third parties to do so if:

- a. this is required to avert imminent effects;
- b. the person liable is unable to arrange for the measures to be carried out; or
- c. the person liable fails to act despite being reminded and allowed time to do so.

Art. 32d Responsibility for costs

¹ The person responsible bears the costs of the measures required to investigate, monitor and remediate polluted sites.

² If two or more persons are responsible, they bear the costs according to their shares of the responsibility. The first to bear the costs is the person who caused the measures to be needed through his conduct. Any person who is responsible simply as the proprietor of the site does not bear any costs if, by exercising the required care, he could not have had any knowledge of the pollution.

³ The public authority concerned bears the share of the costs of any person responsible who cannot be identified or is unable to pay.

⁴ The authority issues a ruling on the allocation of costs if any person responsible so requests or if the authority is carrying out the measures itself.

⁵ If an investigation of a site entered in the register (Art. 32c para. 2) or for which an entry is planned reveals that the site is not polluted, the public authority concerned bears the costs of the investigative measures required.

Art. 32d^{bis} 53 Security for costs

¹ The authority may request the person responsible to provide appropriate security to cover his probable share of the costs of investigation, monitoring and remediation where a polluted site is expected to cause harmful effects or nuisances.

² The amount of the security is fixed in particular on the basis of the extent, nature and intensity of the pollution. It is adjusted if justified on the basis of improved knowledge of the situation.

³ The sale or division of immovable property on which a site is located that is entered in the register of polluted sites requires the authority's authorisation. Authorisation is granted if:

- a. no harmful effects or nuisances are expected from the site;
- b. security is provided for the costs of the expected measures; or
- c. there is an overriding public interest in the sale or in the division.

⁵³ Inserted by No I of the FA of 22 March 2013, in force since 1 Nov. 2013, para. 3 and 4 in force since 1 July 2014 (AS 2013 3241; BBl 2012 9391 9403).

⁴ The cantonal authority may have the entry in the register of polluted sites noted in the land register entry for the property in question.

Art. 32e Charge to finance measures

¹ The Federal Council may require that a charge be paid to the Confederation:

- a. by the operator of a landfill on the deposit of waste in the landfill;
- b. by any person who exports waste for deposit in a landfill, on the export of waste.

^{1bis} In the case of landfills in which only non-contaminated waste is deposited, a charge may only be required if it is necessary in order to fund the recovery of such waste.⁵⁴

² The Federal Council determines the rates of the charge, taking special account of the expected costs and the various types of landfill. The maximum rates of the charge are as follows:

- a. for waste deposited in Switzerland:
 1. in the case of landfills for non-contaminated or lightly contaminated waste: CHF 8/t,
 2. in the case of other landfills: CHF 25/t;
- b. for waste deposited abroad:
 1. in the case of underground landfills: CHF 30/t,
 2. in the case of other landfills: as much as it would cost to deposit the waste in a landfill in Switzerland.⁵⁵

^{2bis} The Federal Council may adjust the rate of the charge under paragraph 2 in line with Swiss Consumer Price Index.⁵⁶

³ The Confederation uses the income from the charges exclusively to pay the costs of the following measures:

- a. the provision of a register of polluted sites, provided their proprietors have been given the opportunity by 1 November 2007 to state their opinion on inclusion in the register;
- b. the investigation, monitoring and remediation of polluted sites in which no waste has been deposited since 1 February 2001 if:⁵⁷
 1. the person responsible cannot be identified or is unable to pay, or
 2. a significant proportion of the waste deposited on the site is municipal waste;

⁵⁴ Inserted by No I of the FA of 26 Sept. 2014, in force since 1 April 2015 (AS 2015 865; BBl 2014 3673 3685).

⁵⁵ Amended by No I of the FA of 26 Sept. 2014, in force since 1 April 2015 (AS 2015 865; BBl 2014 3673 3685).

⁵⁶ Inserted by No I of the FA of 26 Sept. 2014, in force since 1 April 2015 (AS 2015 865; BBl 2014 3673 3685).

⁵⁷ Amended by No I of the FA of 26 Sept. 2014, in force since 1 April 2015 (AS 2015 865; BBl 2014 3673 3685).

- c.⁵⁸ the investigation, monitoring and remediation of polluted sites at shooting ranges that do not serve a predominantly commercial purpose if:
1. on sites in groundwater protection zones, no further waste has been deposited after 31 December 2012,
 - 2.⁵⁹ on other sites, no further waste has been deposited after 31 December 2020 or only the waste from historical shooting events or field shooting events that are held no more than once per year and that had already been held regularly at the same location before 31 December 2020;
- cbis.⁶⁰ adequate protection measures, such as the use of butts, are taken at historical shooting events or field shooting events that are held no more than once per year and that had already been held regularly at the same location before 31 December 2020;
- d. the investigation of sites that are not found to be polluted (Art. 32d para. 5).

⁴ The payments are made only if the measures taken are environmentally compatible and cost-effective and correspond to the state of the art. They are paid to the cantons in accordance with the expenditure incurred and amount to:

- a. for payments in accordance with paragraph 3 letter a, a flat-rate payment of 500 francs per site;
- b.⁶¹ for payments in accordance with paragraph 3 letter b:
 1. 40 per cent of the chargeable costs if no waste has been deposited at the site since 1 February 1996,
 2. 30 per cent of the chargeable costs if waste was deposited at the site after 1 February 1996 but no later than 31 January 2001.
- c.⁶² for payments in accordance with paragraph 3 letter c:
 1. in the case of 300m shooting ranges, a flat-rate payment of 8000 francs per target,
 2. in the case of other shooting ranges, 40 per cent of the chargeable costs;
- d.⁶³ for payments in accordance with paragraph 3 letter d, 40 per cent of the chargeable costs.⁶⁴

⁵ The Federal Council issues regulations on the procedure for collecting the charges and making the payments as well as on the chargeable costs.

⁵⁸ Amended by No I of the FA of 20 March 2009 (Rights to Payment for the Remediation of Shooting Ranges), in force since 1 Oct. 2009 (AS **2009** 4739; BBl **2008** 9213 9223).

⁵⁹ Amended by No I des BG of 27 Sept. 2019, in force since 1 March 2020 (AS **2020** 513; BBl **2019** 3257 3269).

⁶⁰ Inserted by No I of the FA of 27 Sept. 2019, in force since 1 March 2020 (AS **2020** 513; BBl **2019** 3257 3269).

⁶¹ Amended by No I of the FA of 26 Sept. 2014, in force since 1 April 2015 (AS **2015** 865; BBl **2014** 3673 3685).

⁶² Amended by No I of the FA of 26 Sept. 2014, in force since 1 April 2015 (AS **2015** 865; BBl **2014** 3673 3685).

⁶³ Inserted by No I of the FA of 26 Sept. 2014, in force since 1 April 2015 (AS **2015** 865; BBl **2014** 3673 3685).

⁶⁴ Amended by No I of the FA of 20 March 2009 (Rights to Payment for the Remediation of Shooting Ranges), in force since 1 Oct. 2009 (AS **2009** 4739; BBl **2008** 9213 9223).

⁶ Provision may be made under cantonal law for cantonal charges to finance the investigation, monitoring and remediation of polluted sites.

Chapter 5⁶⁵ Soil Pollution

Art. 33 Measures against soil pollution

¹ For the long-term preservation of soil fertility, measures against chemical and biological soil pollution must be laid down in the implementing regulations to the Federal Act on the Protection of Water of 24 January 1991⁶⁶, on disaster management, on air pollution control, on environmentally hazardous substances and organisms, on waste and on incentive taxes.⁶⁷

² The soil may be physically affected only to the extent that its fertility is not durably degraded; this does not apply to land used for building. The Federal Council may issue regulations or recommendations on measures against physical impacts such as erosion or compaction.

Art. 34 Stricter measures against soil pollution

¹ If soil fertility in certain areas is no longer guaranteed in the long term, the cantons must, in agreement with the Confederation, introduce to the required extent stricter regulations on requirements for sewage infiltration, limitation of emissions for installations, the use of substances and organisms or physical impacts on soil.

² If the soil pollution endangers humans, animals or plants, the cantons must restrict the use of the soil to the required extent.

³ If the soil is intended for horticultural, agricultural or forestry use⁶⁸ and it is impossible to cultivate it in a normal way in that location without endangering humans, animals or plants, the cantons must enact measures to reduce the soil pollution at least to such an extent that non-hazardous cultivation is possible.

Art. 35 Guide values and soil remediation values

¹ The Federal Council may set guide values and soil remediation values for assessing pollution of the soil.

² The guide values indicate the pollution level above which, in the light of current scientific knowledge or experience, soil fertility is no longer guaranteed in the long term.

⁶⁵ Originally Chapter 4. Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

⁶⁶ SR 814.20

⁶⁷ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

⁶⁸ Expression in German version in accordance with No II 1 of the FA of 19 March 2010, in force since 1 Aug. 2010 (AS 2010 3233; BBl 2009 5435). This amendment has been made throughout the Act.

³ The soil remediation values indicate the pollution level above which, in the light of current scientific knowledge or experience, certain uses are not possible without endangering humans, animals or plants.

Chapter 6⁶⁹ Incentive Taxes

Art. 35a Volatile organic compounds

¹ Any person who imports volatile organic compounds or any person who, as a manufacturer, puts such compounds into circulation or uses them himself must pay an incentive tax to the Confederation.

² The import of such compounds in paints and varnishes is also subject to the tax. The Federal Council may make the import of such compounds in other mixtures or articles subject to the tax if the quantities of these compounds are such as to pollute the environment to a considerable extent or if these compounds account for a significant proportion of the cost of the product.

³ Volatile organic compounds are exempt from the tax if:

- a. they are used as motor or thermal fuels;
- b. they are in transit or being exported;
- c. they are used or treated in such a way that they are not released into the environment.

⁴ The Federal Council may grant tax relief to the extent of the additional costs incurred for volatile organic compounds which are so used or treated that their emissions are reduced to substantially below the legal requirements.

⁵ The Federal Council may exempt volatile organic compounds that are not environmentally hazardous from the tax.

⁶ The tax rate amounts to a maximum of five francs per kilogram of volatile organic compounds, plus a surcharge to take account of inflation from the date on which this provision comes into force.

⁷ The Federal Council sets the rate of the tax with reference to air quality objectives, taking special account of:

- a. the pollution that volatile organic compounds cause to the environment;
- b. the danger these compounds represent to the environment;
- c. the cost of measures that can limit the effects of these compounds;
- d. the price of these substances and the price of alternative substances which are less harmful to the environment.

⁸ The Federal Council shall introduce the tax in stages and set the timetable and the rate for each stage in advance.

⁶⁹ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

⁹ The revenue from the tax, including interest and under deduction of implementation costs, is shared equally among the population. The Federal Council regulates the distribution procedure. It may instruct the cantons, public corporations or private individuals to make the distribution.

Art. 35b Sulphur content of extra light heating oil

¹ Any person who imports, or in Switzerland manufactures or extracts extra light heating oil with a sulphur content of more than 0.1 per cent (% by mass) must pay an incentive tax to the Confederation.⁷⁰

² Extra light heating oil with a sulphur content of more than 0.1 percent (% by mass) is exempted from the tax if it is in transit or being exported.

³ The tax rate amounts to a maximum of twenty francs per tonne of extra light heating oil with a sulphur content of more than 0.1 percent (% by mass), plus a surcharge to take account of inflation from the date on which this provision comes into force.

⁴ The Federal Council sets the rate of the tax with reference to the air quality objectives, taking special account of:

- a. the pollution sulphur dioxide causes to the environment;
- b. the extra cost of manufacturing extra light heating oil with a sulphur content of 0.1 percent;
- c. the requirements of the national economic supply.

⁵ The revenue from the tax, including interest and under deduction of implementation costs, is shared equally among the population. The Federal Council regulates the distribution procedure. It may instruct the cantons, public corporations or private individuals to make the distribution.

Art. 35b^{bis} 71 Sulphur content of petrol and diesel

¹ Any person who imports, or in Switzerland produces or extracts petrol or diesel with a sulphur content of more than 0.001 per cent (% by mass) pays the Confederation an incentive tax.

² Petrol and diesel with a sulphur content of more than 0.001 percent (% by mass) are exempted from the tax if they are in transit or being exported.

³ The tax amounts to a maximum of 5 centimes per litre plus a surcharge to take account of inflation from the date on which this provision comes into force.

⁴ The Federal Council may fix rates of tax that are different for petrol and diesel.

⁷⁰ Amended by Annex 2 No 6 of the Mineral Oil Tax Act of 21 June 1996, in force since 1 Jan. 1997 (AS **1996** 3371; BBl **1995** III 137).

⁷¹ Inserted by No 1 of the FA of 20 June 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4215; BBl **2002** 6464).

⁵ The Federal Council sets the rate of the tax with reference to the air quality objectives, taking special account of:

- a. the pollution caused to the environment by air contaminants;
- b. the requirements of climate protection;
- c. the extra cost of manufacturing and distributing petrol and diesel with a sulphur content of 0.001 per cent (% by mass);
- d. the requirements of the national economic supply.

⁶ The revenue from the tax, including interest and under deduction of implementation costs, is shared equally among the population. The Federal Council regulates the distribution procedure. It may instruct the cantons, public corporations or private individuals to make the distribution.

Art. 35c Tax liability and procedure

¹ The following persons are liable:

- a. for the tax on volatile organic compounds: those liable to pay tax on imports under the Customs Act of 1 October 1925⁷² (CA) as well as manufacturers and producers in Switzerland;
- b.⁷³ for the tax on extra light heating oil and on petrol and diesel: those liable to pay tax under the Mineral Oil Tax Act of 21 June 1996⁷⁴ (MinOTA).⁷⁵

² If the conditions for exemption cannot be proved until after the tax has been collected, the taxes are refunded. The Federal Council may stipulate the requirements of proof and refuse a refund if this would cause disproportionate costs.

³ The Federal Council stipulates the procedure for the collection and refund of the tax on volatile organic compounds. In the case of import or export, the relevant procedural provisions of the customs legislation apply.⁷⁶

^{3bis} In the case of the import or export, or manufacture or extraction within Switzerland of extra light heating oil, the relevant procedural provisions of the MinOTA apply to the collection and refund of the tax.⁷⁷

⁷² [BS 6 465; AS 1956 587, 1959 1343 Art. 11 No III, 1973 644, 1974 1857 Annex No 7, 1980 1793 No I 1, 1992 1670 No III, 1994 1634 No I 3, 1995 1816, 1996 3371 Annex 2 No 2, 1997 2465 Annex No 13, 2000 1300 Art. 92 1891 No VI 6, 2002 248 No I 1 Art. 41, 2004 4763 Annex No II 1, 2006 2197 Annex No 50. AS 2007 1411 Art. 131 para. 1]. See now: Customs Act 18 March 2005 (SR 631.0).

⁷³ Amended by No I of the FA of 20 June 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4215; BBl 2002 6464).

⁷⁴ SR 641.61

⁷⁵ Amended by Annex 2 No 6 of the Mineral Oil Tax Act of 21 June 1996, in force since 1 Jan. 1997 (AS 1996 3371; BBl 1995 III 137).

⁷⁶ Amended by Annex 2 No 6 of the Mineral Oil Tax Act of 21 June 1996, in force since 1 Jan. 1997 (AS 1996 3371; BBl 1995 III 137).

⁷⁷ Inserted by Annex 2 No 6 of the Mineral Oil Tax Act of 21 June 1996 (AS 1996 3371; BBl 1995 III 137). Amended by No I of the FA of 20 June 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4215; BBl 2002 6464).

⁴ Any person who in Switzerland produces substances or organisms that are subject to the tax must declare them.

Chapter 7⁷⁸

Putting Biogenic Motor and Thermal Fuels into Circulation

Art. 35^d

¹ If a substantial volume of biogenic motor and thermal fuels or mixtures that contain biogenic motor and thermal fuels that do not meet the requirements of Article 12^b paragraphs 1 and 3 of the Mineral Oil Tax Act of 21 June 1996⁷⁹ are put into circulation, the Federal Council may provide that certain biogenic motor and thermal fuels that it designates may only be put into circulation if they meet specific ecological or social requirements.

² Ethanol used for thermal purposes is exempted from the authorisation requirement.

³ The Federal Council shall stipulate the following, taking account of the provisions of the legislation on the mineral oil tax:

- a. the ecological and social requirements that biogenic motor and thermal requiring authorisation must meet;
- b. the authorisation procedure.

Title 3 Enforcement, Promotional Measures and Procedure

Chapter 1 Enforcement

Section 1 Enforcement by the Cantons

Art. 36 Enforcement powers of the cantons

Subject to the reservation of Article 41, the enforcement of this Act is the responsibility of the cantons.

Art. 37⁸⁰ Cantonal implementing provisions

Cantonal implementing provisions on disaster prevention (Art. 10), the environmental impact assessment (Art. 10^a), improvement (Art. 16–18), soundproofing of buildings (Art. 20 and 21) and waste (Art. 30–32 and 32^a^{bis}–32^e) require the approval of the Confederation to be valid.

⁷⁸ Inserted by the Annex to the FA of 21 March 2014 (AS **2016** 2661; BBl **2013** 5737 5783). Amended by No I 3 of the FA of 20 Dec. 2019 on the Extension of the Time Limit for Tax Relief for Natural Gas, Liquid Gas and Biogenic Fuels and on the Amendment of the Federal Act on the Reduction of CO₂ Emissions, in force from 1 July 2020 to 31 Dec. 2023 (AS **2020** 1269; BBl **2019** 5679 5813).

⁷⁹ SR **641.61**

⁸⁰ Amended by No I of the FA of 20 December 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS **2007** 2701, **2012** 2389; BBl **2005** 5351 5391).

Section 2 Enforcement by the Confederation

Art. 38 Supervision and coordination

¹ The Confederation supervises the enforcement of this Act.

² It coordinates the enforcement measures of the cantons and of its own institutions and establishments.

³ The Federal Council decides on the methods of testing, measurement and calculation to be applied.

Art. 39 Implementing provisions and international law agreements

¹ The Federal Council enacts the implementing provisions.

^{1bis} In doing so, it may declare internationally harmonised technical regulations and standards to be applicable and:

- a. authorise the Federal Office responsible to declare subordinate amendments to these regulations and standards to be applicable;
- b. provide that the regulations and standards declared to be applicable are published in a specific manner and that translation into the official languages is dispensed with.⁸¹

² It may conclude international agreements on:⁸²

- a. technical regulations;
- a^{bis}.⁸³ environmentally hazardous substances (Art. 26–29);
- b.⁸⁴ waste avoidance and disposal;
- c. cooperation in frontier zones by the establishment of international commissions with advisory status;
- d. data collections and surveys;
- e. research and training.

³ ...⁸⁵

⁸¹ Inserted by Annex No II 2 of the Chemicals Act of 15 Dec. 2000, in force since 1 Jan. 2005 (AS 2004 4763, 2005 2293; BBl 2000 687).

⁸² Amended by Annex No II 2 of the Chemicals Act of 15 Dec. 2000, in force since 1 Aug. 2005 (AS 2004 4763, 2005 2293; BBl 2000 687).

⁸³ Inserted by Annex No II 2 of the Chemicals Act of 15 Dec. 2000, in force since 1 Aug. 2005 (AS 2004 4763, 2005 2293; BBl 2000 687).

⁸⁴ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

⁸⁵ Repealed by Art. 12 No 2 of the Consultation Procedure Act of 18 March 2005, with effect from 1 Sept. 2005 (AS 2005 4099; BBl 2004 533).

Art. 40⁸⁶ Placing series-produced installations on the market

¹ The Federal Council may make placing series-produced installations on the market dependent on conformity assessments, labelling, registration or licensing according to the environmental pollution they produce.

² It may recognise foreign tests, conformity assessments, labelling, registrations and authorisations.

Art. 41 Enforcement powers of the Confederation

¹ The Confederation enforces Article 12 paragraph 1 letter e (Regulations on thermal and motor fuels), 26 (self-regulation), 27 (Information for recipients), 29 (Regulations on substances), 29a–29h (Environmentally hazardous organisms), 30b paragraph 3 (Deposit compensation fund), 30f and 30g (Import and export of waste), 31a paragraph 2 and 31c paragraph 3 (Federal waste disposal measures), 32a^{bis} (Pre-paid disposal fee), 32e paragraphs 1–4 (Charge to finance remediation), 35a–35c (Incentive taxes), 35d (Putting biogenic motor and thermal fuels into circulation), 39 (Implementing provisions and international law agreements), 40 (Placing series-produced installations on the market) and 46 paragraph 3 (Information on substances and organisms); it may require the cantons to carry out certain duties.⁸⁷

² Any federal authority that enforces another Federal Act or an international agreement is, in fulfilling this duty, also responsible for the enforcement of the Environmental Protection Act. It must consult the cantons concerned before making its decision. The Federal Office and the other federal agencies concerned cooperate in accordance with Articles 62a and 62b of the Government and Administration Organisation Act of 21 March 1997⁸⁸ in relation to enforcement.⁸⁹

³ If the procedure under paragraph 2 is not suitable for certain duties, the Federal Council regulates enforcement by the federal agencies concerned.⁹⁰

⁴ The federal enforcement authorities must take account of cantonal environmental protection measures.⁹¹

⁸⁶ Amended by Annex No 2 of the FA of 6 Oct. 1995 on Technical Barriers to Trade, in force since 1 July 1996 (AS 1996 1725; BBl 1995 II 521).

⁸⁷ Amended by No 13 of the FA of 20 Dec. 2019 on the Extension of the Time Limit for Tax Relief for Natural Gas, Liquid Gas and Biogenic Fuels and on the Amendment of the Federal Act on the Reduction of CO₂ Emissions, in force from 1 July 2020 to 31 Dec. 2023 (AS 2020 1269; BBl 2019 5679 5813).

⁸⁸ SR 172.010

⁸⁹ Amended by No 114 of the FA of 18 June 1999 on the Coordination and Simplification of Decision-making Procedures, in force since 1 Jan. 2000 (AS 1999 3071; BBl 1998 2591).

⁹⁰ Amended by No 114 of the FA of 18 June 1999 on the Coordination and Simplification of Decision-making Procedures, in force since 1 Jan. 2000 (AS 1999 3071; BBl 1998 2591).

⁹¹ Originally para. 3.

Section 2a⁹² Cooperation with the Private Sector

Art. 41a

¹ The Confederation and, within the scope of their responsibilities, the cantons shall cooperate with private sector organisations in enforcing this Act.

² They may promote sectoral agreements by setting quantitative targets and deadlines for meeting them.

³ Before enacting implementing regulations, they must examine voluntary private sector measures. Wherever possible and necessary, they shall incorporate sectoral agreements into the implementing regulations in whole or in part.

Section 3 Special Enforcement Provisions

Art. 42 Environmental protection agencies

¹ The cantons shall set up a specialist agency to consider environmental questions or designate existing public agencies to carry out this task.

² The Federal Office is the specialist agency for the Confederation.⁹³

Art. 43 Delegation of enforcement duties⁹⁴

The enforcement authorities may entrust public corporations or private entities with enforcement duties, and in particular with control and monitoring.

Art. 43a⁹⁵ Eco-labelling and environmental management

¹ The Federal Council may issue regulations on the introduction of:

- a. a voluntary system for an environmental label («eco-label»);
- b. a voluntary system for the evaluation and improvement of environmental protection in establishments (environmental management and auditing).

² In so doing, it must take account of international law and internationally recognised technical standards.

⁹² Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

⁹³ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

⁹⁴ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

⁹⁵ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

Art. 44 Environmental pollution surveys

¹ The Confederation and the cantons conduct surveys on environmental pollution and check the effectiveness of measures taken in terms of this Act.

² The Federal Council coordinates the federal and cantonal surveys and data collections.

³ It decides what information on substances and organisms collected in terms of the legislation on gene technology, foodstuffs, therapeutic products, chemicals, agriculture, epidemics and epizootic diseases is made available to the Federal Office.⁹⁶

Art. 44a⁹⁷ Action plans for air pollution

¹ If several sources of air pollution cause or are expected to cause harmful effects or nuisances, the authority concerned must draw up a plan of the measures that will contribute to reducing or eliminating these effects within a set time (action plan).

² Action plans are binding for the authorities that are entrusted with enforcement by the cantons. They must make a distinction between measures which may be ordered immediately and measures for which the legal framework still has to be enacted.

³ If a plan provides for measures which come within the area of responsibility of the Confederation, the cantons must make the necessary applications to the Federal Council.

Art. 45⁹⁸ Regular inspections

The Federal Council may require the regular inspection of installations such as oil-fired furnaces, waste disposal facilities and construction machinery.

Art. 46 Obligation to provide information

¹ Everyone is obliged to provide the authorities with the information required to enforce this Act and, if necessary, to conduct or acquiesce in the conduct of enquiries.

² The Federal Council or the cantons may order that registers be kept on air pollution, noise and vibrations, waste and its disposal, and the types, amounts and assessment of substances and organisms, and that such registers be stored and made available to the authorities on request.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

⁹⁷ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

⁹⁸ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

⁹⁹ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

³ The Federal Council may order that information be provided on substances and organisms that may present a threat to the environment or which are being put into circulation for the first time.¹⁰⁰

Art. 47 Information and professional secrecy¹⁰¹

¹ and ² ...¹⁰²

³ All those responsible for enforcing this Act as well as experts and members of commissions and technical committees are bound by official secrecy.

⁴ Confidential information obtained in the implementation of this Act may be disclosed to foreign authorities and international organisations only if this is provided for in an international agreement, decisions of international organisations, or a federal act.¹⁰³ The Federal Council regulates responsibilities and the procedure.¹⁰⁴

Art. 48 Fees

¹ A fee is charged for licences, inspections and special services under this Act.

² The rates are set by the Federal Council at federal level and by the competent authority under cantonal law at cantonal level.

Chapter 2 Promotional Measures

Art. 49 Training and research

¹ The Confederation may promote the basic and continuing education and training of personnel entrusted with duties in terms of this Act.¹⁰⁵

² It may commission or support research studies and technology assessments.¹⁰⁶

³ It may promote the development of installations and processes that can reduce pollution in the public interest. Financial aid may not normally exceed 50 per cent of the costs. In the event of the commercial exploitation of the development results, it

¹⁰⁰ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445).

¹⁰¹ Amended by Art. 2 No I of the FD of 27 Sept. 2013 (Aarhus Convention), in force since 1 June 2014 (AS **2014** 1021; BBl **2012** 4323).

¹⁰² Repealed by Art. 2 No I of the FD of 27 Sept. 2013 (Aarhus Convention), with effect from 1 June 2014 (AS **2014** 1021; BBl **2012** 4323).

¹⁰³ Amended by Annex No II 2 of the Chemicals Act of 15 Dec. 2000, in force since 1 Aug. 2005 (AS **2004** 4763, **2005** 2293; BBl **2000** 687).

¹⁰⁴ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445).

¹⁰⁵ Amended by Annex No 18 of the FA of 5 Oct. 1990 on Financial Aid and Subsidies (Subsidies Act), in force since 1 April 1991 (AS **1991** 857; BBl **1997** I 369). The amendment in accordance with the FA of 20 June 2014 on Continuing Education and Training, in force since 1 Jan. 2017, relates to the French and Italian texts only (AS **2016** 689; BBl **2013** 3729).

¹⁰⁶ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4803; BBl **2000** 2391).

must be refunded in proportion to the earnings made. The Federal Council makes a general assessment of the effect of the promotion and reports to the Federal Assembly on the results at five-yearly intervals.¹⁰⁷

Art. 50¹⁰⁸ Contributions towards environmental protection measures along roads

¹ As part of the use of the net revenue from the mineral oil tax and the national highways charge, the Confederation shall contribute to the cost:

- a. of environmental protection measures along national roads and main roads to be upgraded with federal aid according to the provisions of the Federal Act of 22 March 1985¹⁰⁹ on the Application of the Earmarked Mineral Oil Tax (MinOA); in the case of main roads, these contributions are part of the global contributions under the MinOA;
- b. of noise abatement and soundproofing measures as part of the upgrading of the remainder of the road network on the basis of programme agreements with the cantons; the level of the contributions is based on the effectiveness of the measures.

² The cantons shall report to the Confederation on the use of the contributions towards environmental protection measures along main roads that are to be upgraded with federal aid, and along other roads.

Art. 51 Control and monitoring installations

The Confederation may contribute towards the cost of building and equipping the measuring, control and monitoring installations required to enforce this Act, provided these installations are used by two or more cantons.

Art. 52 Waste disposal facilities

¹ The Confederation may provide credit guarantees for the construction of waste disposal facilities, especially those which are used by holders of waste from two or more cantons, provided financing cannot be secured in any other way.¹¹⁰

² The Federal Assembly authorises the maximum amount of credit guaranteed by means of a commitment credit over several years.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

¹⁰⁸ Amended by No II 22 of the FA of 6 Oct. 2006 on the New System of Fiscal Equalisation and Division of Tasks between the Confederation and the Cantons (NFE), in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (AS 2007 5779; BBl 2005 6029).

¹⁰⁹ SR 725.116.2

¹¹⁰ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

¹¹¹ Inserted by Annex No 18 of the Subsidies Act of 5 Oct. 1990, in force since 1 April 1991 (AS 1991 857; BBl 1997 I 369).

Art. 53¹¹² International cooperation on the protection of the environment

¹ The Confederation may make contributions:

- a. to international organisations or programmes in the field of international environmental protection;
- b. for the implementation of international agreements on the environment;
- c. for the financing of the secretariats for international agreements on the environment that are permanently based in Switzerland;
- d. to funds that support developing and transition countries in the implementation of international agreements on the environment.

² Contributions under paragraph 1 letter d are authorised as framework credits for two or more years in each case.

³ The Federal Council monitors the effective use of the funds authorised under this Act and reports to the Federal Assembly thereon.

Chapter 3 Procedures**Section 1 Appeals**¹¹³

Art. 54¹¹⁴ ...¹¹⁵

Appeal proceedings are governed by the general provisions on the administration of federal justice.

Section 2**Organisations' Right of Appeal against Rulings on Installations**¹¹⁶

Art. 55¹¹⁷ Organisations with the right to appeal

¹ Environmental protection organisations have the right of appeal against rulings of the cantonal or federal authorities on the planning, construction or modification of

¹¹² Repealed by Annex No 18 of the Subsidies Act of 5 Oct. 1990 (AS **1991** 857; BBl **1997** I 369). Amended by No I of the FA of 20 June 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4062; BBl **2002** 7911).

¹¹³ Inserted by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS **2007** 2701; BBl **2005** 5351 5391).

¹¹⁴ Amended by Annex No 91 of the Administrative Court Act of 17 June 2005, in force since 1 Jan. 2007 (AS **2006** 2197 1069; BBl **2004** 4202).

¹¹⁵ Repealed by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, with effect from 1 July 2007 (AS **2007** 2701; BBl **2005** 5351 5391).

¹¹⁶ Inserted by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS **2007** 2701; BBl **2005** 5351 5391).

¹¹⁷ Amended by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS **2007** 2701; BBl **2005** 5351 5391). The provision on economic activity in para. 1 let. b comes into force on 1 July 2010 (see No III para. 3 of the said amendment).

installations for which an environmental impact assessment in terms of Article 10a is required, subject to the following requirements:

- a. the organisation is active in Switzerland on a national basis;
- b. it pursues non-profit making objects; any commercial activities must serve to achieve the non-profit making objects.

² The right of appeal is available to organisations only for complaints in legal fields that have formed their objects in terms of their articles for a minimum of ten years.

³ The Federal Council designates the organisations that have the right to appeal.

⁴ The supreme executive body of the organisation is responsible for filing the appeal.

⁵ The organisations may authorise their legally independent cantonal and supra-cantonal subsidiary organisations to file objections and on a case-by-case basis to file appeals that relate to their local field of activity.

Art. 55a¹¹⁸ Notification of the ruling

¹ The authority notifies the organisations of its ruling under Article 55 paragraph 1 by written notice or by publication in the Official Federal Gazette or in the cantonal organ of publication.

² If federal or cantonal law provides for an objection procedure, applications must also be published in accordance with paragraph 1.

Art. 55b¹¹⁹ Loss of the right to appeal

¹ Organisations that have not sought legal recourse may only participate in subsequent proceedings as a party if they are prejudiced by a change in the ruling. For compulsory purchases, the Federal Act of 20 June 1930¹²⁰ on Compulsory Purchase applies.

² If an organisation has not participated in objection proceedings under federal or cantonal law, it may no longer file an appeal.

³ If an organisation has not filed a permitted complaint against a land use plan that has the character of a ruling or if the complaint has been rejected with full legal effect, the organisation may no longer file the same complaints in subsequent proceedings.

⁴ Paragraphs 2 and 3 also apply to objections and appeals under cantonal law against land use plans.

¹¹⁸ Inserted by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS 2007 2701; BBl 2005 5351 5391).

¹¹⁹ Inserted by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS 2007 2701; BBl 2005 5351 5391).

¹²⁰ SR 711

Art. 55c¹²¹ Agreements between applicants and organisations

¹ If an applicant and organisation enter into an agreement on obligations that relate to public law matters, these agreements are deemed exclusively to be joint applications to the authority. The authority takes account of the result in its ruling or in its decision. It does not take account of the result if it is defective in terms of Article 49 of the Federal Act of 20 December 1968¹²² on Administrative Procedure.

² Agreements between applicants and organisations on financial or other benefits are not permitted if they are intended for:

- a. the enforcement of public law obligations, and in particular requirements imposed by authorities;
- b. measures that are not provided for under public law or which have no connection with the project;
- c. compensation for a waiver of legal action or for any other procedural conduct.

³ The appeal authority does not consider an appeal if it constitutes an abuse of the law or if the organisation has demanded unlawful benefits in terms of paragraph 2.

Art. 55d¹²³ Early start to construction work

Construction work may begin before conclusion of the proceedings provided the outcome of the proceedings cannot have any influence on the work.

Art. 55e¹²⁴ Procedural costs

If the organisation loses the proceedings, it is liable for the costs of conducting the appeal before the federal authorities.

Section 3¹²⁵**Organisations' Right of Appeal against the Authorisation of Organisms****Art. 55f**

¹ Environmental protection organisations have a right of appeal against any authorisation for putting pathogenic organisms in circulation for lawful use in the environment, subject to the following requirements:

- a. The organisation is active in Switzerland on a national basis.

¹²¹ Inserted by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS 2007 2701; BBI 2005 5351 5391).

¹²² SR 172.021

¹²³ Inserted by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS 2007 2701; BBI 2005 5351 5391).

¹²⁴ Inserted by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS 2007 2701; BBI 2005 5351 5391).

¹²⁵ Inserted by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS 2007 2701; BBI 2005 5351 5391).

b. It was established at least ten years prior to the filing of the appeal.

² The Federal Council designates the organisations that have the right to appeal.

³ The Articles 55a and 55b paragraphs 1 and 2 apply.

Section 4

Public Authority Appeals and Appeals by Communal Authorities, Compulsory Purchase, Costs of Safety and Remedial Measures¹²⁶

Art. 56 Public authority appeal

¹ The Federal Office has a right of appeal under federal and cantonal law against rulings by the cantonal authorities made on the basis of this Act and its implementing provisions.¹²⁷

² The cantons also have this right in cases where effects from neighbouring cantons on their territory are a matter of contention.

³ ...¹²⁸

Art. 57 Appeal by communal authorities

Communes have the right of appeal under federal and cantonal law against rulings by the cantonal and federal authorities made on the basis of this Act if they are affected by such rulings and have a legitimate interest in having them reversed or amended.

Art. 58 Compulsory purchase

¹ Where enforcement of this law so requires, the Confederation and the cantons have a right of compulsory purchase or may assign this right to third parties.¹²⁹

² The cantons may declare the Federal Act of 20 June 1930¹³⁰ on Compulsory Purchase Act to be applicable in their implementing provisions. They shall provide that the cantonal government decide on objections that remain in dispute.¹³¹

³ Federal legislation on compulsory purchase applies to projects located on the territory of more than one canton.¹³² The Federal Department of the Environment,

¹²⁶ Inserted by No I of the FA of 20 Dec. 2006, in force since 1 July 2007 (AS 2007 2701; BBl 2005 5351 5391).

¹²⁷ Amended by No I 14 of the FA of 18 June 1999 on the Coordination and Simplification of Decision-making Procedures, in force since 1 Jan. 2000 (AS 1999 3071; BBl 1998 2591).

¹²⁸ Repealed by Annex No 91 of the Administrative Court Act of 17 June 2005, with effect from 1 Jan. 2007 (AS 2006 2197 1069; BBl 2004 4202).

¹²⁹ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

¹³⁰ SR 711

¹³¹ Amended by Annex No 17 of the FA of 19 June 2020, in force since 1 Jan. 2021 (AS 2020 4085; BBl 2018 4713).

Transport, Energy and Communications decides on the compulsory purchase in such cases.

Art. 59¹³³ Cost of safety and remedial measures

The cost of measures taken by the authorities to prevent imminent pollution of the environment, to establish its existence, or to remedy it are charged to the person responsible for the pollution.

Title 4¹³⁴ **Liability**

Art. 59a General provisions¹³⁵

¹ The operator of an establishment or an installation that represents a special threat to the environment is liable for the loss or damage arising from effects that occur when this threat becomes reality. In the case of loss or damage that arises from the handling of pathogenic organisms, Article 59a^{bis} applies.¹³⁶

² As a rule, the following establishments and installations are regarded as representing a special threat to the environment:

- a. those that the Federal Council makes subject to the implementing provisions in terms of Article 10 on the basis of the substances or organisms used or the waste produced;
- b. those that are used for waste disposal;
- c. those in which liquids which may pollute water are handled;
- d.¹³⁷ those in which substances are present for which the Federal Council has introduced a licensing requirement or other special regulations to protect the environment.

³ Any person who proves that the loss or damage was caused by force majeure or by gross negligence on the part of the injured party or of a third party is relieved of liability.

⁴ Articles 42–47 and 49–53 of the Code of Obligations¹³⁸ apply.¹³⁹

¹³² Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

¹³³ Amended by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

¹³⁴ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

¹³⁵ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

¹³⁶ Wording of the second sentence according to Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

¹³⁷ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

⁵ The reservation in Article 3 applies to liability provisions in other federal acts.

⁶ The Confederation, cantons and communes may also be held liable in accordance with paragraphs 1–5.

Art. 59a^{bis} 140 Pathogenic organisms

¹ Persons subject to an authorisation or notification obligation who handle pathogenic organisms in a contained system, release such organisms for experimental purposes or put them into circulation without authorisation are liable for any loss or damage that arises from such conduct.

² The person required to obtain authorisation is exclusively liable for any loss or damage occasioned to an agricultural or forestry establishment or customers of products from such establishments by pathogenic organisms that are authorised to be put into circulation if the organisms:

- a. are contained in auxiliary agents used in agriculture or forestry¹⁴¹; or
- b. originate from such auxiliary agents.

³ In the case of liability under paragraph 2, recourse is reserved against persons who have handled such organisms improperly or have otherwise contributed to causing or aggravating the loss or damage.

⁴ If loss or damage is caused by any other pathogenic organisms that are authorised to be put into circulation, the person required to obtain authorisation is liable if the organisms are defective. He is also liable for any defect that he was unable to detect according to the standards of science and technology at the time that the organism was put into circulation.

⁵ Pathogenic organisms are defective if they do not offer the level of safety that anyone is entitled to expect taking account of all the circumstances; the following must be taken into account in particular:

- a. the way in which they are presented to the public;
- b. the use that may reasonably be expected;
- c. the time at which they were put into circulation.

⁶ A product containing pathogenic organisms is not defective simply because an improved product has subsequently been put into circulation.

⁷ The loss or damage must be due to the pathogenicity of the organisms.

⁸ The burden of proving a causal connection lies with the person claiming damages. If such proof cannot be provided with certainty or if the person subject to the burden

¹³⁸ SR 220

¹³⁹ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

¹⁴⁰ Inserted by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

¹⁴¹ Expression in German version in accordance with No II 1 of the FA of 19 March 2010, in force since 1 Aug. 2010 (AS 2010 3233; BBl 2009 5435). This amendment has been made throughout the Act.

cannot reasonably be expected to present the required evidence, the court may satisfy itself on the balance of probability. The court may also order that the facts of the case be established *ex officio*.

⁹ The person required to obtain authorisation or file a report must also reimburse the costs of the required and appropriate measures that have been taken to reconstitute elements of the environment that have been destroyed or damaged or to replace such elements with their equivalents. If the destroyed or damaged elements of the environment are not the subject of a property right or if the person entitled does not take the measures required in the circumstances, the right to damages becomes that of the public authority concerned.

¹⁰ Any person who proves that the loss or damage was caused by force majeure or by gross negligence on the part of the injured party or of a third party is relieved of liability.

¹¹ Articles 42–47 and 49–53 of the Code of Obligations¹⁴² apply.

¹² The Confederation, cantons and communes may also be held liable in accordance with paragraphs 1–11.

Art. 59b Guarantee

For the protection of injured parties, the Federal Council may:

- a.¹⁴³ require that the operators of certain establishments or installations as well as the persons required to obtain authorisation or file a report that handle pathogenic organisms to provide a guarantee for their potential liability through insurance or in another manner;
- b. determine the extent and the duration of this guarantee or leave this to the authority to decide on a case-by-case basis;
- c. require those providing a guarantee for liability to notify the enforcement authority of the existence, suspension and termination of the guarantee;
- d. provide that the guarantee must not be suspended or terminated until 60 days after receipt of the notification;
- e. provide that land on which a waste disposal site is situated becomes the property of the canton when the site is closed, and enact regulations concerning any compensation.

Art. 59c¹⁴⁴ Prescription

¹ The right to damages prescribes in accordance with Article 60 of the Code of Obligations¹⁴⁵.

¹⁴² SR 220

¹⁴³ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

¹⁴⁴ Inserted by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

¹⁴⁵ SR 220

² If the loss or damage occurs due to the handling of pathogenic organisms, the right to damages prescribes three years after the injured person obtains knowledge of the loss or damage and of the identity of the person liable, but at the latest 30 years after:

- a. the event that caused the loss or damage occurred in the establishment or in the installation or came to an end; or
- b. the pathogenic organisms were put into circulation.

Art. 59^{d146} Prescription of the right of recourse

The right of recourse prescribes in accordance with Article 59c. The three-year period begins to run as soon as payment of the damages has been made in full and the identity of the person jointly liable is known.

Title 5¹⁴⁷ Criminal Provisions

Art. 60 Misdemeanours

¹ Liable to a custodial sentence not exceeding three years or a monetary penalty is any person who wilfully:¹⁴⁸

- a. fails to take the safety measures prescribed for the prevention of disasters or fails to comply with the prohibition of certain production methods or the keeping of certain stocks (Art. 10);
- b. puts substances into circulation which he knows or must assume may present a danger to the environment or indirectly endanger people when used in a certain manner (Art. 26);
- c. puts substances into circulation without informing recipients about their environment-related properties (Art. 27 para. 1 let. a) or providing instructions on their required handling (Art. 27 para. 1 let. b);
- d. handles substances contrary to instructions in such a manner that they, their derivatives or waste may present a danger to the environment or indirectly endanger people (Art. 28);
- e.¹⁴⁹ infringes regulations on substances or organisms (Art. 29, 29b para. 2, 29f, 30a let. b and 34 para. 1);
- f.¹⁵⁰ handles organisms in such a manner that the principles contained in Article 29a paragraph 1 are infringed;

¹⁴⁶ Inserted by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

¹⁴⁷ Originally Title 4.

¹⁴⁸ Amended by No II 1 of the FA of 19 March 2010, in force since 1 Aug. 2010 (AS 2010 3233; BBl 2009 5435).

¹⁴⁹ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4803; BBl 2000 2391).

- g.¹⁵¹ fails to take all the containment measures required when handling pathogenic organisms (Art. 29*b* para. 1);
 - h.¹⁵² without authorisation, releases pathogenic organisms for experimental purposes or puts them into circulation for uses in the environment (Art. 29*c* para. 1 and 29*d* paras. 3 and 4);
 - i.¹⁵³ puts organisms into circulation that he knows or must assume will infringe the principles contained in Article 29*a* paragraph 1 when used in a certain manner (Art. 29*d* para. 1);
 - j.¹⁵⁴ puts organisms into circulation without providing recipients with the required information and instructions (Art. 29*e* para. 1);
 - k.¹⁵⁵ handles organisms contrary to the instructions (Art. 29*e* para. 2);
 - l.¹⁵⁶ ...
 - m. constructs or operates a landfill without authorisation (Art. 30*e* para. 2);
 - n. fails to mark special waste as such for transfer (Art. 30*f* para. 2 let. a) or hands it over to an undertaking that does not hold the relevant authorisation (Art. 30*f* para. 2 let. b);
 - o. accepts, imports or exports special waste without authorisation (Art. 30*f* para. 2 let. c and d);
 - p. infringes regulations on the movement of special waste (Art. 30*f* para. 1);
 - q.¹⁵⁷ infringes regulations on waste (Art. 30*a* let. b).
- ² If the offender acts negligently, he or she is liable to a monetary penalty not exceeding 180 daily penalty units.¹⁵⁸

Art. 61 Contraventions

¹ Liable to a fine not exceeding 20,000 francs is any person who wilfully:¹⁵⁹

- ¹⁵⁰ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4803; BBl **2000** 2391).
- ¹⁵¹ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4803; BBl **2000** 2391).
- ¹⁵² Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4803; BBl **2000** 2391).
- ¹⁵³ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4803; BBl **2000** 2391).
- ¹⁵⁴ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4803; BBl **2000** 2391).
- ¹⁵⁵ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4803; BBl **2000** 2391).
- ¹⁵⁶ Repealed by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, with effect from 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4803; BBl **2000** 2391).
- ¹⁵⁷ Amended by No II 1 of the FA of 19 March 2010, in force since 1 Aug. 2010 (AS **2010** 3233; BBl **2009** 5435).
- ¹⁵⁸ Amended by No II 1 of the FA of 19 March 2010, in force since 1 Aug. 2010 (AS **2010** 3233; BBl **2009** 5435).
- ¹⁵⁹ Amended by No II 1 of the FA of 19 March 2010, in force since 1 Aug. 2010 (AS **2010** 3233; BBl **2009** 5435).

- a. fails to comply with the limitations of emissions stipulated in this Act (Art. 12 and 34 para. 1);
- b. fails to comply with remediation orders (Art. 16 and 32c para. 1);
- c. fails to carry out officially ordered soundproofing measures (Art. 19–25);
- d. provides false or incomplete information or instructions (Art. 27);
- e. handles substances with no accompanying information or instructions in such a manner that they, their derivatives or waste may present a danger to the environment or indirectly endanger people (Art. 28);
- f. burns waste illegally outside installations (Art. 30c para. 2);
- g. deposits waste outside authorised landfills (Art. 30e para. 1);
- h. infringes the reporting duties in connection with waste (Art. 30f para. 4, 30g para. 2, 32b para. 2 and 3);
- i. infringes the regulations on waste (Art. 30a let. a and c, 30b, 30c para. 3, 30d, 30h para. 1, 32a^{bis}, 32b para. 4 and 32e para. 1–4);
- k. infringes the regulations on the movement of other forms of waste (Art. 30g para. 1);
- l. fails to guarantee coverage of the costs of closure, after-care and remediation of a landfill (Art. 32b para. 1);
- m. infringes the regulations on physical impacts on and the use of the soil (Art. 33 para. 2 and 34 para. 1 and 2) or on measures to reduce the soil pollution (Art. 34 para. 3);
- n. infringes the regulations on placing series-produced installations¹⁶⁰ on the market (Art. 40);
- o. refuses to provide information to the competent authority or provides incorrect information (Art. 46);
- p.¹⁶¹ infringes the regulations on providing a guarantee for liability (Art. 59b).

² If the offender acts negligently, the penalty is a fine.

³ Attempts and complicity are also offences.

¹⁶⁰ Previously: type approval testing and labelling

¹⁶¹ Amended by No II 1 of the FA of 19 March 2010, in force since 1 Aug. 2010 (AS 2010 3233; BBl 2009 5435).

Art. 61a¹⁶² Offences against the regulations on incentive taxes and on biogenic motor and thermal fuels¹⁶³

¹ Any person who wilfully or negligently evades payment or obstructs the collection of a tax in terms of Articles 35a, 35b or 35b^{bis} or obtains for himself or another an unlawful tax advantage (exemption from or refund of tax) is liable to a fine not exceeding five times the amount of the tax that is evaded or the collection of which is obstructed, or of the advantage gained. If the amount of tax cannot be precisely quantified, it must be estimated.¹⁶⁴

² Any person who wilfully or negligently puts biogenic motor or thermal fuels into circulation without authorisation in terms of Article 35d or obtains authorisation by providing false, inaccurate or incomplete information is liable to a fine not exceeding 500 000 francs.¹⁶⁵

³ Any attempt to commit an offence under paragraphs 1 and 2 is an offence.¹⁶⁶

⁴ The Customs Administration is the prosecuting and adjudicating authority.¹⁶⁷

⁵ If any act is an offence in accordance with paragraphs 1 to 3 and at the same time another offence against federal legislation that must be judged by the Customs Administration, the penalty carried by the more serious offence applies; this may be increased appropriately.¹⁶⁸

Art. 62 Application of administrative criminal law

¹ Articles 6 and 7 of the Federal Act of 22 March 1974¹⁶⁹ on Administrative Criminal Law apply to offences under this Act.

¹⁶² Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995, in force since 1 July 1997 (AS 1997 1155; BBl 1993 II 1445).

¹⁶³ Amended by No I 3 of the FA of 20 Dec. 2019 on the Extension of the Time Limit for Tax Relief for Natural Gas, Liquid Gas and Biogenic Fuels and on the Amendment of the Federal Act on the Reduction of CO₂ Emissions, in force from 1 July 2020 to 31 Dec. 2023 (AS 2020 1269; BBl 2019 5679 5813).

¹⁶⁴ Amended by No I of the FA of 20 June 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS 2003 4215; BBl 2002 6464).

¹⁶⁵ Amended by No I 3 of the FA of 20 Dec. 2019 on the Extension of the Time Limit for Tax Relief for Natural Gas, Liquid Gas and Biogenic Fuels and on the Amendment of the Federal Act on the Reduction of CO₂ Emissions, in force from 1 July 2020 to 31 Dec. 2023 (AS 2020 1269; BBl 2019 5679 5813).

¹⁶⁶ Amended by No I 3 of the FA of 20 Dec. 2019 on the Extension of the Time Limit for Tax Relief for Natural Gas, Liquid Gas and Biogenic Fuels and on the Amendment of the Federal Act on the Reduction of CO₂ Emissions, in force from 1 July 2020 to 31 Dec. 2023 (AS 2020 1269; BBl 2019 5679 5813).

¹⁶⁷ Amended by No I 3 of the FA of 20 Dec. 2019 on the Extension of the Time Limit for Tax Relief for Natural Gas, Liquid Gas and Biogenic Fuels and on the Amendment of the Federal Act on the Reduction of CO₂ Emissions, in force from 1 July 2020 to 31 Dec. 2023 (AS 2020 1269; BBl 2019 5679 5813).

¹⁶⁸ Inserted by the Annex to the FA of 21 March 2014 (AS 2016 2661; BBl 2013 5737 5783). Amended by No I 3 of the FA of 20 Dec. 2019 on the Extension of the Time Limit for Tax Relief for Natural Gas, Liquid Gas and Biogenic Fuels and on the Amendment of the Federal Act on the Reduction of CO₂ Emissions, in force from 1 July 2020 to 31 Dec. 2023 (AS 2020 1269; BBl 2019 5679 5813).

¹⁶⁹ SR 313.0

² For offences against Article 61a, the other provisions of the Federal Act of 22 March 1974 on Administrative Criminal Law also apply.¹⁷⁰

Title 6¹⁷¹ Final Provisions

Art. 63¹⁷²

Art. 64 Adaptation of federal ordinances

If regulations relating to environmental protection enacted under other federal acts contradict or fail to comply with the provisions of this Act, they must be adapted or supplemented in accordance with a schedule to be laid down by the Federal Council.

Art. 65 Environmental law of the Cantons

¹ Unless and until the Federal Council expressly exercises its power to enact ordinances, the cantons may enact their own regulations in terms of this Act, after consulting the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications.

² The cantons may not stipulate any new ambient limit values, alarm levels or planning values nor enact any new regulations governing conformity assessments for series-produced installations or for the handling of substances or organisms.¹⁷³ Existing cantonal regulations apply until related Federal Council regulations come into force.

Art. 65a¹⁷⁴ Transitional provision to the Amendment of 26 September 2014

Applications for payments towards the costs of measures under Article 32e paragraph 4 letter b number 2 shall in derogation from Article 36 of the Subsidies Act of 5 October 1990¹⁷⁵ be assessed in accordance with the law applicable after the date on which the application is filed if work began on the measures before the Amendment of 26 September 2014 comes into force. The applications must be filed two years at the latest after the Amendment comes into force.

¹⁷⁰ Inserted by No I of the FA of 21 Dec. 1995 (AS **1997** 1155; BBl **1993** II 1445). Amended by the Annex to the FA of 21 March 2014 Amended by No 13 of the FA of 20 Dec. 2019 on the Extension of the Time Limit for Tax Relief for Natural Gas, Liquid Gas and Biogenic Fuels and on the Amendment of the Federal Act on the Reduction of CO₂ Emissions, in force from 1 July 2020 to 31 Dec. 2023 (AS **2020** 1269; BBl **2019** 5679 5813).

¹⁷¹ Originally Title 5.

¹⁷² Repealed by No II 32 of the FA of 20 March 2008 on the Formal Revision of Federal Legislation, with effect from 1 Aug. 2008 (AS **2008** 3437; BBl **2007** 6121).

¹⁷³ Amended by Annex No 4 of the Gene Technology Act of 21 March 2003, in force since 1 Jan. 2004 (AS **2003** 4803; BBl **2000** 2391).

¹⁷⁴ Inserted by No I of the FA of 26 Sept. 2014, in force since 1 April 2015 (AS **2015** 865; BBl **2014** 3673 3685).

¹⁷⁵ SR **616.1**

Art. 66 Amendment of federal legislation...¹⁷⁶**Art. 67** Referendum and commencement¹ This Act is subject to an optional referendum.² The Federal Council determines the commencement date.Commencement date: 1 January 1985¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ The amendments may be consulted under AS **1984** 1122.

¹⁷⁷ FCD of 12 Sept. 1984.

