



Climate protection

The climate is changing. The average annual temperatures are rising worldwide. There is considerable indication that climate change is caused by humans. Our world economy, dependent on oil, gas, and coal, emits millions of tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) every day. Along with other greenhouse gases, CO₂ warms up the climate. The suspected consequences of climate change include an increase in extreme weather such as heat waves, storms, heavy precipitation, and the resulting increase in floods and landslides, the rising level of the oceans, and the melting of glaciers.

The international community has recognized climate change as a worldwide problem affecting all of humanity. At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the first international Convention on Climate Change, the Climate Convention, was adopted. In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted as an additional agreement containing concrete and binding time-bound objectives. Industrial countries commit to reduce their average greenhouse gas emissions between 2008 and 2012 by at least 5% relative to 1990. Individually binding reduction goals have been fixed for each industrial country. The Kyoto Protocol is not yet in force.

Liechtenstein is in the middle of the Alps. Observations and model calculations indicate that the effects of climate change on the Alpine region will be above average. The consequences of climate change will, however, likely hit developing countries the hardest, since they lack the means for costly protective measures. Liechtenstein is aware of its shared responsibility and is engaged in climate protection at the national and international levels.

Liechtenstein has been a State Party to the Climate Convention since 1994 and signed the Kyoto Protocol in 1998. The preparations for ratification and implementation of the Kyoto Protocol are underway. Like Switzerland and the EU, Liechtenstein commits itself upon ratification to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 8% relative to 1990.

At the national level, measures are taken in particular in the areas of environmental, energy, transport, agricultural, and forestry policy. For instance, the refurbishment of old buildings as well as solar panels and photovoltaic installations are supported by the State. The revision of the Clean Air Act, which is currently being considered by Parliament, will represent a further commitment to reducing the emission of greenhouse gases. Liechtenstein reported on the current status of its implementation of the Climate Convention in a national report in 2001.



Useful links:

- Liechtenstein Climate Report 2001 (can be downloaded as a PDF file)
- Activities of the UN (www.uno.de/umwelt/index.cfm):
- *This German-language website contains information on the role climate protection plays on the international stage. Interested persons can download the texts of the Climate Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.*
- Swiss climate policy (www.klima-schweiz.ch):
- *The website of the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL) contains a wide range of useful information on climate protection. Worksheets for schools on the topic "Climate in human hands" are also available online.*