

Editorial

About 45 years ago, when I was a little girl, we children could go on wild sledge rides every winter on the Ackermannstrasse down the Zürichberg, just under the Central Meteorological Institute (MZA; MeteoSwiss today). In the meantime, a lot has changed. Sledge rides in Zurich, in the midlands and in the foothills of the Alps are hardly possible anymore. But also the increase in road traffic would make sledging on a neighbourhood street impossible.

And how will the near future look? What will our children be able to do in 45 years? What kind of Switzerland awaits them? The report “Climate change and Switzerland in 2050” (CH2050) deals with these questions. The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) 2001 and 2007 reports serve as the scientific basis. The research reports available today with their scientific data and facts prove what has been evident for years: With a probability of more than 90 per cent, the largest proportion of the observed increase in the global mean temperature since the mid-20th century is due to the increase in greenhouse gas concentration caused by anthropogenic emissions. Today, the evidence available cannot be ignored: Global warming is man-made. Climate change has become a problem of the 21st century for all people on Earth. The IPCC report calculates different scenarios up to 2100 and beyond – by then the measures taken today will show obvious effects on climate.

In our report CH2050, we want to focus on the halfway mark for now. What do climatic changes at the local level mean for Switzerland in the near future? What effects on the different natural landscapes and in the economic-social sectors of daily life will be noticeable? How can society and economy deal with the changes becoming apparent? What need for action is there in politics? What kind of measures must be taken in order to be successfully prepared for these challenges?

We need to ask ourselves these questions. It is the task of the Advisory Body on Climate Change (OcCC) to convey the scientific view to the economy, society and politics, and in this way to work out strategies and approaches for Switzerland. CH2050 should therefore serve as the basis for the desired and necessary future direction, in order to plan the required measures and shape political, economic and societal actions in Switzerland.



Dr. Kathy Riklin, National Council
President of the OcCC