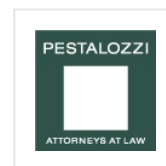


Switzerland to extend certain climate protection measures until 2021



01 June 2020 | Contributed by Pestalozzi Attorneys at Law

Environment & Climate Change, Switzerland

📍 Background

📍 Extension of climate policy measures

📍 Amendment to vehicle emission standards

On 4 May 2020 the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication launched the consultation process for a partial revision of the CO₂ Ordinance.**(1)** Amendments to the ordinance are necessary to extend certain climate protection measures until the end of 2021, as recently decided by Parliament.

Background

Switzerland should pursue its climate targets without interruption and continue to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in 2021 by a further 1.5% compared with 1990.

The total revision of the CO₂ Act for the period following 2020 has yet to be completed by Parliament (for further details please see "Revised CO₂ Act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from passenger cars" and "Revision of Federal Act on the Reduction of CO₂ Emissions").**(2)** Therefore, in December 2019 Parliament decided to extend certain climate protection measures in the CO₂ Act that were due to expire at the end of 2020 until the end of 2021. In addition, the partial revision of the CO₂ Act is based on a parliamentary initiative regarding the time extension for tax reductions for natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas and biogenic fuels.

The required amendments to the CO₂ Ordinance are subject to consultation until 25 August 2020.

Extension of climate policy measures

The current CO₂ Act provides for, among other things, the following two Swiss climate policy measures which were due to expire at the end of 2020 but have now been extended until the end of 2021:

- an exemption from CO₂ tax (with the obligation to reduce emissions) for operators of emission-intensive installations; and
- a compensation obligation for fossil fuel importers.

Further, the Swiss emissions trading system, which was due to expire at the end of 2020, has been linked to the EU emissions trading system since the beginning of 2020 and is no longer subject to a time limit (for further details please see "Latest environmental legislation in effect and in the pipeline – 2020 overview").

The revision of the CO₂ Ordinance allows these measures to be implemented properly and aims to steadily reduce Switzerland's CO₂ emissions from fuels. In particular, the ordinance allows the CO₂ tax to be increased up to Sfr120 per ton of CO₂ if CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels do not fall sufficiently. The revision extends this instrument so that the tax may also be increased from 1 January 2022 if fuel emissions do not fall sufficiently in 2020.

Amendment to vehicle emission standards

A further amendment to the CO₂ Ordinance concerns the emission standards for passenger cars, vans and light semi-trailers.

Since September 2017, both the European Union and Switzerland have measured the CO₂ emissions of new car models according to the new worldwide harmonised light vehicle test procedure (WLTP). The results from WLTP tests are closer to actual fuel consumption and show approximately 25% higher emission values than the results achieved following the old method.

The proposed amendment to the CO₂ ordinance replaces the target values for 2021 to 2024, as determined under the old measurement procedure, with the equivalent WLTP target values to maintain the emissions reduction required from vehicle importers.

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Endnotes

(1) CO₂ Ordinance, SR 641.711.

(2) CO₂ Act, SR 641.71.

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