Plenary sessions

• Rules of procedure
• In-depth discussions and formal decisions
• Social events and technical excursions
designed to broaden the team spirit

PLANAT operates according to the rules of procedure set by the Federal Government. Three annual plenary sessions, each lasting 1.5 days, are held. Social events and the informal exchange of information are as important as the formal meeting, where decisions are taken and reports authorized after in-depth discussions. A half-day excursion for the board of directors and senior executives is another occasion to provide the ambience for deepening the corporate spirit.

Steering committee

• Prepares the plenary sessions
• Coordinates the working groups
• Supervises the action plan

The steering committee meets under the chairmanship of the president in three annual half-day meetings to prepare the plenary sessions. It supports the president in strategic questions, supervises the working groups and external project managers, is involved in consultations for laws, regulations and guidelines and can launch pilot projects.

Presidency and secretariat

• Integrative leadership personality
• Well linked to all governmental levels and sectors

The president has to be a highly involved, motivating and integrative leader, preferably with a high position in a governmental office. The president chairs the PLANAT plenary assembly and the steering committee. He can rely on a closely linked, permanent secretariat, headed by a permanent secretary who is tasked to support the platform and its organs.

peculiarities

• Working groups and mandates for specific tasks
• www.planat.ch as common web portal
• PLANAT Science Award

Actually, PLANAT acts with three working groups covering its main tasks. The working groups consist of PLANAT members and may integrate or mandate external experts for specific tasks, especially with regard to the implementation of the PLANAT strategy. The secretariat runs the Internet platform www.planat.ch, which also hosts the working groups and external project managers, is involved in consultations for laws, regulations and guidelines and can launch pilot projects.

Natural hazards – a social challenge

• Solidarity
• Social, economic and ecological demands

Comparative level of safety for every man

One of PLANAT’s first and most important tasks was to define a vision and a strategy on how to cope with natural hazards and how to protect Switzerland and its people against these threats. It is a risk approach based on solidarity and sustainability.

The protection of life is the overriding purpose of the efforts to provide protection against natural hazards. Every person in Switzerland can expect a comparable level of safety wherever they are in the country. The protection of buildings and other properties and infrastructure has second priority. Decisions are based on the existing evidence and on the capacities available. Risks from natural hazards exist alongside with technical, ecological, economic and sociopolitical risks. Decisions about security and the protection of people have to be taken in an overall context. The importance of climate change is increasing.

Key strategy – integral risk management

• Risk concept brings transparency into decision making
• Joint effort of public and private sector
• Risk concept coherent with technical risks

Planning and management as key process against natural hazards is based on protectable measures of comparable standard, including prevention, intervention or recovery and reconstruction. As the protection against natural hazards has to be a task carried out jointly by the public and private sector, it also assumes that people take personal responsibility.

The main aim of risk management is to achieve a transparent culture of coping with risk across disciplines and departments to allow better planning, response, and reduction of risks. It makes it possible to analyse and assess risks, as well as taking risk reduction measures based on a coherent risk concept.

With strategic controlling the risk situation and the costs and benefits of measures get clear. Conceptual risk dialogue is of vital importance for the public risk awareness and for the acceptance of the necessary risk reduction measures.

Improvement of basic principles, guidelines and data

• Implementation by mandated projects
• The risk concept coherent with technical risks

The Swiss Federal Department for Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC) has the lead to implement the PLANAT strategy. DETEC mandated PLANAT with strategic projects along an agreed action plan. PLANAT itself mandated private companies and research institutions with the execution of projects.

The necessary funding for these projects is provided by a number of Federal Offices. A nationwide evaluation of existing and new guidelines and data is provided by a number of Federal Offices. A nationwide evaluation of existing and new guidelines and data is provided by a number of Federal Offices.

Switzerland can expect a comparable level of safety from natural hazards all over Switzerland, uniform protection goals must be set, covering life and limb, property, and important infrastructure. To successfully influence the public attitude and understanding of risk, a comprehensive exercise in communication is required. This is built around a targeted communications concept, and is part of an effective implementation. All stakeholders participate in wide-ranging dialogue and consensus building. A document is in preparation to demonstrate the practicability of the PLANAT risk concept when applied to different natural hazards and risks.
and run a national disaster risk reduction platform, and it encourages interested nations to build such a platform. Having experienced a couple of severe natural hazards, increasingly complex infrastructures, climate change, etc., are further aggravating the situation. Hence, Switzerland has been confronted with natural hazards, increasingly complex infrastructures, climate change, etc., are further aggravating the situation. Hence, Switzerland has been confronted with natural hazards, increasingly complex infrastructures, climate change, etc., are further aggravating the situation. Hence, Switzerland has been confronted with natural hazards, increasingly complex infrastructures, climate change, etc., are further aggravating the situation. Hence, Switzerland has been confronted with natural hazards, increasingly complex infrastructures, climate change, etc., are further aggravating the situation. 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Why is PLANAT needed?

• For a paradigm shift with a uniform vision and strategy
• As a national forum for discussion

Even though Switzerland is a highly industrialized, rich country, both resources and the political will to deal with natural hazards are limited. Safety is also in Switzerland affordable only to a certain extent, and not every hazardous situation can be eliminated. Actual catastrophes result in increasing damages. Specialists from various sectors and disciplines are involved during the events, but also for recovery and recreation.

Therefore, it became obvious that a platform needed to attract external resources and strategic questions, to look for more synergies and harmonization in the disaster risk reduction process and to bridge gaps between all governmental levels. Federal agencies, Cantons, communities, science, insurances and the private sector are involved. Furthermore, the platform should provide a forum for discussion among the various stakeholders, also to learn “to speak the same language” and to make a common effort at achieving a paradigm shift to handle natural hazards from a risk perspective and not just as threats that require elimination.

Who created PLANAT?

• A bottom-up process
• The team spirit and leadership of a highly motivated group

A number of high-level Federal and Cantonal government officials and experts from research, insurance and the private sector intensively discussed the need for a national platform. Starting with a first meeting only with a few enthusiastic initiative people trying to find common goals, the number of participants kept growing and a team spirit formed.

The Federal Government constituted PLANAT in late 1997 as an extra-parliamentary commission. The aim was to address emerging threats, and to initiate a risk dialogue in order to increase the levels of knowledge, skills, cooperation and coordination in the realms of risk prevention and reduction.

What is the mandate of PLANAT?

• Policy guidance
• To make the most of synergies
• To harmonize and prevent duplications

PLANAT as a strategic, consultative body brings disaster risk reduction to the attention of the Federal Government, provides policy guidance, harmonizes strategies, reveals gaps, develops synergies and coordinates activities. It is a national forum for discussion between the different sectors and stakeholders to encourage and enhance a risk dialogue in order to increase the levels of knowledge, skills, cooperation and coordination in the realms of risk prevention and reduction.

What is the institutional setup of PLANAT?

• An extra-parliamentary, non-political commission of the Federal Government
• A consultative body for policy guidance
• Not active on an operational level

PLANAT is an extra-parliamentary commission and as such a consultative body to the Federal Government, but not linked to the Parliament. It has no executive or legislative power and is not active on an operational level. PLANAT is formally attached to the Federal Ministry for Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication (DETEC). The secretariat is hosted at the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) to secure a close link to the actual president.

How is PLANAT financed?

• Line budget and seed money
• Common will and leadership most important

PLANAT gets an annual line budget from the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) to cover running costs for administrative support, as seed money for strategic projects and other cross-cutting activities. If needed, additional support comes from other agencies. However, most important is not money but the will to move into the same direction.

What is the thematic focus of PLANAT?

• Swiss focal point for UN/ISDR
• A national focal point for sustainable disaster risk prevention and mitigation
• Risk dialogue and risk awareness building

PLANAT is the focal point for UN/ISDR. The primary focus of PLANAT is a sustainable prevention and mitigation; a link to intergovernmental and non-governmental actors and the risk transfer with insurances exists through the members of the platform, representing these sectors. PLANAT should increase national leadership and commitment for a sustainable disaster risk reduction. Thus, the dialogue among the ones who have to reduce a risk and with the general public is essential, risk awareness building thereby a key issue.

Who is a member of PLANAT?

• 20 members from all stakeholder sectors
• PLANAT language and gender representation

PLANAT members are high-level representatives from different agencies, Cantons, science, insurance and the private sector. The Federal Government nominates them for a four-year term. Gender and language minorities are represented.

How is PLANAT organized?

• Plenary sessions
• Steering committee and working groups
• PLANAT presidency and secretariat

PLANAT plenary session as supreme board discusses all business of relevance, selects the steering committee, takes decisions on strategic projects and mandates working groups out of PLANAT members and external experts with specific tasks. This steering committee attends to PLANAT’s interests together with its president. For the risk dialogue they rely on a permanent secretariat with an executive secretary and a public relations manager.