



Since 2001: UNESCO biosphere  
Since 2008: Regional Nature Park

400 km<sup>2</sup> area  
17000 Inhabitants  
Canton of Lucerne



## International charisma

The south-western part of the canton of Lucerne is significantly characterised by the UNESCO-biosphere Entlebuch. Although this is not the only biosphere reservation on Swiss territory – the National Park has enjoyed this status since the 70s of the last century – in the public perception only Entlebuch is associated with the idea of the UNESCO biosphere reservation. A significant reason for this lies in the new focussing of the underlying UNESCO program “Man and Biosphere” (MAB), which since the 2<sup>nd</sup> Biosphere World Congress in Seville in 1995 has set sustainability as the guiding principle. Thus Entlebuch is the first and so far only Swiss biosphere reservation that follows the so-called Seville criteria.

## En route to a model region

When through the Rothenturm initiative all Swiss moorland landscapes became suddenly subject to strict legislative protection, the whole region feared for the consequences to their economic livelihood. The people of Entlebuch have successfully managed to change the supposed handicap into an opportunity and have concentrated on creating a biosphere reservation. In 2000 a referendum in the eight municipalities lead to the overwhelming result of a majority of 94% in favour of the biosphere concept.

Thus in 2001 Entlebuch became the first biosphere reservation in the world that emerged from a referendum. The population and the administrations develop and live joint concepts about protection and utilisation of nature and sustainable development of the economy and culture. The pioneer work of the people of Entlebuch was honoured in 2008 with the recognition of the region as the first Swiss Nature Park.

## May there be some moorland?

More than a quarter of the area of the Entlebuch UNESCO biosphere is covered with moor landscapes of national significance. Nowhere else in Switzerland is there so much nationally protected moorland in such a confined area as in Entlebuch: 44 highland moors, 61 flat marshland and 4 large moor landscapes characterise the landscape of the UNESCO biosphere Entlebuch (UBE). The moor region Laubersmad-Salwidili is even on the list of the most significant wetlands in the world (Ramsar convention). In the 400 square kilometres region are not only the largest and numerous moor landscapes in Switzerland, but also a significant animal and plant world.

## A confident and motivated population

The rich historical and cultural background of the eight municipalities ensures a wide and colourful range of tourism. Above all the “quite normal” lifestyle of the people of Entlebuch maintains the customs and traditions and ensures at the same time the spirit of the age and the present. The inhabitants of the pre-Alpine nature regions learned to think in terms of value-added chains. Local groups and forums put into practice their ideas generated in conferences about the future. The interests of people and the requirements of the environment, economy and society were developed in a fair compromise with sustainable mutual benefits. Life in the biosphere is a permanent and open social process of searching, learning and forming.

The future is not created here on the drawing board, but in a competent dialogue of mutual negotiation, with knowledge, craft and enjoyment. The creative development and marketing of regional products also demonstrates high consciousness for natural and cultural values and the desire for an innovative shaping of the future. In the meantime over 300 regional products have been awarded the label “Genuine Entlebuch”.

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