

Company Law

# ***No special regulation*** for sustainability

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## At a glance

- The Swiss economy is suffering from international uncertainties, rising location costs and US tariffs - new special national regulations would be particularly harmful in this situation.
- Instead of Switzerland going it alone, the Federal Council is pursuing a course of sustainability in line with global standards with its counter-proposal to the Responsible Business Initiative.
- The Responsible Business Initiative calls for unrealistic liability rules and ignores existing standards - it would put Swiss companies at a disadvantage in global competition and has already been democratically rejected.

The Swiss economy is experiencing difficult times: US tariffs are hitting export-oriented companies hard, while international uncertainties and rising location costs are putting many companies under additional pressure. Numerous jobs are at stake - the worst possible time for new burdens and special national regulations. The latest wake-up call for Switzerland as a business location from economiesuisse has made it clear that relief and international coordination are more urgent than ever.

With this in mind, the Federal Council decided this week to put forward an indirect counter-proposal to the new Responsible Business Initiative. In terms of content, it is doing the right thing: sustainability should be promoted, but not with special Swiss solutions, but in close step with international developments. However, it is also clear that new regulations are not acceptable for the economy in the current situation.

## Sustainability yes - additional hurdles no

Strict rules already apply in Switzerland today. Companies must report on environmental, human rights and social risks, particularly in the case of child labor and conflict minerals. Liability also arises from the applicable law. Switzerland therefore has a set of rules that is internationally compatible and at the same time sets high standards.

## Initiative fails to recognize reality

The new Responsible Business Initiative completely ignores these basic principles and calls for internationally unknown instruments - including liability in Switzerland for operations abroad. This would not only isolate Switzerland and place an additional burden on companies, but would also maneuver itself into the sidelines. In view of the current economic challenges, this is out of date and counterproductive - and from a democratic point of view, it would be a constraint, as the Responsible Business Initiative was rejected precisely because of this liability provision.

## Strengthen the location, ensure sustainability, no to experiments

The Federal Council is pursuing the right course in terms of content by focusing on international coordination and maintaining a sense of proportion. Sustainability remains important - but no additional special national regulations should be introduced in the current economic environment. It is now crucial to develop practicable solutions in step with our trading partners. One thing is clear: the new Responsible Business Initiative is not suitable as a reference - neither economically nor politically.

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