

NATURLAND STANDARDS ON SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT ASPECTS



Water is a valuable natural resource that is not infinitely available. Water is essential for agriculture, but agriculture is increasingly a cause and a victim of water scarcity. In addition, climate change is amplifying the frequency of extreme weather events, therefore responsible for two extremes regarding water: flooding & inundation and drought & aridity.

This is an overview of important aspects on Naturland requirements for sustainable water management. For more information refer to [Guidance for sustainable water management](#), developed by Naturland and Bio Suisse.

Note: This summary only refers to certain aspects of the Naturland standards on production. To fully comply and rely on, the [official and latest version of Naturland standards on production](#) are binding.

PRINCIPLES FOR SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION RELEVANT FOR ALL NATURLAND FARMS



- Farm management (including irrigation) should not have a negative effect on long-term soil fertility
- Excessive exploitation and exhaustion of water resources are not allowed.
- Wherever possible, rainwater is collected and used
- The effects and impact of the amount of water removed from water sources are monitored.
- The way water is used, as well as other farming methods, should only have a negligible impact on water quality. The farm management must avoid salinization of soil and water.
- Irrigation must follow good farming practices.
- Farms in regions with a climate typical of deserts or steppes or with hot summers comparable to those common to the Mediterranean climate must perform an annual water analysis according to FAO standards or equivalent methods.

Note: The use of non-renewable and fossil water resources is subject to prior evaluation. The use of non-renewable and fossil water resources for agricultural production is only possible if it does not conceal any significant ecological or social risks.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR FARMS IN WATER-SCARCE REGIONS



Areas with scarce water resources are those with high levels of water consumption in relation to water availability.

The basis for this is the Aqueduct Water Risk Atlas under the indicator Water Depletion. Naturland classifies areas with level 4 (“high”) and 5 (“extremely high”) as areas with scarce water resources. Furthermore, areas located in a desert area according to the Köppen-Geiger climate classification, are classified as areas with scarce water resources.

Farms in areas with scarce water resources must comply with additional requirements.

Note: These requirements take effect only if farms practice irrigation!

Sources for classification:



[Aqueduct Water Risk Atlas - Indicator Water Depletion](#)



[Köppen-Geiger climate classification](#)

REQUIREMENTS FOR NATURLAND FARMS LOCATED IN AREAS WITH SCARCE WATER RESOURCES PRACTISING IRRIGATION



- Water abstraction must comply with national and regional laws and regulations.
- Mechanical irrigation systems must operate effectively and be water-efficient (for example drip irrigation or mini sprinklers).
- Water losses must be avoided by means of regular maintenance.
- Water consumption (m³/ha/a) is to be recorded.
- In the scope of a risk analysis relevant categories of users are to be identified at the regional level. Co-operation should be sought with them to make progress in the sustainable use of water resources at both farm and regional levels (e. g. in water catchment areas).
- A detailed water management plan must be developed and submitted.

Note: The **Naturland Water Management Plan** (WMP) must be thoroughly filled in and handed over to Naturland prior to inspection! The template for the Naturland Water Management plan is free and can be downloaded on the [Naturland website](#)



THE NATURLAND WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

The completed Naturland Water Management Plan must be submitted to Naturland before inspection in the first year and every three years thereafter. It must be kept continually up to date and shown at Naturland inspections. Naturland evaluates the water management plan.



Individual farms

- Naturland Water Management Plan in form of the Excel template, with all registers filled in
- List of all plots or map(s) with all plots actually cultivated,
- Written proof of legality for all water sources (incl. wells)
- Analysis of irrigation water quality according to FAO standards or equivalent methods



Producer groups

- Naturland Water Management Plan in form of the Excel template, with registers R3 “FAO analysis” and R4 “Risk Analysis, Plan of action and stewardship” filled in for the whole group
- Additional list of farmers practising irrigation (“Farmers list Irrigation (FLI)”). The template for the farmers irrigation list is free and can be downloaded on the [Naturland website](#).

For the verification of the water management of producer groups, Naturland selects a random sample and informs the producer group about the selected producers. For the selected producers, lists or maps of all plots, as well as proof of legality must be submitted.

The size of the sample depends on the size of the producer group.

Last updated: 10/2024