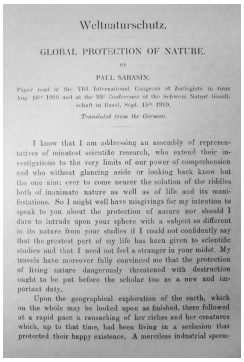
Multimedia Library Collection: Books & Profiles

"Weltnaturschutz": Global Protection of Nature

Sarasin, Paul



Weltnaturschutz.

GLOBAL PROTECTION OF NATURE.

by

PAUL SARASIN.

Paper read at the VIII. International Congress of Zoologists in Graz Aug. 15th 1910 and at the 93rd Conference of the Schweiz. Naturf. Gesellschaft in Basel, Sept. 15th 1910.

Translated from the German.

I know that I am addressing an assembly of representatives of minutest scientific research, who extend their investigations to the very limits of our power of comprehension and who without glancing aside or looking back know but the one aim: ever to come nearer the solution of the riddles both of inanimate nature as well as of life and its manifestations. So I might well have misgivings for my intention to speak to you about the protection of nature nor should I dare to intrude upon your sphere with a subject so different in its nature from your studies if I could not confidently say that the greatest part of my life has been given to scientific studies and that I need not feel a stranger in your midst. My travels have moreover fully convinced me that the protection of living nature dangerously threatened with destruction ought to be put before the scholar too as a new and important duty.

Upon the geographical exploration of the earth, which on the whole may be looked upon as finished, there followed at a rapid pace a ransacking of her riches and her creatures which, up to that time, had been living in a seclusion that protected their happy existence. A merciless industrial specu-

The first page of *"Weltnaturschutz": Global Protection of Nature*.

From Paul Sarasin, *"Weltnaturschutz": Global Protection of Nature* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1911)

PUBLIC DOMAIN This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Public Domain Mark 1.0 License .

Sarasin, Paul. *"Weltnaturschutz": Global Protection of Nature*. Basel: Birkhäuser, 1911.

The text "Weltnaturschutz" (World nature protection) by Paul Sarasin (1856–1929) is a key document in the history of the global nature conservation movement. The text is a speech, which Sarasin first held at the 8th International Zoological Congress in Graz on 16 August 1910 and again a few weeks later at the 93rd Conference of the Schweizerische Naturforschende Gesellschaft (Swiss Academy of Natural Sciences) in Basel. It was published both as a special print and in the proceedings of the Schweizerische Naturforschende Gesellschaft. Sarasin wrote his speech in German but translations into English, French, and Italian were made at the time and published as special prints in 1911. Most notably, copies of the speech were sent along with the invitations to the First International Conference on Global Nature Conservation, convened by the Swiss Government in Bern in November 1913 and attended by delegations of most of the leading powers of the time, such as Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Italy, and the United States.

—Patrick Kupper, 2022

The following is a re-edition of the English translation, now out of copyright. The original page numbers are given in square brackets. The original translation has been lightly edited to improve readability; typographical errors and minor mistakes have been corrected.

Download:

Download the edited translation
https://www.environmentandsociety.org/sites/default/files/key_docs/paul_sarasin_weltnaturschutz_english_0.pdf

Related links:

- Kupper, Patrick, *Creating Wilderness: A Transnational History of the Swiss National Park* (excerpt)
  https://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/7482

Books & Profiles Collection, Multimedia Library, Environment & Society Portal
"Weltnaturschutz": Global Protection of Nature
Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/9416
Print date: 24 November 2026 16:32:34