

# Preface

The use of hydropower in Switzerland is based on a long tradition. The topography of Switzerland presents favourable conditions for providing the population with electrical energy obtained from the exploitation of the flows and gravitational potential of its waters. Tremendous dams, modern weirs, turbines and generators have led to world wide recognition of the leading achievements of Switzerland's engineers and companies in the field of hydropower development.

The Exhibition presents a major chapter of Swiss engineering, the development of hydropower exploitations from the beginnings with the water wheel to the latest developments in turbine, generator and control techniques. The wide spectrums of the subject and the long history of the technical developments require presentation reflecting particular moments of this history; however they reflect as a whole an impressive picture of this most important part of the energy supply of Switzerland.

The exhibition coincides with the present discussions concerning the changing background of the energy supply situation in Switzerland and aims to encourage the public's awareness of this indigenous source of renewable energy. The exhibition comprises six departments:

- The Beginnings of Hydropower
- Milestones of Hydropower Exploitation
- Dams, the Useful Pyramids
- Developments in Hydropower Equipment
- The Countenance of Power Stations
- The Pioneers.

This fourth volume in the documentation series of the Society for the Art of Civil Engineering shows the complete exhibition. It also provides, in its own right, a significant contribution on the subject of "Hydropower in Switzerland".

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