

POSITION PAPER

Committee- United Nations General Assembly

Agenda- The Convention on Biological Diversity and its contribution in Sustainable Development

Country- Germany

The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework will likely address the unsustainable production and consumption patterns that are responsible for a large part of the loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystems. In the past 50 years, the world's population has doubled, with personal consumption also increasing 15% in the same time frame. While more food and energy are being provided in most parts of the world, this comes at the expense of nature's ability to continue to provide. Over half of the agricultural expansion since 1992 has been into tropical forests, an abundant source of biodiversity. Freshwater ecosystems have been negatively impacted by runoff containing high amounts of fertilizers flowing into coastal waters, causing both excessive plant growth and oxygen-depleted "dead zones."

These ecosystems are further harmed as over 80% of wastewater is released back into freshwater ecosystems without being treated. The land and natural resources managed by indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) are experiencing increasing pressure from unsustainable consumption and production practices, but biodiversity is declining less rapidly in these areas as compared to non-IPLC protected areas. As IPLCs increasingly come under threat from climate change, so does their knowledge about how to sustainably manage the land and natural resources. The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework will aim at addressing the challenges to protect biodiversity and set ambitious targets for the international community.

In order to raise international awareness of the significance of protecting biodiversity, in addition to other environmental and climate policy issues, the UN General Assembly decided in December 2010 to set up an Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which advises governments on the science of climate change, IPBES is designed to scientifically study and monitor the Earth's biodiversity and to advise environmental policy-makers. Germany had long sought to create this platform and ultimately succeeded in its bid to host the IPBES secretariat on the UN Campus in Bonn. Since the beginning of 2014, the IPBES secretariat has been located at the UN Campus on the Rhine.

One important aspect of the conservation of biodiversity is protecting endangered species in the animal kingdom. Germany has signed both the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Washington Convention, CITES) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention, CMS). Moreover, Germany has been a member of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) since 1982 and actively supports maintaining the ban on commercial whaling. Germany has also

joined various regional agreements on the protection of specific species or groups which are endangered but not yet necessarily threatened with extinction.

On the basis of the decisions of the European Union and of the recent ruling of the German Federal Constitutional Court, Germany aims at a reduction of its greenhouse gas emissions of at least 65% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. The German Federal Government will set yearly reduction targets in order to reach greenhouse gas emission neutrality by 2045. This needs to be accompanied by an increased effort in climate and sustainability diplomacy, based on a whole-of-government approach.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its worldwide effects have sharply increased the urgency of social and ecological transformation. It has been and remains strategically important to set the tracks for a socially and environmentally more sustainable and thus more future-proof society to pursue a better and green recovery worldwide, in Europe and in Germany. The 2030 Agenda and its SDGs as well as the Paris Agreement should serve as the guiding framework at the national, European and global levels, to redirect policies and programmes in response to the pandemic to “recover better”, guided by the principle of “leave no one behind”.

Sustainable development serves as a guiding principle for German foreign and development policy. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Germany has played a pivotal role in its implementation and the pursuit of its SDGs world-wide. The successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda is only possible if the effort is based on broad support from society as a whole. The Federal Government has included civil society, business and science in the process of the development of the German Sustainability Strategy as well as in the dialogue process accompanying the preparation of its voluntary national report. The transition to a sustainable Germany can only succeed if understood as a joint endeavor – that is, as a road that the federal, Land and local authorities and the various groups within society will travel together.