



SUMMARY NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS: Connecting People and Nature - Dialogue on Regenerative Agriculture and Investing in Nature-Based Solutions

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Davos offers an important platform for forward-thinking policy-makers and businesses to demonstrate that protecting and restoring nature is a central component of securing not only the long-term viability and profitability of businesses, but also the full implementation of the SDGs and meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement. The next generation will not tolerate leaders who are avoiding the steps they must take to transform their practices to reduce climate impacts.

A dialogue of 30+ leaders from government, business and civil society met at the Ice Village at the World Economic Forum on 21st January to focus on the topic of scaling up investments in nature-based solutions (NBS). Our participants discussed the following issues: policies and practices that are working to promote regenerative agriculture; financial mechanisms and reforms to bring about the increase in funding required for nature-based solutions; the role that science-based targets, technology and innovation can play; how can we use strategic communications to build public support and political will?

This is an influential, cross-sector high-level group of participants who have the potential to influence the systemic change required by 2030 to allow nature-based solutions to fulfil their potential as a third of the emissions reductions – and to help deliver the SDGs. There was overwhelming consensus of the need to both decarbonize our economy AND invest in nature to restore life on Earth. There was energy and alignment that this group – and associated peer groups – can be instrumental in providing a unified voice, particularly from the private sector, to bring about a scaling up in investment in nature-based solutions. The event was oversubscribed, energy levels were high, the discussion was rich – and many participants signaled an interest in maintaining the connections in order to accelerate action where it matters, ie. on the ground.

Areas of discussion included the following:

Policy:

- Recognition that the current government infrastructures and frameworks that created the problems we are facing do need to change. “We need the ministries of agriculture and environment to work in a completely co-ordinated way.” Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, Minister of Environment, Costa Rica.
- 2020 is a critical year for getting action on nature-based solutions – mainstreaming nature and investing in NBS that cut across all the SDGs. “This is the year that NBS takes centre stage; we need to mainstream the agro-economy.” Achim Steiner, Head of UNDP.
- There was universal recognition that nature-based solutions have to be part of the equation – on a huge scale. “We cannot get to net zero without carbon sinks. This is not about either/or; it’s a both/and solution. If we invest in nature, we can change the dialogue from fear to hope. There are so many benefits: the just rural transition is a way of providing a much-needed boost to rural economies.” Claire O’Neill, UK President of COP26.
- There was open and honest debate about the role of carbon finance, with clear expression of the many different opinions that have been well articulated over many years, but also recognition that we must work together if we are to resolve these issues in the run up to COP26. “We need to invest in forests and NBS but there is no time for offsetting. It is urgent to shift away from coal and fossil fuels.” Jennifer Morgan, Executive Director, Greenpeace. “We cannot wait for Article 6; we need transparency now on the carbon transactions to ensure more investment into carbon sinks.” Claire O’Neill.

Practice, business, finance:

- Discussion focused on the need to provide solutions that work for farmers; that both policy incentives and business practices need to reward the growers, producers, farmers and communities who are the real stewards of nature. “How

can we take everyday decisions to reward farmers for good behavior especially in rural communities.” Berry Martin, Board Member, Rabobank. “We need to focus on solutions for farmers; our role is to reconstitute the environment, not destroy it. We need to make the Food Summit a priority for both zero hunger and environmental protection.” Agnes Kalibata, President, AGRA

- There was agreement that there is value in joining forces as the private sector – to unify, to get louder, to provide clarity on how companies can move forward on bringing nature into the heart of corporate decision-making. “There is a drumbeat of companies signing up, meaning that the business voice is getting louder and more unified on the role that nature plays.” Eva Zabey, Executive Director, Business for Nature.
- Many participants spoke of the practices, frameworks and approaches that are already paying dividends in their supply chains – for farmers, for communities and for companies. “I fell in love with this regenerative agriculture framework that enables us to focus on soil health. Soil is the second largest carbon sink after the oceans; soil health is equivalent to human health.” Andrea Illy, Chairman, illycaffè.
- Discussion also centered on the plethora of measurements, frameworks, resources that exist to measure and manage outcomes, and that this needs to be simplified. “We need to measure and manage if we’re to succeed but we cannot possibly use the hundreds of different measures that exist out there. We need to come up with five measures that we all agree on, for example, how much soil organic carbon is a good measure.” Tony Simons, Executive Director, CIFOR / ICRAF.
- But there was recognition that many critical sectors were missing from the dialogue. “Digital technology needs to be part of this conversation. That technology can help us resolve many of these issues on a huge scale.” Pablo Barrera, EVP Supply Chain, Yara.

Narrative:

- Participants discussed the fact that despite progress and a real spike in interest, investment and action on nature-based solutions, much work still needs to be done to build political will and shape public narratives. “We only have 8 years left in terms of carbon budget: we have to decarbonize ‘black carbon’ and manage the ‘green carbon’. We have to be 100% focused on nature-based solutions; it’s net-zero agriculture as well as decarbonizing our economies.” Johan Rockström, Director, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research
- Movement building, building political will and public engagement was recognized as critical in getting action on the ground under way. “We have been building a movement for trees – talking to communities 22 hours a day, mobilizing support from 162 million people, converting 72,000 farmers to regenerative agroforestry. Trees first have to be planted in peoples’ minds; the hardest terrain can be peoples’ minds.” Sadghuru, Isha Foundation.
- Food was discussed as a critical way into this discussion for many audiences. “Food connects everyone; it links different communities – whether people are interested in climate, health, development, it is food that is the basis from bringing in many different actors.” Gunhild Stordalen, Founder and Executive Chair, EAT
- There was acknowledgement that movement building and conversations are a critical part of the process but that there is such limited time, that 2020 has to be the year that all of this energy is translated into action. “We need to translate declarations into concrete actions; hence we have issued the [planetary emergency plan](#) that has details for implementing much of what we have discussed today.” Sandrine Dixson-Declève, Club of Rome

Our next steps are as follows:

1. **Circulate** this read-out to all attendees (and interested parties) to solicit levels of interested in continuing to be engaged in the discussion. There are many opportunities this year to reconvene this group / a similar group to resolve some of the specific issues that arose. Please reply if you have interest in a particular area covered in this document.
2. **Commitment to become a ‘champion’ for nature-based solutions** in 2020 (and beyond). This would involve being part of our active NBS community – invited to events at key milestone moments; active on social media (Linked In, Twitter etc) as NBS messengers and participants in the ongoing #NatureNow campaign; media spokespeople on NBS topics at key events; commit to become a speaker at international / national events; receive N4C outputs like these including messaging documents and campaign materials ahead of key events – or connect us with your organization’s communications teams.
3. **Commitment to ‘recruit’ unusual suspects to the NBS agenda.** If every attendee committed to ‘recruiting’ only 10 different people from our networks in the next 12 months, we will have engaged another 300 powerful individuals to contribute to systemic change.

APPENDIX – Attendees:

- Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, Minister of Environment of Costa Rica
- Achim Steiner, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme
- Agnes Kalibata, President, AGRA
- Johan Rockström, Director, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research
- Berry Marttin, Member of the Board, Rabobank
- Sadhguru, Founder of Isha Foundation
- Gunhild Stordalen, Founder and Executive Chair, EAT
- Pablo Barrera Lopez, EVP Strategy and Supply Chain, Yara
- Tony Simons, Executive Director CIFOR-ICRAF (CGIAR)
- Justin Adams, Executive Director, Tropical Forest Alliance
- Mark Gough, CEO of Natural Capital Coalition
- Praveen Singhavi, President of APRIL
- Jennifer Morgan, Executive Director, Greenpeace
- Pierre Rousseau Sr Strategic Advisor for Sustainable Businesses BNP Paribas
- Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chairperson, GEF
- Melissa Pinfield, Director, Food and Land Use Coalition
- Zach Fenster, Chief of Staff, Watergen
- Eva Zabey, Executive Director, Business for Nature
- Jeff G Turner, VP Sustainability, DSM
- Dharsono Hartono, CEO, PT. Rimba Makmur Utama
- Jennifer Morris, President Conservation International
- Sandrine Dixon- Declève, Co-President of the Club of Rome
- Jonny Hughes, UNEP-WCMC
- Diane Holdorf, Managing Director, Food & Nature program at WBCSD
- Nikhil Seth, Executive Director of UNITAR
- Mats Granryd, Director General, GSMA
- Mahendra Singhi, CEO Dalmia Cement
- Greg Skinner and Suneil Setiya, Founders Quadrature Climate Foundation
- Joseph Conofio, Natural Capital Coalition
- Jonathan Ekstrom, Chairman, Biodiversity Consultancy
- Frederic Hoffman, Massellaz
- Catherine Cunningham, Founder, CEO, Eikosphere
- Joanna Elliott, Senior Director, Conservation Partnerships, Fauna & Flora International
- David Nabarro, 4SD (Moderator)
- Elise Buckle, Senior Advisor to the UN, Director of Climate & Sustainability (Organizer)
- Lucy Almond, Director & Chair, Nature4Climate (Organizer)

Resources for further information:

- [Business for Nature](#)
- [Science-Based Targets Network](#)
- [Nature4Climate's nature-based solutions 'survival guide'](#)
- [Nature-based solutions in action case studies](#)
- [Nature-based Solutions Initiative, Oxford University](#)
- [Tropical Forest Alliance](#)