

# Federal Republic of Germany

## Positions for the United Nations Environmental Programme - Committee of Permanent Representatives

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### I. Cultivating Technological Innovations to Meet Climate Change Challenges

The Federal Republic of Germany strongly affirms the necessity of the creation of technological innovations that will combat climate change. Germany recognizes the role that humanity has had in the geological changes that have resulted in the rise of the global temperature by between 0.5 and 1 degrees Celsius since the start of the Industrial Revolution. This presents many problems as climate change now affects every country on every continent in the world as it disrupts economies and wreaks havoc on wildlife, human health, and food supply. Germany acknowledges that fossil fuels supply around 80% of global energy and 66% of electrical generation which contributes approximately 60% of the greenhouse gas emissions that have caused the climate crisis. Through a wide range of technological innovations, it is still possible to limit the rise in global temperature to two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, has called upon Germans to summon “the courage to think in a new way, the strength to leave familiar paths, the willingness to try new things, and the determination to act faster” in order to preserve the world for today’s young people and their descendants. Germany believes that the world must come together to combat the current effects of climate change, as well as take active measures to implement major institutional and technological change to prevent further damage to the Earth’s atmosphere.

As a leader on the issue of climate change, Germany has already begun the process of reflecting climate action in administrative activities. Approved in December 2010 and amended in May 2015, the Programme of Sustainability Measures has made significant strides in areas such as energy supply, environmental management, federal properties, and information technology. In an ongoing effort to achieve greenhouse gas neutrality, the German government currently records energy consumption, as well as the share of renewable energy sources and CO2 emissions in order to pinpoint changes and tighten up any measures necessary. The German government also encourages the continuous exchange of ideas among distinct levels of the public sector so that the best practices may be utilized. In addition to the measures implemented on a federal level, Germany has also pledged a program worth €54 billion in order to reach climate target goals without abandoning its policy of zero deficit spending. Germany is proud of the steps it has taken to actively reduce the nation’s greenhouse gas emissions. Angela Merkel has stated that she intends to “use all [her] strength to ensure that Germany makes its contribution- ecologically, economically, socially- to getting climate change under control.”

Germany acknowledges that climate change is a direct threat to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Several SDGs involve climate-related issues, and SDG 13 directly addresses climate change and the need for global legislative action in mitigating its effects, while SDG 17 calls for and encourages international funding and collaboration in order to meet climate change goals. The Paris Agreement expands on the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and works to unite all nations under a common cause. This includes enhanced support from developed Member States to provide financial and educational assistance to developing Member States. Ratified by Germany in 2016, the Paris Agreement focuses on strengthening to global response to climate change and limiting the further rise of temperatures to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The Federal Republic of Germany **strongly suggests** the consideration and improvement of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology as a short-term solution in order to reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions being released into the air. CCS is the process of capturing CO2 before it enters the atmosphere, transporting it to a storage site, and storing it where it will not be able to reach the atmosphere. Germany realizes that the careful selection of storage sites is necessary to guarantee low-leakage rates and avoid long-term consequences of CO2 leaking back into the air in the future. As a long-term solution, Germany **emphasizes** the need for renewable energy sources such as wind power, solar energy, and hydropower. Germany therefore **proposes** the Technological Education for Climate and Habitat (TECH) Conference, to be held triennially in a city leading the way in combatting the climate crisis. The TECH Conference would focus on raising awareness of the affordability and effectiveness of renewable energy technology, including a program to assist in the implementation and installation of wind turbines, solar panels, and other climate

technology. The development and implementation of these technologies will provide an alternative to fossil fuels that will help mitigate the climate crisis. To fund this process, Germany **highly recommends** that each Member State, both developing and developed, allot an adjusted percentage of their GDP to the implementation of clean energy sources. Germany **firmly believes** in the necessity of developed and developing Member States taking active, progressive measures to combat the climate crisis as climate change is an issue that affects the health and wellbeing of all who inhabit the Earth. Germany therefore **stresses** that it is crucial to bring the issue of climate change to the forefront of the international stage and take swift action.

## II. Reducing the Impact of Pollution on Habitat Loss

The Federal Republic of Germany strongly condemns the impact of pollution on habitat loss. Germany acknowledges that the Earth is currently experiencing a human-caused mass wave of extinction, which is only the sixth in the past half-billion years. Studies have shown that species of vertebrates are going extinct 114 times faster than if there were no human activity, and that the number of species that have gone extinct in the past 100 years would have taken 11,400 years to go extinct using natural extinction rates. Germany recognizes that human pollution, population growth, and land development all have major impacts on the environment that lead to climate change and habitat loss. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) has reported that, since their earliest recorded states, natural ecosystems have fallen by 47 percent on average, while global biomass of wild mammals has declined by 82 percent. Biodiversity is a crucial factor in fighting habitat loss due to the fact that an environment that is biodiverse is able to compensate for various changes, ensuring that all interdependent groups are functioning properly. Biodiversity encompasses genetic diversity, species diversity, and ecosystem diversity. Human development causes habitat fragmentation, which has a significant negative correlation to biological diversity and has lastingly hurtful effects on habitats on a long-term basis. Germany believes that all Member States must take an active approach to preserving habitats and reducing the impact of the human population.

Germany has a long history of prioritizing the environment. As a party to the 1993 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Germany is committed to national and international efforts to protect biodiversity and reverse the effects of human pollution on habitats. Over the past twenty years, Germany has continuously contributed to international biodiversity conservation, increasing its contribution gradually. Since 2013, Germany has provided more than €500 million annually to assist with the conservation of forests and other ecosystems throughout the world, thereby quadrupling its contribution since 2007. Along with several partner countries, Germany utilizes the Strategic Environmental Assessment to assess the environmental consequences of proposed plans or policies to neutralize their negative effect on the ecosystem at the earliest stages of the decision-making process. Germany has also begun the process of educating the public about the importance of biodiversity in order to mainstream biodiversity throughout the government and society. The promotion of sustainable use throughout Germany is crucial in order to remove the direct pressures on biological diversity. In 2009, Germany passed the Federal Nature Conservation Act, which is enforced in all sixteen German states. This Act touches on species provisions protection and protected areas, and includes provisions on landscape planning, marine nature conservation, access to nature and landscape for recreational use, and the inclusion of well-known nature conservation associations in decision making processes when appropriate.

Germany recognizes the importance of biodiversity in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Biodiversity ties into each of the goals, demonstrating the significance of biodiversity itself. In order to increase the chances of attaining all 17 SDGs, Germany is utilizing the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets to most effectively enhance biodiversity nationwide. These targets educate the public about biodiversity, but focus on putting concrete measures in place to protect habitats and species.

Germany is committed to biodiversity and utilizing its principles to reduce the impact of pollution on habitat loss. Germany **strongly recommends** a three-part plan that consists of putting environmental protections in place and redeveloping habitats, mitigating climate change with the use of renewable resources and sustainable practices, and taking active measures to reduce the amount of human pollution in the air, ocean, and on land. Germany **proposes** the creation of the Habitat Conservation and Restoration (HCR) Project, which would enable the three-part plan to be put into action on an international level. With the financial assistance of various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the program would be able to assist Member States in taking active steps to implement renewable energy technology,

rebuild habitats, and make recycled, reusable materials mainstream throughout society. Germany **implores** that Member States adopt the use of the aforementioned Strategic Environmental Assessment in order to proactively address and mitigate problems before they are able to arise. Germany also **encourages** the exchange of ideas on an international level, believing that habitat loss is an issue that the world must work together to solve. It is only by coming together as one united planet to combat the complicated issues of climate change and habitat loss that humanity can ensure that the Earth is suitable for future generations.