



Dr. Camilla Bausch on How Think Tanks Can Serve as a Catalyst for Action at the "Why Think Tanks Matter Forum"

Presentation

[Panel discussion](#)

Date

28 January 2021

Location

online

Panel discussion

[Dr. Camilla Bausch](#)

How can think tanks serve as a catalyst for ideas and action? In view of a challenging year of dual public health and environmental crises, Dr. Camilla Bausch addressed this question at the Why Think Tanks Matter Forum. The forum brought together more than 700 think tank professionals from all around the world. In an all-female panel, leading think tank presidents from four continents elaborated on how think tanks can add insights and value on key policy issues for policymakers and the public.

While acknowledging the vast differences between think tanks around the world, Dr. Bausch identified a range of topic areas that these institutions must take into consideration, no matter the specific issues they work on. These topic areas include the [planetary boundaries](#), the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) as well as the social dimensions of change. Furthermore, with a specific focus on 2021, Dr. Bausch included recovery packages into the list, as these unprecedented flows of money have the potential to determine our future.

Dr. Bausch challenged think tanks to not merely address symptoms, but to identify and analyze underlying causes. In doing so, they will also have to question well-established assumptions, including their own theories of change. Despite the work of science over decades, policies are still not sustainable.

In order to support societal transformation towards a better future, Dr. Bausch concluded by pointing to the strengths specific to this sector. Different to policymakers, think tanks can go beyond election cycles and work outside the sometimes rigid confines of established structures. Different to many in academia, think tanks are free embrace interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches, acknowledging not only the complexity of current issues but also the relevance of the knowledge and experiences of stakeholders for identifying the most pressing societal questions and potential practical solutions.

Dr. Bausch shared the panel with CEOs and Directors from think tanks in Brazil, Indonesia, Kenya, the US and Egypt.

The [international event](#) also discussed think tank priorities for 2021 and highlighted 20 examples of how think tanks contributed to helping in the 2020 crisis across the world. At the conclusion of the Forum, the [Global Go To Think Tank Index](#) was officially released.

Event

[Why Think Tanks Matter Global Forum](#)

Organizer

University of Pennsylvania, [Think Tanks and Civil Society Program](#) (TTCSP), United States

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[Dr. Camilla Bausch](#)

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