

EVENT

Dinner Dialogue
Biodiversity

Transatlantic perspectives on biodiversity and climate change



On 11 October 2007, a transatlantic Ecologic Dinner Dialogue was held in Berlin to celebrate the launch of The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) first European office and to discuss EU and US policies on biodiversity and climate change. The guest of honor, Rebecca Patton, Chief Conservation Strategies Officer for The Nature Conservancy (TNC), was joined by her colleagues Sascha Müller-Kraenner, the new European Representative as well as Roberto Troya, Director of International Government Relations and Andreas Lehnhoff, Director for the Mesoamerica & Caribbean for the Conservancy. The keynote speaker was Miranda Schreurs, Professor at the Free University in Berlin, who is an expert in transatlantic environmental policy.

Rebecca Patton made opening remarks to introduce TNC, which has offices in more than 30 countries with over 3,500 employees. As the largest conservation organization in the world, she said that the Conservancy was excited to open its first European office, directed by Sascha Müller-Kraenner in Berlin. The Conservancy views Europe as a leader in environmental policy and is looking forward to large-scale collaboration, especially in the lead-up to the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali in December 2007 and UN Conference on Biodiversity in Bonn in May 2008.

Miranda Schreurs then presented the US and EU positions on biodiversity and climate policy. She stressed that although the US has not been active at the federal level, including its notable absence in multilateral agreements on the environment since 1994, there has been wide-scale effort at the state and local levels. For example, 30 states now have renewable energy portfolios and 475 municipalities have agreed to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the Kyoto Protocol. She noted that

while there is increasing awareness of climate change in the American consciousness, biodiversity has still not reached the level of public debate that it has in Europe. The question is how to raise the level of awareness in the US, and how to build on the momentum of the EU's environmental policy development on both sides of the Atlantic.

Discussion following the dinner focused on the importance of civil society in environmental protection and how to increase awareness of the linkages between human well-being and biodiversity. Possible synergies exist between biodiversity protection and adaptation and mitigation of climate change, as well as environment and energy security. There is also a new trend toward economic valuation of ecosystem services that measures human well-being beyond traditional measures, such as GDP. Corporate responsibility was stressed as a key component of any global solution to environmental degradation. Throughout the dinner, there was repeated mention of the timely opportunity for the US and EU to collaborate, especially through existing global networks developed by international NGOs like The Nature Conservancy.

Further Links

- [The Nature Conservancy](#) [1] (TNC)
- [Miranda Schreurs](#) [2] (CV)
- [UN Climate Change Conference](#) [3] (Bali)
- [UN Conference on Biodiversity](#) [4] (Bonn)
- [NGO network on Biodiversity](#) [5]
- [Beyond GDP: Measuring progress, true wealth, and the well-being of nations](#) [6]

11 October 2007
Berlin
Rebecca Patton
Miranda Schreurs

Speaker

Rebecca Patton
Miranda Schreurs

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Links

[1] <https://www.nature.org/?redirect=https-301>

[2] <http://www.fu-berlin.de/ffu/Team/CVSchreursshort.pdf>

[3] http://unfccc.int/meetings/cop_13/items/4049.php

[4] <https://www.cbd.int/>

[5] http://www.biodiv-network.de/front_content.php?idcatart=7&changelang=2

[6] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/beyond_gdp/