

Position Paper for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

The topics before the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development are: 1) By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters; 2) Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life; and 3) By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans. Germany reaffirms its commitment to sustainable development and looks forward to collaborating with other Member States to promote prosperity and wellbeing for all individuals.

I. By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters

Germany remains committed to eliminating extreme poverty and acknowledges the need to reduce the vulnerability of the poor and others in vulnerable situations to the consequences of climate change, as well as other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters. Germany also places high importance on reducing poverty while protecting the global environment and climate. In order to successfully eradicate poverty by 2030, Germany acknowledges the need to strengthen international efforts to include the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and individuals. Poverty remains a challenge for all nations, both developed and developing.

Germany itself is currently taking several actions and adopted strategies that aim to build the resilience of the poor and reduce their vulnerability to the impacts of climate-related shocks and disasters. One of the actions that Germany has taken in regards to addressing both climate change and poverty is adaptation. In 2008, Germany adopted the "German Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change", which present possible consequences of climate change, as well as potential responses to those consequences. The overall aim of the strategy is to increase Germany's resilience to climate change. In 2011, Germany also developed the "Adaptation Action Plan of the German Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change". As a part of its adaptation strategy to climate change, Germany has also facilitated dialogue between the government and civil society on climate change and actions to mitigate its impacts. These dialogues aim to promote greater understanding of climate change in order to reduce the vulnerability to the consequences of climate change.

Germany views poverty as an issue of multiple dimensions, and is particularly concerned with leaving no one behind. Reaching out to disadvantaged or discriminated groups, including women, remain important for the eradication of poverty. Specifically, Germany advocates for a green economy, which places an emphasis on the interlinkages between the environment and economy. In addition, a green economy can promote socioeconomic development at the international level by protecting the environment, reducing climate change, and sustainably managing resources. A strong proponent of gender equality, Germany also encourages policies and programs that allow both poor women and men to participate in, contribute to and benefit from a green economy. As a method of successfully implementing a green economy, Germany believes in the empowerment

of the poor, especially women. A green economy is especially important in reducing climate change and its consequences, as well as managing environmental risk. Further, Germany fully supports the notion of a green economy, which can effectively build the resilience of the poor and reduce their vulnerability to the consequences of climate-related hazards and disasters by promoting equity.

II. Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political economic and public life

Germany continues to be a strong proponent of gender equality and acknowledges the need to promote inclusive social policies. Further, Germany recognizes the important role gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls around the world can play in the achievement of sustainable development. Still, Germany also realizes that inequality between both men and women exist, with opportunities being far from equal. Germany strongly believes that policies that help improve gender equality can allow each person to be independent and free, regardless of their gender.

Regarding gender equality, Germany is a state party to several international agreements, including the *UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women* and regional agreements, such as the *EU Conclusion on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Cooperation*. In accordance with these agreements, Germany makes economic and political empowerment of women a priority on their national agenda. Currently, women consist of over half of the elected members in the national government. However, in some areas, women continue to remain underrepresented in political life. Regarding employment, Germany has taken action to prevent both direct and indirect discrimination against employees based on background, including gender, through passing the General Equal Treatment Act (GETA). Through this Act, Germany places an obligation for employers to take measures necessary to protect employees from discrimination. In addition, Germany has taken steps to promote the economic development of women through programs such as the G7 Initiative on Women's Economic Empowerment. Through this program, and as a strategy to promote the participation of women in economic life, participating states aim to increase the number of women and girls in developing nations receiving vocational training by 2030. As a whole, Germany has taken several actions, such as making political, economic and public processes more inclusive.

Germany encourages the international community to place gender equality as a primary goal in the efforts to achieve sustainable development. Germany also encourages other countries to give women access to the law and courts and allow for opportunities where women can voice their opinions. In addition, Germany believes that a human rights based approach, one that addresses discrimination against women, can help ensure the full and effective participation of women in political, economic and public life. Moreover, Germany fully supports the work of civil society organizations that work to promote women's political and socioeconomic rights. In accordance with the *Programme of Action of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development*, Germany encourages governments to include women's organizations as a method of increasing women's participation in the development of political and socioeconomic policies and programs.

III. By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans

Germany acknowledges the significant role healthy marine and coastal ecosystems play in achieving sustainable development. Moreover, Germany recognizes that protecting these ecosystems is also a means of reducing climate change and its consequences. Germany further realizes that both oceans and seas, which provide coastal and marine resources for many people play a crucial role in human well being, as well as social and economic development around the world. Overall, Germany understands the need to restore, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.

In accordance with a number of international and regional agreements, Germany has taken actions to protect its marine ecosystems in the North and Baltic Seas. In addition, Germany understands that the health and productivity of marine ecosystems also depends on biodiversity, or variety of life within an ecosystem. Acknowledging the important role biodiversity plays in protecting marine ecosystems, Germany has implemented the Habitats Directive, which designated eight nature reserves as protected areas. The goal of the Directive is to prevent activities that would be harmful to the environment, such as overfishing. As a member of the EU, Germany also aims to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems by taking measures to reduce marine litter. Regarding marine litter, Germany believes that there is a need to address pollution from both land-based and sea-based sources.

At the international level, Germany supports measures that not only conserve and protect the sustainable use of marine and coastal ecosystems, but also those which eliminate the root causes of marine pollution. Germany also strongly believes in the implementation of ecosystem-based approaches, which can result to social, economic and cultural benefits for local communities. In terms of protecting biodiversity, Germany encourages the international community to increase their efforts in establishing marine protected areas. In particular, Germany believes in the importance of marine protected areas, which has been shown to be an effective strategy to increase biomass and biodiversity in oceans and seas. Germany also supports the idea of sustainable fisheries and believes that action to promote fishing can protect the livelihoods of people living in coastal regions. In addition, Germany also recognizes the need to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Germany further encourages other countries to equally prioritize ocean needs and human needs, as sustainably managed marine and coastal systems promote sustainable development for all individuals.