

# Draft Symposium Summary:

## Nature-Based Solutions to the World's Biggest Crisis

Jointly organised by the Danida and WWF on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2020, Copenhagen.

This symposium report includes a write up of the key points in the presentations and the panel discussion. There were close to 200 participants in the symposium, 50 at the meeting venue while the rest participated virtually from around the world. Participants represented various stakeholder groups including civil society, academia, ministries, investors and private sector.

- A short video of the symposium can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/mayostudio/review/462603261/db79123c26>
- The symposium in its full length can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/00TUzdC46Cw>
- Under each of the presentations there is a link for that specific presentation only.
- A full deck of presentation slides in pdf can be viewed here: [https://www.wwf.dk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/symposium-on-naturebased-solutions-presentations\\_mfa-and-ww.pdf](https://www.wwf.dk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/symposium-on-naturebased-solutions-presentations_mfa-and-ww.pdf)

### Introduction and welcome

Introduction video (WWF-UM): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDbCki-rIMI&t=10s>

Welcome by facilitator Jarl Krausing, International Director, Concito

- Jarl welcomed participants and introduced the purpose of the symposium: Gathering decision makers, experts, practitioners and frontrunners within the nexus of nature and development to an inspirational discussion on the potentials of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) to contribute to solve some of the key global societal challenges while benefiting nature and its ecosystems. Finally, Jarl gave the word to the Minister set the scene from the Governments perspective.

### Session 1: Setting the scene

Rasmus Prehn, Minister for Development Cooperation, <https://youtu.be/5kpf25e29s>

- The Minister gave a keynote speech on the need for NbS in development work, policy and partnerships.
- The Minister emphasized that we cannot ignore the **global challenges**, ranging from climate change, biodiversity loss, water and food security to droughts, floods, conflict, hunger and poverty. These issues are interrelated and call for smart integrated solutions. Here nature can play a key role. **Nature-based Solutions** is one of the best and cheapest ways to address societal challenges.
- Relatedly, the Minister emphasized that **partnerships** with CSOs as well as private sector and pension funds must be strengthened.
- Finally, the Minister concluded that we must leverage synergies of the forthcoming COPs on biodiversity, desertification, and climate and promote innovative solutions such as NbS in this context.



- Next, the technicalities of the **IUCN Global NbS Standard** were introduced, focusing on metrics, self-assessment tool, measure of standard-adherence (please see the presentation or <https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/49070>).
- Steward then pointed to the **interlinks of governance, transparency, and learning** to promote and improve future solutions.
- Finally, the importance of **financing for NbS** was highlighted – addressing related issues of limited learning, viability and performance, scalability, as well as investment initiatives and the role of different types of funding.

**Melissa de Kock, Senior Advisor: Conservation, Climate & Communities, WWF,**

<https://youtu.be/S3PzKHx61Ao>

- Melissa gave a presentation on how WWF work with NbS, highlighting the potential of NbS (based on the IUCN Standard) to **deliver conservation while addressing key societal challenges**.
- She emphasized the **opportunities of NbS** ranging from synergetic social, climate and nature outcomes to inclusive sustainable development pathways and COVID-19 recovery in rural and urban settings.
- She introduced how WWF work on **enabling conditions** for NbS through policy (e.g. NbS for climate in revised NDCs) and finance (e.g. Payment for Ecosystem Services and Bankable Nature Solutions).
- Next she highlighted how WWF work on the ground with **120+ NbS interventions globally**, drawing special attention to three impactful cases 1) Integrated forest & water resource management in Kenya, 2) Community-led conservation in Namibia, and 3) Integrated Ocean Management, SWIO/Madagascar (please see presentation for specific interventions and outcomes).
- Furthermore, she reflected that NbS should be seen as part of a **broader strategic efforts** to create sustainable change and emphasized how a **long-term perspective** is needed to ensure successful NbS.

**Ingrid Reumert, VP, Global Communications, Sustainability & Public Affairs, Velux,**

<https://youtu.be/uYwYzqUJqjA>

- Ingrid gave a presentation on the new sustainability strategy of Velux, illustrating how private companies can take **corporate climate and nature action**. At the core of the strategy is the concept **“Lifetime Carbon Neutral”** developed in a partnership between Velux and WWF Denmark.
- Essentially, Velux is committed to capture its **historical carbon footprint** through forest conservation (5.6 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e, from 1941-2041, scope 1+2) while reducing its **future carbon footprint** of own operations (100% reduction) and value chain (50% reduction).
- Ingrid emphasized how future reductions entail a sustainable transformation of the entire business by committing to **Science-based Targets** and the **1.5°C reduction path** – addressing both scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions.
- The historical carbon capture is based on a **20-year programme with WWF** to protect forest and biodiversity through projects around the world; providing a holistic and sustainable carbon capture model which addresses both climate change, biodiversity loss and livelihoods.
- Ingrid further highlighted how the programme will follow five **carbon capture principles**; 1) No off-setting, 2) High legitimacy through verified standards, 3) Full transparency on progress, 4) Ensuring long-term sustainability through biodiversity and local livelihoods, and 5) Funding is ‘on the ground’.
- Finally, she emphasized that Velux hope to **inspire other companies** to take corporate climate and nature action, while recognizing that **“Lifetime Carbon Neutral”** is not a silver-bullet and that other companies must develop a sustainability concept suitable to their specific situation.

## **Session 3: Panel discussion**

The participants were:

- **Stephan Schønemann**, Under-secretary for Development Policy, Danish MFA
- **Bo Øksnebjerg**, CEO WWF Denmark
- **Tim Christophersen**, Head Nature for Climate Branch, UNEP
- **Ingrid Reumert**, VP, Global Communications, Sustainability & Public Affairs, Velux

Below key issues and points from the discussion have been summarised. The panel discussion can be viewed in its full length here: <https://youtu.be/Yb9T2LSPbR0>

**Issue #1: There is a need to act now.** All panellists emphasised that the nature and climate crises are happening now and that all stakeholders step up action immediately. It is unfortunate that there in general has been too little focus on integrating nature in development policies. But that is what is needed now: adding nature, and the NbS toolbox needs to be put to work right away. It is recognised that private companies, some local governments and other non-state actors are starting to move ahead on integrating nature, climate and development, now we need national governments to move quickly as well.

**Issue #2: NbS and People – opposites or supportive?** Participants questioned whether NbS is really supporting people and respecting the rights of and creating opportunities for local communities in the Global South. Tim Christophersen highlighted that according to the NbS definition, it must address societal challenges and deliver wellbeing, hence it is not NbS when people are deprived etc. An example of how people's development and nature conservation go hand in hand is the Great Green Wall initiative, which started as a forest and landscape restoration initiative in 2007, but developed into a focus on how to use land management to ensure equal rights and access, health, jobs etc. Bo Øksnebjerg further emphasised that NbS can create jobs just like any other solution and that land/nature is a commodity, and that all NbS must be in concordance with the local people, this approach is applied in the Velux-project. The Bonn Challenge also shows that there is a positive synergy between creation of jobs and nature agendas.

**Issue #3: NbS is not entirely new, but there is a need to be more systematic and scale efforts.** Both Stephan Schønemann and Tim Christophersen highlighted that efforts to work on conservation for people and development has been taking place for years. In that sense NbS is not an entirely new concept, it is based on decades of experience, and simply provides as stronger brand for what we have done in a smaller scale for years. But it is now the time to go much further. We need to be systematic and link up with our partners and massively scale the NbS efforts.

**Issue #4: There is a massive need for finance for ecosystem protection and restoration.** It was pointed out by Tim Christophersen that a UNEP study has assessed that 1 trillion USD is needed to restore ecosystems at a global scale by 2030 (0,1% of global GDP). And Bo Øksnebjerg highlighted that there will never be enough finance if we do not have the private sector on board. It is positive that there seems to be a growing interest among private actors, the establishment of investment funds initiated by large financial players on forest, agriculture and NbS exemplifies this. Tim Christophersen added that we are seeing the emergence of multi-billion-dollar restoration and conservation economy, and that it is important with a timely regulation to guide this finance in the right direction. National governments have an important role to play in putting in place strong and enabling frameworks (good rule of law, etc.) in the Global South for ODA and private finance to flow and be effective on the ground, also making it attractive to invest in green transition through the NDCs.

**Issue #5: Partnerships are key in scaling NbS.** Stephan Schønemann emphasised that partnerships are key in scaling NbS – development assistance will not do the trick alone. Hence, the Government is seeking partnerships with the private sector and NGOs and other stakeholders. Ingrid Reumert highlighted that the private sector is key to tackle climate change and biodiversity crisis. Companies are good at communicating and marketing. And if you want to convince people and scale up efforts, then you must also succeed in explaining what you are doing – especially the ‘why’ – and in simple terms. For a private company it is about maximizing impact and minimizing risk. Here NbS provides a compelling holistic approach. Bo Øksnebjerg emphasised that everything you do must have funding. Previously, nature projects were only funded by foundations with conservation at their heart. With NbS people are now put at the centre. Relating to the Velux-WWF partnership - Velux considers it risk-management, for WWF it is an opportunity, but we have shared interest, and with joint forces we can scale NbS.

**Issue #6: Recommendations on how to move the agenda forward.** Tim Christophersen highlighted that Denmark has an important role to play in this agenda, despite the country’s relatively small size. Denmark has been a key player on several environmental issues, such as water and renewable energy, showing that things are doable, if you choose strategic interventions with a multiplier effect. Add nature to that position would be ideal. It can contribute to a lot of the agendas addressed today. Denmark has some very large companies in the agri/food system and some large players in the finance industry that could be brought in as partners to scale NbS. Denmark should make green investments an official priority in development assistance. Bo Øksnebjerg suggested that to enable integration of NbS into Danish development policies it would be recommendable to establish a fast-track NbS task force with different technically capable stakeholders to advise the Danish MFA. And he also suggested that to advance the nature agenda in Denmark’s global engagements it could be considered to appoint a Nature Ambassador – similar to the Danish Climate Ambassador. Ingrid Reumert had a recommendation to private companies – also relevant to other stakeholders - on what to keep in mind when taking the first steps towards action: namely that if you want to act on climate change you have to find a way that suits who you are, because that’s where you have the most impact. There is not a one-size-fits all.

**Jarl: Short wrap-up and thanks for today.** The world is facing many crises, these are connected, we need to act now. All stakeholders need to act - bilateral, multilateral, private companies and NGOs – we can best address the complex and interconnected challenges in partnerships. We need to start investing much more in nature, if we are to meet the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. In today’s symposium, we learned seen that NbS delivers on multiple goals, development, climate, biodiversity. We also gained insights into the NbS toolbox and how companies, NGOs and multilaterals are already starting to act and making use of the NbS toolbox. Denmark plays an important role in promoting the NbS approach. It is time to massively scale NbS, Denmark can support that. We heard from the minister, that Denmark is committed to taking global green leadership, that there is a need for innovative and effective approaches, and that NbS holds such a potential. Now we need to get into the working mode for Denmark and Danish stakeholders to concretely move the NbS agenda forward – in terms of programming and implementation.

**Annex 1:** The symposium programme: <https://www.wwf.dk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/um-wwf-symposium-program.pdf>

**Annex 2:** The compilation of presentations: [https://www.wwf.dk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/symposium-on-naturebased-solutions-presentations\\_mfa-and-ww.pdf](https://www.wwf.dk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/symposium-on-naturebased-solutions-presentations_mfa-and-ww.pdf)