



**Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Sweden**

*Ambassador Anna Brandt*

**Swedish statement at OWG VIII on Oceans and Seas, Forests and Biodiversity**

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Mr. Co-chair,

Thank panelists this morning and this afternoon they have really enriched our discussions. I associate myself with the statement made by the European Union.

One of the greatest challenges for sustainable development is how to manage human needs for food, energy, water, minerals, medicine and natural resources without undermining biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides. Millions of people depend on natural resources and biodiversity for their livelihood and well-being. 70 percent of the world's poor live in rural areas and many depend on use of forests and oceans. Therefore, it is of outmost importance that we use our natural resources in a sustainable manner. SDGs should reflect the following three points;

**Firstly**, the valuation as well as integration of ecosystem services and biodiversity in relevant national development strategies and national accounts. Promotion of fiscal policy measures for sustainable use of natural resources, including investments in environmental technology and innovations is important. Elimination of harmful fossil fuel subsidies will be key in this regard.

**Secondly, the sea** gives us ecosystem services most important of them being food security. There is a need for long-term management plans. There should be an end to illegal, unregulated and unreported fishery, as well as an end to harmful subsidies also in this area.

**Thirdly, forests** are resources for climate-change mitigation. The forest gives us renewable energy, 80 % of the world's biodiversity and contributes to the green economy. A well-functioning market economy, open and free trade coupled with improved governance including legally clear tenure rights are necessary for responsible forestry management.

The forest should and needs to be managed in an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable manner.

Mr. Co-chair, the post-2015 agenda should aim at ensuring long-term sustainable use of our seas and forests to safeguard biodiversity and natural resources to reduce poverty and our vulnerability to climate change. These are all interlinked and therefore oceans and seas, forests and biodiversity should be treated as an integral part of the architecture of the sustainable development goals.

Yesterday afternoon there was an interesting debate on whether to have a freestanding goal on sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystems or if to integrate them through the whole goal framework. Our view is that it is not a question of either/or, instead we are of the view that we need both.