



H.K.H. Kronprinsesse Marys tale ved konferencen "Biodiversity is good business"

Dato

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Sted

Industriens Hus, København

Omstændigheder

Konferencen var arrangeret af WWF Verdensnaturfonden.

Good afternoon.

Thank you, Lars Sandahl, for the kind introduction.

And thank you to WWF Verdens Naturfonden for continuously pushing the agenda of nature preservation forward and putting it on top of today's agenda.

I was lucky to grow up surrounded by nature, in between the bush and the ocean. Much of my time was spent outdoors or dreaming of being outdoors whilst sitting in school looking at the ocean from my classroom. Sometimes we could be gifted with a sighting of dolphins swimming by. The nature in Denmark also gives me calm and joy from the wild coastline of Vesterhavet to the, for me, exotic spring forests that are almost luminous green.

And today, I feel lucky that I can support the work of WWF to protect nature and its balance.

The latest Living Planet Report from WWF reveals that wildlife populations have plummeted. Since 1970, there has been an average global decline of 68% in species populations. This number speaks volumes about the state of our wild world.

The report by WWF and Bain & Company, that we are here to discuss today, shows clearly that Danish businesses are aware of the risks that biodiversity loss poses for their businesses. However, most don't have a plan for how to deal with it. So, today is an invitation to start a dialogue.

Like most people of my generation, I have witnessed climate change unfold. From the first warnings of climate change from scientists to the debate on whether it's manmade or not. To the present, where climate change is seen as perhaps the most pressing global challenge we are facing.

Today, mitigating climate change is broadly speaking an integrated part in how companies are run, how most politicians govern and how an increasing number of consumers make choices.

However, it has taken us decades to get here.

Biodiversity supports every aspect of life on Earth and that foundation is at serious risk. We do not have decades to react to the biodiversity crisis we are facing. Our planet's biodiversity is declining faster than ever before in history. Last year, the Koala [in NSW] went from vulnerable to endangered.

I mention this, not because I have overly strong feelings towards the koala, although they are very cute Australian animals, but to underline that biodiversity has reached a state, where we risk losing iconic animals that our children or their children will only be able to see in books and on YouTube – and never in real life.

Unfortunately, this is not a risk unique to the koala, it also includes the tiger, the rhino and many other endangered species. This is a crisis affecting the foundation on which all life is built. And it's also about the foundation upon which most businesses are built.

Humanity depends on a nature in balance. Nature plays a crucial role in our food systems, in global health, in science and innovation, in job creation, in preventing conflicts and in the fight against climate change.

And loss of biodiversity affects that balance. It is also a threat to businesses. However, biodiversity can also be good business and offer new business opportunities.

Many Danish companies are dependent on nature and its biodiversity, both globally and/or in a Danish context. Some may already be beginning to sense

what the consequences quite quickly could be if that nature was to disappear or be degraded beyond repair.

According to the UN and World Economic Forum, we are looking into a future where the prices of raw materials will skyrocket, where water scarcity will be even more prevalent and where regulations will be tightened. And the future, you could say, is already here in the form of the current energy crisis.

It is important to understand the impact a business has on biodiversity. And it is important to understand how a business can improve its impact on biodiversity. How? – is the question. And that is why today's conference is so important.

What should the first steps be? How do we act on something that we don't yet fully understand?

These are some of the questions that first movers are asking themselves. And yes, biodiversity and how to mitigate it is difficult to understand. It is a new language. It is a new logic.

Several Danish companies have already taken the first important steps. For instance, Ege Tæpper have allocated the land around their factory in Herning to creating habitats for animals and plants. A nature reserve that the people of Herning can experience and enjoy. It's a step in the right direction. And every step counts.

Loss of biodiversity is also an issue that has the attention of many Danes. The campaign "Danmarks Vilde Haver / Denmark's Wild Gardens" has been an inspiration for many to establish greater biodiversity in our gardens and on our balconies.

I was also inspired and we have dedicated part of our garden in Fredensborg to a biodiversity friendly area. Where plants and flowers grow wild and provide a great home for insects and other animals, and where birds come to visit.

How companies can counteract the degradation of our nature and biodiversity, is what today is all about.

No question is too small or too stupid.

Sharing of knowledge and know-how is the smart thing to do. And working together to find solutions is the right way to move forward.

Essentially, it's about ensuring sustainable businesses that contribute to a tomorrow, where our nature is in balance and where populations can thrive.

And it's about a future, where the coming generations can see tigers, rhinos and koalas in their natural habitats.

Thank you.

Kilde

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