

144. IPU Nusa Dua, Indonesia

Innlegg av Birgit Oline Kjerstad på vegne av en norske delegasjonen i General Debate on: Getting to zero: Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change

My dear colleges representing parliaments all over the world.

It is a great honour for me to meet you and have the opportunity to speak to this audience. I participate for the first time in the Norwegian IPU delegation, and it is of great inspiration to listen to you all.

My concern is climate change and the ongoing loss of biodiversity.

We have to take better care of our blue planet, this wonderful beauty in our solar system, our mother earth.

It is our responsibility to cooperate to find solutions to climate change that everyone can go for, because we have only one common atmosphere and one common ocean.

I am happy to be a grandmother, but every day I think of my ten-year-old grandson, his and other children's future.

How can we, members of our countries parliaments, take action to make a difference?

The Covid-19 pandemic makes it even more important to take action.

A just and fair distribution between countries and people is essential if are to succeed in tackling the climate change and its consequences.

The burden must be shared according to ability to carry the load.

Cooperation, exchange of knowledge and international solidarity are fundamental to create the trust and confidence needed to be able to reach the sustainable development goals and fulfil the Paris agreement.

I come from a country that together with Canada and Indonesia has one of the world's longest coastlines. Norway has extensive ocean areas – six times greater than our land area. Therefore, we are very concerned about the health of the ocean and its ecosystems.

Ecosystems that are indispensable for our survival: The marine photosynthesis supplies 50 per cent of the oxygen in the atmosphere.

That is, half of the oxygen you breathe comes from marine photosynthesizers, like phytoplankton and seaweed.

The ocean also plays an important role when it comes to carbon storage as it holds 50 times more carbon dioxide than the atmosphere. A small change in the fluxes to the ocean carbon pool could affect the ocean's storage capacity and in turn impact atmospheric CO₂ levels.

Plastic pollution is one of the world's most rapidly growing environmental issues.

Over the course of the next 20 years, the increase in plastic waste is forecast to double, while plastic leakage into the sea is expected to triple and the total volume of plastic in the oceans may increase fourfold.

So, it is of the utmost importance that we are able to stop the pollution of our oceans now, before it is too late.

Let me conclude with some good news:

at the Fifth UN Environment Assembly in Nairobi in the beginning of March this year, following 12 days of negotiations, world leaders agreed to work for an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution.

The world now agrees to develop an agreement promoting circular economy for plastics with additional positive effects on climate,

biodiversity and pollution. A circular economy for plastic will create opportunities for green jobs and sustainable business.

Finally I would like to thank our Indonesian hosts for the excellent cooperation between our two countries serving on the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy.

The health of the ocean is fundamental to our survival on this blue planet!