

The 2021 High-level Political Forum (HLPF) of the United Nations will put its thematic focus on "Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: Building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development."

Bäuerliche Erzeugergemeinschaft Schwäbisch Hall has consultative status with the United Nations. Written contribution by Rudolf Bühler, CEO, Bäuerliche Erzeugergemeinschaft Schwäbisch Hall (Farmers Association of Schwäbisch Hall), Wolpertshausen/ Germany, 23th of April 2021

Main objective and purpose of the statement:

The idea is to show the feasibility of a digital global conference in a multifold rural atmosphere and encompassing a wide scope of participants ranging from farmers to representatives of indigenous communities, to NGO experts and intellectual pioneers from leading think tanks who particularly focused on localizing the SDG paradigm and set the breeding ground for a future network of „SDG Regions“ to be elaborated through practical bottom-up work. The 4th World Organic Forum under the title „Localizing SDGs. Creating a network of Sustainable Development Goal Regions was conducted in a hybrid format from 16th to 18th of March 2021, again Schloss Kirchberg/ Germany (the „Farmers‘ Castle“) functioned as the atmospherical hub.

Whereas Rudolf Bühler permanently referred to the need of approaching the 17 Sustainable Development Goals as holistically and inclusively as possible while enrooting them specifically on the ground, the clear profile of BESH in rural regional development and organic farming was directly graspable throughout the whole congress. Accordingly, this year’s forum first and foremost shed light on the SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), 13 (Climate Action), 15 (Life on Land) and 17 (Partnerships for Goals).

Overview of the issues as it relates to the work of the NGO:

In a nutshell, this engagement of the NGO shows in how far its experience, know-how and networks of succesful work in rural regional development, ecological small scale farming, regional food culture and peasants‘ rights is able to interconnect stakeholders form all over the world in a transregional setting. Bearing in mind the defectiveness of the dominant industrial food system concerning its destructive impact on biodiversity, production and the fragile supply chains for food as stressed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the NGO offers new tools to push agrarian change towards a more sustainable food system and for synchronically making the SDGs achievable in heterogeneous local contexts.

A way forward (expectations, specific policy recommendations):

The NGO aspires and expects to stay in close contact with the participants on a relevant work level and on a rolling processual basis. The NGO aims at fostering the cooperation with the professional policy modellers who conducted a workshop on validating indicators for future SDG Regions and paralely will carry out community building within the SDG paradigm on a rather atmospherical dimension. Optimally, the participants and policy modellers will gather again on the 5th World Organic Forum in 2022 and found the first SDG Region as a space of resilience to pandemics thanks to sustainable farming and food. No one will be left behind!