EVENT SUMMARY: NATURE, PEACE AND SECURITY – FORGING NEW PATHWAYS FOR GLOBAL STABILITY

UNGA80 Side Event | 25 September 2025 | New York

Organised by Slovenia, Germany, WWF International, and adelphi global

Overview

This breakfast discussion explored the critical nexus between environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, and global security challenges. Against the backdrop of a triple planetary crisis and heightened geopolitical tensions, participants examined how nature loss acts as a conflict multiplier while healthy ecosystems serve as foundations for peace and stability. The event brought together senior representatives to discuss actionable pathways for integrating nature into security frameworks and peacebuilding efforts.

Key insights

Mainstreaming nature in security discourse: While climate change has become a recognised topic within international security forums, the roles of nature and biodiversity are still underexplored, despite their clear links to resource-related conflicts. Experiences shared during the discussion underscored the value of using more inclusive terminology—such as "environmental degradation" rather than specifically "climate change"—to foster broader consensus among stakeholders.

Reframing risk as a collective concern: It was highlighted that reframing fragility—from labelling specific countries as "fragile" to addressing shared risks that threaten development—can encourage a more universal approach. This perspective acknowledges that environmental security risks are not limited to any one group of countries but are a global governance challenge.

Shifting from risk to resilience: Participants emphasised the importance of moving beyond risk-centric language towards identifying factors that strengthen resilience and promote cooperation. Practical examples were shared, illustrating how localised interventions in resource management can enhance social cohesion and address environmental challenges, even in highly complex settings.

Environmental crime as an entry point: There was broad recognition that addressing environmental crime provides a tangible entry point for security institutions, with existing mechanisms such as sanctions already in place. Opportunities were noted for advancing this agenda in upcoming international forums, with potential for strengthening global accountability frameworks.

Practical solutions through partnership: Several examples were presented demonstrating the effectiveness of collaborative, multi-stakeholder approaches to environmental challenges. These included initiatives in resource management, land restoration, and waste management, as well as projects where modest initial investments catalysed larger-scale financing from development and private sector partners.

Strategic Pathways Forward

- ***Multi-level integration:*** Pursue coherent approaches across global (UNSC), regional (AU, EU, OSCE), and national levels, with NDCs serving as vehicles for mainstreaming nature-security linkages.
- ***Bottom-up engagement:*** Prioritise community-led solutions while ensuring voices reach decision-makers with resources and authority, recognising environmental defenders as peacemakers.
- ***Innovative financing:*** Scale successful models that combine traditional development finance with peacebuilding funds, engaging private sector expertise particularly in fragile contexts.
- ***Strategic language:*** Adapt terminology to context—using "environmental degradation" in Security Council settings while maintaining climate language where it advances the agenda effectively.

Looking Ahead

The discussion underscored that embedding nature into peace and security frameworks is both urgent and within reach. There is a pressing need to balance rapid crisis response with sustained environmental stewardship. Upcoming opportunities such as COP30, as well as the integration of nature-related risks and resilience into NDCs provide important entry points. Moving forward, fostering inclusive partnerships, scaling up practical interventions, and mainstreaming nature considerations into security and governance agendas will be essential for building more resilient and peaceful societies.