

HOLDING THE LINE, SHAPING THE FUTURE: GERMAN AND EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP AT THE WORLD BANK GROUP

SYMPOSIUM

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2026

9:00 AM – 6:00 PM

HOTEL AQUINO
HANNOVERSCHE STRASSE 5B
10115 BERLIN-MITTE

Germanwatch and Urgewald are organizing a one-day symposium to address the future of the World Bank's development mandate against the backdrop of geopolitical pressures. While the current energy crisis again demonstrates the importance of phasing out fossil fuels, the climate agenda at the World Bank Group is under pressure despite massive financing needs. Coupled with recent developments regarding the Bank's independent accountability mechanisms, this leads to questions around strategies for progressive reforms that safeguard high quality development projects. How can the World Bank Group credibly implement its development mandate? What role can Germany and Europe play in preventing a rollback of environmental and social standards? What new alliances can be formed to strengthen the World Bank Group's role in delivering its development mandate, including the just energy transition and climate finance?

The symposium will bring together World Bank Group management, shareholder representatives, members of the German parliament and civil society representatives to discuss upcoming windows of opportunity such as the 2026 Annual Meetings, the review of IFC Performance Standards and the upcoming IDA replenishment.

The event will be held in English and German, with interpretation available. Chatham House rules apply. As there are a limited number of seats available, we kindly ask that you only register if you are able to attend on site. Please register by 10 September using the link below.

Registration: <https://anmeldung.germanwatch.org/worldbank-symposium/>

In case of questions, please reach out to emma.beelen@urgewald.org and anja.gebel@germanwatch.org.

Organized by:



PRELIMINARY AGENDA

HOLDING THE LINE, SHAPING THE FUTURE: GERMAN AND EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP AT THE WORLD BANK GROUP

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2026

9:00 - 9:30	Registration and Welcome Coffee
9:30 - 9:40	Opening Remarks by Ute Sudmann and Dustin Schäfer
9:40 - 10:00	Keynote Speech: Maintaining the Development Mandate of the World Bank Group – Current Geopolitical Challenges and Windows of Opportunity <i>Mac Darrow, Chief Advisor on Development Finance Institutions at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)</i>
10:00 - 10:20	Keynote Speech <i>Representative of the World Bank Group Management (tbc)</i>
10:20 - 10:45	Coffee Break
10:45 - 12:00 (Q&A from 11:45)	High-Level Panel: The Future of Climate at the World Bank Group in a Fractured World • <i>Opening Statement by Jürgen Zattler, German Institute for Development and Sustainability (IDOS), Former Executive Director for Germany at the World Bank Group</i> • <i>Lisa Badum, Member of Parliament, Spokesperson for Climate Policy, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen</i> • <i>Representative of the World Bank Group Management (tbc)</i> • <i>Representative of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) (tbc)</i> • <i>Melanie Ullrich, E3G</i>
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
13:00 - 14:15	Input and Discussion: The Independent Accountability Mechanisms and their Significance for Effective Governance, Oversight and Development Effectiveness • <i>Ibrahim Pam, Chairperson of the WB Inspection Panel and Acting Director General, Compliance Advisor Ombudsman</i> • <i>Arntraud Hartmann, Senior Adjunct Professor (Johns Hopkins University), Former World Bank Country Director</i> • <i>Dr. Dustin Schäfer, Team Lead at Urgewald</i> • <i>Representative of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) (tbc)</i>

14:15 - 14:30	Coffee Break
14:30 - 15:45	Input and Discussion: Intertwined Potentials and Challenges – The Review of IFC’s Sustainability Policy and Environmental and Social Performance Standards as Foundation for Effective Development • <i>Kate Geary, Strategy Director at Recourse</i> • <i>Representative of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) (tbc)</i> • <i>Abishek Singh, E&S specialist, WBG/IFC</i> • <i>Moderation: Mac Darrow, Chief Advisor on Development Finance Institutions at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)</i>
15:45 - 16:15	Coffee Break
16:15 - 17:45	Open Roundtable and Discussion with European Shareholders, Parliamentarians and CSOs: Building Alliances and Identifying Windows of Opportunity for World Bank Group Reform Processes • <i>Representatives of World Bank Group Governors (shareholding countries)</i> • <i>Members of German Parliament</i>
17:45 - 18:00	Closing Remarks by Ute Sudmann and Dustin Schäfer