

Welcome to Turning Conscience Into Action, the Earth Charter podcast. Join Mirian Vilela, Earth Charter International Executive Director, in her fascinating conversations with great thinkers, scholars and activists from around the world who are working in the fields of sustainability, ethics, education and social transformation. Our purpose is to generate new insights on how to face current global challenges and inspire informed action.

So hello everyone. Thank you for joining us today. It's a very special day because we have the pleasure of welcoming Felix Dodds for our Earth Charter podcast conversation.

Felix is a writer and an activist with over 30 years of experience in global sustainability policy. He is an adjunct professor at the University of North Carolina, Water Institute. Felix has been involved in numerous international sustainability conferences and was instrumental in introducing stakeholder dialogues to the UN. He's an expert in environmental lobbying at the United Nations and in fact he wrote a book about this. So thank you for joining us today, Felix. It's my pleasure. I'm happy to be here.

So let's start with the first question, which is around one of your latest books that's called titled Heroes of Environmental Diplomacy, which you co-edited with Chris Spencer. And I understand it captured the stories of 12 influential individuals who made outstanding contributions around the world of environmental protection and how we understand what we need to do to care for our planet. So can you share with us what the gist we can find in it and the purpose of this book? Absolutely. We had a secondary title which was called Profiles in Courage.

And so in essence, the book was very similar approach to John F. Kennedy's profiles in Courage that he had, I think, came out in 1958. And I wasn't going to do this book because I was busy doing a different book at the time, but Chris Spencer approached me and says, let's do this. And I told him to go away. I was too busy. And then I thought, it's such a good idea. Let's look at some individuals who've actually really changed the world. We took it as our group that we were looking at, as people who were engaged in the multilateral environmental agreements, the conventions or the key environmental decisions that were being taken basically since before Stockholm because we dealt with the whales, which goes further back.

And the idea was to look at who was this person that we had identified as a key person. So I did Maurice Strong. And so Maurice Strong's story is fascinating because he tried to get into that. He got his birth certificate changed so it looked like he was 18 and he was only 16. And he tried to fight in the end of the Second World War. His family didn't have any jobs. I mean, the whole story of him, he went to live with the Indians. I mean, it's a fascinating story of what influenced him and his life.

And so we were doing this with all of the 12 individuals. And then we were looking at the issue that they were dealing with. So for Maurice, we looked, we could have done so many different things, but we looked at the major groups, the stakeholders, the nine chapters of Agenda 21, but we looked at the whales, so Sydney Holt. We looked at Obama and the Copenhagen Accord. We all thought it was a disaster in Copenhagen, but actually

without Copenhagen, you would never have got Paris because basically Paris is the enactment of the Copenhagen Accord.

If we had got the agreement in Copenhagen in 2009, we could have had a lot more earlier the movement that in fact Paris agreed. Hillary Clinton came up with the amount of money and the issue of 1.5. All of that was on the table in Copenhagen. So we looked at what was the issue that they were looking at and then what did they do in that negotiation to change the direction of it or to make it happen? And then what happened to them and what happened to the issue afterwards? So that was the art that we were telling in each of the stories.

So certainly there is a lot we can learn in terms of leadership from these people, specifically the 12 people you wrote about in this book. Let's focus on Maurice Strong. So Maurice Strong was the UN Secretary General of the Earth Summit in 92, but he also did so many other things around this, around his life before the Earth Summit, after the Earth Summit. So Felix, what can we learn from him? If you can share the gist of his key achievements, but also learning, what can we learn from his leadership style?

I think we wouldn't want to learn his bad dad jokes that he would always tell. But we remember he goes back to Stockholm and he was the Secretary General of the 72 Conference. And I think he learned a lot between 72 and 92. And one of the things he learned was that governments alone wouldn't deliver and that you needed to engage different parts of society. And when I did the chapter, I interviewed his deputy, Nitin Desai, and a number of other people, Yolanda Kekkeback, see the people who were part of the Secretariat to say, so what was he doing?

And they said, he never told us. He kept that a secret because he thought that there would be such a pushback from member states if he let it out. So some of it is choose when you actually put in the elements of what you want to do. And the earlier you do it, the easier it becomes for that to happen. So he learned that by putting things in at the very beginning, the first preparatory meeting in Nairobi and then letting it play out, then, you know, it's enabled it that when it came into the political atmosphere of New York, which is extremely political, it was too late for them to kick it out, though some of them had tried to.

So part of it is understanding the arc of negotiations. It's a leader you can work out where you can where you can work. The second is he was great at recognising he needed to build up support for what he was doing. So when he would go to a country, he would not only see the government, but he would do media and he would bring together the stakeholders, which would kind of create or help to create that momentum, which we saw delivered by the amount of people who went to Rio, because the largest number of stakeholder engagement we'd ever had in a summit, the Global Forum, that was as well as the main negotiations.

So I think he understood he had to build a coalition that was as large as it could, because the larger it was, the more pressure he could put on the heads of state. And of course, as you know, the summit wasn't called the Earth Summit. It was called the UN Conference on Environment and Development. Well, by calling it an Earth Summit, he created an

expectation that the heads of state would turn up. And I think that also helped. So he understood the politics. He understood who he needed to get in the room and he understood who he needed outside the room to be able to put the pressure on those in the room to do the right thing.

So we can certainly say that before the Rio 92 summit, that it was not normal to engage with non-state actors in intergovernmental negotiations or UN conferences. Is that right? That's correct, yeah. In Morris Strong, we clearly saw the importance of empowering different stakeholders that are beyond government. And he didn't just do it for the summit, because what he did was he forced through the General Assembly, those that had gone to the summit but didn't have consultative status with the UN, to have a letter sent to them to ask if they wanted to be in consultation with the UN.

And why that was important was, I think over 600 of them became part of what was the groups that were active around the Commission on Sustainable Development, but were not in the past part of the UN system. They hadn't been a recognized non-governmental organization. So he didn't just leave it to the conference. He wanted to make sure that they were involved in the implementation. And the nine chapters and Agenda 21 aren't just about engaging them. It's about them taking responsibility to be an implementer, to be an activist, to make sure that what has been agreed will actually come to pass.

Yeah, so I agree with you and I think we can reflect about, when we reflect about good governance or good environmental governance, he showed the light. He opened the space for us to think that decisions and implementations of decisions are not really limited to what happens within the government or intergovernmental negotiations because there is limited information, there is also limited capacity within the government, implementation capacity, and therefore they need to engage with multistakeholder groups to develop policies, but also to implement policies.

So in your understanding of more strong in the chapter you wrote in this book, is this the kind of leadership that you see that emerges through the example that Mrs. Strong gives us? Yeah, I think if you look around, particularly around the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development and then its success of the high-level political form, but also the SDG negotiations, those nine major groups, as they were called, those nine stakeholders, had seats so that they could enter their viewpoints into the negotiations.

That was replicated for UNEP, for the UNEP governing council and now the UN Environment Assembly. If you go to the UNFCCC, it's the same nine major groups or stakeholder groups who are recognised in the system, not all of them are recognised with the Convention on Biological Diversity, but in the plastics negotiation that's been going on most recently, you would have had each of those nine major groups having an opportunity to have their input to that. So he set a completely different process and one of the reasons why I prefer the approach that Morris did as opposed to the civil society approach is that it includes Indigenous peoples, it includes academics, it includes industry, it includes local government, so it gives and it ensures women have their own space and youth have their own space.

And so I think that's quite important and sometimes by going for a civil society discourse, we actually play into the government's hands of reducing space for different stakeholders. Yeah, I agree, we cannot mingle all of them together because they have different views and positions and interests and we need to hear them all. So 92 under Morris Strong's leadership was generated a major change in the way in which UN conferences take place by opening the spaces for different groups or groups of interest as we call stakeholder groups.

So let's talk about the SDGs, the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 UN Agenda. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the launch of the SDGs and it's also a reminder that we only have five years to go. Many people could say that there is little progress in the implementation and others could say, well, there is good progress and what would we do without the SDGs? So we would like to hear your thoughts on the implementation process of the SDGs so far. Anything that comes to your mind in terms of what can we say that's concrete and valuable progress over the past 20 years since the launch of the SDGs?

So I think it's important to understand that the first conference that actually came forward with the set of SDGs was the UN DPI conference in Bonn in 2011. And that conference I had the opportunity to chair it, but Paolo Cabrero, who is the mother of the SDGs, in July of 2011, had suggested at a retreat in Solo Indonesia that we should have sustainable development goals. And so the stakeholder community got behind her and played a critical role in mobilising around Rio Plus 20. The idea that the SDGs should be part of the 2015 discussion.

I think it's important to recognise that came from stakeholders. But I think the world's not in a very good place at the moment and hasn't been for a number of years. We passed this in 2015. We passed the Paris Agreement in 2015. And then we saw President Trump being elected. We saw Brexit in the UK. And there was a real kind of movement away from the space that we wanted to be advancing. I think that was not very good. But a lot of organisations and governments through their national reports, their voluntary national reports started to try and work out how to move the SDGs in the context of implementing in the countries.

And because they were producing national reports, then governments had to start to put in place the systems by which they could report and then how they can do their next report or their third report or their fourth report. So I think that played an important role in integrating the SDGs into many governments' activities. But that was also a process going forward with local governments. You had local governments and subnational governments. I think the first subnational or first city government to do it was New York.

They produced theirs and they are now reporting through their process. You had industry work out what the indicators they needed to have and what tool kits through the global compacts. So I think those were important. So the stakeholders started to also move to become implementation agencies. It wasn't just the governments. And that meant in the aid that was being given to non-government organisations for their activities in country in Africa or Asia or Latin America. That many of those were around aspects of the SDGs and the targets those SDGs had and the indicators that were agreed would measure whether or not they were implementing that.

Now, we're not in as good a place as we were four years ago. I think there was a between the first Trump period and this present one. There was a real movement under the Biden administration, particularly on climate change, to actually accelerate the implementation of SDG 13, which is on climate change and its associated activities. But now it's really difficult because basically USAID has disappeared. The UK and France and Germany are reducing their overseas development aid. And we're in a period where it reminds me a little bit of after 9-11 in 2001 where peace and security are becoming the, whether it's in the Gaza or it's in Ukraine.

And we see the budgets for military go up while the budgets for stabilising society go down. Peace and security taking centre stage and all the other agendas that are related to that are kind of going backwards in terms of the importance that it's given. But would you say that there is any specific SDG that you see that it's ahead of others in awareness and implementation? I think it depends. So I don't operate in all of the SDG space. You don't have an ability to do that. I think there hasn't been as much advance in SDG 16 on governance and peace. I think that's clearly a real problem.

And it may be that we need to revisit that goal in 2030 and maybe take the peace elements out and kind of split the goal and go into more depth on what we believe is creating a stable society, a stable world. Than we were able to do in 2015. I think that we had an opportunity with the city's goal, which is SDG 11, for real advancement of that with what was called Habitat 3. And unfortunately Habitat 3 did not recognise the localisation of SDG 11 as its main outcome. And by doing so it weakened the UN Habitat body, I think.

So that's one way it went in the wrong direction in my viewpoint. And it's needed outside work by local government associations and by the World Urban Forum and by regions for to try and build a coalition to strengthen that. And it still needs a lot more work. I think that the agriculture one or the poverty one, I think there's been some work on that and that's through things like the food system summit and the link of the food system summit to climb it as well. I think that's been one of the better ones we had. And my backdrop is the Dubai COP. And I think that they were able to get the heads of state to sign up to a food system declaration, which I think is an important step to do work on that.

And because the food system summit has a recall every two years, we've just had their fourth one or plus four that happened in Ethiopia in Addis a few weeks ago, that keeps it in their mind. And I think what we've missed is, in a sense, a set of countries or, or UN agencies kind of pick up and run kind of a more in depth approach to each of the SDGs. You have the oceans, you have this thing every two or three years with oceans, you've just had it with water started off. You do have it with SDG 16 Italy have organized a number of follow up conferences, but we needed to push that so that we would have on each of the SDG so you will create a momentum behind them, and it wouldn't just be when you're at the high level political form.

I think there should be a meeting of all the partnerships for each of the goals at each of the relevant meetings of the relevant agencies so all the health partnerships should meet at the World Assembly, the World Health Assembly, and there should be some accountability and I think there hasn't been enough of a robust approach to whether these partnerships are real and what they're delivering.

Now in climate change that exists in nutrition, it does David Nabarro who we lost a few weeks ago, unfortunately, great man developed a really robust accountability mechanism, but we haven't been able to do that for the others because I don't think there's been a space for that to happen. What's your take on the valuable progress of SDG 6 water or on. So, so, so my, so my comment on the water goal. We've had one water summit was held in New York we're going to have another one coming up in Dubai I think it is in 20.

26, I think it doesn't lead to policy. So the last policy decision that we made on water was the Commission on Sustainable Development in 98. So the addition of text in Joe Berg or a couple of bits of text in, you could argue in the SDGs, we haven't had a policy discussion on water since 98. So I think that needs to be clarified for us here when you talk about policy discussion on water so we have all these UN conferences on water water summit, but there is a vacuum on developing stronger and more policies around water and water security.

So, so, so, what happens in the water summits. They discuss, they discuss the issues around I mean water security will be one of them water insecurity will be one. They discuss the issues they've got a number I think five themes that they'll discuss, but then they don't feed that into policy recommendations. I would love to find someone to fund me to get that discussion into a resolution for the General Assembly, because I think it's important we have an annual resolution on agriculture, we have nothing on water, and we don't have anything actually on energy.

I mean, most of the work on energy is done through IRENA in Abu Dhabi, and they have a big energy ministers meeting. It's not part of the UN. It should be it was going to come in in 2012 but for some reason it didn't. But we don't have a home in the in the system for policy making on energy or policy making on water.

Yeah, so it's very interesting and it's good for this helpful to for all of us to clarify that there are many, even summits or UN conferences that are valuable in itself, but they don't necessarily generate new policies but they're there to elevate the visibility of the issues of what's going on, sharing knowledge, sharing new technology, develop new cooperation, either technical cooperation or financials around an issue, but not necessarily to develop new policies and agreements, but they're valuable.

Yeah, I agree. And I think what we lost with the Commission on Sustainable Development was a policy making forum. And what you have with a high level political forum is you have a ministerial declaration, but you don't have a real discussion on what are predominantly means of implementation in these areas. So what what could we do to accelerate the issue on water, what's needed is it technological transfer is it is a capacity building is it education, is it building up the statistical units of governments. Is it finance, if it is finance, is it donor finance or is it private sector finance or is it regional development finance. So we don't have that kind of space where we could really start to work out what the blueprint to move forward the implementation is.

Now there's DGs have a timeline, which is 2030, we have five years to go. And would you share with us what what do you think should take place after 2030 or what do you know it's being already cooked or in vision, in terms of the post 2030 agenda. So in New

York, there are a number of what's called friends groups of member states, and I'm the Secretary out for the Friends of Governance for Sustainable Development and it's, you can see the website we have, we have the work we do we have a book that comes out each year we do three workshops.

Often those workshops are just member states and UN staff with academics or, or people coming in and presenting on a particular issue so I'm at the moment involved in the whole process around clustering environmental conventions which will come back to later, I hope, and we'll do a friends group meeting in October on that with Nairobi and with New York. The friends group has identified something like nine different areas that we need to look at sooner rather than later. So one of them is an assessment. Where are we. What has happened. What did we hope and so we have a number we have a workshop that we're hoping to get funded for January, which will look at that and that would be a close space for state effort for member states initially.

And then we'll have a number of substitutes will have one on science. What can we do to ensure that any new targets are based on science will have a session on indicators. How can we make sure that we understand that if you want a new target in the goals, you have to have an indicator that is what they call either type one or type two. Type one or type two. So if you go to the indicator website of the statistical commission, you'll find what the definition of type one or type two you can't just invent it.

Say we should have an indicator on this, you need to have already collected the data. So if you're interested in a target, make sure that the UN agency or the World Bank is collecting that data now. So we want to make it very, very clear. We don't think there'll be new goals. So there are a number of people are advocating for new goals. This is not going to happen, partly because the political situation in the world is so difficult that I think it's not possible to do that. So you don't think it's going to be possible to redesign a new agenda around SDGs for post 2030, but rather looking at what has taken place so far, what are the achievements and the progress and just let's continue to move on with the same agenda.

But you just said before that it would be nice if SDG 16 could be split into two for governance and peace. Don't you think that could take place towards 2030? I do. I do. I think that's the only thing I've heard where there's a feeling that that might be happening. I think that there are a number of targets that might find their way into a 2030 agenda. So AMR, so the antibiotic resistance target from the summit that was held last year where in danger of being antibiotic resistant with millions of people dying because we don't have any new antibiotics.

And that affects agriculture because it could mean that we have to put animals back on the land, which is a good idea because it will help us save the soil, which we're losing. And there's something like only 30 or 40 harvest left if we don't save the top soil. So these are integrated issues. The nitrogen target that was set in the CBD, one of the biggest issue where in the planetary boundaries, it's the one we're exceeding the most. The target is unrealistic. And so we need to have a relook at that because every time a country's tried to implement the target like in the Netherlands or in Sri Lanka or I think even New Zealand, the political fallout has been terrible.

And so we need transition plans to help address that. And I think the target would be revised in a 2030 opportunity. So I think they're helping people to understand where to put their energy. So their energy should be on targets and it should be on making sure that if they've got a target they want that their indicator is being collected in enough countries in enough regions for it to be a serious contender. Okay, so we can envision that maybe towards 2030 when the SDG timeline is over, what will happen is a renewed commitment to the SDGs with some refinements or tweaks here and there in terms of each SDG and but also mostly in the targets, because there's not necessarily good monitoring and reporting mechanisms around each of the targets. There are some vacuums there, is that right?

Well, the vacuums exist within the indicators. And the indicators aren't the best, they're whatever we had the data for. And so, you know, there has been some work by the UN Statistical Commission and by some of the UN agencies to get data started to be collected that will make the indicator better if we extend the target. But understanding that is important. And I think, you know, what I'd like to see in the run up to 2030 is in a sense, 17 months out, we have a month on each of the goals and we collect the input from all of the community that's interested in education, that they get it, they become an engine for change.

And then they also then work with the other months where they see their work being interlinked with that so that you build a coherent interlinked agenda leading up to 2030. So let's change a bit our conversation to focus on UN and UN reform. We have 80 years of UN and some people may say there's a lot of waste of policies and budgets in the way money or funding is used. What are the key things that are happening around the UN reform for the current time? So Guy Ryder's in charge, former head of ILO is in charge of the review that's happening and there are a number of areas, some of which you've mentioned. So I can't remember how many mandates there are out there, but there's a very large number of mandates that have been given by different UN agencies.

So a simplification of that would be sensible. And now part of the decision making process on that will be for member states to talk about that they would have to agree which mandates they want to change. In the context of funding, for example, you know, if the General Assembly resolution has something that has a financial requirement, it has to have gone through for agreement through the fifth committee. So every resolution in the General Assembly has to be a funded resolution or zero funded resolution. Or there has to be money that's going to be in a budget that will be available for the UN to do.

That's not true for the other UN. So if you're going to UNEP for the HLPF, it's not the resolutions aren't related to there being funds available for them to do it. So I think there needs to be a much stronger link between when a resolution is passed in whichever UN body that it is, it is a funded resolution that there will be funds in and it will fit into the the work program. Then there is a conversation about how they might merge certain parts of the UN. My engagement is really just on the environmental side. I think other people are better suited to comment on other bits of the UN system.

The environmental side and on the merging idea that you mentioned and you have been working on new approaches to how we bring the conventions together. So could you share

with us? What are your thoughts on this? Sure. Luckily, these are not new ideas. They are actually Klaus Toth's ideas, going back to his term, wonderful term as head of UNEP. And he tried in the Johannesburg process in 2002 to try and move as one of the outcomes to a clustering of the convention. So the chemical waste conventions will be brought together and there will be what ultimately we call a super cop of those.

So it would help to integrate the conventions that are dealing with the same thing, deal with overlap, deal with clear funding, reduce the ability to compete. So it creates a more holistic. He wanted to do the same with climate and wanted to do the same with biodiversity. Unfortunately, he didn't manage to get that to happen in the Johannesburg process, which was a very difficult process, as you will remember. But Akam did. So Akam Steiner came in and he got set up the first super cop. The three conventions that deal with climate and waste now all exist in Geneva and they have a super cop of the three.

And that's a proof of concept. We now know that that's possible. There was a hope that the biodiversity conventions that were under UNEP will go the same way. But after Akam left his successor Eric wasn't interested. But when Guy Ryder brought out or the Secretary General brought out the suggestion of putting the UNFCCC under UNEP that allowed the possibility for the climate conventions to be clustered because the only other one is just to help the audience here. What do you mean by the climate conventions with a plural.

So I would argue that there are probably three, but the two that are most important are the ones that deal with ozone, so Vienna and Montreal and the UNFCCC. And so it's relatively easy if UNFCCC went under UNEP to create a super cop for those particular two conventions. There is another air pollution convention, which might be considered. But at the moment, as the Montreal protocol is dealing mostly with nitrogen, which is also what the UNFCCC is trying to deal with, it makes a little bit of sense anyway to pull them together.

And it's not. It's two conventions. You know, and if you put them both in a bonnet would enable you to back them up. There are more for biodiversity than well. There is the UNEP conventions, which I think are four or five, but then there are a number that fall under UNESCO, I think, and I would start with just looking at the UNEP ones and bring them together. You know, the UNCCD doesn't exist exists as an independent one. So at some point, but do the easy things first and then decide what you want to do.

What are some of the examples of the biodiversity conventions in the UNEP conventions? Just a couple of examples. Yeah, so. So you've got Ramsar, you've got the Migratory Species Convention, you've got CITES, you've got the UN's Biodiversity Convention. I think you've got wetlands as well. These are not under UNEP. Yeah, they are all under UNEP. And then you've got a number that aren't, which I can't remember exactly, but there's, I think, a couple under UNESCO. And then you could argue that what's being discussed in New York next week, which is the Beyond National Jurisdiction, which is the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction, which is under UNCLOS, the UN Law of the Sea Treaty, is another one. But I would separate those.

I separate the one dealing with justification. And I just focus on dealing with the ones dealing with UNEP first. And then once that's been established, then I would argue there needs to be then a conversation about how you deal with the others. And that would strengthen UNEP enormously, because part of the problem is every time we float off a convention, UNEP doesn't need to deal with the issue. And so by creating these three clusters where UNEP could play a role, we could re-establish the Global Environment Ministers Forum, which used to exist, as the place where the three science bodies maybe get the first day to explain where we are with science.

And then there's a policy conversation about how do we deal with the national plans for each of the different conventions, so that we are dealing with one thing at the, the different clusters, so we're dealing with the same thing. So I'd see this as an arc to 2030. And so that if this was to be moved forward, it takes time, but it would be a substantive outcome from the 2030 summit that it had been, you know, kind of formalized by the GA. Yeah, it will just make things simpler, easier, maybe more effective in monitoring, but also in the implementation side of it and sharing, developing partnerships, just to organize these conventions and clusters.

Thank you so much for sharing this. Now let's turn to COP on climate change. COP 30, it's part of the many climate change cops. What are your thoughts in terms of what's happening around climate change cops and what should happen in the near future? So, some people say, oh, we need to move to implementation, but the reality is that that's not what the climate cop is about. It's about policymaking. But there's an opportunity to make it about implementation as well. And so how do we do that. And the answer to that is the blue zone.

The blue zone has just been anyone who wants to do a pavilion pays the presidency X number of dollars, they get to do whatever they want in the pavilions. And at last, someone is saying we need to have a more directed approach to this. So, Brazil is saying we want, we've got, I think it's five themes where we want in the blue zone, and we want to have a move towards addressing implementation in those five themes. Now, they will achieve this much this time. But if they then talk to whoever the COP 31 presidency is, whether it's Australia or Turkey, and Turkey picks this up, and maybe there's a policy decision made that the COP presidencies would start to shift the pavilions to implementation.

And that when they're doing that, it doesn't mean that people can't do other events, but that you if you're going to sign up to do a pavilion, part of your pavilion a day or two days has to be about implementation and has to fit into the implementation themes that are being done for that COP. So I think that's why that is by using the space and the time to share concrete ways in which implementation is being done in a specific place, more than just developing policies here, way, using the blue zone as a space to show showcase.

And that's a great implementation. I mean, the, and there's a, I think they will be less directive than I would be. I will be really directive, and I will be like, Okay, now we know what your agenda is for your your pavilions, we're now going to also create a space where if you're doing energy, and you're doing energy and you're doing energy, we want that group to come together to start to create a like a space in certain ways, where you're really becoming a coalition of implementation. Yeah, so 30 years of cops on climate change and

still a long way to go. So can you do you still keep your hopes on the value of cops on climate change.

Without that, I mean, we've gone down from a projection of 4.5 to six degrees before Paris to the moment probably 2.5. And that's quite a big leap if we have if if Trump hadn't been elected, we might have been able to save 1.5 and we're not going to save 1.5 now. And so actually we do need policy on what a two degree world is going to look like and that will require negotiations on how we deal with that. But I think if you look at the period from Paris to now, that's 10 years. And we've we've halved what the projection is going to be for climate change. I think that's a pretty good impression. I think that's really important. And the engine part of the engine for change will be China.

I mean, China is I think some like 50% to 60% already on renewables. I guess you include nuclear in that. So they're they're just going to I mean, they're going to be the main the main, the head of producing the best batteries, their head of solar, their head of wind. You know, I mean, America's just lost that whole whole whole possibility of being a leader in renewables and even if a different president comes in into 2029. I don't see them taking that leadership again, because I think people are already reorganizing their trading blocks and not going to include the US in that.

Yeah, good. Well, thank you so much for opening our eyes to see from that angle. We came to a last question and I would like to hear your thoughts with regards to the Earth Charter. So what are what do you think are we could see as the value of the Earth Charter an instrument to clarify the ethical foundations. And even the roadmap from an ethical perspective of how to address the current challenges we face. Well, I mean, you know, I'm a huge supporter. We had the pleasure of working together in particularly in the Johannesburg process where we had it in at the beginning unfortunately it didn't survive.

I think it's a it's a it's a I mean, and it's not just that it's the real declaration and it's a number of other things that create a conversation about an ethical base we're in a terrible place. As far as ethics are concerned in the world at the moment so the work that you're doing and the others. And the people who attended the conference in in the Netherlands very important the question is how do we integrate it more into the policy making space. And I think I think the conversation around the global ethical stock take is a good space for that to happen.

I think Brazil's, you know, it's an important thing for them but then the question is what could be the, in a sense the instructions for the global stock take in 2028 that you would want countries to have included in their report. So I think that there's a there's a there's a piece of work, and it may be a piece of work that comes out of believe as opposed to something that we already know that looks at the instructions that people get for the global stock take and looks at what could be asked of them to include that would start to at least get them to address those questions in the right way.

And then you can look afterwards to see how far you were able to influence that but you're not going to do it all in one attempt. And hopefully, by the time we get because you know the cop will happen in 28 after the US election. So we'll know who the new president will be, if there are going to be any more elections in the US. And that will give us an

opportunity to perhaps hope that there's going to be a better period between 2029 and future cops. Well, we came to an end of our conversation today I want to express my deep gratitude and also appreciation for Felix Felix dots for not only for being with us here today, but for the outstanding work you have been doing in the forefront of UN inter governmental and mode stakeholder negotiations around environment and sustainability.

So thank you so much, Felix for being with us today. It's gonna be my pleasure, real pleasure.

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