

Tal från Miljödepartementet

Tal av miljöminister Karolina Skog på FN-toppmöte om Agenda 2030 (på engelska)

Publicerad 18 juli 2018

New York, 17 juli 2018 Det talade ordet gäller.

Excellencies, ministers, colleagues, friends,

Sweden has a favourable starting position in implementing the SDGs. In international comparison, we often come out on top. Our peaceful and democratic conditions, our cooperation with others, our dynamic business climate – all of this has created a strong foundation for sustainable development and welfare. Sweden continues to value good governance, the rule of law, democracy, gender equality, SRHR, peace and inclusive societies.

But believe me when I tell you - there is much to be done in Sweden if we are to become truly sustainable. We must transform our consumption patterns, shift our ways of transportation and strengthen our ecosystems.

Dear friends,

I believe the chemical and waste issue is at the core of achieving the 2030 Agenda. Harmful chemicals are everywhere, spreading with global trade. This is not sound. It is not sustainable. It is not healthy. Lives are at stake and our planet is in danger.

This is why today, Sweden, together with a group of countries, is launching the Alliance for High Ambition on chemicals and waste, to work towards a global deal.

Substitution, knowledge and information throughout the entire value chain,

and non-toxic material cycles, are key to achieve a circular economy. Global trade is changing, and our management of chemicals must change with it.

Dear colleagues,

Water knows no boundaries. It is a shared resource, and a shared responsibility. Still today, more than 800 million people live without safe drinking water and proper sanitation. Climate change is changing people's access to water and marine resources. We urgently need to improve our cooperation, especially transboundary waters, to protect the quality and quantity of water, and to prevent conflicts.

The security risks associated with climate change are real. Last week, Sweden organized a debate in the Security Council on Climate and Security. And last year, Sweden and Fiji hosted the historic UN Ocean Conference. It was a big step towards reaching SDG 6 and 14. The work to implement the commitments made have started, and Sweden will continue to show leadership to Save our oceans.

Finally, I want to underline the importance of new partnerships between the public and private sectors, and with civil society. We need to create better conditions for people to live sustainable lives. It needs to be easy, accessible and attractive. Young people are key in the transformative change that is needed. The 2030 Agenda is a roadmap to a better world. Let us follow it's path.

Thank you.



Regeringskansliet

Tal från Miljödepartementet

Sveriges nationella anförande vid FN:s miljömöte UNEA3 i Nairobi

Publicerad 05 december 2017

Miljöminister Karolina Skog vid FN:s miljömöte UNEA3 i Nairobi, Kenya, den 4 december 2017. Det talade ordet gäller.

Excellencies, ministers, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen – friends of the environment,

A recent scientific report published in The Lancet revealed that more than 9 million people died in 2015 as a result of diseases caused by pollution. Health aspects of pollution therefore urgently need to be addressed and attended to. UNEA is timely and we welcome the agreements made in the resolution on this matter.

The United Nations Environment Assembly should be the number one Authority for environmental issues. To deliver, we have to step up our mode of work, we have to focus and use the instruments and agreements already in place to deliver towards a pollution free planet. This Assembly should not be about redrafting or renaming, but fulfilling, implementing and where possible enhancing what we together have already agreed upon. The 2030 Agenda, the Paris agreement, the Montreal Protocol and the Minamata convention set out our directions but are only contributing to the future we want if implemented with full strength.

Fighting pollution is key. Stockholm Environment Institute has presented a pyramid model that shows, the environmental dimension as the basis for not only the health perspective, but also for the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development.

Sweden has a long experience working with industry and equally important

with NGO:s representing many different interests. By involving civil society we are taking decisions and formulating policies that has a broad support in society.

At the historic UN Ocean Conference, co-hosted by Sweden (and Fiji) over 540 voluntary commitments were made on marine pollution alone, including land-based measures to reduce marine pollution and litter, in a source-to-sea approach. We must now implement the commitments made.

Clean seas, clean air and the sustainable management of chemicals and waste are key for sustainable development. The Swedish Government is committed to invest, as voluntary commitments, more than one hundred million US Dollars in 2018 for international and domestic measures related to:

- pollution-free seas and responsible plastic management;
- clean air [nationally through achieving a fossil-free car fleet, and globally through contributing to the Climate and Clean Air Coalition];
- measures to reduce pharmaceutical pollution, [e.g. by investing in advanced wastewater treatment].

The UN Environment Programme and the UN Environment Assembly uniquely span all global climate and environmental issues. The Assembly is a platform enabling the world's environment leaders to act together.

Friends, together we must beat pollution!

Thank you.



Regeringskansliet

Tal från Miljödepartementet

Tal av miljöminister Karolina Skog på Life Below Water - local implementation of UN goal 14 and KIMO Annual Meeting (engelska)

Publicerad 11 oktober 2017

Malmö, 11 oktober 2017 Det talade ordet gäller.

Ladies and gentlemen, friends,

Over three billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their everyday livelihoods. As for the City of Malmö, the strait of Öresund provides huge recreational values for people, as well as economic income. It is at the local level concrete action can be - and is - taken.

Broad ownership among all actors in society is fundamental for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Ownership and participation need to develop and deepen over time. A shared commitment, built on knowledge and insight from the local to the national level, is necessary to reach the targets set in the Agenda.

This is why I truly welcome that Kimo and the City of Malmö invite us to discuss the role of local implementation of UN Goal 14.

It is the Government's ambition that Sweden will be a leader in implementing the 2030 Agenda – both at home and through contributing to its global implementation.

In June Sweden and Fiji initiated and led the first UN Ocean Conference.

The Ocean Conference was a global manifestation in support of the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, building further political momentum for a strong implementation of Goal 14.

In short the Conference brought three deliverables:

- A "Call for Action" – a declaration that gave high-level political support to take further action on the implementation of SDG 14.
- About 1400 voluntary commitments from stakeholders from all over the world. Mostly commitments came from governments, civil society and business. Not so many came from cities around the world. The site is still open for registration of voluntary commitments and I would encourage you to register your commitment!
- Thirdly, the Conference, through seven partnership dialogues and more than 130 side events, mobilized a wealth of dialogues, initiatives, and ideas. Creative dynamic interactions between different sectors, which rarely cross paths, of the international community took place. It contributed to overcoming fragmentation and breaking down silos.

For a whole week prime ministers, ministers, business leaders, researchers, city mayors, NGOs and youth representatives gathered in the UN building in New York. The focus was on delivering action for the ocean, and together we came up with a long to do list.

In all discussions the importance of healthy oceans for the development of local communities – and the importance of local communities to take action for healthy oceans was very present.

At the Conference it was also very striking that although goal 14 was at the centre of discussions it was really a conference about the implementation of the whole Agenda 2030.

Goal 11 on sustainable cities is one of the goals that go hand-in-hand with goal 14. To take concrete steps towards sustainable cities – to deal with water and waste management – is crucial as to reduce marine pollution. Goal 12 on sustainable production and consumption go hand-in-hand with goal 14. To take concrete steps on how we use plastic materials like plastic bags links to how will be able to combat marine litter ending up in our seas. And of course, goal 6 on clean water and sanitation is intimately linked to the health of the ocean.

Ladies and gentlemen,

At the Conference the Swedish Government made several voluntary commitments – to take action against marine pollution, increase the protection and sustainable use of the oceans.

One of the voluntary commitments Sweden supported at the Conference was the Unesco initiative to strengthen ocean literacy. Unesco is now working on an initiative named Ocean Literacy for all. It is a global initiative that aims to improve knowledge across the world's population regarding our global ocean. Importantly, it also highlights the close links between ocean and human well-being.

Ocean literacy is important in all stages of education.

Here in Malmö you have a unique source of knowledge with the World Maritime University. Dr Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry, the President of the World Maritime University will also speak at this conference. I look forward to your contribution in strengthening education on SDG 14 and Agenda 2030 in the years to come.

An important part of ocean literacy is reaching out to children! Today I have the privilege to take part in the inauguration of the Marine Educational Centre here in Malmö will take place. I hope this centre will be a pioneer in ocean literacy on a local level. I hope Kimo can play a role to strengthen the work on ocean literacy.

As a global leader, Sweden should of course be the first to implement its voluntary commitments on the ocean. We are taking broad action to implement all parts of SDG 14: reducing pollution, increasing protection of marine protected areas, combating climate change and taking steps towards sustainable fisheries, and a blue economy.

Let me give some concrete example on what we do to reduce pollution. For next year the Swedish Government invests approximately 55 million euros to combat marine pollution, within three main areas:

- We remove hazardous substances. This includes sanitation of ship wrecks recognized as acute environmental hazards, but also increased efforts to reduce the amount of pharmaceuticals in marine environments.
- We increase the efforts to combat eutrophication. Among other things, we take measures to reduce the load of phosphorus in coastal bays, to restore wetlands and further the development of blue catch crops.
- Finally, we focus on making plastic management more responsible. The action we take includes cleaning of beaches and support to the development of new, alternative materials.

Litter, micro plastics and hazardous substances in oceans and seas are spreading at a catastrophic pace. In order to prevent this approaching disaster for human development, we need strong efforts across all levels.

Already today we see great work taking place on local level to combat eutrophication and to reduce marine litter. To take the southern part of Sweden – Skåne – as an example – we see that great projects have taken place and are new projects underway. New wetlands have been constructed. The nutrient management in agriculture has improved.

To tackle eutrophication two things are crucial – local cooperation and effective measures. This is why we will focus on strengthening local project development, as well as on improving the knowledge about where measures are most needed. We should focus our efforts to where they can most effectively mitigate eutrophication.

When local authorities and municipalities take an active part in project management working together with stakeholders, great results can be achieved!

Let me come back to the issue of plastics and marine litter. I would like to thank KIMO for your letter on microplastics. The issue of plastics and marine litter is important in so many ways – not least because it is possible for people to understand it.

Plastic in the ocean is a huge problem, and it is an eye opener for people who previously might not have thought very much about the sea. Children,

for instance, who see a beach covered in plastic bags immediately, understand that something is wrong. In next year's budget we therefore dedicate 3 million Swedish crowns to raising the awareness among the young – about the ocean in general and plastic in particular.

I would like to end by welcoming a very special bunch of guests welcome back to Öresund. I am of course talking about the bluefin tuna!

They serve as a powerful reminder: while there are many negative trends for the ocean, it is not too late to set things right again. You all know that many positive steps are already being taken, especially at the local level. But the potential for action for the ocean is even greater.

If we work together, and focus on concrete results, I am certain that the tuna will turn out to be more than a temporary guest. Let us use collective action to give them a warm welcome back. In that way, Mikael and his colleagues at the marine centre will be able to add tuna spotting to their educational program!