

# FALLING WALLS SCIENCE SUMMIT

## KEY RESULTS OF THE ROUND TABLE

### “SCALING UP NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS: PITFALLS AND POTENTIALS”

— *From peatlands to timber towers: turning nature-based solutions into core climate infrastructure*

Climate targets will be missed if land use, food and housing systems continue to drive emissions while nature's own carbon stores degrade. The panel argues that nature-based solutions must move from niche pilots to mainstream practice by restoring peatlands, transforming construction with bio-based materials, reshaping policies and markets, and investing in science education so that working with nature is seen as the smartest economic choice, not an expensive luxury.

Nature-based solutions use ecosystems to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and water risks while supporting human wellbeing. In this session, experts in peatland science, architecture, rural development and green finance focused on rewetting drained wetlands, scaling paludiculture and timber-based construction. Aligning the circular economy and the bio-based circular economy and building global alliances are crucial to enabling local pilot projects – from wetland value chains to modular bio-based buildings – to be replicated and adapted in different regions.

### THE PANEL CALL TO ACTION:

#### 1 — Restore and protect peatlands as frontline climate allies.

Prioritise rewetting drained peatlands, halting new drainage and setting science-based targets for peatland conservation, backed by long-term public funding and international coordination. This keeps carbon in the ground, restarts natural sequestration and delivers co-benefits such as biodiversity, flood protection and cleaner water.

#### 2 — Build a bio-based, circular construction economy.

Scale up the use of sustainably sourced timber, paludiculture products like reed and other bio-based materials in both new builds and retrofits, designing components for disassembly and reuse. This reduces dependence on carbon-intensive materials such as cement. It also cuts construction waste and turns buildings into temporary carbon stores within a broader circular economy.

#### 3 — Reform land use, building rules and incentives to work with wet landscapes.

Align agricultural subsidies, land use planning, building codes and procurement standards so farmers, foresters and developers can earn a living from wet soils and low-impact materials rather than from now conventional farming. Clear standards, certification and fair transition support make climate-smart farming and construction bankable for land managers, housing providers and local authorities.

#### 4 — Coordinate technosphere and biosphere through regional, cross-sector planning.

Plan food, housing, energy and ecosystem restoration together at biore-



### PANELLISTS

#### Alexander Bonde

*Generalsekretär, German Federal Environmental Foundation*

#### Niklas Fanelisa

*Architect & Professor, Technical University of Munich, Atelier Fanelisa*

#### Alan W. Organschi

*Professor, Yale School of Architecture*

#### Franziska Tanneberger

*Director, Greifswald Mire Centre*

#### Conny Czymoch

*Moderator*

### CONTACT

#### Falling Walls Foundation gGmbH

Kochstraße 6–7  
10969 Berlin

Web: [www.falling-walls.com](http://www.falling-walls.com)

#### PARTNER REQUEST

Dr. Andreas Kosmider  
Managing Director  
[andreas.kosmider@falling-walls.com](mailto:andreas.kosmider@falling-walls.com)  
Phone: +49 30 609 883 97 28  
Mobile: +49 172 273 75 77

#### PRESS REQUEST

Felix Mihalek  
PR Manager  
phone: +49 30 60 988 39 780  
mail: [felix.mihalek@falling-walls.com](mailto:felix.mihalek@falling-walls.com)

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gional scale, connecting peatland landscapes, forests, rural producers, architects, cities and industry in shared value chains. Linking digital tools, material passports and modular design with ecological knowledge enables resilient local economies that can also share lessons globally.

## **5 — Invest in science education and narratives that make nature-based solutions tangible and desirable.**

Strengthen science literacy and systems thinking for citizens, professionals and decision-makers, while showcasing real projects where bio-based materials improve everyday spaces and livelihoods. A narrative that nature-positive solutions smell good on site, feel better to work with and offer strong business cases helps dismantle the belief that climate and nature action is always a cost rather than an opportunity.

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## **CONTACT**

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Managing Director  
[andreas.kosmider@falling-walls.com](mailto:andreas.kosmider@falling-walls.com)  
Phone: +49 30 609 883 97 28  
Mobile: +49 172 273 75 77

### **PRESS REQUEST**

Felix Mihalek  
PR Manager  
phone: +49 30 60 988 39 780  
mail: [felix.mihalek@falling-walls.com](mailto:felix.mihalek@falling-walls.com)



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