

ESDN Conference

2026

02 October

Environmental Security in Europe: Building the Foundations of Long-Term Resilience

Draft Agenda

02 October 2026

**Tom Johnson House
(Ground Floor)**

Haddington Road, Dublin 4, D04 K7X4

Organized by the

European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN)
in cooperation with the
**Irish Department of Climate, Energy and the
Environment**

This event is recognized as an Associated Event of the
Irish Presidency of the Council of the European Union

08:30 – 09:00 BST Conference Registration and Networking

09:00 – 09:30 BST **Welcome and Opening**

09:00 – 09:10 **ESDN Opening**

Elisabeth Freytag-Rigler, ESDN President, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Climate and Environmental Protection, Regions and Water Management, Austria

09:10 – 09:20 **Host Welcome**

Fiona McManus, Assistant Principal - Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Team, Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment - EU, International & Marine Affairs Division, Ireland

09:20 – 09:30 **Overview of the Day**

Gerald Berger, Moderator

09:30 – 10:45 BST **Session 1: How can multilateral environment and climate policy succeed in building resilience and support peace and security during turbulent times**

09:30 – 09:45 **Keynote**

David Donoghue, Former Irish Ambassador to the UN and co-facilitator for the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, Ireland

09:45 – 10:00 **The Environmental Crisis as a Shared European Security Risk**

Emma Hakala, Leading Researcher, Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Finland (online)

10:00 – 10:15 **Building Europe's Resilience in an Unstable World**

Serafin Groebner, Seconded National Expert - Circular Economy, European Environment Agency, Denmark

10:15 – 10:45 **Panel Discussion**

10:45 – 11:15 BST Coffee Break

11:15 – 12:45 BST **Exchange Space 1: Building the Foundations for Long-Term Resilience**

11:15 – 12:00 **Round 1**

Topic 1: Just and Green Transition

Table 1: Ireland – Just Transition Commission

Ali Sheridan, Chair, Just Transition Commission, Ireland

Table 2: Spain – National Strategy for Sustainable Development

Alba Villamor, Deputy Assistant Director, Ministry of Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and 2030 Agenda, Spain

Table 3: Wales – Just Transition Framework

Robert Morgan, Head of Decarbonisation, Welsh Government - Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability, Wales

Topic 2: Circular Economy

Table 4: Ireland's Circular Economy Strategy

Bernie Kiley, Principal Officer - Circular Economy Division, Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment, Ireland

Table 5: Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform

Maria Nikolopoulou, President – Sustainable Development Observatory, European Economic and Social Committee, Spain

Table 6: Phasing Out the Throw-Away Society

Bas Waterhout, Senior Advisor, Dutch Infrastructure and Environment Council, Netherlands

Topic 3: Citizen & Stakeholder Engagement

Table 7: The most sustainable way of building engagement - Should it be from the ground up or top down?

Niall McGuirk, Coordinator, Coalition 2030, Ireland

Table 8: ESDN Youth Workshop 2026 & Resilience 2.0

Pedro Sereno, ESDN Youth Representative, Portugal

&

Martina Doubková, ESDN Youth Member, Czechia

Topic 4: Environment , Climate, and Biodiversity

Table 9: Irish Environmental Protection Agency

Mary Frances Rochford, Programme Manager, Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland

Table 10: Climate action as a litmus test: Will the climate crisis strengthen or challenge democracy?

Florian Eywo, Policy Officer, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Climate and Environmental Protection, Regions and Water Management, Austria

&

Katja Hummer, ESDN Advisory Board Member, Policy Officer, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Climate and Environmental Protection, Regions and Water Management, Austria

12:00 – 12:45

Round 2

Speakers remain at their tables and everyone else switches tables for round 2.

12:45 – 13:05

Reporting Back from the Exchange Space Tables

13:05 – 13:50 BST

Light Lunch

13:50 – 15:40 BST

Exchange Space 2: Building the Foundations for Long-Term Resilience

13:50 – 14:35

Round 1

Topic 1: Just and Green Transition

Table 1: Irish National Economic and Social Council

Niamh Garvey, Senior Policy Analyst, National Economic and Social Council (NESC), Ireland (TBC)

Table 2: Nordic Toolbox for a Just Green Transition

Nora Sanchez Gassen, Senior Research Advisory, Nordregio, Sweden (TBC)

Topic 2: Circular Economy

Table 3: Implementing Romania's Circular Economy Strategy: Governance, Monitoring and Digital Tools

Ileana Luminița Bălălaşu, Director, Department of Sustainable Development, Government of Romania, Romania

Table 4: North Rhine-Westphalia Circular Economy Strategy

Julian Lauten-Weiss, Circular Economy Expert, Ministry of the Environment, Nature and Transport of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany

Topic 3: Citizen & Stakeholder Engagement

Table 5: ESDN Youth Workshop 2026 & Resilience 2.0

Daniel Wood, ESDN Youth Network Representative, Wales

&

Filip Lepieš, ESDN Youth Network Member, Slovakia

&

Jorina Kaminski, ESDN Youth Network Member, Switzerland

Table 6: Wales - Office of the Future Generations Commissioner

Jenny McConnel, Sustainable Development Advisor, Office of the Future Generations Commissioner of Wales, Wales

Topic 4: Environment , Climate, and Biodiversity

Table 7: Building Resilience in an Irish Context

Stephen Flood, Resilience Team Lead, Irish Climate Change Advisory Council, Ireland

Table 8: Connecting Climate, Nature and Communities - Building solutions together

John Barimo, Manager, SDSN Ireland, Ireland

Table 9: Biodiversity Policy in Ireland

Representative from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), Ireland (TBC)

14:35 – 15:20

Round 2

Speakers remain at their tables and everyone else switches tables for round 2.

15:20 – 15:40

Reporting Back from the Exchange Space Tables

15:40 – 16:15 BST

Moderated Discussion: Expectations for the SDG Summit 2027 on Post 2030

Anna Pot, ESDN Vice President, National SDG Coordinator, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands

Maria Nikolopoulou, President – Sustainable Development Observatory, European Economic and Social Committee, Spain

Diandra Ní Bhuachalla, Coordinator, National Youth Council of Ireland, Ireland (TBC)

Antoine Stevens, ESDN Advisory Board Member, International Relations Attaché, Federal Institute for Sustainable Development, Belgium

16:15 – 16:30 BST

ESDN Conference 2026 Closing

16:15 – 16:20

Host Farewell

Fiona McManus, Assistant Principal - Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Team, Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment - EU, International & Marine Affairs Division, Ireland

16:20 – 16:30

ESDN Close and Next Steps

Taru Savolainen, ESDN Vice President and Secretary General of the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development, Prime Minister's Office, Finland

16:30 BST

End of ESDN Conference 2026
