

RESPONSIBLE COMPANIES LEADERS IN BIODIVERSITY

Giner de los Ríos Foundation

Madrid. 11th July 2017

Biodiversity Foundation, of the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment organized the conference “Responsible Companies Leaders in Biodiversity” on the 11th of July of 2017 in Madrid. With more than 100 people representing the business world, the academy, the public administration and the conservation sector, the conference had two main objectives:

- To bring innovative experiences from companies and business platforms which are leading the integration of biodiversity in their business models.
- To present the first results report of the Spanish Business and Biodiversity Initiative (SBBi).

The General Director of Quality and Environmental Evaluation and Natural Environment of the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment, **Francisco Javier Cachón**, started the conference emphasizing the key role of the companies in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services. He also noted that collaboration between the business sector and public administration is essential to address these challenges.



Subsequently, pioneering and innovative international experiences of business platforms and companies were presented and they revealed how the road to sustainable development is possible. This part of the conference was kicked-off by **Mihela Hladin**, Environmental and Social Initiatives Manager at Patagonia. Mihela argued that it is essential for a company to understand how its impact on biodiversity and climate change can be improved, seeking regenerative economies and the least impact of its activities. During her speech Rick Ridgeway,

Vice President of Patagonia, was present through a video and stated that “*there is no business in a dead planet*”. Understanding that consumption patterns are increasingly demanding, she advocated a greater relationship between the company and society. She also showed how environmental activism is a fundamental part of Patagonia.



Next followed a debate between three entities working to help business more sustainable.



Daniel Truran, B-Corp Ambassador, spoke about the strength of companies with purpose. He summarized the movement of B-Corp companies as companies 'for' a better world, with a new conception of their business strategy and the growing support of consumers, who value committed within companies. He concluded explaining how passion and coherence can lead that change.



Ben Kellard, Head of Sustainable Business of Forum for the Future, explained the Net Positive Impact group, which is led by companies that want to make a positive contribution in the society. He presented several examples of sustainable companies and highlighted the economic importance for the company if it works with Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, he argued that governments take into account the actions of leading companies to adapt legislation.

Marta Santamaría, Technical Director of Natural Capital Coalition, explained the importance of integrating natural capital in companies and the procedure of the *Natural Capital Protocol*. Marta noted that the application of the protocol is being especially useful to understand the impacts and dependencies of companies in relation to natural capital and advanced the future supplement on biodiversity issues, which will better address specific biodiversity issues that



currently were not well reflected sometimes.

In the debate with the audience, moderated by **Helena Díez-Fuentes**, it was possible to delve into which strategies could be more effective in bringing the issues raised in the conference to senior executives and how to seek the interest of stockholders. It was discussed about the importance of the companies' transparency and how to involve and inform both consumers and the entire supply chain.

In the second part of the conference, a video about the Biodiversity Foundation and another about the Spanish Business and Biodiversity Initiative was shown with the purpose of presenting its first results report.



Isidoro Miranda, CEO of LafargeHolcim Spain, explained the company's commitment to generate a net positive impact as well as the importance of integrating sustainability into the economic equation. He described how LafargeHolcim goes a step beyond what is required by law regarding quarries restoration and the small economic difference that it implies.



After that, the SBBI companies presented the motivation of their company to work in a sustainable way with biodiversity, showing some exemplary actions. Next, the conservation organizations highlighted the importance of alliances between companies and conservation organizations to support biodiversity conservation in a mutual and desirable benefit.



In the open debate, issues like the need of having objective and standardized indicators of actions on biodiversity, to understand the value of natural capital as a tool for business decisions and the importance of transferring the environmental variable to the Board of Directors of companies was raised, among other things.

The event was closed by **Sonia Castañeda**, Director of the Biodiversity Foundation, who summarized the day, emphasized the commitment of the Spanish Business and Biodiversity Initiative and advocated for a continuous work of the Foundation in favor of an increasingly sustainable economy.

