



Progress Amid Change: Hamburg Sustainability Conference Looks Back on a Successful First Year

October 7, 2025. One year ago, the first Hamburg Sustainability Conference (HSC) took place. HSC 2024 marked a successful launch of the Conference's mission to forge new sustainability alliances and accelerate the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. The remarkably broad and high-level participation, along with the substantial number of sessions and launched alliances at the inaugural conference, sent a strong signal. In June, HSC 2025 built on this momentum—despite the challenging global context of mounting geopolitical tensions and deepening fragmentation. Against this backdrop, the mission of the Hamburg Sustainability Conference has become even more urgent and relevant.

It is encouraging that, after just one year and two conferences, the HSC can already point to strong numbers: in total, around 3,200 people from more than 120 countries have accepted the invitation to Hamburg—among them over 10 heads of state and government, about 40 ministers, more than 20 heads of international organizations, and over 300 C-level business executives. Across more than 120 sessions, concrete solutions to the world's most pressing challenges were discussed, and around 25 new alliances were launched. In addition, HSC has attracted wide media attention, with more than 3,000 reports published to date.

Global Alliances for a Sustainable Future

The initiatives and alliances launched at the Hamburg Sustainability Conferences in 2024 and 2025 address key issues such as international financial architecture, global health, biodiversity, digitalization, and sustainable mobility, advancing concrete solutions. To give both the media and the wider public a clear and easy-to-access overview as well as direct points of contact, the HSC website now features **two dedicated pages presenting the core initiatives and alliances from [2024](#) and [2025](#)**, along with further information.

Many of the initiatives and alliances launched at HSC 2024 have already achieved remarkable progress in this short period of time and were further advanced at HSC 2025. One promising example is the SCALED initiative (*Scaling Capital for Sustainable Development*), which aims to remove barriers to the large-scale mobilization of private investment for sustainable development in emerging markets and developing economies. Launched at HSC 2024 by several governments and investors, the initiative continues to drive standardization and enhanced international cooperation in the area of blended finance. Currently, it is working on the establishment of a specialized company which will mobilize private investment more efficiently. Thereby, the SCALED members are laying the foundation to systematically connect like-minded investors, develop standardized investment instruments, and eventually carry out the investments through professional asset managers. In this way, SCALED will make a significant contribution to closing financing gaps in developing countries—with the potential to mobilize several billion US dollars in private investment in the years ahead.

Another important example is the Hamburg Declaration on Responsible AI for the Sustainable Development Goals, presented at HSC 2025. The Declaration is the result of extensive collaborations that began at HSC 2024, when the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in partnership with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and



Development (BMZ), introduced initial principles for leveraging AI responsibly for sustainable development. Building on this groundwork, the Declaration sets out shared commitments for the fair, inclusive, and sustainable development and application of AI worldwide. It is the first global declaration to specifically address the use of AI in international development cooperation. By now, its supporters include more than 50 governments, international organizations, companies, civil society actors, and leading research institutions.

A Platform for Continuous Impact

Following the second conference in June, the Hamburg Sustainability Conference has continued its work with great dedication—because sustainable progress requires long-term commitment. Looking ahead, several important events and projects are already on the agenda. Thus, in close cooperation with its initiators and partners, HSC is convening a series of international Round Tables that build on sessions and initiatives from previous conferences or pave the way for new ones.

On October 29, on the sidelines of the Southern Voice Conference in São Paulo, Brazil, HSC will host a **Round Table** on mobilizing and scaling local climate action in cooperation with the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS). Further details will be made available shortly through the communication channels of HSC. Another highlight is the ongoing call for applications for the **HSC Youth Ambassador Program 2026**: Young changemakers and leaders from emerging markets and developing economies can apply until October 15, 2025, at <https://hsc.link/hsc26youth>. In addition to participating in the 2026 conference in Hamburg, the program also includes a series of Round Tables, starting in Nairobi in January 2026.

At the same time, preparations are already in progress for the third Hamburg Sustainability Conference, which will take place on June 29–30, 2026 at Hamburg City Hall and the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce.

Initiators and Partners

The Hamburg Sustainability Conference is an initiative of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Michael Otto Foundation and the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. The HSC works in cooperation with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the German Institute for Development and Sustainability (IDOS).

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