



AUSTRIAN WORLD SUMMIT 2025



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INTRODUCTION

The 9th AUSTRIAN WORLD SUMMIT, held on June 3rd, 2025, took place under the motto “Unite in Action – Terminate Pollution.” In a world increasingly divided and confronted with multiple crises, the Summit aimed to highlight diverse approaches to safeguarding a healthy planet and securing a livable future for generations to come.

Approximately 1,500 attendees from 60 nations gathered at the Hofburg, with many more joining online, to hear from Arnold Schwarzenegger and a range of inspiring speakers — including first responders to natural disasters, former professional athletes now advocating for environmental causes, and young entrepreneurs and climate action leaders.

The panel discussions echoed the Summit's central theme: while our opinions and strategies may vary, the climate and pollution crises are challenges we can only overcome together.

Attendees at the Hofburg also enjoyed a musical performance by The BossHoss, as well as rich



insights and connections at the AWS Conference Expo. There, 15 companies and organizations showcased their work and innovations, creating extensive opportunities for networking and collaboration.

MAIN TOPICS at the AWS 2025

- Unite in Action
- Climate Action on the Global Agenda
- Building for Tomorrow
- Why Healthy Soil Matters
- Pump for the Planet
- First Responders - Our Climate Heroes
- Environmental Innovation

www.schwarzeneggerclimateinitiative.com

www.austrianworldsummit.com

#ClimateAction

ONE LOOK



1,500

Summit
Guests

130

Journalists

60

Nations

1,460

Online Media Reports
Worldwide



5.4 BILLION

Potential News Reach

50 MILLION €

Advertising Value

96 MILLION

Social Reach (External)

11.4 MILLION

Social Media Views (Internal)

INTRODUCTION



From left to right: Alexandra Maritza Wachter, Monika Langthaler and Matt Iseman

On June 3rd 2025 the **9th AUSTRIAN WORLD SUMMIT** took place at the Vienna Hofburg, under the motto "Unite in Action - Terminate Pollution". Presenters **Matt Iseman** and **Alexandra Maritza Wachter** welcomed around 1500 people to this global environmental conference.

Monika Langthaler, Director of the Schwarzenegger Climate Initiative, opened by thanking the hosts and audience, emphasizing that she represents a dedicated team committed to action over complaints, in line with Arnold Schwarzenegger's motto: "Do it. Do it now." She acknowledged that environmental issues are not always a global priority, but stressed the importance of acting immediately, regardless of political leadership.

She highlighted key milestones of the Schwarzenegger Climate Initiative, including the AUSTRIAN WORLD SUMMIT Solutions Hub, renewable energy projects, and the new Wild Solutions Park. She also introduced the "Pump for the Planet" campaign, promoting daily environmental actions and healthy habits, which has already reached six million people.

Langthaler concluded by announcing the premiere of the new song by The BossHoss, *I'll Be Back*. It supports the initiative through streaming revenue. Monika Langthaler encouraged everyone to find joy in environmental action, thanking Arnold Schwarzenegger for his leadership.

UNITE IN ACTION

Young vs. old, urban vs. rural areas, progressive vs. conservative – we are living in an increasingly divided world, fueled by economic hardship and the lingering effects of a global pandemic. Our media consumption habits often deepen these divides, fostering misunderstanding rather than dialogue. At the same time, the impacts of pollution, biodiversity loss, and the climate crisis are becoming impossible to ignore..

In his keynote speech **Arnold Schwarzenegger**'s message was crystal clear: "When people ask, "What do we do?" I say: Stop whining. Whining doesn't change anything. Get to work."

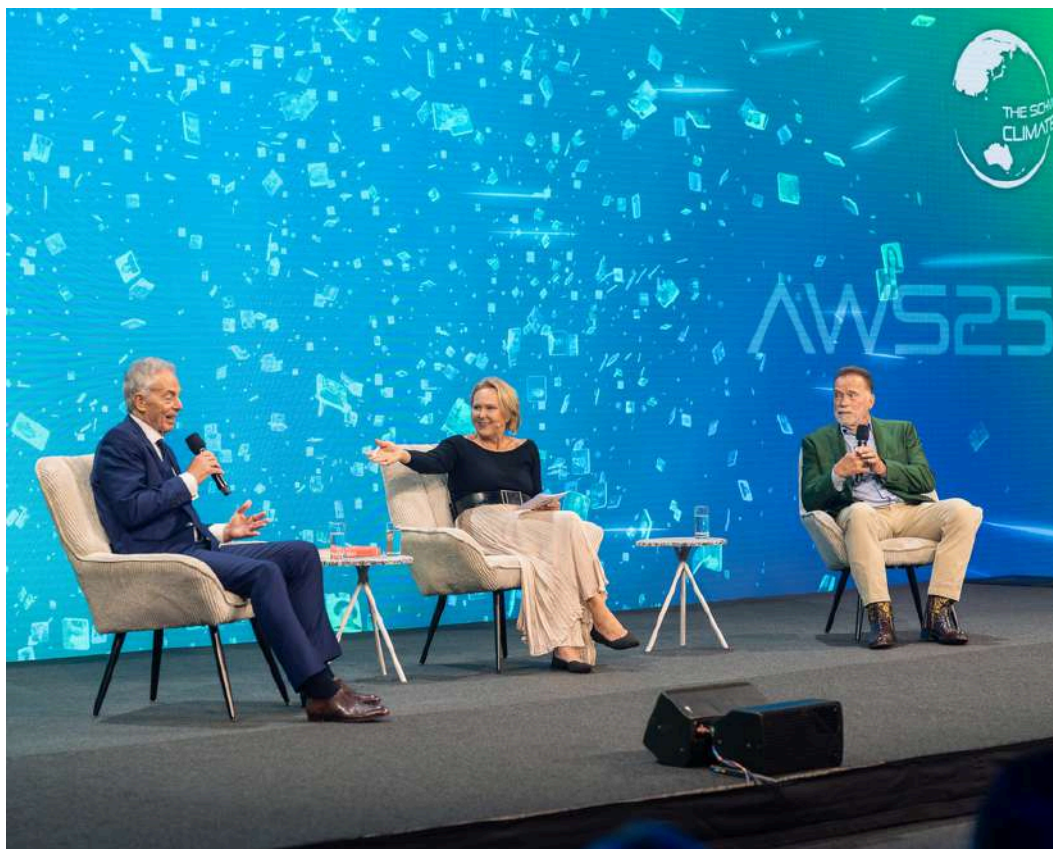
Schwarzenegger follows to bring a wealth of best-practice examples to the table — from his groundbreaking initiatives as Governor of California, such as green building standards, the Million Solar Roofs Initiative and the Global Warming Solutions Act, to forward-thinking cities like San Diego and Grenoble, France, which are leading the way with progressive environmental legislation.

"You can't just sit and make excuses because one guy in a white house doesn't agree with you. We need heroes. We need to win people over. And you don't do that by talking. You do it by taking action that improves their lives – now."



The Austrian Federal President **Alexander Van der Bellen**, patron of the climate conference, received a standing ovation from the audience and agreed with Schwarzenegger's opinion: 'Our planet is not the responsibility of individual countries, parties or groups – or even individual people. It is the responsibility of all of us. The climate crisis is a major threat, that unites us all. And environmental protection is a major task that unites us all.'

In his speech, Federal Chancellor **Christian Stocker** emphasized that global crises can only be addressed through global



From left to right: Tony Blair, Hannelore Veit and Arnold Schwarzenegger

solutions. He stated that ambitious climate goals must be aligned with prosperity, energy security, and a competitive economy. Stocker called for collective action, stressing that every contribution matters — whether through innovation, sustainable practices, or dedication to environmental protection.

In his video message, Secretary-General **António Guterres** united global action to tackle a triple environmental crisis: pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change. He stressed that no country is immune, and none can solve these issues alone. Yet he speaks of hope as clean energy

is now cheaper than fossil fuels, and global investment is shifting toward renewables. To avoid the worst climate impacts, he reminded countries to commit to stronger climate plans and support developing nations in transitioning to clean energy and adapting to climate threats. A global treaty to end plastic pollution is also essential according to Secretary-General Guterres. Together, we can end pollution and protect both people and the planet.

The fireside chat between **Arnold Schwarzenegger** and **Tony Blair**, former Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, focused on the

importance of bipartisan and global leadership to tackle the climate crisis. It was hosted by **Hannelore Veit**. Despite coming from different political backgrounds, Schwarzenegger and Blair emphasized their long-standing cooperation on climate issues and stressed that climate change is not a political issue but a human one. Schwarzenegger explained his journey from bodybuilding and acting into public service, highlighting how he promoted environmental policy in California by framing the problem as pollution, not "climate change" — a term he believes fails to connect with the public. He argued that effective communication is essential, and changing public perception, as he did with "resistance training" for fitness, is key to building a people-powered movement.

Tony Blair praised Schwarzenegger's results-driven leadership, especially as a Republican promoting environmental action. Blair stressed that climate change solutions must be practical, affordable, and growth-friendly, especially in developing countries where emissions are rising most rapidly. Referring to a recent report from his institute, Blair called for a realistic transition, incorporating tools like carbon capture, nature-based solutions, and new financing models for clean energy in the Global South.



Both leaders agreed that uniting people and nations in action is the only way forward. Blair concluded that true leadership means guiding people toward what they need, not just what they want — and proving that climate solutions can improve both lives and economies.

CLIMATE ACTION - HAS IT FALLEN OFF THE GLOBAL AGENDA?

News media have long been seen as both a necessary observer and, at times, a counterpart to politics. Climate and environmental issues have become deeply polarizing, and people often seem to disengage when it comes to taking action on these topics. Taking a self-critical approach, we must acknowledge that our communication on global warming and environmental pollution has, on the whole, not been effective.

This panel hosted by **Hannelore Veit** aimed to explore the roles of journalism, finance, and the economy in this 'new normal'.

Laura Kuenssberg, BBC journalist, opened the conversation by noting that climate change has not disappeared from public concern but has faded in urgency due to economic and political pressures. People are overwhelmed by immediate issues and often resist costly or complex environmental demands. She emphasized that climate communication has been overly abstract or alarmist and called for a shift toward practical relatable messaging — solutions,

people can understand and act on in their daily lives.

Steve Westly, founder of the The Westly Group and former California official, was more optimistic. He argued that clean energy is already winning on economics: 90% of new U.S. energy in the past year was renewable. Despite federal setbacks, states and companies are moving forward, driven by economic opportunity and market logic. He cited Tesla as an example of green innovation that also yields massive returns, calling on people to stop whining and participate in the growing clean economy.

Elex Michaelson, anchor at Fox 11 in California, highlighted California's bipartisan environmental leadership, even when national policy stalls. He recalled that both Republican and Democratic leaders in the state — like Ronald Reagan, Richard Nixon, and Arnold Schwarzenegger — championed environmental action. However, California's attempt to phase out gas-powered cars by 2035 is facing federal challenges, likely heading to the Supreme Court. He emphasized the need for



From left to right: E. Michaelson, H. Veit (host), L. Kuenssberg, S. Westly

coordination across states and nations to be effective.

Steve Westly offered a note of optimism, highlighting that China, often seen as the world's largest polluter, installed more solar and wind power last year than the rest of the world combined—twice over. He added that China has recently begun reducing its carbon emissions by 1% annually, signaling a major shift.

China, he said, has embraced renewables, battery technology, and electric vehicles, and is now leading globally in these areas. His message: the rest of the world should follow China's lead in clean energy adoption. The panel ended with a reflection on public trust, particularly from younger generations. Michaelson stressed that people are scepti-

cal after years of misleading political messages. He said that climate communication should be visual, local, and experiential, helping people see changes in their lives — like cleaner water or falling energy bills — rather than asking them to blindly trust experts.

Kuenssberg concluded that journalists must rebuild trust through transparency — showing how facts are verified and letting people see the process behind reporting. She mentioned the BBC's new "Verify" initiative as an example of this approach.

BUILDING FOR TOMMOROW



From left to right: W. Hoekstra, H. Veit (host), N. Forrest, M. Sjögren

The industrial sector – one of the main CO₂ emitters globally – faces huge challenges but also opportunities in becoming climate-neutral. The Clean Industrial Deal as the current strategy of the European Union to reduce environmental and climate impacts focuses very much on the decarbonizing industries as well as implementing a circular economy. Companies and industries demand long-term political planning and goals in order to maintain competitiveness

and economic sustainability. How do companies react and act in this environment and what strategies and decisions have they chosen to become clean?

Wopke Hoekstra, EU Commissioner for Climate, Net Zero and Clean Growth, emphasized that the European Green Deal is not dead but evolving. The shift to the Clean Industrial Deal reflects a focus on integrating decarbonization with economic competitiveness and geopolitical independence. Hoekstra argued that Europe

must simultaneously pursue climate goals, support industrial success on EU soil, and avoid dependency on unreliable foreign energy sources. He stressed the importance of fostering innovation through



simplified regulation, fair competition, and improved access to capital—particularly via the Capital Markets Union, which seeks to increase investor-based funding for businesses across the EU.

Nollaig Forrest, Chief Sustainability Officer at Holcim, detailed how her company — a global leader in building materials — is working toward net-zero cement production by 2030. Forrest explained that emissions from the built environment stem both from the materials used during construction and from energy consumption during building use.

Holcim is tackling both by innovating low-emission materials and promoting circular construction methods. Through partnerships with the EU Innovation Fund, Holcim is working on projects to capture 5 million tons of CO₂ and produce 8 million tons of net-zero cement. Forrest emphasized the importance of scaling these innovations through policy support and industry partnerships.

Marta Sjögren, co-founder and co-CEO of Paebbl, introduced her startup's technology, which converts CO₂ gas into solid carbonates (CO₃), effectively storing carbon in building materials. Paebbl's innovation acts as a partial replacement for traditional cement. Sjögren argued for a carbon-efficient economy that uses CO₂ as a resource, rather than simply storing it underground. She called on the EU to create better frameworks for small startups



through performance-based regulation, public procurement incentives, and testbed environments for novel materials. While she acknowledged recent EU support — such as co-financing for Paebbl's demo facility — she urged continued progress to level the playing field between large corporations and emerging innovators. In response, Hoekstra reiterated that Europe must create conditions where both legacy industry and disruptive startups can thrive. He stressed neutrality in picking technology winners but emphasized setting the right conditions through market fairness, regulatory simplification, innovation investment, and cross-border capital access. Forrest concluded that while the technologies for carbon-neutral construction already exist, policy and procurement alignment are needed to bring them to market at scale. Both she and Sjögren praised recent EU funding efforts that are enabling real-world demonstration and growth of climate-positive technologies. The panel ended on a hopeful note, with agreement that partnerships across policy, industry, and startups — along with smart regulation and investment — can unlock Europe's potential to lead in sustainable industrial transformation.

CITY OF VIENNA

In his introduction to the talk with Vienna's Executive City Councillor for Climate, **Jürgen Czernohorszky**, **Matt Iseman** playfully refers to a surprise video message from Vienna's new "Chief Mobility Officer", which turns out to be Arnold Schwarzenegger, humorously urging action against pollution.



In the talk, Czernohorszky outlined the city's ambitious environmental plans following recent elections. He emphasized Vienna's ongoing commitment to climate action, noting that Vienna's mayor would soon present a five-year program focused on preserving the city's high quality of life.

Czernohorszky detailed a five-point climate plan: expanding green spaces, phasing out gas heating, restoring nature, increasing renewable energy (with a goal of solar power for 25% of households), and transitioning to a circular, zero-waste economy. He described this as Vienna's strategy for "kicking ass" on climate.



J. Czernohorszky interviewed
by M. Iseman

He reaffirmed the city's target of climate neutrality by 2040, citing achievements like a substantial reduction in CO₂ emissions over 15 years (more than third) and an 11% drop in just 2023. Czernohorszky concluded by stressing the urgency of bold, focused action for the sake of future generations.

WHY SOIL MATTERS: AND WHAT WE CAN DO TO SAVE IT

Food security is highly dependent on healthy soils and biodiversity. UNESCO is warning that 90% of the planet's land surface could be degraded by 2050, with major risks for biodiversity and human life. However, as the European Union says, healthy soils are essential for achieving climate neutrality, a clean and circular economy and stopping desertification and land degradation.

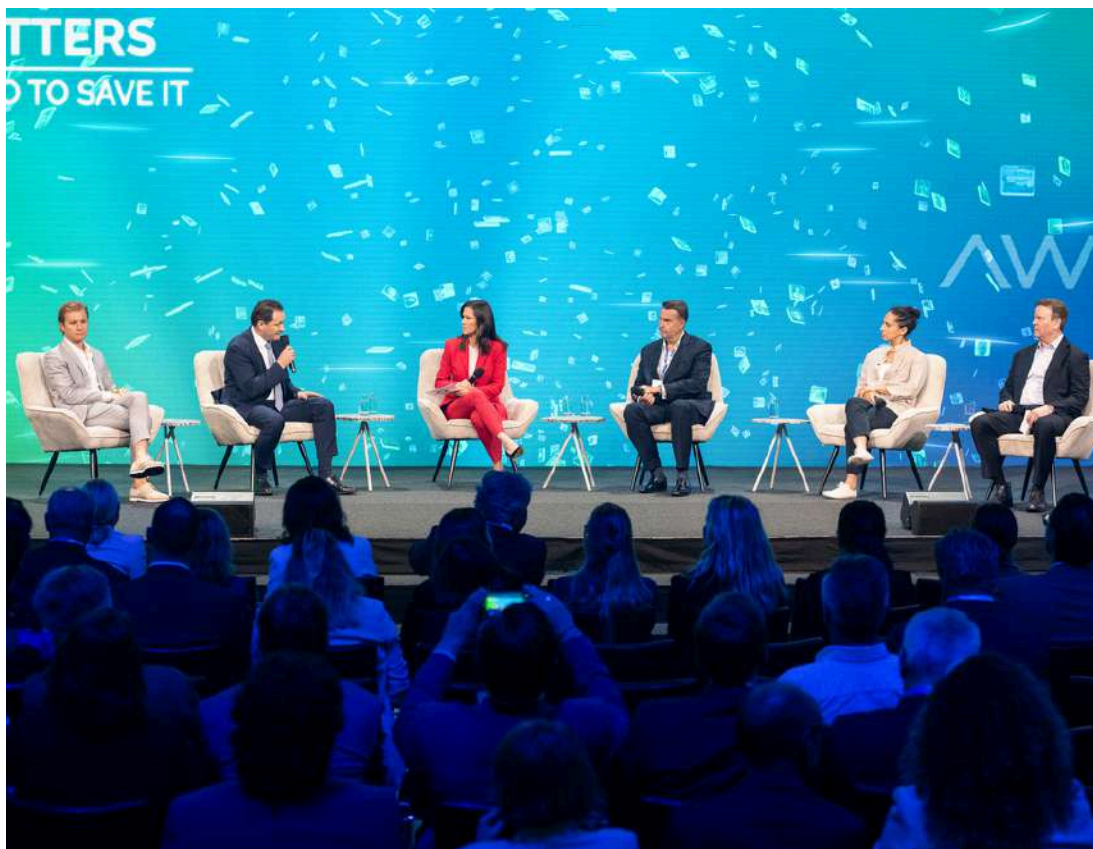
The panel discussion moderated by **Alexandra Maritza Wachter** explored the vital importance of healthy soil in achieving sustainable agriculture, resilient food systems, and improved public health.

Sheila Damos, a regenerative farmer and representative of the European Alliance for Regenerative Agriculture, described healthy soil as the foundation of life. She stressed the importance of closing ecological cycles and avoiding extractive practices. Using her own agroforestry farm as an example, she explained how observing nature's patterns —



particularly circularity — can guide better land management. She also highlighted the need to simplify bureaucratic processes for farmers, invest in agricultural education, and design incentive systems that reward actual improvements in soil health.

Todd Wagner, a tech entrepreneur and founder of Food Fight USA, spoke about the systemic disconnect in the United States between the food and health industries. He criticized the fragmented regulatory framework and the widespread use of harmful chemicals in the food supply. Wagner traced this problem back to the influence of the tobacco industry and the rise of



From left to right: N. Rosberg, N. Totschnig, H. Veit (host), W. Grabher, S. Darmos, T. Wagner

WHY SOIL MATTERS

hyper-processed foods. He outlined Food Fight USA's efforts to promote food safety legislation, such as California's bans on known carcinogens and initiatives for clearer labeling and ingredient reformulation, inspired by stricter European standards. He emphasized the scalability of sustainable practices and the need to reorient U.S. policies toward health and food safety.

Austrian Federal Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Climate and Environmental Protection, Regions and Water Management

Norbert Totschnig acknowledged the challenges related to soil loss. He introduced Austria's first National Soil Strategy, which aims to reduce daily land sealing to 2.5

hectares. Though not legally binding, he reiterated that this strategy demonstrates a real commitment to tackle the issue and established clear parameters for sustainable soil management. The strategy involves cooperation with provinces and cities and includes measures like protecting agricultural land, raising public awareness, and reusing already developed areas to also prevent uncontrolled urban expansion. He discussed Europe's role in global food security, especially as the population approaches 9 billion by 2050. He highlighted Austria's sustainable agriculture, characterized by small family farms, and detailed national investments in education, climate-resilient crops and research. He



emphasized the importance of passing agricultural knowledge to future generations and reducing food waste through improved systems.

Wolfgang Grabher, CEO of Sun AG, discussed his product "Mini Meals"—a new type of high-efficiency, low-calorie food product saving 90% of the resources typically used for food. These "high-performance foods" would offer full nutritional value at just 800 calories per day, as Grabher stated. He also explained his long-standing campaign "Race for Soil," inspired by alarming data on global soil degradation. He developed mini meals partly to provide a tangible solution to this issue.

Nico Rosberg, former Formula 1 World Champion, shared his experience in the Extreme E racing series, which combines motorsport and environmental advocacy. He described joint efforts with Wolfgang in reforestation and emphasized how racing can raise awareness for climate issues. Rosberg also spoke about his venture fund Rosberg Ventures, and

investments in agri-tech startups using AI and computer vision for , smarter farming.

Wagner later returned to discuss monoculture and soil depletion in the U.S., noting that most corn grown is used for processed ingredients or livestock feed, not human consumption. He advocated for shifting USDA priorities to support regenerative practices like crop rotation, cover crops, and no-till farming. He also mentioned collaboration with European companies like Campo Verde to bring high-integrity foods to a broader audience. In closing, Sheila Damos reiterated the findings of a major study published by the European Alliance for Regenerative Agriculture, demonstrating that regenerative farming not only restores ecosystems but is economically viable. She emphasized again the need to invest in education and reward real outcomes in soil regeneration.

Nico Rosberg concluded the panel by reflecting on the role of athletes as role models. He pointed to Arnold Schwarzenegger as a leading example of how success in sports can inspire broader societal contributions. Rosberg emphasized the responsibility and opportunity for public figures to use their influence to drive environmental and social change, including for future generations like his own children.

PUMP FOR THE PLANET

For many people, sports are an essential part of their life and culture, whether through participation or as passionate fans. However, the relationship between sports and the environment is complex. On one hand, sports contribute to emissions that drive global warming, but on the other hand, extreme weather events, like heatwaves, disrupt competitions and pose risks to athletes' health and performance. Many athletes have voiced concerns about global warming and pollution.

At the AWS, **Matt Iseman** hosted a panel named "Pump for the Planet" with three champion athletes: Dominic Thiem, Felix Neureuther, and Nico Rosberg, focusing on the intersection of sport and climate action.



Dominic Thiem, Austrian tennis star, discussed founding Thiem Energy, a company aiming to make clean energy accessible and appealing, especially to younger generations. He emphasized wanting to contribute to both the planet and the community after his tennis career.

Felix Neureuther, German ski champion, spoke about his Felix Neureuther Foundation, which promotes outdoor education and environmental awareness among children. Through programs like



"Nature Heroes," he has reached hundreds of thousands of students, encouraging learning through nature and sustainability.

Nico Rosberg, former Formula 1



From left to right: D. Thiem, M. Iseman (host), N. Rosberg, F. Neureuther

world champion, reflected on the contrast between his sport's environmental impact and his current efforts in sustainability. Motivated by his daughters and a desire to give back, he now works on projects to benefit the planet and raise awareness. The former professional athletes closed by reflecting on life lessons from sports—resilience, risk-taking, and teamwork — and how these qualities now guide and help with their climate advocacy and entrepreneurship.

CLIMATE HEROES LIVE IN ACTION

We have witnessed immense environmental catastrophes like fires, droughts or floodings worldwide in the last years. With a changing climate we can expect more natural disasters with a greater intensity. In the panel "Climate Heroes Live in Action" Alexandra Maritza Wachter and Matt Iseman talked with people who are on the forefront of the climate and environmental crisis - aiming to hear the perspective of a first responder, listen to a medical worker and understand what challenges they are facing in their work – in some cases even volunteer work – with a warming climate and a polluted world. Alexandra Maritza Wachter welcomed Viktoria Zechmeister and Dom Bei on the AWS stage.



Dom Bei interviewed by A. Wachter

Viktoria Zechmeister, from the Austrian Fire Brigade, described the devastating floods that hit Austria in September 2024. Unprecedented rainfall — up to 400 liters per square meter in four days — caused flooding, dam breaks, and landslides. The Vienna Fire Department experienced its busiest day in history, with 1,400 interventions in 24 hours. Across eastern Austria, 25,000 firefighters were deployed. Zechmeister emphasized the critical need for updated equipment, cross-border training, and especially recruitment of volunteer firefighters, who form the backbone of Austria's emergency response.

Dom Bei, a California firefighter, shared his experience during the Palisades Fire in January, comparing it to previous record-breaking wildfires like the Thomas Fire in 2017. He noted that 9 of the 10 largest fires in California's history have occurred in just the last 8 years, turning what used to be a "fire season" into a year-round threat. Firefighters now train continuously and stay on standby for rapid deployment.



Viktoria Zechmeister and Alexandra Maritza Wachter

Both speakers highlighted the increasing frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters, calling for greater preparedness, public education, and support from decision-makers. They urged policymakers to invest in infrastructure, resilience planning, and emergency services, while reinforcing the message that there is always hope — as long as people continue to show up, support one another, and act together.

Matt Iseman continued by addressing the intersection of climate, crime, and humanitarian response and spoke with Sasa Braun from Interpol, Fiona Donovan from World Central Kitchen, and Carol Devine from Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières).

Sasa Braun is Interpol's Senior Criminal Intelligence Officer focusing on pollution crimes. He explained that environmental crime is the third largest criminal sector in the world, involving organized crime and even terrorism. He detailed harrowing examples from Nigeria, where people suffer from mercury and cyanide poisoning, are subjected to forced labor, and are pumped with painkillers like Tramadol to keep working. He also exposed the massive, largely invisible impacts of illegal sand mining and carbon trading fraud, painting a grim picture of exploitation under the guise of economic activity.

Fiona Donovan, the VP of Response Administration at World Central Kitchen, shared her organization's mission to



From left to right: F. Donovan, M. Iseman (host), S. Braun and C. Devine

provide meals in the aftermath of disasters. She emphasized that WCK's approach is driven by urgency, local leadership, and cultural sensitivity. She recounted operations following Hurricane Helen and the Turkey-Syria earthquake, where millions of meals were distributed and local kitchens mobilized. Donovan stressed that every crisis response is unique, built around empowering communities and staying present for as long as the need persists.

Carol Devine, representing Doctors Without Borders, emphasized the profound health and humanitarian consequences of climate change. She shared moving testimonies from affected regions like Burundi, Honduras,

and Bangladesh, where communities face not only immediate threats like flooding but also long-term issues such as salinity intrusion and displacement. She advocated for greater policy action, urging leaders to treat climate as a health issue, listen to communities — especially Indigenous voices — and commit to real funding and fossil fuel non-proliferation.

In closing, Devine called for solidarity, humanity, and science-based policy, a message that resonated with the themes of the entire discussion.

CLIMATE HEROES

UNITE IN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

In a lively and humorous conversation, actor and environmental advocate **Rainn Wilson** joined **Arnold Schwarzenegger** virtually on stage to discuss the importance of effective climate communication. Introduced with applause and jokes, Wilson reflected on how he turned to comedy as a survival tool in the Seattle suburbs and how his passion for the environment grew after realizing that venting on Twitter wasn't enough. He shared how a trip to Greenland with Dr. Gail Whiteman and the Arctic Base Camp led to the creation of a low-budget documentary, *An Idiot's Guide to Climate Change*, and sparked his commitment to using humor and media to spread climate awareness.

Schwarzenegger praised Wilson's charisma and muscles, jokingly flirting with him before turning the conversation to serious climate topics. Schwarzenegger emphasized the need for clearer language in climate messaging, pointing out that terms like "climate change" confuse people, whereas "terminating pollution" resonates more. He cited polling data from his time as California governor to support this point.



Wilson agreed and elaborated on the goals of his initiative, Climate Base Camp, which aims to engage broader audiences — especially in middle America — by collaborating with entertainers, athletes, and comedians to make climate science more accessible and compelling.

The talk concluded with Arnold Schwarzenegger inviting Rainn Wilson to join next year's climate conference in Vienna. After some playful teasing, Wilson accepted the invitation with a nod to Schwarzenegger's famous movie line: "I'll be back."

Moderator **Barbara Meier** continued by opening the session and welcomed the speakers: Müge Baltacı, Maximilian Wilk and Julia Bialetska.

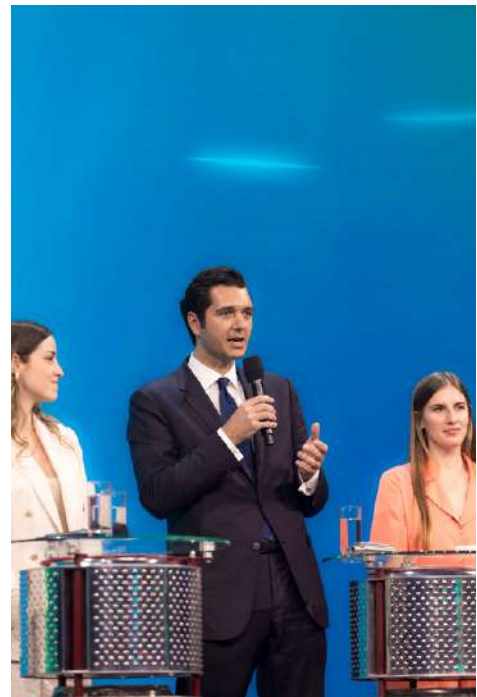
Müge Baltacı, co-founder and COO of mol-e, introduced their platform for managing and recycling e-waste like cables and phones. She explained that e-waste contains hazardous and valuable materials (like mercury, gold, and rare earth elements), and if not processed correctly,



can harm children in developing countries. mol-e creates a digital waste passport to analyze uploaded e-waste and matches it with licensed recycling facilities. The company is expanding in Turkey with corporate clients and is developing a new product — mol-e ATM —

to collect e-waste in exchange for gift cards or discounts.

Maximilian Wilk, founder of Aqon Pure, shared how he was inspired by a law signed by Arnold Schwarzenegger banning salt-based water softeners in California. His company offers a salt-free water treatment solution that reduces limescale without polluting water sources with chloride. It's easy to install and already present in 25,000 German buildings. His focus is now on public communication to raise awareness about the poor



ecological condition of German rivers and lakes. He ends with advice to "be a terminator" — of outdated tech and habits.

Julia Bialetska, CEO of s.lab, explained how her company offers a sustainable alternative to Styrofoam using plant waste and mycelium (mushroom roots).

After witnessing plastic pollution while surfing in Bali, she and her husband co-founded the company. s.lab's biodegradable packaging has clients like L'Oréal and Nespresso. Julia's vision is to scale production via mobile units to reach global impact. Her advice: "just keep going" and stay mission-driven.



The panel then welcomed **Phoebe Wang**, investment partner at the Amazon Climate Pledge Fund, a \$2 billion venture fund aimed at supporting climate innovation. She explained that Amazon's fund supports sectors like mobility, energy storage, and circular economy. She acknowledged a recent slowdown in green investment, especially in the U.S., but emphasized that the climate crisis is worsening and that the demand for sustainable solutions

is not going away. Her advice to startups: be persistent and united in action.

In closing, each speaker reflected on the theme "Unite in Action." Müge urged everyone to recycle e-waste; Maximilian encouraged immediate action without excuses; Julia stressed the importance of overcoming resistance to implementing green innovations.

The session ended with a strong call for collective responsibility, innovation, and persistence in tackling the climate crisis.

Matt Iseman then talked to Maya Penn and Benji Backer. **Maya Penn**, a filmmaker, animator, environmentalist, and entrepreneur, discussed her journey from becoming a climate activist at the age of 8 to now leading Upenndo! Productions, her animation studio. She introduced her latest project, *Asali: Power of the Pollinators*, an animated short film executive produced by Viola Davis and featuring voice talent including Whoopi Goldberg. Maya emphasized using animation and other creative mediums to engage diverse audiences, especially youth, in climate advocacy, and to break out of the environmental "echo chamber."

Benji Backer, a conservative climate activist and author, shared his motivation for founding Nature Is Nonpartisan, aiming to unite conservatives a



From left to right: M. Iseman (host), M- Penn and B. Backer

nd liberals around environmental issues. Growing up in Wisconsin and later living in Seattle, he stressed that different regions have different values and messages around climate, and these must be acknowledged to build a broader coalition. He called for pragmatic, respectful outreach across political divides — arguing that shouting or disruptive protests are less effective than collaborative, community-rooted advocacy. Both speakers echoed the central theme of the summit— "Unite in Action, Terminate Pollution" — by underlining the need to build unlikely alliances, empower young people, and make environmentalism inclusive, accessible, and nonpartisan. The discussion highlighted the urgency of

climate action while offering hopeful, practical strategies to expand the movement.

Barbara Meier then welcomed Felix Krainer, Hannah Omokhaye, and Valerie Huber who shared their climate activism journeys and calls to action.

Felix Krainer, founder of Planet Matters, opened by explaining how his social media-driven



movement mobilizes people globally to pick up plastic waste from nature. Starting as a teen in Austria creating viral content, he realized he could immediately combine his skills with environmental impact. His app now rewards users for collecting litter, and his vision is to reduce plastic pollution altogether by empowering individuals to take small but meaningful actions.

Hannah Omokhaye, founder of EOSmart Club in Nigeria, described her grassroots initiative to educate students and communities about climate change — especially in a country where the school curriculum lacks such content. Through her work, she has reached over 3,000 students and trained dozens of teachers. She also introduced a unique emergency flashcard system for deaf individuals, developed after

consulting with people with disabilities, to help them communicate during climate disasters.

Valerie Huber, an actress known from film and TV and a UNICEF Austria ambassador, spoke passionately about linking climate justice with social justice, urging to rethink social and economic structures. Having grown up in Uganda and Ivory Coast, she stressed the disproportionate effects of climate change on the Global South and called for a systemic overhaul of industries and policies to prioritize sustainability and well-being over profit. Her book, *Fomo Sapiens – Verpassen wir die heile Welt?* (transl. *Fomo Sapiens – Are We Missing the Perfect World?*), encouraged young people to resist despair and advocate for transformative



Hannah Omokhaye presenting her flashcard system for deaf individuals



Valerie Huber talking about her climate activism

change.

In closing, each speaker shared powerful advice:

Felix urged the audience to focus on what they can change, quoting the Serenity Prayer and advocating for action based on personal strengths.

Hannah emphasized intergenerational collaboration, urging older and younger generations to unite for climate justice, and reminded young people especially in the Global South to rest, then act.

Valerie encouraged everyone to fight for the future and balance that activism with mindfulness and care for others and the planet.

The talk ended with enthusiastic applause, celebrating their commitment and urging everyone to get active.

FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS

Since its beginnings, the AUSTRIAN WORLD SUMMIT strives to be a Green Matchmaker and also use diverse tools to deliver its vital messages.



More than 480 school students attending the AWS 2025



The BossHoss releasing their new song "I'll Be Back"



The AWS Conference Expo



Pump for the Planet Campaign



Arnold's Stammtisch - connecting and green matchmaking

SCHOOL STUDENTS AT THE AWS

One of the core goals of the Schwarzenegger Climate Initiative is to raise awareness of the climate crisis and the urgent need for action among people of all ages. It is therefore especially important to engage with the generation that will be most affected by the consequences of a changing climate.

To support this mission, all **Austrian secondary schools were invited** to apply for participation at the AUSTRIAN WORLD SUMMIT. Admission was granted on a first-come, first-served basis. Ultimately, we welcomed **480 students** from 18 different schools from across the country on-site in Vienna. In addition, many more school classes followed the summit via livestream in their classrooms.



As part of this youth engagement, a special **brochure was developed specifically for students**. It provided valuable facts, insights, and actionable solutions to address pollution and the climate crisis - designed to inform, empower, and inspire the next generation to take part in shaping a sustainable future.



THE BOSSHOSS



With their first time performance of "I'll Be Back," The BossHoss make a powerful statement at the AUSTRIAN WORLD SUMMIT. Supported by Arnold Schwarzenegger, who personally contributes his iconic line, the song becomes a musical call to action: climate protection requires determination, power, and collective effort. What makes the project special is that all proceeds from streaming the song go directly to a climate protection project by the Schwarzenegger Climate Initiative – supporting concrete solutions in the fight for a healthy planet.

The BossHoss also took the time to sign autographs for the many guests at the Vienna Hofburg. Several hundred school students, in particular, seized the opportunity to have their brochures signed.



AWS CONFERENCE EXPO

At the AUSTRIAN WORLD SUMMIT 2025, the **AWS Conference Expo** took place as a sustainable exhibition platform that brought together **15 organizations**, including **established companies, start-ups, and NGOs**, to present **pioneering climate protection solutions**. Hosted at Vienna's Hofburg, the Expo offered all summit participants an engaging and accessible way to experience innovative approaches to tackling the climate crisis.



Organized by the AWS Solutions Hub, the Expo was designed to reach far beyond the usual audience of environmental enthusiasts. Its aim was to inspire every single person - including those not yet deeply involved in climate issues - with practical, economically viable solutions for a more sustainable future.

The core objective was to show visitors how climate action can work in everyday practice - through tangible examples from diverse industries, interactive exhibits, and direct dialogue with innovators and experts. Of the 15 participating organizations, 7 NGOs or start-ups received complimentary exhibition space **provided by the Schwarzenegger Climate Initiative** - a deliberate measure to support impactful initiatives with limited financial means and give visibility to solutions that often lack access to traditional marketing channels.



AWS CONFERENCE EXPO

A special highlight was the presentation of an **electric go-kart**, developed and built by students from technical high schools (HTLs) across Austria as part of the "Zero Emission Challenge." This competition promotes hands-on learning, environmental awareness, and innovation in e-mobility, empowering young talents and drawing significant attention within the Expo setting.



Sustainability was also central to the Expo's physical design: all booths were constructed from recyclable corrugated cardboard, supplied by the partner PAPERTOWN. While companies could choose between two booth sizes, NGOs and start-ups were provided exhibition space free of charge through the Schwarzenegger Climate Initiative.

By combining forward-thinking content, thoughtful design, and support for impactful projects, the AWS Conference Expo created a **dynamic space for exchange and inspiration** - making climate protection not only visible but emotionally engaging, and sparking a real desire for change.

Additionally, the **Networking Islands**, that took place after the AWS stage program, presented the opportunity to connect with and talk to selected AWS speakers.



PUMP FOR THE PLANET CAMPAIGN

Some might remember "Pump for the Planet" from last year. In 2025, the Schwarzenegger Climate Initiative relaunched the campaign and partnered with local initiatives to showcase how simple it can be to make the shift toward sustainability. The challenge attracted unprecedented online engagement and social media followers.



Together with Bicibus, a bike bus organization, Green Heroes, a local eco-friendly movement, and many more organizations, we're demonstrating that small changes—like swapping a car ride for a bike ride—can have a lasting, positive impact on both our personal lives and the environment. We're showing that each step, each action, and every individual who joins this community brings all of us closer to "uniting in action" to "TERMINATE POLLUTION."

Total Views



11,370,710

Reach



4,121,152

New Followers



20,141

Top content by views



For Arnold, riding his bike isn't just about...

Mon Apr 28, 8:51am

3.1M 189.2K
3.2K 2.1K



Arnold Schwarzenegger, Ton...

Tue Jun 3, 12:34am

1.7M 38.5K
614 61



"Sometimes the people need to rise up and g..."

Tue Jun 3, 2:11am

1M 48.1K
1.2K 755



@schwarzenegger is here! Tune in to the...

Tue Jun 3, 12:42am

853.9K 25.5K
305 37



The #PumpForThePlanet...

Tue Apr 22, 5:01am

754.7K 839
27 86

CALL TO ACTION



Monika Langthaler and Arnold Schwarzenegger

Arnold Schwarzenegger and **Monika Langthaler** concluded the AUSTRIAN WORLD SUMMIT 2025 by highlighting the critical importance of the event in spreading the message about environmental protection. Schwarzenegger emphasized that the fight against pollution must not stop — urging continued action through innovative and creative approaches to terminate pollution. He stressed that a clean and safe planet is in everyone's best interest, regardless of political affiliation.

Monika Langthaler expressed her gratitude to the entire team behind the Summit for making the event possible. She also announced that the **10th AUSTRIAN WORLD SUMMIT** will take place on **June 16, 2026**, once again at the Vienna Hofburg.

MANY THANKS TO ALL OUR PARTNERS

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