

Executive biography

Profile

Highly qualified sustainability expert with an extensive network and professional experience in both conceptual planning and consulting and the operational implementation of environmental and sustainability strategies. At age 70, and maybe because of age 70, a highly sought-after consultant and speaker offering a broad perspective and clear direction.

Bio

Born in Berlin in 1955; married (second marriage); one daughter.

University studies and doctorate (Dr.-Ing.) in landscape planning and soils at TU Berlin.

1983 to 2001: German Environment Agency (UBA), team lead on soil protection and the cleanup of contaminated sites

- Key negotiator of regulatory frameworks at the highest political level.
- Lead of science-policy interface on soil management, initiator of major research budgets
- Founder of European networks and soil-related civil society institutions
- Jean Monnet Fellowship in Florence; grant from the German Marshall Fund of the United States for a two-month research trip to the USA.

2001–2020: Head (Secretary General) of the German Council for Sustainable Development—a high-level advisory body to the Federal Government chaired by eminent political leaders such as Volker Hauff and Klaus Töpfer.

- Direct reporting line to Chief-of-Staff of Chancellery.
- Expanded the operational budget and political reach out.
- New type of engagement projects, inter alia three international peer reviews at the behest of Chancellor Angela Merkel; Roundtable of Lord Mayors, BRICS+G. European and Global networks of similar political bodies
- Stepped down in 2020 at my own request (upon reaching the age limit).

2011: Member of the Ethics Commission on a Safe Energy Supply appointed by Chancellor Angela Merkel (providing recommendations on whether and how to phase out nuclear power).

Since 2007: The German Sustainability Award, a private stakeholder initiative recognizing corporate best practices.

Various honorary roles, including Honorary Professor at Leuphana University Lüneburg (2014–2022) and member of the investment committee for the Green Growth Futura Fund (2017–2021).

Since 2020

- Independent consultant for companies and institutions.
- Lui-Walton Innovators Fellowship at Conservation International.
- Non-executive board member, various

Recent publications:

- *Die Stunde der Politik. Essay über Nachhaltigkeit* (The Hour of Politics: An Essay on Sustainability). Munich: Oekom Verlag, 2020.
- *How to Successfully Encourage Sustainable Development Policy: Lessons from Germany*. London: Routledge, 2021 (in English).
- *DAS NACHHALTIGKEITSBUCH 2023* (The Sustainability Book 2023). Self-published by Stiftungsverein Deutscher Nachhaltigkeitspreis e.V., Düsseldorf, 2023.
- *Backlash. How Climate Action and Sustainability Are Being Dismantled and How a Comeback Can Succeed*, Oekom Verlag, Nov. 2026

For a complete list of books and lectures, see www.guentherbachmann.de

Language skills

English (proficient), German (native speaker), French (rudimentary)