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Comprehensive overview of Germany's biodiversity: *Faktencheck Artenvielfalt*

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REVIEW

The recently published *Faktencheck Artenvielfalt. Bestandsaufnahme und Perspektiven für den Erhalt der biologischen Vielfalt in Deutschland* (translated *Biodiversity fact check. Inventory and perspectives for the conservation of biodiversity in Germany*) [1] is an exceptional compendium on the current state and future of biodiversity conservation in Germany. Edited by Christian Wirth, Helge Brühlheide, Nina Farwig, Jori Maylin Marx, and Josef Settele, this monumental work spans 1,256 pages and synthesizes contributions from over 150 authors across 75 institutions. An additional 200 experts reviewed the manuscripts, ensuring high scientific rigor. The volume also includes digital supplementary materials and builds upon an extensive literature review of over 6,000 publications and 15,000 time-series data sets on biodiversity.

The book's primary goal is to offer an exhaustive account of biodiversity within Germany, addressing essential habitats such as agricultural lands, forests, inland waters, coastlines, urban spaces, and soil biodiversity. This structure provides an in-depth analysis of the status and trends of biodiversity, the impacts on ecosystem services, direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity changes, instruments and measures for biodiversity conservation, and pathways for societal transformation towards sustainability.

Notably, the editors underscore the urgent need for evidence-based action in biodiversity policy, stating in the foreword that "science denial, the rejection of facts, and the active spread of misinformation" may pose significant challenges to biodiversity management.

The book's strengths lie in its thorough conceptual consistency, interdisciplinary breadth, and editorial precision. It provides a robust foundation for biodiversity work in Germany and beyond, as well as a substantial resource for environmental policy-making. Despite its significant physical size and price of 149 Euros, the book should find a place in every specialized library. To enhance accessibility, a summarized version for policymakers and the general public is also available as an open-access resource [2], which aligns well with the book's editorial goal of promoting evidence-based decisions.

While *Faktencheck Artenvielfalt* focuses on Germany, its findings and approaches are also highly relevant from an Austrian perspective. The effort that went into this publication is inspiring, the density of information impressive, and the call to action on biodiversity preservation substantial. It is surprising, however, that the book does not delve into the emerging technological innovations that could further enhance biodiversity research, nor does it address potential technological solutions for biodiversity-related evidence generation in its future research recommendations.

In conclusion, *Faktencheck Artenvielfalt* is an essential reference for biodiversity conservation and sustainable environmental management, offering a comprehensive compilation of information for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. It stands as



a testament to the commitment of the scientific community to halt biodiversity loss and adapt to environmental challenges.

ORIGINAL TITLE

- [1] C. Wirth, H. Bruelheide, N. Farwig, J. M. Marx, J. Settele, Eds., *Faktencheck Artenvielfalt. Bestandsaufnahme und Perspektiven für den Erhalt der biologischen Vielfalt in Deutschland*. München: oekom Verlag, 2024, 1256 p., ISBN 978-3-86581-893-5.
- [2] C. Wirth, H. Bruelheide, N. Farwig, J. M. Marx, J. Settele, Eds., *Faktencheck Artenvielfalt. Bestandsaufnahme und Perspektiven für den Erhalt der biologischen Vielfalt in Deutschland*. ZUSAMMENFASSUNG für die gesellschaftliche Entscheidungsfindung. 96 p., DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14512/9783987263378>.

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