Good afternoon everyone, I am here to advocate for shade coffee plantations.

Ecosystems are dependent on biodiversity to function, providing humans with services that we rely on to sustain our livelihoods and culture. We are entering the sixth mass extinction on Earth and scientists blame humans for the crisis. We only have a short period of time to act, so it is essential we create universally binding policy to protect the biosphere now.

Sun coffee plantations have been found to reduce biodiversity drastically. Increasing the shade and tree species richness in coffee plantations benefits biodiversity of many species in and around the plantation, even restoring plantation biodiversity to the levels that are in the natural forest.

Currently, there is no law binding policy regarding shade coffee plantations, the only governance is via the bird friendly certification which relies upon ethical businesses to buy into the idea. Although bird friendly coffee is becoming more popular, the growth is not fast enough to ensure biodiversity protection in the tropical rainforest.

Also, there is no direct financial incentive attached to farmers becoming 'bird friendly', and no education given on the many benefits it brings for the crops themselves such as increased yield and climate resilience.

Universally binding policy to turn sun coffee plantations into species rich shade coffee plantations is essential to ensure that the coffee billions of people drink every day does not endanger the very biodiversity that allows us to survive. We must educate farmers on how to reap the benefits of shade coffee and provide them with the tools to make their plantations sustainable. The international community should fund this effort, not the countries that coffee is grown in, as unsustainable practice is a result of global demand and solutions bring global benefits.

I fully explain my ideas on how to make global coffee more biodiversity friendly through shade coffee plantations in my policy brief that I can send to you if you give me your email address.