

GYBN Intervention on Biodiversity and Climate Change at SBSTTA18 - 25/Jun/2014

Global Youth Biodiversity Network

Thank you Madam Chair for the opportunity to share our position.

I am speaking on behalf of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network and we would like to provide our views on agenda items 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3.

In light of the latest findings of the IPCC fifth assessment report of and the outcomes of the fourth Global Biodiversity Outlook, GYBN is gravely concerned about the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and the consequences for children, youth and future generations. Combating climate change and preventing the loss of Biodiversity are one of the greatest challenges for mankind in the 21st century. Neither can be solved without addressing the other. The key to tackling both Biodiversity and climate change is policy coherency.

We therefore strongly urge parties to take effective measures to integrate the protection of Biodiversity into climate change policies and vice versa.

With regard to agenda item 9.1 on the integration of Biodiversity into climate–change mitigation and adaptation strategies, GYBN urges parties to further strengthen cooperation between conventions, specifically through the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions. To ensure policy coherence, we propose the development of joint work programs on cross cutting issues such as ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation, forestry and other relevant issues between conventions.

Furthermore collaboration and information-sharing among national Focal Points of different conventions is absolutely crucial to ensure the coherent implementation of decisions.

Special attention must also be given to the development of sound adaptation strategies, so that maladaptation can be avoided and adverse consequences for Biodiversity prevented. In this regard we urge parties to put in place joint platforms to share best-practice examples and lessons learned when it comes to the implementation of national adaptation strategies and the incorporation of ecosystem based approaches.

With regard to agenda item 9.2 on the application of safeguards for Biodiversity in REDDplus, we want to emphasize that compliance with Biodiversity safeguards in REDDplus initiatives must be constantly monitored and reported. It is of fundamental importance that the conservation of natural forests and the protection of the rights of indigenous and local communities that depend on forests are ensured in all activities. The conversion of natural forests must be ruled out under all circumstances! Forests are complex ecosystems that support life on Earth and should not be regarded simply as carbon stocks.

Therefore, greater attention to non-carbon benefits as well as non-market based approaches should be ensured and parties should develop guidance on how these can contribute to the objectives of the Convention.

With regard to agenda item 9.3 on climate-related geoengineering and in light of repeated attempts by several actors from the private sector to sidestep decisions that were taken under the CBD, we urge parties not to allow for any exceptions and to take effective measures to prosecute violators. The evidence we have is clear: Geoengineering is way too risky to be taken into consideration. It is not a solution to combat climate change and could have dramatic consequences for ecosystem-services and Biodiversity. In accordance with the precautionary principle in the Convention, GYBN strongly calls upon parties to reaffirm the existing de facto moratorium on geoengineering.

Young people and future generations will have to bear the costs of climate change and live in a world deprived by much of its biological diversity. We are here to take up our responsibility. We are here to live up to the challenge and become part of the solution.

Thank you Madam Chair.