

Thank you chair

The Youth would like to focus on item 5.4-- Engagement of other Stakeholders

On behalf of Global Youth, on behalf of young people fighting to protect their lands, culture, and biodiversity, we would like to give our heartfelt thanks to the secretariat. The unprecedented support provided to youth by the Secretariat since COP10 in Nagoya has enabled us to launch an initiative for a Global Youth Biodiversity Network. We also would like to express our gratitude to the German Government, which supported our kick off meeting in August 2012, when we officially started our work in unifying youth for this conference.

We are proud to introduce you to the Global Youth Biodiversity Network , or GYBN, - a unique youth platform created to unite youth voices and raise awareness on the immeasurable value of Biodiversity.

Today, it gives us great pleasure to speak as GYBN for the first time at a COP. This is a huge step forward for youth, who as stakeholders are as invested in the outcome of this meeting as every other organization, government and individual present.

Youth have the energy, motivation, and innovation needed for a positive outcome. You have the experience, knowledge, and power. We must work together. For this reason, we would like to thank Zambia and other parties who have directly acknowledged the importance of including youth participation in the text and in the process.

We are not here to ask you to fix the world's problems for us; we are here to work with you and share the responsibility of finding solutions for achieving the Aichi targets. Therefore, we urge parties here to agree to include young people in the decision-making process at the local, national, and international levels.

Youth participation can be of great value to decision-making processes. We come from diverse backgrounds, and therefore our on-the-ground activities for biodiversity conservation are diverse as well. We bring together these different experiences in a common vision, allowing us to bring innovative and unique perspectives to the table -- these perspectives must be taken into account. Youth participation in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and NBSAPs, the provision of support for youth initiatives focused on the protection of Biodiversity, and the establishment of National Youth Delegations by governments will empower young people to effectively participate in the process of transforming our societies.

To this end, we would request that parties consider the addition of text under item 5.4 emphasizing the importance of youth engagement and encouraging governments to continue to support integrative initiatives like GYBN.

GYBN would like to propose the following text as on page 43 of UNEP/CBD/COP/11/1/Add.2:

"7. Acknowledges the importance of youth participation in decision-making processes on all levels and encourages parties and other governments to fully include youth in all relevant processes, specifically in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and NBSAPs, as well as activities under the United Nations Decade for Biodiversity,, and invites parties to continue to provide support for youth initiatives that support the three objectives of the Convention such as the Global Youth Biodiversity Network."

Thank you.