



GYBN Intervention for the Opening Ceremony of COP12

Pyeongchang, South Korea, October 6 2014

**Thank you Mister Chair for the opportunity to share our position.
I am speaking on behalf of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network.**

First we would like to express our appreciation to India for the past COP presidency and to the Republic of Korea for hosting this meeting.

We are happy to announce that since Hyderabad, GYBN has grown, and is now representing more than Three hundred forty thousand members from 86 countries.

Further gratitude goes to the secretariat for always supporting our activities. We would also like to thank the Japan Biodiversity Fund for the on-going support and especially to Germany for mobilizing resources in a very tight framework to make our presence here possible. (pause to applause)

Following up on your advice during WGRI, we are here to reiterate our commitment to be a key partner and provide concrete actions to implement the Aichi Targets.

Therefore, GYBN is pleased to announce the launch of its new project “Youth Voices - Communicating GBO4: catalyzing the implementation of Aichi Targets and the Pyeongchang Road Map”. You are welcome to join our joint side event with DIVERSITAS this friday evening. We hope this is one of many initiatives and collaborations to come.

We are also grateful for the willingness of the Republic of Korea to take the initiative to collaborate with GYBN and support the “Youth Voices” project. We are looking forward to further cooperate and hope to establish a close partnership during the whole COP presidency.

As agreed in Hyderabad, in order for us to make a meaningful contribution towards the implementation of the Aichi Targets, it is absolutely crucial that all governments actively involve young people in decision-making processes on all levels, including COP

meetings. We therefore believe that every COP host-government has a **special responsibility to ensure effective participation by all stakeholders, including youth.**

We would like to assure every COP host government, that **you can count on the FULL support** of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network!

We are here, showing our commitment, giving our energy and building partnerships, but there is **only so much we can do** by ourselves. Therefore, recalling that biodiversity is at the core of sustainable development, as **it supports life on earth**, we strongly **remind you** that **future generations** are the **main reason of why** the concept was conceived in the **first place.**

We understand that you have to position yourselves according to your government's interests, but what we are discussing **here today** goes **beyond governments and generations.** It is our collective future we are deciding about, so let yourselves be remembered as those who were brave enough to lead the change [instead of those who failed us].