



15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Part II)

Closing Statement

Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN)

December 19, 2022

Thank you, Mister President. I'm speaking on behalf of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network.

We want to express our appreciation to everyone, the Secretariat, our allies and partners, for your support, your encouragement, and your generous patience as we navigated through this complex process.

Let us start by acknowledging our victories. We would like to thank all the Parties who have listened to and supported our collective calls for a just and rights-based post-2020 global biodiversity framework throughout these four years. We stand firm in our assertion that each decision made with us and each decision that heeds the calls of those whose lives are interwoven with biodiversity brings us closer toward the right direction.

We celebrate the much-needed recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth to inclusive participation and access to justice and information – a huge milestone for international biodiversity policy. We applaud the strong and long-overdue call for the protection of environmental defenders. We stand beside the Indigenous peoples and local communities that continue to steadily guide us toward reconciliation. And we should be proud that this framework has taken a significant step for future generations in its recognition of intergenerational equity. We will step out of this meeting knowing that our efforts have made a difference.

However, dear delegates, this is a framework that will only be successful with everyone supporting it. We are saddened by the glaring lack of true commitment to bridge the financial gap to adequately provide the means of implementation for developing countries. For us, this is a statement of the lack of intention to truly halt and reverse biodiversity loss, accept historical responsibilities and pay the colonial and intergenerational debt.

A truly transformative change responds to the responsibilities of the ones who perpetuated systems of colonization and oppression. This is a matter of social-ecological justice.



We will continue to push, to voice, to act, guided by our values of inclusion, justice and empowerment of the grassroots. There is much more work to do, and we want you to do it with us. Please don't disappoint yet another generation.

Finally, and most of all, we thank our global youth community, whose participation, efforts, sacrifices, and energy poured into this process was always based in the pure aspiration for a better dignified future for all, leaving no one behind.

After some rest, we will be more than ready to kickstart implementation as key partners. As Chief Oren Lyons puts it, "In these times, humanity must work together, not just for survival, but for quality of life based on universal values that protect the delicate inter-relatedness of life that protects us all."

Thank you Mister President.