



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

Opening Statement

Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN)

December 7, 2022

Delivered by:

Thank you Mister President,

I am speaking on behalf of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network.

We are finally here - the last step, the last chance to steer us towards transformation. Before we embark on it, let's take a deep breath. Let's take a moment to thank the land and the lives it nurtures.

Dear delegates, our community has been working together with you for the past 12 years, mobilizing, building capacity, organizing and listening.

Listening to the voices of our community. To the voices of our generation and the ones to come after us. Listening to the chirping, the bubbling of our fellow living beings, of our rivers, our oceans, our forests. Listening to you.

Listening very carefully with our ears, minds, and hearts, knowing full well all that is at stake.

Dear delegates, we have gone past all limits of reason, all limits of greed, of loss. For too long we have been fed the same greenwashing, the same broken promises, the same too-little-too-late solutions, the same old excuses, the same injustices. We see this in many places, still, in the global biodiversity framework. We remind you: if we keep doing things the same way, we are doomed to fail.

We are urging all of you in power, decision-makers that have the power to change people's lives with the brush of a pen or the push of a keyboard – we urge you to see the biodiversity crisis for what it is: a crisis that is rooted in injustice and inequality.

Quick fixes, false solutions, empty slogans will not work. They are serving the interests of those who have brought destruction to our world, at the expense of those who have nurtured and protected it since time immemorial.

Selling us positive-sounding approaches that do nothing but maintain our dysfunctional status quo – this is not intergenerational solidarity. Until when will we offset our lands, seas, lives and futures?



Global Youth
Biodiversity
Network

Dear delegates, We understand the limits of your mandates, and the differences that will have to be bridged during this time. But the things we share are more than what separates. At the opening of our Youth summit two days ago, *Kanien'kehá:ka* elder Charles Patton from this land we stand on reminded us: **"It doesn't matter where you come from, this Earth is still our mother."** We repeat. It doesn't matter where you come from, this Earth is still our mother.

Let us celebrate this. Let us take a stand together. Let's make this framework express the heart, the good will, that we know is in the people who have spent countless days on it. Let's work together to **#StopTheSame** and usher in a new era of healing diversity: of people, of ideas, of culture, of nature.

We hope this can guide us in the two weeks ahead of us, two weeks that will demand of us compromise, constructive dialogue, and real change, for the benefit of present and future generations.

No nature without justice. Stop the same.

Thank you Mister/Madame Chair,