



Global Youth  
Biodiversity  
Network



Empowering  
Youth For  
Biodiversity

## THEMATIC INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE

Meaningful Youth & Civil Society Participation in the CBD during the  
age of COVID -

# Digital Inequality vs. Virtual Negotiations - can this work?!

Wednesday, June 23 2021 | 1pm UTC

### **Context**

For more than 16 months now, the COVID-19 global pandemic has dramatically changed the way we work and collaborate with each other: Since March 2020, almost all workshops, conferences, seminars and CBD meetings that would normally have taken place in-person, had to be either cancelled, postponed or were required to happen online. However, participation in online-meetings requires stable and reasonably fast internet connections. While these are widely available in many urban areas, particularly in developed countries, those who are living in more rural areas and developing countries are generally at a huge disadvantage.

To better assess the level of digital inequality and how this affects youth, GYBN has conducted a survey among our community from December 2020 to January 2021. 300 youth from all over the world took part and the results are clear: As universities and offices remain closed, many youth, particularly in developing countries, do not have access to fixed-line internet and rely on mobile data, which tends to be expensive in many countries. Unstable internet connections, frequent power shutdowns and the lack of dedicated work spaces in small housing units, were mentioned as well. These, among others, can be serious impediments to enable the full and effective participation of youth but also other stakeholders as well as Parties - not only in CBD meetings but in virtual events in general. However, the timing of the pandemic was particularly bad for the CBD community, as it severely affected the process towards the adoption of a new Post-2020 global biodiversity framework. As a result, for the first time in the CBD's history, SBSTTA-24 and SBI-3 have been conducted in a virtual format.

### **About the Event**

During this event, GYBN wishes to provide a space for representatives of civil society, women and youth as well as representatives from other relevant groups and regions to share about their experiences with Digital Inequality and how these issues can be addressed in order to ensure that the process towards the Post-2020 GBF is truly inclusive and delivers a framework that we can all gather behind.

Outcomes of this dialogue will be taken up as GYBN and other youth organizations and networks build a movement for decision-makers to recognize and support the role of youth in addressing biodiversity loss and in the lead up to the adoption of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

## PROGRAMME

Time in UTC	Content	Speaker(s)
13:00	<b>Welcoming</b>	GYBN Team
13:05	<b>Launch of the GYBN Report on Digital Inequality</b>	Ms. Mirna Fernandez (GYBN)
13:20	<b>Views from Civil Society on Virtual Negotiations</b>	Ms. Lim Li Ching (TWN), Mr. Gadir Lavadenz (CBD Alliance) - tbc
13:35	<b>Perspectives from the CBD Women's Caucus on Digital Inequality</b>	Ms. Mrinalini Rai (Women4Biodiversity)
13:40	<b>Questions from the Audience</b>	
13:50	<b>Challenges related to a lack of access to internet connections from a Government Perspective</b>	Ms. Mphatso Kalemba (Malawi), Ms. Malta Qwathekana (South Africa)
14:00	<b>Challenges with related to unstable connections from a Government Perspective</b>	Mr. Joaquin Salzberg (Argentina) - tbc
14:05	<b>Questions from the Audience</b>	
14:15	<b>Reflections by the Chairs of SBSTTA and SBI</b>	Ms. Charlotta Sörqvist (Chair of SBI, Sweden), Mr. Hesiquio Benitez (Chair of SBSTTA, Mexico)
14:25	<b>Reflections by the Co-Chairs of the Open Ended Working Group for the Post-2020 GBF</b>	Mr. Basile van Havre (Canada), Mr. Francis Ogwal (Uganda)
14:35	<b>Reflections by the host of COP15</b>	Ms. Jing Guan, COP15 Executive Committee, China
14:40	<b>Questions from the Audience</b>	
15:00	<b>Closing</b>	