



MAINSTREAMING

Today, we face a state of emergency, biodiversity is being lost at alarming rates. Mainstreaming is supposed to ensure that all sectors include biodiversity in their decision-making processes. The current decision seems to be more about bringing the interests and concerns of other sectors into the Convention. This seems to reflect the ever increasing openness towards the stakes of business, such as profit and access to resources, at the CBD.

AGRICULTURE

It is proven that it is farmers, livestock keepers, fishers, forest dwellers, indigenous peoples and women who produce food while nurturing and protecting biodiversity. However, what we see is a push to further intensify agriculture, based on the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers in large-scale monocultures of a few species. This is not sustainable.

TOURISM

We are disturbed that tourism and so-called eco-tourism are being promoted at the CBD, when tourism is actually having serious negative effects. It is heavily reliant on increasing aviation and other infrastructure. Tourism also negatively impacts biodiversity and indigenous peoples, through exploitation of their cultures and sacred sites.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The role of indigenous peoples and local communities in fostering biodiversity is vital. They defend ecosystems from threats, including mining, mega-infrastructure, etc. They have suffered severe human rights violations as a result, including militarization of their sacred lands. Indigenous Communities Conservation Areas have proven to be the best protection of ecosystems.

We are pleased that they have succeeded in achieving recognition of the right to Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). In future COPs we support the IIFB in their request that Parties take their rights fully into account when decisions are being taken and that their voices are invited and respected.

FINANCIALISATION

We note that the discussions about valuing biodiversity continue to involve attempts to put a price on biodiversity. As Oscar Wilde said, a cynic is “a man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing”.

PRECAUTION

The Precautionary Principle is fundamental to the CBD process and is no barrier to innovation, as claimed by some. Destructive impacts on biodiversity and health have occurred in the past when it was not applied. We should bear this in mind when further developing synthetic biology, gene drives or new generations of GMOs as well as novel chemicals.

RISK ASSESSMENT SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY AND GENE DRIVES

On biosafety, the common denominator between parties was unfortunately too low to protect biodiversity, ecosystems, livelihoods or human health. As result, new guidance on risk assessments of LMOs may only be available, if at all, in 4 years, including on organisms produced with synthetic biology or on GM fish. Prioritizing financial gains and trade interests played a key role in this process.

However, we want to thank parties for highlighting the global concern about Gene Drives in decision (L34), and the call for precaution and risk assessment on these new organisms, although this does not sufficiently address the threat that they may be an aggressive and destructive force against biodiversity. As for digital sequences, they have finally been firmly put on the agenda, even though the COP failed to take a decision that could have stopped digital biopiracy.

GEOENGINEERING

We welcome that the CBD has re-affirmed its moratorium on climate-related geoengineering, particularly since geoengineers are falsely claiming that these high-risk technologies for manipulating the climate are needed to fulfill the Paris agreement.

IMPLEMENTATION – NBSAP

National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) are the principal instruments for implementing the Convention at the national level. But only half of the Parties actually have NBSAPs.

NBSAPs should be adopted at a high political level, provide policy rather than guidance, and involve synergistic implementation with other biodiversity related conventions.

Implementation also involves monitoring, reporting, enforcement, and accountability. There is no point in ratifying and then ignoring agreements. Parties should fully implement them.

OTHER MATTERS

The choice of Cancun as a venue for the COP points to some serious contradictions. It represents an economic model that is destructive to biodiversity and to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities and has to change.

The high costs at the resort marginalized and excluded many developing country delegations and civil society organizations.

They further struggled to deal with the parallel process of a COP and 2 protocols at the same time, through too many contact and informal groups.

Finally, we have seen unacceptable levels of bullying and harassment at this COP. We should all be here to listen to each other, and to build decisions together that lead to a better future for biodiversity.

More information:

To know more about the work of the CBD Alliance at COP 13 and member organizations visit: <http://www.cbdalliance.info/> and follow us on: Facebook as CBD COP 13 or CBD Alliance and Twitter as @CBD_Alliance.

Press contact:

Cecilia Navarro, tel. 52 55 54540678, email: cbdalliance.prensa@gmail.com