



OPENING STATEMENT COP 13

Dear friends,

On behalf of the CBD Alliance, I would like to thank the Secretariat and Mexico for all the arrangements made to hold COP 13.

We are blessed to be here in Cancun, which is indeed a beautiful place. But it also a sad reminder of the pressures human activities- particularly tourism- have on our ecosystems. Activities which we clearly see lead to the loss of biodiversity, traditional knowledge and cultures.

We only have 1489 days left to meet the Aichi Targets. Only one third of the targets are currently on track of being met by 2020. It is clear that more action is needed.

We need to move beyond high ambitions and move towards clear action.

Civil society expects COP 13 to:

- Recognize effectively the role of women by providing direct support to them and implementing the Gender Plan of Action 2015 – 2020.
- Strengthen effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities by, among others, recognizing and respecting the right to free, prior and informed consent in decision making at all levels.
- Support the work of youth agents of change.

Clear actions must be taken at COP13 to:

- Put a strong emphasis on achieving Aichi Target 3 by adopting concrete measures to eliminate, phase out, reform and reorient perverse incentives in agriculture, fishery, forests and other sectors.
- Address the issue of land tenure and collective land reforms as a measure that contributes to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
- Secure tenure rights to the resources and areas upon which small scale and subsistence fishing depend for their livelihoods, identity and wellbeing.
- Protect traditional small scale agriculture by creating viable options for small farmers and indigenous peoples and local communities.
- Support the development and transition to more sustainable practices such as diversified organic and agro-ecological activities.

- Limit activities and initiatives with a market based approach.
- Provide more space and concrete support for conservation and sustainable use activities with a rights based approach. For instance, moving away from payment for ecosystems services.
- Adopt the operational definition for synthetic biology worked out in the AHTEG.
- Apply a precautionary principle on gene drives and agree a moratorium on field trials or deployment of gene drives pending further work.
- Agree on a process to consider the issue of digital sequences at a technical level by the AHTEG, so that it can be brought before the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol.
- Address the impacts of synthetic biology, in particular socioeconomic impacts.

Lastly, in regards to procedures:

- We would like to express our concern in regards to visa procedures that severely limit participation of many participants, namely less privileged participants.
- Civil society participation is crucial for the success and legitimacy of COP13 and the COP/MOPs. We urge the plenary and Working Group chairs to allow sufficient time for civil society to make statements, and also give time to State Parties to express their support for such statements.

Thank you very much.