



JOINT ADVOCACY MESSAGE FOR COP17

From recognition to integration: A call to strengthen community-generated biodiversity data

As Parties undertake the first Global Review of progress towards the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) at COP17, the world remains off track to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. Persistent gaps in biodiversity data and knowledge systems continue to limit effective decision-making. At the same time, the opportunity created by COP16's new Article 8(j) Programme of Work and subsidiary body for Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities has yet to translate into stronger recognition and use of community-generated biodiversity data.

Community-based monitoring and citizen science are credible, evidence-based and cost-effective approaches to strengthening biodiversity knowledge, addressing critical data gaps and supporting more inclusive biodiversity governance. More than a decade of experience and evidence generated through the work of Big Ship Organization, Chair of "Fondation Diane" for Education on Eco-citizenship and Sustainable Development at Saint Joseph University of Beirut, Danmission, Development for People and Nature Association, Karen Environmental and Social Action Network, more4nature, University of Copenhagen, alongside Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities, has shown the value of these approaches in practice.

We call on Parties at COP17 to strengthen the recognition, integration and use of community-generated data through five practical actions:

1. Recognise community-based monitoring and citizen science as complementary sources of data for KMGBF and NBSAP implementation
2. Embed community-generated data in NBSAP implementation and national reporting through clearly defined targets, indicators, uptake pathways and protections for community data sovereignty.
3. Earmark a defined share of biodiversity finance, including through Global Biodiversity Framework Fund and the Cali Fund, for community-led monitoring, including capacity building and institutional infrastructure required to use community-generated data, with priority given to Indigenous-led and women-led monitoring initiatives.
4. Establish interoperability between community-based monitoring systems and relevant national and global biodiversity information platforms while maintaining community control over the use and dissemination of locally generated data.
5. Strengthen recognition of community-based monitoring as a mechanism for Indigenous Peoples' as well as local communities' participation in implementation, monitoring and review, and align future guidance with the new programme of work on Article 8(j) adopted at COP16.