

Go4BioDiv Germany 2008

Participant Feedback

This is the feedback Go4BioDiv participants gave about the impacts of the International Youth Forum on their lives. They answered the questions in January 2011, two and a half years after their experience.

What does Go4BioDiv mean to you?

Go4BioDiv made me believe stronger in my mission to work and contribute in order to achieve a global impact. It gave me the confidence and the conviction that we can make a change and have an effect in real life. And joining our forces really works! With the help of all, our Declaration was translated into different languages, making it possible to reach more people with our message. Thinking of Go4BioDiv gives me a thrill, because I think of all the names and faces of the young people who are a part of this bond. (Gabriela, Bolivia)

Go4BioDiv made me look over the edge of a plate, as we would say in Germany. Seeing all the different problems and finding the connection/relation between them and focusing on finding solutions is something Go4BioDiv stands for! For me Go4BioDiv is not only the protection of nature but also means the variety with which one can protect and experience. (Annegret, Germany)

Every country and even every region has its own dynamics and challenges. But despite all these obstacles, there is something common in that we all have to share, taking care of our environment. This is what I have learnt at the Go4BioDiv summit. After interacting with so many people from different cultures and regions my thinking towards biodiversity has been broadened and empowered my commitment to nature conservation. I realised that what I'm doing in Namibia is important for biodiversity conservation on a national and international level. (Monika, Namibia)

Go4BioDiv has given me the experience for the first time that there is a global civil society which does not only share common concerns but can also advocate these concerns together and gain a strong voice in international relations. Before participating in Go4BioDiv, I always thought that the solutions of the world's problems lie in the hands of the big decision-makers. Go4BioDiv has shown me that it is fundamental that every one of us voices their opinion. Only then can the people in charge know how important this matter is to us, and how disappointed we are when a summit does not come up with viable solutions. (Verena, Germany)

For me Go4BioDiv was a very nice experience. I think especially the dance lessons were great! One could feel the energy shift in the group from a bunch of slightly insecure individuals or national subgroups into one big Go4BioDiv team that vibrated clouds of positive energy, to release emotions related to the environmental problems we were dancing about and at the same time to get our message across. (Christina, Germany)

Personal change

I think we gained the confidence to believe in our actions and in our ideas, based on the fact that we experienced and were part of biodiversity in a very harmonious way. The declaration that we elaborated directs our efforts and ideals in the present. I re-directed my studies to focus on water conservation.

Being a tourist guide and university student, I try to discuss the ecological footprint with tourists and classmates. (Gabriel, Bolivia)

The Go4BioDiv event in Germany was definitely one of the most interesting and exciting experiences in my life. Getting to know these people from all over the world had a real impact on me and changed my way of dealing with guests in our country. (Johanna, Germany)

Influence on others and in our communities

I think the experience allowed me to really appreciate the biodiversity found in my country, it showed me how to protect it and how to reduce the impact of global warming. I spoke to a group of university students in Carupano, the region where I live, on the importance of changing our lifestyle to minimize our ecological footprint. Let's be the voice, eyes and ears of Nature, she is just waiting for us to be saved. (Maitté, Venezuela)

I realized that it could be much easier to work with children than with grown-up people. Although I know it takes a long time, maybe a decade or two, in some way we will see the effects if we educate the young generations on environmental issues. Therefore, my family founded an NGO named the 'Green Peace' and initiated several tree-planting activities with secondary school students aged 10 to 16. (Sauljegul, Mongolia)

Go4BioDiv is a seed that each of us brought to our countries, it's in our hands to make it grow and collaborate in the process of uniting young people with a global awareness. In La Paz, with University colleagues we formed the "Ecological Footprint" group. The whole novelty of the Ecological Footprint, the specific data related to Bolivia that we presented and the Declaration were a total surprise to many. (Gabriela, Bolivia)

Work experience and important life decisions

If I had not participated in Go4BioDiv, I would have been working straight on my science career. My desire now after my PhD study is to be an environmental journalist as a part-time job. I love writing, so why not write small articles on environmental issues beside my scientific career. I know that most scientists publish their results only in professional journals. For the general public, it is sometimes hard to find this information and difficult to understand these scientific results. Therefore I want to be an interpreter between scientists and the public. (Sauljegul, Mongolia)

With my research, I try to help protecting areas in Bolivia, try to investigate speciation processes, to develop an idea how species evolve and where they live. And why they can live only in a very small distribution range. You have to know the diversity you want to protect. (Natascha, Germany)

I'm grateful to share with you that I received a Springbok Award from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, which recognizes the outstanding performance of a young field staff of the Ministry who demonstrated great potential in the field of conservation, park management and special outreach services with communities. I wish all Go4BioDiv participants to be part of the generation which respects and engages in conservation of nature for the benefit of future generations. (Monika, Namibia)