

Go4BioDiv Japan 2010

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, three months after their experience.

What does Go4BioDiv mean to you?

In my opinion Go4BioDiv as a brand and a mantra means you give 100% when you engage with people. For me, Go4BioDiv illustrates that this is possible and doable. We are in a race for biodiversity – so start now, GO! 4Biodiv (Candice, Cape Floral Region, South Africa)

For me, Go4BioDiv provides an extraordinary opportunity for young people from different natural World Heritage sites from all over the world to come together; to learn from one another and to set the stage for a better world for coming days. (Dhritiman, Manas, India)

The type of thinking that makes the environment – our home – a priority, is the type of thinking that will change the way the world works. It's the type of thinking that Go4BioDiv is all about. I've found that I have more drive, more passion, more need to conserve, to share and to protect.

(Anna, Great Barrier Reef, Australia)

I consider Go4BioDiv as a strategy to involve young people like me, future leaders, in nature preservation. (Josiane, Dja Faunal Reserve, Cameroon)

Personal Change

Go4BioDiv makes me feel as if I had neighbors everywhere in the world. It makes me feel as if global problems occurred in my home town. (Tagashi, Ogasawara Islands, Japan)

I felt that this event was not just an ordinary event in my life but a mile stone that pushes me to act now and contribute my part to the society as an individual. Today, when I come back to my country, I have an intense desire to spread the message of nature conservation with more power. (Shazia, Nanda Devi, India)

In general, I think Go4BioDiv had a big influence on the participants. Personally, it made me more active. I understood how important it is, especially in the western world, to do some things voluntarily and not just to see money everywhere. (Vladimira, Primary Beech Forests, Slovakia)

I was very excited about my trip to Japan, I had never travelled abroad before. I am very grateful to the organizers and everybody who supported me in the preparation to have chosen an El-molo youth to attend Go4BioDiv out of millions of Kenyans regardless of my small tribe. This was my first achievement to represent my people and their concerns. (Mikelita, Lake Turkana, Kenya)

Now I know that similar problems occur in different parts of the world but that we can overcome all barriers and we know that we all are one, that we all feel the same despite of color, ethnic origin or position.

(Yeny, Machu Picchu, Peru)

I recognized that we all have the same problems and in that way we were the same...as one we activated so much power, creativity and passion to keep on fighting for the rights of our nature.

(Sven, Wadden Sea, Germany)

The Go4BioDiv has been a breaking point of my life. It is a matter of identity for myself.

(Alan, Sian Ka'an, Mexico)

The most important thing about Go4BioDiv is that I have realized how small our problems are compared to other countries. In Switzerland it is much easier to participate in political processes than in other parts of the world. (Benjamin, Jungfrau Aletsch, Switzerland)

I've always cared about nature and its conservation. But what I saw was that my focus has just been on my

own country, my knowledge was limited to my own homeland. Maybe I thought that the consequences of the climate changes were only tough for us Inuit. I was so wrong. (Avaaraq, Illulisat Icefjord, Greenland)

Influence on others and in our communities

I am really happy to have been part of the Go4BioDiv experience and to be a spokesperson of the manifold soul of my home country. With my youth group in Andahuaylillas, we pursue activities that embrace and preserve our cultural and natural heritage. From Andahuaylillas, I encourage my friends of the Go4BioDiv family to promote the movement that was born in Japan and to make it grow in our communities, to invite young people to get involved in the protection of our "Pacha Mama" (Mother Earth).
(Rosa, Machu Picchu, Peru)

Go4BioDiv has influenced changes in my lifestyle: I take more environmentally-friendly action and I've become more coherent: I refuse to use plastic shopping packets and reduce my personal energy and I persuade my friends to do the same. (Peng Na, Wulingyan Historical Site, China)

It has inspired me so much to meet all these different people who have done something that helps. I met people who make a difference. A difference I also want to make on my people, back home.
(Avaaraq, Illulisat Icefjord, Greenland)

Go4Biodiv allowed me to ask myself the difficult questions, such as: You want the world to change, but have you changed enough? You want to change the world, can you even influence those closest to you - your friends, family, colleagues and community? (Candice, Cape Floral Region, South Africa)

The Mexican Senate sponsored my participation in Go4BioDiv Japan. Upon my return, I personally gave the president of the Senate a report about our activities at the biodiversity conference. He is very interested in continuing to support youth activities for the environment. (Alan, Sian Ka'an, Mexico)

When I got back from Japan I wanted to share my experience about Go4BioDiv. I had a presentation for volunteers at a biodiversity seminar. I also wrote a couple of articles and initiated discussions about this topic with people in my local area. Finally, I believe that for us, the participants, it is important to stay in touch, continue to be active, work together and keep the Go4BioDiv spirit alive.
(Vladimira, Primary Beech Forests, Slovakia)

Work experience and important life decisions

Immediate changes which can be traced to Go4Biodiv include that I am engaging my superiors on difficult topics. I am putting (in)action on the agenda. I am providing the necessary feedback with solutions. On a tangible level I am streamlining Go4Biodiv ideas and new insights from the forum into CapeNature Programmes and operational levels by engaging with the relevant directors and managers.
(Candice, Cape Floral Region, South Africa)

During COP10, debates and exchanges I had with Ministers of the Environment helped me getting prepared to what I long to be and to face in future. (Josiane, Dja Faunal Reserve, Cameroon)

Due to Go4BioDiv, I decided to change my postgraduate-major: I gave up civil and commercial law to major in environmental protection and sustainable development. If possible, I would like to continue with a PhD in environmental research and protection after finishing my postgraduate education.
(Peng Na, Wulingyan Historical Site, China)

I got to discuss about the whole experience with the project heads of my World Heritage Site, telling them how we can be more active in protecting our site, what are the loopholes, need of co-ordination and cooperation amongst the locals and forest staff. Go4Biodiv forum has its widespread and long-lasting effects. (Shazia, Nanda Devi National Park, India)