



**Statement by
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Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity**

**International Youth Day 2024
12 August 2024**

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This year we acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of young people to shaping a sustainable future through the use of digital technology.

As “digital natives”, digital technology to them is like a blank canvas. The potential of innovation knows no boundaries.

We need their energy and innovation to respond to the crisis afflicting our planet—a crisis in which biodiversity loss interacts with climate change and pollution, putting the future of humanity in harm’s way.

We must make space for them to help us find the solutions we need. But believing in their potential is not enough.

Disparities in access to technology persist, particularly in low-income countries and among young women.

The SDGs, which address those disparities, among other challenges, constitute the umbrella blueprint for a sustainable future.

In December 2022 the world adopted the historic Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework – KMGBF—with the aim of halting and reversing biodiversity loss.

Both the SDGs and the KMGBF must be implemented by 2030.

To accelerate implementation, the world must use every asset, every shred of innovation and creativity. Young people have plenty to offer.

We at the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity believe that inquisitive, creative young minds can help accelerate the implementation of the KMGBF.

Digital technology can boost science, knowledge and bring about transformational change.

Young people, including the youth of indigenous peoples and local communities, are part of a whole-society solution to this global environmental crisis.

We must ensure intergenerational equity. Because we are in this together and we shall make it together.

Happy International Youth Day!