

**African Youth Declaration on Nature**  
**#IAm4Nature Youth Conference**  
May 22-24 2019, Nairobi, Kenya

**We**, the youth representatives from various African countries assembled at the #IAm4Nature Youth Conference in Nairobi from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019;

**Recognizing** the Convention on Biological Diversity ,and corresponding African Biodiversity Priorities, African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources by the African Union, Africa's Biodiversity Priorities, in synergy with the African Union Agenda 2063 priority lines and the United Nations 2030 Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals;

**Taking note of** the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa and the Final Act of Lagos as well as the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights; the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and of the World Charter for Nature adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations; and the need to continue furthering the principles of the Stockholm Declaration, to contribute to the implementation of the Rio Declaration and of Agenda 21, and to work closely together towards the implementation of global and regional instruments supporting their goals;

**Aware that** it is our duty to champion promote sustainable livelihoods and "to harness the natural and human resources of our continent for the total advancement of our peoples in spheres of human endeavor" as stipulated in the Charter of the Organization of African Unity;

**We**, the African Youth, are committed to work with our governments and all stakeholders including the indigenous peoples and local communities, people living with disabilities, as well as marginalized and vulnerable groups without any distinction on; nationality, gender, sexual orientation, language, race, religion and level of education; and hereby commit to:

1. Adopt and promote sustainable, innovative and proactive practices that encourage sustainable production and consumption.
2. Use the power of social media to raise the conservation agenda high up on political arena.
3. Actively engage in policy formulation and dissemination at local, national and international levels.
4. Advocate for informed youth participation and inclusion at all levels of decision-making regarding biodiversity conservation and climate change.

5. Use experiential learning<sup>1</sup> to Promote intergenerational knowledge transfer as well as embrace mentorship and capacity building .
6. Champion climate change mitigation and community based adaptation through innovation and the fight for climate justice.
7. Advocate for sustainable and direct funding from donor and multilateral agencies to youth-led conservation initiatives for the implementation of their programs.
8. Protect and conserve our biodiversity to ensure sustainable socio-economic development of Africa.

For us to achieve our commitments we call on our Governments to:

1. Prioritize and mainstream biodiversity protection in development by committing financial resources to tackle biodiversity loss;
2. Directly Involve the African Youth who are the greatest stakeholders when developing, reviewing and implementing national, regional and global policies and legislations
3. Create, establish and invest in youth-green enterprises that provide innovative and sustainable solutions.
4. Ensure that indigenous peoples and communities realise tangible value from the existence of conservation areas through just and stringent access and benefit sharing agreements.
5. Urgently enforce regulations and legal instruments that improve biodiversity management and protect genetic resources in order to improve bioprospecting and reduce trafficking and/or biopiracy.
6. Impose and enforce strict regulations to reduce pollution in the environment.

**We call on the Private Sector to:**

1. Reduce environmental footprint, avoid greenwashing and reduce, reuse and recycle waste
2. Invest and promote innovation to address conservation challenges for their profitable sustainability .
3. Embrace accountability in their business practices by incorporating environmental stewardship and adopting environmental social and governance (ESG) values and safeguards.

**Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) should**

1. Recognize and invest in African youth led conservation initiatives and build their capacity to deliver on the “Africa we want.”
2. Provide platforms for youth led advocacy and activities that raise awareness on environmental management.

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<sup>1</sup> David Kolb defines experiential learning as the process of learning through experience and more specifically as learning through reflection on doing  
<https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html>

3. Incorporate the African Youth within the management structures, including decision making platforms.

**Development Partners should:**

1. Invest in the youth of Africa for Africa on biodiversity conservation.
2. Increase investments for biodiversity conservation.

**Media should:**

1. Amplify the voices of African Youth by documenting and reporting their conservation effort and success stories.
2. Showcase human interest stories focusing on those who are directly affected by the negative impacts of unsustainable development and climate change.
3. Prioritize the environmental agenda as a topical issue.
4. Support influencers and stakeholders within the creative industry to promote environmental conservation through their various platforms.
5. Revamp and develop conservation tailored programmes that are attractive to the youth and general audience in order to increase public awareness and attract more people to conservation

We call on our governments, the private sector, civil society, media and development partners to recognize and invest in the ambitions of the African youth towards conservation of biodiversity.

Adopted by unanimity in Nairobi, Kenya June 2019