

Thank you, Chair.

Friends of the Earth Malaysia speaking on behalf of the CBD Alliance.

COP17 must stop the bleeding before treating the wound. The multilateral mechanism and Cali Fund must get DSI sharing right before asking provider countries to recognise the certificates issued by them. Two years after COP16, we have yet to see meaningful measures by Parties hosting DSI users and databases, as called for under paragraphs 13 and 11 of the modalities adopted by Decision 16/2.

Despite efforts by some databases to raise awareness of the Cali Fund, fundamental gaps remain in maintaining accountability and transparency with respect to DSI sharing and access. Users need clarity on whether DSI was lawfully made available. Provider countries and communities need to know the origins of DSI and whether its use falls under the multilateral mechanism or other ABS arrangements. This is the first step to ensure legal certainty.

The COP17 draft decision prioritizes recognition of Cali Fund certificates by provider countries, while remaining silent on incentives for user countries and measures expected of database-hosting countries. Meanwhile, intersessional processes have focused on asking provider countries to grant exemptions from national laws and communities to accord donor privileges to businesses making financial contributions.

We reject this reversal of obligations and the attempt to financialize ABS. Responsibility for making the Cali Fund work must lie with countries hosting DSI users and those facilitating inequitable extraction under the banner of open access—not with developing countries and communities from whose DSI is extracted and used, anonymously.

We call on database-hosting countries and operators to end anonymous access to DSI, thereby taking the first steps to prevent digital biopiracy. Researchers, R&D funders and international agencies must obtain necessary prior informed consent before making DSI public; databases must not make DSI public if no such consent is provided.

We urge provider countries and communities to strengthen oversight over DSI generation and use. Benefit-sharing must deliver more than monetary benefits, it must also ensure meaningful participation, scientific collaboration, safe technology transfer and the capacity to shape resulting innovations.

COP17 must discipline DSI sharing before demanding further concessions from provider countries. The Cali Fund should not inadvertently facilitate digital biopiracy. Weakening national laws and people's rights in exchange for access to its funds would defeat the very purpose of equitable benefit-sharing.