

Press Release WWViews 03_9_2012

Global Citizen Participation project on biodiversity about to begin

„World Wide Views on Biodiversity“ organizes local consultations of laypeople worldwide. Citizens views on a global challenge - the rapid loss of biodiversity - will be collected on September 15 and might enhance negotiations at the matching UN-Conference in October.

The citizen participation project „World Wide Views on Biodiversity“ (WWViews) will take place 15th of September 2012 in 34 locations in 25 countries on five continents. In each participating location, 100 citizens deliberate in a daylong meeting about different policy options regarding the loss and protection of global biological diversity. The events will be held in Africa (Cameroon, DR Congo, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia), North America (Canada and USA), South America and Caribbean (Brazil, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines), Europe (Denmark, France and Germany) and Asia (China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Maldives, Nepal, Palestinian Territories, Philippines, and Vietnam). The project was created by the Danish Board of Technology and its partners and is supported by the Secretariat of the UN-Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Danish Ministry of Environment

WWViews was designed to provide policymakers with accurate information about citizens' views on globally relevant environmental issues, in order to assist high-level decision-making. This is why the results of WWViews will be presented to the delegates of the Convention on Biological Diversity one month later at the COP11 Meeting in Hyderabad, India. Policy makers, scientific experts, NGOs, and industry already have a say in these international negotiations. It is the goal of WWViews to also bring the voice of normal citizens to these negotiations.

The diversity of the citizen vote is safeguarded through a representative recruitment of laypeople of all ages, origins, professions, gender and education. The global proceedings will deliver detailed and in depth results and different views on a global challenge that affects everyday life of people around the world, in developed as well as in developing countries.

The loss of biodiversity is closely linked to human activities (e.g. agriculture, infrastructure or mining). WWViews involves laypeople since they are both contributing to biodiversity loss and are those most affected by it. Citizens who will have to live with any political decision on biodiversity should have a fair chance to express their opinion and to be heard both by the UN-negotiators as well as their own national politicians. Involving them into the discussion process gives country delegates also a more complete picture of socially acceptable paths to the future. Once decisions



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and action plans are made, they have a better chance to be realized when founded on citizens' acceptance and cooperation.

WWViews follows an already established method and takes place for the second time. In 2009 laypeople drew up directions and suggestions in the run-up to the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

World Wide Views on Biodiversity will allow comparison of the results from all the participating countries after the global meeting day, September 15th 2012. Results will be made available to the press, contact us for email alerts.

Further information: <http://biodiversity.wwviews.org>

National partners: <http://biodiversity.wwviews.org/partners>

Twitter: @WWViews

Facebook: www.facebook.com/WorldWideViewsOnBiodiversity

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