

When I was a kid, my grandfather's house in Yangsan was a good playground for me. The front yard where grasshoppers roam around, the crayfish and the minnows that were caught in the stream, and the potatoes and sweet potatoes that were picked up at the right time. All the good memories of my childhood came from here. From giant animals to small fingernail-sized animals and plants, all of the natural phenomena that happen in nature have always excited me. And that was the time when I met Dr. Jane Goodall in the book. When I opened the book, at the first page, it was written like this; "She loved all the animals, 100 times more than others." She was just like me! So, I read the book over and over again, and I promised myself to be like her.

When I was young, I was just a little girl who loved animals. Back then, my dream was to become an animal scientist, simply because I thought I could spend every day with animals. Then, Jane Goodall came into my life and changed my life completely. She emphasized the importance of protecting the environment, so that the life inside it could live. We all know that our planet Earth is writhing in pain, but lot of us do not actively take actions for this problem. I felt that it was my job to publicize those environmental issues and elicit more participation. Therefore, I decided to become UNEP environmentalist in the future.

I am now 20 years old, and starting from a young age of seven, I'm still following this dream. Throughout my high school life and even till today, I've been working in Jane Goodall's organization, Roots and Shoots, and have been involved in a variety of environmental activities. My activities that started with a simple campaign in high school have grown, and therefore now I'm doing elementary environmental education and even writing ecological reports of DMZ. Thanks to those various activities, I went to Global Roots and Shoots Leadership Meeting this summer as a representative of Korea, too. I was able to discuss environmental issues with representatives from over 50 countries, choose and design environmental projects that we'll be working on in our countries after the meeting, and learned a lot. Above all, it was an unforgettable experience that I spent a week with my life mentor, Dr. Jane Goodall. The Roots and Shoots Film Ark project, which was planned with a Greek representative in this meeting, is now on the verge of launching. In addition, through EcomomKorea Eco-Mentoring and Climate Scout programs, I could start elementary environment education, and through UNESCO Peace Nuri program, I could take various environmental campaigns into action. Through DMZ ecological report and UN Youth Environment

Committee, I was able to learn more about places that are so important for the ecological environment, what middle and high school students think about environment, and how UN meetings are held. Throughout my first year as a freshmen, I've learned the attitude and role that environmental scientist should have. I'm working with great significance to the idea that I can create a little change in a field that I'm interested in.

What I feel most keenly while doing these activities is that experience greatly widens the way I see my future and the world. The reason I started all the activities I did was simply because it was just an activity that was related to the environment which I like. But while working on that, I realized that there were many areas in the environment, and that the environment and other areas are closely related. I think that this experience is related to the topic of this year: volunteer work in solving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. I thought about this in two ways: the impact of volunteering on myself and the positive effect of volunteering on the world.

First of all, it affects the person himself. Currently, UN SDGs consist of a total of 17 goals. Among them, 16 and 17 are the goals that includes all the rest. As you can see from this point, any 17 goals that you're interested in, you need an idea that encompasses all of them. Volunteer work is essential to have such an idea. For example, I am interested in protecting the ecosystem among environmental issues, so I went to environmental education program with related goals of 14 and 15. But to describe the ecosystem, I had to explain the impact of climate change on the ecosystem, so I explained goal 13, and as we talked about sustainable consumption in order to protect the ecosystem, goal 12 was connected too. I also realized that I could connect climate change and women's rights. I think this is a fact that I could not have realized without a lot of volunteering experience involved. The reason why I think this is important is because I've seen too many students neglecting environmental issues recently. Few days ago, I was having a meeting to improve the Palm Oil problem, and some of my friends said, "Environment is a problem that people don't care about, so we have to put it back when we advertise it." When I saw the movie "Okja" in my club activity, people said that the movie seems to be inappropriate as an environmental film because life-respect is not an environmental issue. I think we need to change the system that divides these environmental problems and human problems, and what we need to make that change in ourselves is more related volunteering experience.

Secondly, there is a positive effect on the world. Here's one of my favorite words from Dr. Jane Goodall.

"The roots go anywhere in the ground and form a solid foundation. Shoots look very weak, but in order to reach the sun, they can drill hard bricks. Let's say that the problems our planet is facing are brick. Hundreds, thousands of roots and shoots, hundreds, thousands of young people, can drill this brick. You too can make a change. "

Environmental problems are global problems, so it's hard to solve them with just one or two people. But if people around the world make a little change, environmental problem starts to be solved slowly. And so are social and minority issues that many people don't care about. I think it's volunteer work that makes those little changes to the world. The small act of reaching out for the weaker, not wanting to make a profit, will come together and become a piece of puzzles that will solve the problems of the world. That's why volunteering is important to address the UN's sustainable development goals.

Every global problem that exists in the world today needs more publicity and more people's involvement. So I want to be a leader working on a global stage and lead the participation of the world. As Dr. Jane Goodall did, I want to change the future of the Earth no matter what path I take.