



A GENDER RESPONSIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

Key Recommendations and Messages

Women are key users of biodiversity and actors in natural resource governance. Advancing gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment is critical for the successful implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF). Women's rights are human rights. Gender-responsive approaches identify and lead to actions that address gaps and systemic barriers that stand in the way of women's enjoyment of human rights, including in relation to conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity.

WWF believes that gender equality can be the game changer to an enhanced delivery and the effective and inclusive achievement of all goals and targets. Greater women's participation and leadership in environmental policy- and decision-making processes in all sectors is needed in order to meet the three objectives of the Convention; of biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits, and it will result in more sustainable and inclusive land, water and natural resource governance.

The following aspects need to be in place for gender responsive and transformative implementation of the post-2020 GBF. WWF urges Parties to:

1. **Adopt the post-2020 gender plan of action (GPA)** (Agenda item 9D) including by lifting the brackets around [rights to ownership and control over land and natural resources and access to water,] and [all genders] to enable the full scale and scope of women contributions to biodiversity and the effective gender-responsive implementation of GBF at national level).
2. **Adopt the new gender stand-alone target (target #22)** in the GBF (Agenda item 9A) to ensure that actions to advance gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment are implemented, monitored and reported, at all levels, in an effective and accountable manner.
3. **Integrate the GPA into national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs)** by taking initiatives to support full and equitable participation of women, including women and girls from indigenous peoples and local communities, addressing barriers to inclusiveness and power imbalances, support gender mainstreaming, and establishing mechanisms for reporting, assessment, and review of implementation.
4. **Include gender-specific indicators** in the monitoring framework (Agenda item 9B) and in the development of national indicators, and collect gender, sex and age disaggregated data.
5. **Increase gender responsive mobilization of resources and capacity building** for the effective implementation, monitoring and reporting of the GPA and a gender-responsive GBF.

Background

Effective and inclusive action on halting and reversing biodiversity loss requires all members of society to be fully engaged. This includes women and girls, half of the world population, whose contributions, rights and critical roles in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use have been fundamental yet largely undervalued and invisible to decision makers. Gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment, and hence diversity in decision-making, will lead to better natural resource governance and biodiversity conservation outcomes. Greater gender equality also enhances economic efficiency and improves other development outcomes. Closing gender gaps benefits countries as a whole, not just women and girls.

While awareness and evidence have been growing of the contributions that women make to biodiversity conservation and natural resource governance, much more needs to be done to systematically map, analyze and integrate this into policy- and decision-making related to biodiversity. Along with enduring gender inequality, women often suffer disproportionate impacts from biodiversity loss and climate change. Women — especially rural and indigenous women who are farmers, fishers, small traders, and food providers for their families — often bear the greater and direct brunt of the consequences when natural resources are destroyed or depleted. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has also affected women more, thus furthering inequality. Women's marginalization from decision-making is also making them likely to be more negatively impacted and exacerbate gender inequalities.

A strong, rights-based GPA for a gender-responsive implementation of the GBF

The urgency for GPA to be adopted and implemented by Parties equals the urgency for action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. The 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action was not fully nor consistently implemented. Moreover, gender is not yet adequately reflected in the implementation of the Convention or in many national biodiversity strategies and action plans. To secure equal access, ownership and control over biodiversity for women, and equal benefits from its sustainable use, enabling conditions need to be created and incentives for sustainability provided. Parties are encouraged to support women's social networks and organizations to facilitate information sharing, problem solving and capacity building to strengthen leadership and organizational skills for women to be more effective in influencing decision-making related to biodiversity.

A stand-alone target on gender equality for enhanced accountability

The proposal for a new gender equality target (or target 22) is now supported by a growing number of Parties as indicated by the outcome of the Contact Group at OEWG4 in Nairobi. A stand-alone target will enhance alignment between GPA and the GBF, and support the accountable implementation of a gender-responsive GBF. Only with a stand-alone target on gender, the GPA will become an effective tool to guide implementation that is fully aligned with the GBF. Moreover, a stand-alone target, with clear and focused language, would ensure that gender is integrated across the GBF, monitored, reported and appropriately accounted for, and hence help maintain and strengthen efforts of Parties to advance gender equality.

Women's relationships with the environment are varied and diverse and share many commonalities across regions and sectors. Women play critical roles such as collect, harvest, plant, produce, prepare, distribute, sell and use a wide range of biodiversity. Women in many indigenous and rural communities are the primary stewards of medicinal plants and seeds of local traditional crops, the primary health and food security providers, and keepers of specialized knowledge. The unique role of women is recognized in the text of the Convention, but their contributions to the three objectives of the Convention are typically undervalued and overlooked, resulting in little engagement of women in policy, planning and decision-making in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and other sectors linked to biodiversity and ecosystem functions.

A stand-alone target on gender equality can strengthen collaboration and synergies across the Rio Conventions for implementing gender-responsive and gender-transformative measures while building associated capacities as relevant.

WWF also urges Parties to increase and strengthen the full, effective and equitable participation and leadership of women at all levels of decision-making. Research has found that collaboration, capacity for collective action and conflict resolution increased when women were present; and women's groups were more likely to adopt sustainability principles.

Integration of the GPA in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)

The Review of Progress in the Implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (Item 8), indicated that "the efforts of Parties need to be maintained and strengthened, including in areas of women's full and effective engagement in implementation and mainstreaming of gender issues in biodiversity-related actions". WWF urges Parties to undertake various indicative actions to strengthen gender equality by compiling baseline data, research and systematic documentation of gendered knowledge, including women's innovations and effective practices that have historically and traditionally been applied to maintain biodiversity and agro-biodiversity, collect disaggregated data by sex/gender for all relevant targets in the GBF, adopt gender-specific indicators, strengthen coordination and collaboration with women's organizations, relevant ministries and local partners. Data is critical to influence policy making in support of gender-responsive measures.

Gender-responsive biodiversity financing

WWF requests that adequate financial and other resources be allocated to advance gender equality and support the implementation of the GPA at national level, including to support capacity building for all actors, monitoring and reporting at national and global level. Gender-sensitive biodiversity financing can be leveraged to help address gender imbalances and gaps.

For more information

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