

**Statement by  
David Cooper  
Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity  
International Women’s Day, 8 March 2024  
Invest in Women: accelerate progress  
#InvestInWomen**

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Gender equality benefits us all. Yet achieving it remains one of the greatest human rights challenges of our time. We must invest in women and girls to achieve sustainable development, justice and equity, and to achieve the goals and targets of the Biodiversity Plan.

Currently there is a staggering 360 billion USD annual deficit in spending on gender-equality measures. The current economic system is exacerbating poverty and inequality and is negatively impacting the environment. This reality disproportionately affects women and other marginalized groups around the world. Shifting towards and investing in a green economy is one of the ways to amplify women’s voices.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, known also as “the Biodiversity Plan” aims to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity by 2030 for the benefit of people and planet. Women play critical roles in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, ecosystem restoration and environmental justice. So, as recognized in the Plan, successful implementation will depend on ensuring gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, and on reducing inequalities.

A specific target (Target 23) aims to ensure gender equality through a gender-responsive approach, recognizing the equal rights and access to land and natural resources for women and girls, and their full, effective, meaningful, and informed participation and leadership at all levels of action, engagement, policy, and decision-making processes related to biodiversity.

The Biodiversity Plan is accompanied by a very ambitious Gender Plan of Action. This sets out concrete actions to be taken by all actors to enable women and girls to fully participate and contribute in implementation.

This International Women’s Day, let’s agree to #InvestInWomen – to invest in our future: a gender equal, just and sustainable future.