

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD)

NOTIFICATIONS 2021-014

Virtual Discussion – Draft Outline of a Post-2020 Gender Plan of Action

Submission by Australia



Australian Government

TEMPLATE FOR COMMENTS

Review comments on the updated draft outline of a gender plan of action for the post-2020 period	
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<i>General Comments</i>	
<p>Australia appreciates the work undertaken to date on the development of an updated draft outline for a new Gender Plan of Action (GPA). In response to the questions posed for the upcoming <i>Extended Virtual Consultation on the Draft Outline of a Post-2020 Gender Plan of Action</i>, Australia has included some overarching comments on the purpose, scope and alignment with the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework below as well as proposed text amendments on the objectives and actions We look forward to further engaging in this process going forward.</p> <p>As a general recommendation, Australia would prefer that the Gender Plan of Action be revised so as to avoid gender binary language that excludes people with diverse, non-binary, gender identities.</p> <p><u>Views on the purpose of the gender plan of action and its alignment with the post-2020 global biodiversity framework</u></p> <p>The Gender Plan of Action should be a tool and guidance mechanism for the gender-responsive implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Ensuring strong alignment between the GPA and the monitoring framework are key to ensuring accountability and transparency. Australia notes that target 21 is the only target that directly references gender considerations. Australia's view is that gender considerations need to be better reflected in the targets in order to ensure the gender-responsive implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.</p> <p>It is important to note that while Governments are responsible for implementation of the GBF and new GPA, non-parties, inclusive of business and financial institutions, are key actors in delivering effective gender-responsive biodiversity outcomes. Australia therefore believes that non-Parties should be included and allowed sufficient time to engage in the consultation process before a new plan is to be adopted at COP 15. We also are of the view that a new GPA should recognize, strengthen, and clarify the role of non-parties in delivering effective gender-responsive solutions.</p>	

Principles

Australia believes that the GPA should be utilised as an implementation mechanism that recognises and values indigenous women's traditional knowledge, innovations, practices, technologies and cultures and their related rights in support of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and in the fair and equitable sharing of benefits.

Australia recommends explicitly highlighting the compounding disadvantages faced by indigenous women and girls as relevant to the expected outcomes, objectives, and actions. This includes:

- Connection to country for indigenous women and girls is integral to protecting the succession of cultural knowledge, systems of Law and the strength of kinship networks
- Gendered, systemic barriers also limit Indigenous women's connection to country, such as through legislated (native title processes) and existing biological diversity initiatives which do not adequately consult with Indigenous women to understand or formally recognise women's sites; women's business; women's knowledge; and women's responsibilities to kin, culture and country – and which therefore undermine women's roles as traditional custodians and decision-makers.

Australia's [Wiyi Yani U Thangani \(Women's Voices\) Report](#) highlights overarching issues that impact indigenous women and girls, which would benefit from integration into the GPA:

- Indigenous land management representative bodies and initiatives are dominated by Indigenous men (as a result of introduced westernised bias towards male leadership)
- This excludes Indigenous women from decision-making opportunities regarding land management and community development.
- This has led to decisions that have not adequately protected women's sacred sites or women's traditional ecological knowledge.
- As such, focusing on Indigenous women's initiatives in this sector will also assist in elevating women's voices on matters highly relevant and important to the whole of community.

Views on the proposed expected outcomes and associated objectives

Expected Outcome 1

Australia believes it is important to ensure the three outcomes align and are reflective of the three objectives of the Convention, ensuring these outcomes are pursued in a gender responsive manner while remaining within the scope of the CBD. Australia is concerned that *expected outcome 1* as currently worded, does not fall within the remit of the CBD, and therefore should be revised.

Furthermore, Australia recommends avoiding gender binary language that excludes people with diverse gender identities. Formulations such as “women and men and boys and girls” are increasingly used by states to create/maintain gender binary norms in international texts. In light of this, Australia is strongly supportive of retaining ‘*All genders, in particular women and girls.*’

Objective Outcome 1.1 – Australia is supportive of Canada's proposed alternative wording, noting that the current text does not align with the scope of the CBD objectives.

‘Women have equal access to and control over initiatives that support the

conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.'

Objective Outcome 1.2 - Australia notes that the meaning of the term 'environmental human rights defender' is unclear and would prefer the term 'environmental defender', with the text amended as follows:

'Eliminate, prevent and respond to all forms of GBV relating to sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity, including protecting women environmental defenders'

Objective 1.4 – Australia supports Canada's proposed deletion of '(including nutrition, food security, livelihoods, health and well-being)', provided these aspects are reflected elsewhere in the document. Food security, health and wellbeing are implicitly tied to the intent of this action of Indigenous peoples. Australia suggests rephrasing for clarity and to ensure consistency of language use within the Convention, as follows.

'Ensure equitable access to and benefit from initiatives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity'

Objective 1.5 – Australia supports Canada's proposed deletion of objective 1.5 as promoting women's economic empowerment is not within the scope of the CBD, when de-coupled from biodiversity conservation.

Expected Outcome 2

Australia suggests the text inclusion of 'equitable' over 'equal', to ensure fairness and acknowledgment different circumstances.

Objective 2.1 – Australia supports New Zealand's proposed text inclusion of '*opportunities.*' Australia also proposes the insertion of '*all levels of action, engagement and decision making*'.

Objective 2.2 – Australia suggests the deletion of '*informed*' as not to create an onus that women should/need to be informed before they can participate and lead. This applies to both 2.1 and 2.2.

Expected Outcome 3

Objective 3.1 – Australia is strongly supportive of retaining text referring to IPLCs, ensuring that all references to Indigenous women and girls are retained. Australia suggests the insertion of '*gender*' after '*data disaggregated by sex...*', as to avoid gender binary language that excludes non-binary people.

Objective 3.2 – Australia suggests amending the text as follows: '*the roles of women and men as agents of change...*'.

Objective 3.3 – To clarify the intent of the paragraph, Australia proposes the following text amendment:

'Support engagement of women's organizations, networks and gender specialists in implementation, monitoring and reporting on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework'.

Views on the proposed actions, including associated deliverables, timelines, and responsible actors

Action under 1.1.2

Australia questions the scope of this action. We note the position of power occupied by community leaders, but suggest that the action be expanded to be more inclusive. Australia suggests rephrasing this action as follows:

“Raise awareness, educate and strengthen capacities of all members of targeted communities, including leaders and decision-makers, to address gender inequities and promote gender equality with regards to initiatives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity”

‘Strengthen capacities of government representatives and entities to address gender inequalities with regards to initiatives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity’.

Action under 1.1.3

Australia is supportive of ensuring women’s organisations/network participate, lead, and make decisions in all policy and reforms processes. We suggest amending the text as followed:

‘Support women’s organizations/networks to participate in, lead and make decisions in the formulation of land policy and land reforms, including through provision of financial support.’

Additionally, Australia supports New Zealand’s proposed addition *‘encourage organisations/networks to apply a gender-lens to their work’.*

Action under 1.2. 1

Australia suggests the inclusion of *‘accessible’* after *‘disseminate’* to ensure information is accessible to all, not just generated and disseminated.

Action under 1.4.1

Australia suggests amending the text as follows: *‘Conduct participatory, inclusive gender assessments of roles, needs, interests, contributions, benefits and impacts related to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.’*

Action area 2.2.1

Australia suggest the insertion of *‘through remote and in-person modalities’* to ensure this objective is actionable by all despite their location.

Action area 2.2.2

Australia does not think it is appropriate to establish a separate participation fund under the CBD. Australia’s view is that it would be more efficient to have more measures in the existing CBD funding mechanisms that drive gender balance in delegations. Australia’s view is that the Secretariat, not Parties, should lead this work.

Actions under 2.3.1

To simplify the text and clarify the intent, Australia suggests amending the text as followed:

'Provide capacity-strengthening opportunities for governments and other relevant stakeholders on gender-responsive development planning, implementation, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of NBSAPs.'

Actions under 2.3.3

It is important that all relevant stakeholders are involved, and to ensure the doors are open for engaging Indigenous stakeholders. In line with this, we suggest amending the text as followed:

'Engage all relevant stakeholders, particularly women and girls, including IPLCs, at all levels, in the process of developing, implementing and updating gender-responsive policies, plans, strategies and action, as appropriate.'

Action under 3.1.1

Australia notes that 'national statistical offices' is the generic label used internationally.

Actions under 3.5.3

Australia is supportive of this action in principle, and prefers that any peer-review process remain voluntary, and suggests that 'periodic' isn't prescribed (e.g. every 6 months) so as to maintain flexibility. Australia suggests amending the text as follows:

'Integrate existing national reporting mechanisms to report on women's and girl's contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and on the integration of gender considerations into NBSAPs, including their implementation, budgeting and reporting'

Action under 3.6.2

Australia notes that CBD Parties haven't yet agreed to the inclusion of national commitments in the GBF. Australia therefore suggests the deletion of 'national commitments' in this objective, pending the outcomes of COP 15.