



Statement by Elizabeth Maruma Mrema
Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity
on the occasion of
International Women's Day
8 March 2022

"Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow"

Gender equality and sustainable development go hand in hand.

Without the full participation, engagement and commitment of women and girls – half of the world's population – efforts to attain a sustainable future cannot reach their full potential.

In contrast, exploitative and unsustainable approaches to nature and biodiversity serve to perpetuate and exacerbate the inequalities experienced by women and girls the world over.

Measures to address gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are embedded in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as are commitments to halt biodiversity loss and achieve the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The synergies between action on gender equality, biodiversity and sustainable development are evident, and we are at an opportune time to ensure that policies and actions can realize these in practice. The draft post-2020 global biodiversity framework acknowledges the importance of gender equality, women's empowerment and gender responsive approaches to ensure successful implementation. It also puts forward a draft target to ensure equitable and effective participation in decision-making related to biodiversity with a focus on women and girls, indigenous peoples and local communities, and youth.

A new post-2020 gender plan of action is being developed, which aims to align with and help to realize the ambition and transformative approach of the post-2020 framework. The draft plan positions women and girls as valuable actors in the efforts to halt biodiversity loss and aims to ensure, among other related outcomes, equal opportunity and capacity to contribute to the implementation of the Convention.

Efforts to ensure that biodiversity thrives in the coming years and decades will depend on the measures in place and opportunities available to ensure that women and girls can play an equal part.

Today, on International Women's Day, and in fact every day, we all must do our part to bridge the equality gap and ensure a sustainable tomorrow.

