



**Statement by
David Cooper
Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity
International Women's Day
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#DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality**

International Women's Day is an opportunity for us all to highlight the critical contribution of women and girls all over the world towards a sustainable future for the planet and for all people.

But we must also acknowledge that gender inequalities continue to result in women carrying a higher burden from biodiversity degradation and loss around the world.

Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity have committed to addressing such inequalities: inequalities that also restrict women's rights and access to biodiversity and natural resources.

In December 2022, Parties adopted [a Gender Plan of Action](#) with aim to ensure women's equal access to resources, services and technologies and to support their engagement in the governance, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. This includes access to education, training and relevant information. It brings women and girls to a table that they should have been sitting at from the beginning.

Gender equality is also a key theme of the recently adopted [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (GBF). The Framework emphasizes that successful implementation will depend on ensuring gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. A specific target (Target 22) reflects the importance of access to information related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, women and girls. Another (Target 23) ensures a gender-responsive approach where all women and girls have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention, including by recognizing their equal rights and access to land and natural resources.

This sends a clear message that transformative change cannot be achieved without inclusive, equitable and gender-responsive decision-making.

Implementing the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework will require new solutions to address many of the challenges ahead. Innovation and technology will be essential in supporting these efforts underlining the relevance of the theme for this year's International Women's Day: #DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality. *We must* work towards reducing the digital gender gap to ensure women and girls' access to technology and digital tools.

Gender equality is a fundamental human right and essential to tackling our greatest global challenges.

This year, 2023, let us not just *imagine* a world where women and people of all genders are equal in their rights, let us step up and speak out to make this a reality.

