

A gender-responsive approach to the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Submission by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)

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Background

At the fourteenth session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological diversity (CBD), Parties will consider for adoption a proposed framework for the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework for the CBD (from here on, ‘the post-2020 framework’), which will build on the progress made by the Convention through the ‘Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020’.

This submission is in response to the ‘[CBD Notification](#): Invitation for views on the preparation, scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework’¹ and outline key steps to be undertaken to foster a gender-responsive approach to the development of the post-2020 framework.

The submission outlines the key guiding principles relevant to a gender-responsive approach in the preparation of the post-2020 framework and identifies key steps to be undertaken at various stages of the process to ensure equal and meaningful participation of women and girls at the local, national and global level, and adequate representation of their concerns, views and solutions related to the biodiversity challenges we face.

To facilitate the systematic integration of the recommendations of UN-women, this submission directly addresses relevant sections of the ‘proposal for a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework’² prepared by the CBD Secretariat, for the consideration of Parties and Stakeholders. Specifically, this submission addresses two subsections under Section V (proposed preparatory process) of the document: subsection V-A on ‘overarching principles’ (page 9) and subsection V-B on ‘activities’ (page 10).

Gender Mainstreaming in the CBD Process

The CBD process has consistently integrated gender considerations, as reflected in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020,³ the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action,⁴ and other decisions, guiding documents and instruments. The CBD process’ development of the post-2020 biological framework is a critical juncture and provides an opportunity for systematically integrating gender considerations in the implementation of the Convention. In this regard, identifying and addressing the key and strategic

¹ CBD (2018). SCBD/OES/DC/RH/KNM/87538: Notification: Invitation for views on the preparation, scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. [\[Link\]](#)

² *ibid*, page 9, 10.

³ CBD COP Decision X/2: Strategic Plan for Biodiversity [\[Link\]](#)

⁴ CBD COP Decision XII/7: Mainstreaming Gender Considerations [\[Link\]](#)

interlinkages between gender equality and women's rights, and biodiversity in the early stages of the preparation of the post-2020 framework is crucial.

In many societies, and in particular in rural areas, women and men interact with their natural environment on a daily basis for their sustenance and livelihoods. Women and men depend on and contribute to the management and conservation of biological resources. Yet, pervasive gender inequalities limit women's opportunities, rights and benefits linked to biodiversity, which in turn influence their needs, priorities, roles, responsibilities and decision-making power with respect to the use and conservation of biodiversity, and more generally, natural resource management. Consideration of the gender dimensions of biodiversity involves understanding women's and men's use of biodiversity; identifying the institutions—both formal (e.g., policies and laws) and informal (e.g., customs, values, and norms) – that influence women's and men's use, management and conservation of biodiversity; and examining how different biodiversity-related outcomes (e.g., loss, degradation, sustainable management etc.) impact women and men differently. The post-2020 framework presents an opportunity to systematically incorporate gender considerations into the strategy of the Convention and align its processes with other relevant global processes such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Guiding principles for a gender-responsive post-2020 global biodiversity framework

Considering the consistently low levels of participation of women in key decision-making processes including on environmental issues, it is critical that the preparations of the post-2020 framework be based on certain fundamental principles which will enable women's full, equal and meaningful participation, contribution and leadership in the process. This section outlines the pertinent principles which will complement Section V-A (page 9) of the 'proposal for a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework'.⁵

Human rights-based approach⁶

Human rights-based approach refers to the fulfillment of human rights through laws, policies and programmes. Legislation, policies and programmes should address practices and traditions that discriminate against individuals, in particular, women and girls. Principles and obligations derived from international human rights instruments should guide the legislation and policy processes as well as the programming in all sectors and in all phases of the programming process, including the development of post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Consequently, rightsholders are empowered to claim their entitlements, and duty-bearers are held accountable for meeting their obligations. **Women's human rights:**⁷ refers to the need to ensure full enjoyment by women of all human rights. United Nations human rights instruments and mechanisms, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), provide a framework for, and critical support to, efforts to achieve such enjoyment in all policy areas. Gender-responsive approaches identify and lead to action to

⁵ CBD (2018). SCBD/OES/DC/RH/KNM/87538: Notification: Invitation for views on the preparation, scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. [\[Link\]](#). page 9.

⁶ UN practitioner's portal on human rights-based approaches to programming [\[Link\]](#)

⁷ Definition partly based on United Nations Agencies Statement of Common Understanding on the Rights-based Approach to Development Cooperation; UNODC (2011) Protection and promotion of human rights. Guidance note for staff.

address gaps and constraints in women's enjoyment of human rights, including in relation to natural resource management and biodiversity.

Safeguarding against the exacerbation of inequality

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights prohibits discrimination of any kind as to “race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” that has the intention or effect of nullifying or impairing the equal enjoyment or exercise of a human right. In that regard, biodiversity conservation policies need to establish monitoring and assessment mechanisms to ensure that they do not exacerbate inequalities but have positive social, environmental and economic impact in target communities.

Empowered participation

Women’s full, equal and effective participation, leadership and decision-making related to biodiversity is essential in enhancing the implementation and sustainability of conservation interventions. Informed participation is critical in ensuring that women’s knowledge, values and experiences related to biodiversity, as well as their needs and priorities, are reflected in policies and programmes. It is also crucial that women play an active role in the design, negotiation, receipt, distribution and application of benefits from biodiversity and natural resources.

Steps towards a gender-responsive development process for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

The activities outlined in section V-B of the ‘proposal for a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework’⁸ provide a concrete basis for the preparatory process for post-2020 framework.

In this section, UN Women presents the relevant CBD proposal and then makes a recommendation on specific steps which could be taken to ensure a gender-responsive process.

These steps will collectively focus on including ‘gender equality’ as a key strategic goal in the post-2020 framework.

(a) Providing opportunity for stakeholders to submit their views:

CBD proposal [Paragraph 33.(a)]: “Providing opportunities for Parties to the Convention and its Protocols, indigenous peoples and local communities and all relevant stakeholders, including citizens, subnational governments, and representatives of sectors which depend or have an impact on biodiversity to submit their views. Ample opportunities to do so will be provided, including the submission of comments on working documents, submissions through online forums, surveys, campaigns, questionnaires, as well as

⁸ CBD (2018). SCBD/OES/DC/RH/KNM/87538: Notification: Invitation for views on the preparation, scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. [\[Link\]](#). page 10.

interventions in relevant workshops and meetings. The views received will be made available through a dedicated webpage, as appropriate and will be acknowledged in relevant documentation;” [page 10]

UN Women recommendation: *A specific call for submissions on ‘Gender and biodiversity’ from the Parties and other stakeholders could be made to collect and compile information on:*

- a) the key gender issues and challenges relevant to biodiversity;
- b) approaches and methods adopted to address them;
- c) ways of addressing the issues in the post-2020 framework; and
- d) feedback and suggestions on updating the Gender Plan of Action 20115- 2020

The information compiled through this submission could be used for strengthening the gender-dimensions of the post-2020 framework and for the review and revision of the present Gender Plan of Action of the CBD.

(b) Global, regional and sectoral workshops:

CBD proposal [Paragraph 33.(b)]: “Global, regional and sectoral workshops. It is envisioned that a series of global, regional and sectoral workshops will be organized. Some of these workshops will focus on specific aspects related to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, including its relationship to the two Protocols. These workshops will allow for consultations at different scales and facilitate dialogues on the development of transformative agendas and sustainability transition pathways for biodiversity. These workshops would be informal and would allow Parties to the Convention and Protocols, indigenous peoples and local communities and all relevant stakeholders, including citizens, subnational governments, representatives of sectors which depend or have an impact on biodiversity to share experiences and exchange views. An CBD/SBI/2/17 Page 11 adequate level of participation of experts with experience in matters related to the two Protocols will be promoted;” [page 10]

UN Women Recommendations:

- a) *The series of global, regional and sectoral workshops includes dedicated workshops on ‘gender and biodiversity’;*
- b) *Integration of a gender perspective into all other workshops delivered under this activity;*
- c) *Conduct a webinar series on various ‘gender dimensions of biodiversity’; and*
- d) *Organize an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on ‘gender and biodiversity’.*

(c) Consultations at relevant meetings:

CBD proposal [Paragraph 33 (c)]: “Consultations at relevant meetings. Between the fourteenth and fifteenth meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, various meetings will be convened by other biodiversity-related conventions, the Rio conventions and other relevant processes, including meetings of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity related Conventions. Similarly, there may be opportunities to participate in meetings outside the traditional biodiversity community where consultations on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework could be held. These meetings represent opportunities for the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to undertake consultations and to raise awareness of the process for developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. They also represent

opportunities to receive information from sectors on their relationship with biodiversity. Specific actions could include making interventions in formal processes and organizing co-designed events to build engagement and coalitions with other relevant sectors to contribute to post-2020 actions. Further, depending on the type of consultation or meeting, formal recommendations could be made;” [page 11]

UN Women Recommendation:

- a) *Organize consultations on ‘gender-mainstreaming in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework’ on the margins of major intergovernmental meetings on gender equality and the empowerment of women, such as the sixty third session of the Commission on the Status of Women (2020), treaty body sessions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women (2019-2020) and the regular sessions of the human Rights Council (2019 and 2020).*

(d) Outreach effort to encourage participation:

CBD proposal [Paragraph 33 (d)]: “An outreach effort to encourage participation in the process. The Secretariat will work with partner organizations to undertake communication activities concerning the post-2020 global biodiversity framework with a view to enabling inputs from various perspectives and to mobilize engagement in the resulting framework. Parties will also be encouraged to facilitate corresponding efforts at national level;” [page 11]

UN Women Recommendations:

- a) *Use the communications network of partners working on gender equality and the empowerment of women to disseminate information and update on the post-2020 framework;*
- b) *Disseminate knowledge, experiences and lessons learned from partners and other civil society organizations on ‘gender issues in biodiversity conservation’ through the communication channels of the CBD;*
- c) *Dedicate a chapter to ‘gender and biodiversity’ in the discussion documents,⁹ including the discussion paper,¹⁰ to be developed by the CBD Secretariat as part of the development of the post-2020 framework;*
- d) *Develop and disseminate, in collaboration with partners and gender experts, targeted issue briefs to improve the knowledge on ‘gender and biodiversity’;*
- e) *Develop a ‘gender and biodiversity’ series featuring women community leaders working on gender issues;*
- f) *Mobilize the ‘friends of gender and biodiversity’ group created at SBI-2 to generate awareness and facilitate participation at the national level; and*
- g) *Leverage the network of organizations, entities and other stakeholders working on SDG 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women and SDG 15 on life on land by creating a campaign around SDG5 – SDG15 connections.*

⁹ CBD (2018). SCBD/OES/DC/RH/KNM/87538: Notification: Invitation for views on the preparation, scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. [\[Link\]](#). Paragraph 35

¹⁰ The proposal for the discussion paper can be found on page 16, under Annex 1 of the proposal for the process prepared by the CBD Secretariat. [\[Link\]](#). Deadline for the first draft: June 2019

(e) Mobilizing political buy-in:

CBD proposal [Paragraph 33 (e)]: “Mobilizing political buy-in at the highest level and encouraging and supporting actions that would raise the visibility and political profile of biodiversity among competing global priorities. Achieving a successful post-2020 global biodiversity framework can be facilitated through political championing and also through featuring biodiversity at key strategic meetings both specifically dedicated to biodiversity, such as the Africa Summit during the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties or a possible Heads of State Summit in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly in 2020, but also, outside the traditional biodiversity community, such as the World Economic Forum, G7, G20, Finance Ministerial Meetings, the World Bank Group’s high-level meetings and many others. Additional relevant meetings could possibly include a dedicated Global Business and Biodiversity Summit in 2019, featuring biodiversity and nature-based solutions in high-level events of UNFCCC, and more specifically the Secretary General’s Climate Summit in 2019. Other possible events include the IUCN Congress in 2020, or a biodiversity summit at the subnational level organized in 2019 under the leadership of the Province of Quebec in Canada;” [page 11]

UN Women Recommendations:

- a) *Organize an event on ‘gender and biodiversity’ on the occasions of the International Women’s Day in 2019 and 2020, and the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; and*
- b) *Issue a specialized message from the CBD Secretariat on the importance of a gender-responsive biodiversity policies and the relevance of gender mainstreaming in the post-2020 framework on International Women’s Day 2019 and 2020.*

(f) Encouraging and supporting the organization of meetings by third parties

CBD proposal [Paragraph 33.(f)]: “Encouraging and supporting the organization of meetings by third parties – The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity will promote the convening of workshops, expert meetings, and other inputs organized by Parties, partners and stakeholders that are relevant to supporting development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Such engagement and facilitation could include the development of ‘transition arenas’ for specific biodiversity relevant sectors in the national and local economy with support of the researchers from biodiversity and transition communities. Complementary to existing NBSAPs, such processes could help to develop national transition agendas in which transition to biodiversity positive economic pathways are explored in relevant sectors in congruence with the objectives of mainstreaming biodiversity adopted at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and proposed for discussion at the fourteenth meeting;” [page 11]

UN Women Recommendations:

- a) *Provide financial support for indigenous women, and women from local communities to effectively participate in local, national and international level consultations, workshops and meetings relevant to the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;*
- b) *Encourage financial mechanisms such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to provide financial support for women biodiversity activists and leaders,*

particularly rural and indigenous women, to participate in the consultation process and workshops; and

- c) *Raise visibility of meetings and other events organized by local actors, including indigenous group, through the communication channel of the CBD.*

(e) Formal considerations:

CBD proposal [Paragraph 33. (f)]: “Formal consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at its twenty-second and twenty-third meetings of the IPBES regional, global and thematic assessments.” [page 11]

UN Women Recommendations:

- a) *Call for a dedicated section on ‘gender and biodiversity’ in the Global Biodiversity Outlook 5;*
- b) *Call for gender analysis of biodiversity issues in the upcoming assessments carried out by IPBES; and*
- c) *Call on Working Group on Article 8(j) and related provisions to consider in its meetings in 2019 and 2020 a gender analysis of the progress made by Parties on protecting, preserving, promoting and benefiting from traditional knowledge on biodiversity.*

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