



CBD

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

COMMUNIQUÉ

Not an official document.

22 May 2007
International Day for Biological Diversity



Biodiversity and Climate Change

TOWARDS A CBD GENDER PLAN OF ACTION

Geneva – 23 January 2008. With funding support from HIVOS (Dutch Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries), a workshop was organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Senior Gender Advisor of IUCN from 16 to 18 January 2008 in Geneva. Participants included staff from: the Convention Secretariat, IUCN, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), and indigenous and local community representatives.

The workshop finalized a draft CBD Gender Plan of Action. The plan defines the role that the CBD Secretariat will play in stimulating and facilitating efforts, both in house and with partners at the national, regional and global levels, to overcome constraints and take advantage of opportunities to promote gender equality. It is also a reflection of the increasing awareness that gender equality and women's empowerment are important prerequisites for environmental conservation and sustainable development.

The plan consists of four objectives:

- To mainstream gender perspective in the implementation of the Convention and the associated work of the Secretariat;
- To promote gender equality in achieving the three objectives of the Convention and the 2010 biodiversity target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss;
- To demonstrate the benefits of gender mainstreaming in biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and benefit sharing from the use of genetic resources; and
- To increase the effectiveness of the work of the Convention Secretariat.

The Plan outlines a framework for integrating a gender perspective within all divisions and units of the Secretariat during the period 2008–2012. It establishes strategies with reachable targets and proposes instruments to address gender concerns in the Convention's programmes of work on cross cutting issues and thematic areas.

The draft action plan will be submitted to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to be held in Bonn in May 2008. To this end, the draft plan of action was presented to and welcomed by the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties at its meeting held in Geneva on 20 January 2008. It was also presented at a side event held in Geneva on 22 January on the margins of the sixth meeting of the Ad-Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-Sharing on the elaboration and negotiation of an international regime on access and benefit-sharing.



The side-event was opened by the Executive Secretary, Ahmed Djoghlaif, who thanked the IUCN Sr. Gender Adviser, Ms. Lorena Aguilar for her time and fund-raising efforts in making the CBD Gender programme a reality. He further noted that, "Gender equality is a prerequisite to poverty eradication and sustainable development," and that "the livelihoods of rural and indigenous peoples and those of communities living in poverty are often closely tied to the use and conservation of biodiversity".

Mary Fosi of Cameroon said that: "The Government of Cameroon intended to do something similar and we were looking for the appropriate framework to mainstream gender into biodiversity initiatives. We will support the approval of the Gender Plan of Action at COP 9. After its approval it is up to the willingness of the international cooperation and other donors to support the process of implementation."

Lakshan Bibi of Pakistan noted: "It is very important for us to see in the implementation of the plan that there will be capacity-building for indigenous women. South Asia has a network of women that is working in biodiversity conservation that is very accessible."

Florina Lopez, a Kuna indigenous woman, said that: "I would like to thank the initiative of the CBD and IUCN's support to this initiative to visibilize women in the CBD processes. We are looking forward to the implementation of the Plan of Action."

Background

In March 2007, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif appointed a Gender Focal Point in line with a series of internal mandates within the United Nations system calling for gender equality and the mainstreaming of gender issues within all UN processes. Amongst these mandates are: the outcome of the 2005 World Summit (General Assembly resolution 60/1, paragraphs 58, 59 and 116) and the Economic and Social Council Resolution (ECOSOC) resolution 2005/31.

The importance of gender mainstreaming in environmental/biodiversity conservation and poverty eradication policies is also recognized in a wide range of global agreements, including, but not limited to, chapter 24 of Agenda 21 adopted at the Earth Summit in 1992, the 2002 Johannesburg Plan of Implementation; paragraph K of the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995); and the 2000 Millennium Declaration.

In highlighting the important role played by women, the mandates also note that gender is not a women's issue but that of girls and boys, and men and women.