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ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP

EMG



Convention on
Biological Diversity

UN Environment Management Group Nexus Dialogues

Gender & Biodiversity: A 2-Part Virtual Nexus Dialogue Series

Unpacking Linkages with Gender and Biodiversity in UN System Efforts

29 March 2021

Towards Gender Responsive Biodiversity Action and Outcomes: A Workshop

30 March 2021

Virtual Series

The Background & Rationale

Biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation pose significant threats to the enjoyment of human rights. These impacts are disproportionately felt by those already in vulnerable positions, including women and girls. The costs and benefits behind efforts dedicated towards the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are not distributed equally, a result of decision-making processes that inadvertently maintain existing power imbalances and leave out women's voices and leadership. The COVID-19 pandemic exemplifies our tenuous relationship with the natural world, and compounds the impact of gender issues such as – the burden of caregiving, insecure employment, and heightened risk of gender-based violence – on one-half of the population. The pandemic and the effects of biodiversity loss/ecosystem degradation threatens to overshadow and roll back limited gains and progress already made towards the global objectives of gender equality.

The global community has committed to Leave No One Behind in the efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity of Living in Harmony with Nature. As a result, there is a need to ensure that gender mainstreaming, as set out in the SDGs, is reflected and advanced in the efforts by country Parties and stakeholders to halt biodiversity loss. As stated in the [UN Secretary General's Call to Action on Human Rights](#), "The promotion and protection of human rights of women in all spheres of work must be understood as foundational to the values and goals of the UN, not as a simple add-on to existing efforts". The development of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework¹, and a new gender plan of action for the post-2020 period², provide a timely and relevant opportunity to ensure a comprehensive approach to addressing gender issues within the conservation and sustainable use of

¹ [CBD/POST2020/PREP/2/1](#) – Update of the zero draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

² [CBD/SBI/3/4/Add.2](#) – Draft outline of a post-2020 gender plan of action



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biodiversity, and the sharing of its benefits. The result of which invariably supports the achievement of the SDGs and related international commitments.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a different meaning to what was to be the “[super year for nature and biodiversity](#)” in 2020. While many intergovernmental processes, including the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (“COP 15”) and the 26th Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change were postponed, the fragility of the relationship between people and nature has risen in the global consciousness. Speakers at the UN Biodiversity Summit in September 2020 emphasized that biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation are currently among the top threats facing humanity, with impacts already being seen around the world. There was agreement that political momentum is necessary to secure an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework at the CBD COP15, to be held in Kunming, China.

2020 was also intended to be a ground-breaking year for gender equality, marking the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action. Instead, the COVID-19 pandemic has been shown to have [disproportionate impacts on women](#), and risks rolling back the limited gains made in recent decades, deepening pre-existing inequalities. The UN Secretary General has called for solidarity in response to the pandemic, highlighting the need to focus on people, and the most vulnerable – in particular, he has emphasized that “[women and girls \[should be put\] at the centre of efforts to recover from COVID-19](#)”. Against this background, the UN Environment Management Group (“EMG”), in close collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), will organise a two-part series of virtual Nexus Dialogues on gender and biodiversity, in alignment with UNEP’s [COVID-19 response](#) which emphasizes modernizing environmental governance and multilateralism with a move towards virtual e-platforms, while simultaneously lowering the overall environmental footprint.

An introductory dialogue (*Unpacking Linkages with Gender and Biodiversity in UN System Efforts*) will provide an overview of priority objectives to address persistent gender and biodiversity challenges, and their linkages with the broader environmental and sustainable development agenda. This will be followed by a workshop (*Towards Gender Responsive Biodiversity Action and Outcomes*) focusing on the gaps, opportunities and next steps for collaboration and synergies in implementation of a new gender plan of action for biodiversity, and for gender responsive implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

There will be two online Nexus Dialogues covering:

1. Unpacking Linkages with Gender and Biodiversity in UN System Efforts
2. Towards Gender Responsive Biodiversity Action and Outcomes

The Dialogues will also benefit from the recently developed Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards for UN Programming as well as the UN Sustainability Strategy, which highlight the importance of human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples. Particular attention will be paid to the linkages with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



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Gender and Biodiversity in the 2030 Agenda

Human rights, including gender mainstreaming, underpin the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, including SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 10 (Reduce Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) - committing to *leave no one behind*.

Unpacking Linkages with Gender and Biodiversity in UN System Efforts:

Preparatory discussions to determine how gender considerations may be addressed in the development of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework³ have identified three opportunities to advance action on gender issues and in doing so, support the achievement of biodiversity objectives.

Delineated below, the three opportunities are reflected in varying degrees within related frameworks addressing gender and environment-related action⁴ as well as in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.

- 1) Ensuring women's equal access, ownership and control over biodiversity and ecosystem services (SDGs 5 and 10);
- 2) Ensuring women benefit equally from nature and biodiversity (SDGs 6, 13, 14, and 15); and
- 3) Ensuring biodiversity policy, planning and programming decisions address equally the perspectives, interests and needs of women and girls (SDGs 1, 2, and 3)

Additionally, these are proposed as the overarching goals of the draft outline of the CBD's post-2020 gender plan of action⁵.

Despite consensus across the UN system on the importance of addressing these priority areas, there is still a need for more concerted and sustained action, and to maximize limited resources to achieve results at larger scales.

The development of a new Global Biodiversity Framework and a new gender plan of action offer a critical opportunity to promote stronger uptake of gender responsive action, as a necessary means to ensure effective implementation of the post-2020 framework, and to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

Towards Gender Responsive Biodiversity Action and Outcomes: A Workshop

Fresh from an expert-level panel discussion, the Workshop will involve a smaller group of EMG and non-EMG focal points to consider more deeply the existing opportunities across the UN system to advance gender-responsive biodiversity action, and the potential for strengthening harmonized efforts for greater results in the next decade.

The Workshop focuses on 1) Contributing to the conceptual framing of the new CBD Gender Plan of Action and identifying pathways to support its implementation, and 2) Contributing to the

³ UN-Women and CBD Secretariat-led [Expert Workshop to develop recommendations for possible gender elements in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, New York USA, 11-12 April 2019, related events including side events for the first and second Open-Ended Working Groups on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#)

⁴ Beijing Platform for Action, GEF Gender Policy, UNFCCC gender action plan, and UNCCD gender action plan.

⁵ [CBD/SBI/3/4/Add.2](#) – Draft outline of a post-2020 gender plan of action



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coordination and guidance on gender-responsive environmental action in the UN's support for countries to achieve the SDGs, towards the implementation of the gender action plans of other Rio Conventions; UNFCCC, and UNCCD, and others. Such coordination and guidance align with the UNSG Call to Action on Human Rights.

Objectives

The main objectives of the two-part Nexus Dialogue are to:

- Convene and engage the UN system behind rights-based environmental action, with a focus on addressing issues of gender equality in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including in the fair and equitable sharing of benefits.
- Consider key gender goals to support the achievement of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and the linkages with other global commitments and mandates, notably:
 - Ensuring women's equal access, ownership and control over biodiversity and ecosystem services;
 - Ensuring women benefit equally from nature and biodiversity; and
 - Ensuring biodiversity policy, planning and programming decisions address equally the perspectives, interests and needs of women and girls
- Consider how synergies among UN system efforts can be maximized to contribute to the development and implementation of the CBD's gender plan of action and the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Outcomes

The Dialogue is expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Contribute to the thought processes and provision of inputs for consideration in the development of the CBD's gender plan of action and in the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Increase the UN system's prioritization and commitment to support the advancement and the implementation of gender responsive biodiversity-related action.
- Strategic plans for future engagement with the Human Rights Council, the 3rd Meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, 3rd Meeting of the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Implementation, the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the 26th Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other related events.



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Structure and Content

For safety and logistical reasons, the Nexus Dialogues will each be held virtually and hosted on Zoom Webinar. *Unpacking Linkages with Gender and Biodiversity in UN system efforts (29 March 2021)* will be 90-minutes long, while *Towards Gender Responsive Biodiversity Action and Outcomes: A Workshop (30 March 2021)* will be 120-minutes long.

Provisional Agenda – TBD (all suggestions for speakers/resource persons TBC)

Unpacking Linkages with Gender and Biodiversity in UN system efforts

Time: 8:00-9:30 EST TBC, Tuesday 29 March 2021

<p>Time Zones</p> <p>8:00-9:30 EST 14:00-15:30 CEST 15:00-16:30 EAT</p>	<p>Introducing and welcoming by CBD Secretariat and EMG outlining objectives and structure (10 minutes)</p> <p><i>Substantive Elements Behind Gendered Approaches to Biodiversity and Environmental Governance</i></p> <p><i>Moderator: Mr. Benjamin Schachter, Human Rights Officer, UNOHCHR</i></p> <p>Initial expert remarks (20 minutes) - TBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Tanya McGregor, Gender Programme Officer, CBD Secretariat • Ms. Seemin Qayum, OIC, Economic Empowerment Section, UN-Women • Ms. Gabriella Richardson-Temm, Senior Gender Specialist, Global Environment Facility • Ms. Fleur Newman, Gender Affairs Officer, UNFCCC Panel Discussion (50 minutes) <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some key policy entry points to ensure women’s equal access to biodiversity and ecosystem services, related benefits and/or decision-making? • Where can the UN make the biggest difference by promoting and ensuring that biodiversity policy, planning, and programming addresses the perspectives, interests, and needs of women and girls equally? • What are the biggest gaps / inconsistencies in current UN approaches to mainstreaming and implementing gender and biodiversity issues? <p>Concluding Remarks and Next Steps: CBD Secretariat and EMG (10 minutes)</p>
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Towards Gender Responsive Biodiversity Action and Outcomes: A Workshop

Time: 8:00-10:00 EST TBC, Wednesday 30 March 2021

<p>Time Zones</p> <p>8:00-10:00 EST 14:00-16:00 CEST 15:00-17:00 EAT</p>	<p>Introducing and welcoming by CBD Secretariat and EMG, outlining objectives and structure (10 minutes)</p> <p>Workshop Towards Gender Responsive Biodiversity Action and Outcomes</p> <p><i>Moderator: Ms. Soo-Young Hwang, Legal Officer, UNEP</i></p> <p>Roundtable Discussion (100 minutes)</p> <p>Roundtable Participants (30) from the following agencies (alphabetical):</p> <p>Bentley University, CBD Secretariat, CBD Women’s Caucus, CGIAR, Conservation International, FAO, GCF, GEF, ILO, IUCN, The Nature Conservancy, UNCCD, UNDP, UNEP, UNEP-ROAP, UNEP-WCMC, UNFCCC, UN OHCHR, UN Women, WEDO, WRI, World Fish, WWF.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What lessons from the development and implementation - to date - of related commitments under the SDGs, UNFCCC and UNCCD gender action plans, and other processes, should be considered for the proposed CBD gender plan of action? • Given the setbacks already identified in the global development agenda resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, where do you think additional focus should be put in order to realize gains for gender-responsive environmental action by 2030, in line with the aims of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework⁶, and the SDGs? • In developing a gender plan of action under the CBD that aligns closely with existing international commitments related to gender and the environment, this puts an emphasis on the importance of leveraging action at different scales and in different processes, to enable larger scale change. With your agency’s or department’s mandate in mind, what are some high-impact leverage points (e.g., actions, low-hanging fruit, etc.) that you can advance (or commit to)? (Reference: Appendix A) • Moving forward, what should the focus of inter-agency collaboration be to effectively protect women and girls’ <i>Right to a Healthy Environment</i>, in line with the Secretary-General’s Call to Action on Human Rights? <p>Concluding Remarks and Next Steps: CBD Secretariat and EMG (10 minutes)</p>
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⁶ [CBD/POST2020/PREP/2/1](#) – Update of the zero draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework



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Appendix A

Donella Meadows identifies the following list as “places” to intervene in a system (in increasing order of effectiveness).

Source: http://donellameadows.org/wp-content/userfiles/Leverage_Points.pdf

