

Needed – a gender sensitive biodiversity framework

Future global biodiversity goals must recognise the vital contributions made by women and girls, particularly from indigenous and local communities

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The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is perhaps the most relevant and ethical convention for the conservation, the sustainable use, and the fair and equitable distribution of benefits of marine and continental biodiversity use. In the next ten years, there are two ways through which the CBD can, clearly and effectively, address the issue of gender in its management framework.

First, the new Framework for Global Biodiversity, being prepared for approval at the 15th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, is an excellent opportunity for member states of the CBD, civil society and private companies to develop a strategy imbued with a clear gender vision – one that recognises the contributions towards conservation that women and girls make, and further, one that is based on a framework of human rights, thus ensuring the

well-being and the improvement in the living conditions of women across the world.

Second, the process being developed by the CBD for the review and generation of a new gender action plan provides a further opportunity for decisive action on gender. In fact, both the proposed action plan as well as the previous such programme and its evaluation are excellent opportunities for decisive gender action.

Today, more than ever before, the role of women and girls in biodiversity conservation is becoming evident in a world that has been unable to change its inequitable model of development, and where women, who represent half of humanity, have worked unceasingly to provide food security, to maintain traditional knowledge of sustainable biodiversity usage and have supported collective action for greater environmental justice in their territories. Despite all these contributions, the world still only timidly, if

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Fish landing centre in Manpura, Bangladesh. Civil society groups have asked for an integration of the human rights based approach and pointed out that the right to land, marine territories and access to resources in these ecosystems be recognised as a central challenge impeding gender equity



Local Biodiversity Outlooks 2

The contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and to renewing nature and cultures.

A complement to the fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*.

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at all, recognizes the impact of productive, reproductive and collective actions in the territories of life closest to the biodiversity that we wish to protect.

Poverty, together with the lack of opportunities for women in education, adolescent pregnancies and domestic and sexual violence, cannot but be part of the work of our societies to change the situation of women and girls throughout the planet, based on the assertion of their fundamental human rights and sustainability, which is unattainable without true gender justice.

These new strategic lines of action can bear fruit only if civil society is able to thoroughly reflect upon the findings of the previous Global Biodiversity Framework, evaluated at the CBD level in the Global Biodiversity Assessment. This official evaluation offers many great lessons and a clear path of action, in addition to civil society's own evaluation of this process which is intended to complement the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-5).

The evaluation from civil society, titled *Local Biodiversity Outlooks 2*, reviews the practical action undertaken en route to 2020 and makes it clear that, in the face of current challenges, progress is possible only if certain vital issues are addressed: tenure (securing

land, customary and community rights), food security, governance (decision making and participation), local and solidarity economies, and incentives and finance.

The importance of these issues has been underscored during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the revitalization, the strengthening of traditional knowledge, the relationship between food security and health, and the strengthening of organizational capabilities have been found to be fundamental for gender equity and equality.

Civil society groups and organizations working with a vision of gender equity and equality have reviewed the drafts presented by the CBD for the Global Biodiversity Framework and offered their contributions in the form of a second draft that is now available for global discussion.

Viewed from a gender perspective or a feminist lens, the draft appears to leave out certain fundamental issues with respect to gender and the conservation of biodiversity. Civil society groups have asked for an integration of the human rights based approach into the document and pointed out that the right to land, marine territories and access to resources in these ecosystems be recognised as a central challenge impeding gender equity and equality in the fisheries. ■

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