



Living in harmony with nature

Gender and Biodiversity

The importance of biodiversity to individuals varies according to gender. Based upon the social roles between men and women, gender is shaped by culture, social relations, and natural environments. For this reason, we need to incorporate gender dimensions into our understanding of biodiversity and its conservation, sustainable use and the sharing of benefits.

Gender roles affect economic, political, social and ecological opportunities and constraints faced by both men and women. Recognizing women's roles as primary land and resource managers is central to the success of biodiversity policy. For example, women farmers currently account for 60-80% of all food production in developing countries, but gender often remains overlooked in decision-making on access to, and the use of, biodiversity resources.

Just as the impact of biodiversity loss is disproportionately felt by poorer communities, there are also disparities along gender lines. Biodiversity loss affects access to education and gender equality by increasing the time spent by women and children in performing certain tasks, such as collecting valuable resources and services such as fuel, food and water.

To conserve biodiversity, we need to understand and expose gender-differentiated biodiversity practices, gendered knowledge acquisition and usage. Various studies demonstrate that projects integrating gender dimensions generate superior results. Gender considerations are not solely a women's issue; instead, this outlook could yield advantages for whole communities and benefit both sexes.

The Convention on Biological Diversity developed a Gender Plan of Action that defines the Secretariat's role in stimulating and facilitating efforts on national, regional, and global levels to promote gender equality and mainstream a gender perspective. The Millennium Development Goals emphasize clear linkages between gender equality, poverty alleviation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Such insights should be included into our outlook and approach for reversing biodiversity loss, reducing poverty and improving human well-being.



Convention on
Biological Diversity

www.cbd.int/gender



United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

Fast Facts

- ▶ Exposing and understanding gender-differentiated biodiversity practices and knowledge of women and men enhances biodiversity conservation
- ▶ Biodiversity conservation efforts become more effective and efficient when women and vulnerable groups are empowered to participate as equals in: information sharing and generation, education and training, technology transfer, organizational development, financial assistance, policy development
- ▶ The tenth Conference of the Parties (COP-10) through decision X/19: (i) emphasized the importance of gender mainstreaming in all programmes of work under the Convention in order to achieve the objectives of the Convention and its Strategic Plan for the period 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets
- ▶ 25 out of 47 decisions from COP-10 call for the mainstreaming of gender and/or the full participation of women
- ▶ The first coordination meeting on gender mainstreaming in the Rio Conventions and the GEF was held in March 2011
- ▶ Financial and technical support to date:
 - ▶ Government of Finland: €190,000 for the establishment of a full-time Gender Programme Officer, including support to the other Rio Conventions on gender mainstreaming
 - ▶ Government of the United Kingdom: £10,000
 - ▶ Government of Norway: \$25,000
 - ▶ HIVOS the Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation, of the Netherlands: \$300,000
 - ▶ Swiss Development Corporation: \$30,000 for women's participation in COP-9
 - ▶ The International Union for Conservation of Nature through the Office of the Global Senior Gender Advisor secured funding for the elaboration of the CBD Gender Plan of Action and continues to give technical support, advise and resource mobilization to the Secretariat including the elaboration of the Guidelines for Mainstreaming Gender into the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans

Learn More

Gender and the Environment ▶ www.unep.org/gender_env

Facts from the UN Millennium Development Goals Report 2008

▶ www.millenniumpromise.org/site/DocServer/MDG_FastFacts.pdf

Gender and Women's empowerment ▶ www.unwomen.org

IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature

▶ www.genderandenvironment.org

Women's Environment and Development Organization ▶ www.wedo.org

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

413, Saint Jacques Street, suite 800
Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1N9
Canada

Tel.: +1 514 288 2220
Fax: +1 514 288 6588
UNBiodiversity@cbd.int

www.cbd.int/gender