



**Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework
Second meeting
Rome, 24-29 February 2020**

**Item 1: Opening Statement (February 24 2020) - 6 MIN
CBD Women Statement**

Thank you, Chair

I am Mrinalini Rai, speaking on behalf of the CBD Women Caucus an alliance representing women, grassroots women organizations and networks and their agencies in working to advance women and girl's empowerment and gender justice in the work of the CBD.

While the gender-and-biodiversity nexus is increasingly acknowledged in international agreements and national policy documents, **implementation and follow-through** need to be **strengthened**. The extent and gravity of environmental crises globally require a decisive move away from business-as-usual approaches. A more transformative agenda would call for gender justice as a **driver of change**, leading to an effective, inclusive and equitable way to move forward towards implementation of the Post-2020 GBF.

KEY COMPONENTS COMPRISING THE INTERNATIONAL GENDER-ENVIRONMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK INCLUDE

Gender equality is a human rights that is enshrined in a number of declarations and conventions, including the **legally binding** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW 1979).

Agenda 21 (1992), Earth Summit marked a **pivotal moment embedding gender equality consideration in environmental decision-making on the global stage**, with regards to crucial issues such as land ownership, resource stewardship, education and employment.

CBD (1993): The first of the three Rio Conventions, has **preamble text** “affirming the need for the full participation of women at all levels of **policy making and implementation for biological diversity conservation**,” as well as many subsequent decisions of Parties that include gender considerations. In 2008, the Parties to the **CBD adopted a Gender Plan of Action**, making it the **first Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA)** to do so and it was updated for the period of 2015-2020.

SDGs (2015): Gender is a **standalone goal (#5)** in addition to being cross-cutting issues across the other 16 goals.

Sendai Framework (2015-2030): The Sendai Framework for Action for Disaster Risk Reduction calls for **stronger women's leadership and participation** in disaster risk reduction (DRR).



Recognition that gender equality works for all

Gender inequality (gender-based oppressions) is one of the most pervasive threats to sustainable development. It has negative **impacts on access to, use of and control over a wide range of resources**, and on the ability to meet human rights obligations with respect to enjoyment – by women and men – of a clean, safe, healthy and sustainable environment and addressing structural (including gender-based) violence in current patterns of environmental degradation;

Gender injustice is intersectional and magnified by other social positions. Multiple and multiplying layers of inequality are experienced by **women who are indigenous; or members of sexual, racial or other minorities; or the elderly and the poor**. As pervasive as gender differences and inequalities are, they are often hidden. In line with this, there is an emerging issue of **Gender Based Violence (GBV) in the environmental context**. In a recent publication by *IUCN in January 2020 “Gender-based violence and environment linkage - the violence of inequality”*, establishes that these patterns of gender-based abuse are observed across environmental contexts, affecting the security and well-being of nations, communities and individuals, and **jeopardising meeting sustainable development goals (SDGs)**. While linkages between GBV and environmental issues are complex and multi-layered, **these threats to human rights and healthy ecosystems are not insurmountable**.

We need to beNarrowing gender gap

A transformative agenda recognizes gender justice as a key element, leading to more people-centered environmental policies. To **‘bend the curve’ of biodiversity loss**, the new framework **has to bend the curve of inequality and injustice and move toward being more inclusive, equitable, just and leaving no one behind**, while addressing women rights within the collectives they belong to: indigenous peoples’ and local communities, farmers, small scale fishers youth and other rights holders. However, it is also crucial to **move beyond focusing on merely quantitative targets** signifying representation, towards methods of measuring representation that give equal attention to both quality and quantity.

And recognise that **the Rio Principles on Environment and Development (UN 1992)**, particularly **the principles of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and free prior (and informed) consent**, apply to **both environmental relations and gender relations**.

We hope that the Post-2020 GBF **integrates a rights-based approach towards** ‘a sustainable and just future from business-as usual to transformational change” that translates the lessons learnt from over the years from various spheres and build on them and put in place mechanism, actions that support tangible implementation on the realisation of women empowerment and gender equity within and beyond 2030 and 2050.

Over the past year, there have been **various consultations and workshop** and within it there has been a **component of gender** that have been discussed, and in other workshop including one on Landscape Approach, and recently one on Human Rights in Post-2020 GBF which we hope would also inform the coming days on some of the key gender-responsive elements for your consideration.



We thank the Gender Office of the Secretariat of the CBD, Parties, “Friends of Gender Equality” group and UN Agencies, including UN Women for their leadership and the Co-Chairs for the continued support and providing space for our participation to engage in the Post-2020 GBF discussions.

(Reflection - 25+ countries have reported on gender in their 6th NRs.)

We are here and we look forward to engaging and contributing effectively the coming week with our concrete recommendations to the Zero Draft of the Post-2020 GBF.

Thank you.