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DRAFT 2015-2020 GENDER PLAN OF ACTION

1. The 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action under the Convention on Biological Diversity defines the role that the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity will play in stimulating and facilitating efforts, both in-house and with partners and Parties at the national, regional and global levels, to overcome constraints and take advantage of opportunities to promote gender equality within its biodiversity work. It builds on the Gender Plan of Action described in UNEP/CBD/COP/9/INF/12/Rev.1 and welcomed by the Conference of the Parties in decision IX/24.
2. The Plan forms part of the continuing response under the Convention on Biological Diversity to the global commitments of recent decades and the recommendations of the Parties of the Convention, in compliance with major mandates within the United Nations system. It is also a reflection of the increasing awareness that gender equality is an important prerequisite for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.
3. This Plan pursues four strategic objectives:
 - (a) To mainstream a gender perspective into the implementation of the Convention and the associated work of the Secretariat;
 - (b) To promote gender equality in achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
 - (c) To demonstrate the benefits of gender mainstreaming in biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and benefit-sharing from the use of genetic resources; and
 - (d) To increase the effectiveness of the work of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
4. The Plan outlines a framework for integrating a gender perspective within all Secretariat divisions and units during the period 2015–2020. It establishes strategies with reachable targets and proposes instruments to address gender concerns in the areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The CBD Secretariat's substantive activities under the Plan of Action are concentrated in four spheres: policy, organizational, delivery and constituency.

* UNEP/CBD/WGRI/5/1.

A. *Policy sphere*

5. The policy sphere is concerned with building an appropriate policy framework so as to provide the mandate, political support and resources to ensure the mainstreaming of gender within the implementation of the Convention. The actions and activities foreseen under this sphere are described below.

1. *Make gender and biodiversity a strategic priority of the Convention*

6. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets provide the guiding framework for action and strategic direction for implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. As such, ensuring that the links between these processes and gender are understood and elaborated will be a key prerequisite for the successful mainstreaming of gender under the Convention.

7. Reports on progress on implementation of the programmes of work and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 should, therefore, include information and updates on the activities contained within the Gender Plan of Action.

8. The Secretariat should provide updates to Parties and partners on progress towards achieving gender equality, including, when possible, through the annual audit of the Secretariat.

2. *Secure ongoing commitments from funders to support gender and biodiversity*

9. It is critical to ensure that the resource mobilization strategy of the Secretariat fully takes into account the implementation of the CBD Gender Plan of Action including through the identification of a specific budget line.

10. Furthermore, the Secretariat should explore how funding for gender mainstreaming can contribute to implementation of the activities of the Secretariat for which voluntary contributions are required.

11. With regard to supporting gender mainstreaming in implementation at the international, regional, national and local levels, it is critical that awareness of gender and biodiversity links is built among donors to the Convention on Biological Diversity. It will also be important to consider and promote the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Policy on Gender Mainstreaming as well as the gender policies and safeguards of GEF agencies.

12. As such, efforts should be made to identify priority areas in the Convention on Biological Diversity for investment in gender.

3. *Secure high-level commitment for gender and biodiversity within the Secretariat*

13. High-level commitments and prioritization by senior management within the Secretariat is essential for the success of the Gender Plan of Action. It is important therefore to present gender-biodiversity issues to senior management to build awareness and secure their support for mainstreaming.

14. It is important for the value of gender mainstreaming to be evident to all Secretariat staff members, as such, the rationale for gender mainstreaming in the CBD should be elaborated including through the collection and dissemination of case studies and good practice examples.

15. Efforts should be conducted to mainstream gender within the four-year rolling work plan of the Secretariat. For this purpose, the Secretariat's management committee should further contribute to the mainstreaming of gender within all relevant activities of the Secretariat by providing strategic direction on the implementation of the work plan.

B. Organizational sphere

16. The organizational sphere addresses gender equality in the CBD Secretariat's staffing, institutional capacity, staff development, accountability and related equal opportunity policies. There are five recommended actions under this sphere.

1. Establish a body within the Secretariat to support gender mainstreaming

17. In order to strengthen the Secretariat's expertise related to gender-biodiversity links, there is an urgent need to continue to fund a full-time gender programme officer at the Secretariat. This person will not have other responsibilities within the institution.

18. Responsibilities of the gender programme officer will include:

- (a) Liaising with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Senior Gender Advisor;
- (b) Leading a gender task force;
- (c) Conducting gender analyses of work under the Convention;
- (d) Guiding management and staff of the Secretariat on how to best integrate gender in its work;
- (e) Awareness-raising and training;
- (f) Monitoring the implementation of gender mainstreaming under the Convention;
- (g) Revising and supporting documents of the programmes of work, thematic areas and cross-cutting issues;
- (h) Collecting and disseminating gender-biodiversity information and data;
- (i) Guiding and supporting national focal points and CBD stakeholders on gender-biodiversity linkages and issues;
- (j) Reporting to the Executive Secretary on progress in the advancement of gender mainstreaming;
- (k) Establishing alliances with structures addressing gender.

19. The gender task force will support the work of the gender programme officer.

2. Strengthen gender-specific capacities of all Secretariat staff

20. The CBD gender programme officer and gender task force will provide practical training for CBD Secretariat staff on gender-sensitive approaches to the work of the Secretariat. Such training will be targeted to address the key work areas of the Secretariat and the programmes of work under the Convention.

21. The CBD gender programme officer, in collaboration with the UNEP gender focal point, will ensure that CBD Secretariat staff have access to gender training and support provided by UNEP.

22. Through analysing the experiences of similar processes it has emerged that one of the most effective ways to develop the capacity of personnel is through a coaching system of learning by doing; such a process will result in the creation of an internal and external gender peer-review mechanism.

3. Ensure gender equality is reflected in human resources management

23. The Secretariat should continue to follow UNEP's human resources policy regarding gender, and should report on compliance.

4. *Increase awareness of responsibility of all staff for gender mainstreaming*

24. The execution of this plan of action, as well as mainstreaming gender within the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, is not the sole responsibility of the gender programme officer and gender task force. Gender mainstreaming will be the responsibility of everyone within the Secretariat and will require commitment from all staff. In order to define staff roles in relation to this plan of action, the Secretariat will adapt UNEP's manual for staff responsibilities for gender mainstreaming. This will provide a platform to measure responsibility and accountability regarding gender mainstreaming. Successful accountability should be accompanied by rewards and incentives.

5. *Develop indicators to measure the extent of gender mainstreaming within the Secretariat*

25. In relation to the development of indicators to measure the extent of gender mainstreaming within the Secretariat there are lessons to be learned from other agencies, including UNEP and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The gender task force should examine the approaches adopted by such organizations and adapt them for the Secretariat.

C. *Delivery sphere*

26. The delivery sphere deals with mainstreaming a gender perspective in the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. It also relates to the ways in which gender is addressed in the underlying theory, methodology and applied research upon which interventions are based. Four recommendations are identified below as being relevant to this sphere.

1. *Collect and disseminate gender-biodiversity related information*

27. The conceptual and practical bases for enriching biodiversity conservation efforts with a gender-related perspective will require knowing who is doing what at all levels including in the field and making the latest information available. The Secretariat is well positioned to collect and disseminate information on gender and biodiversity with a view to establishing a knowledge base to inform action by the Conference of the Parties, individual Parties and partners to support implementation of the Convention. The sources of information are widespread. Partners such as United Nations entities, other international organizations, regional networks, national sources, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can assist the process by providing information on their activities. Case studies and other information (e.g., indigenous women's experiences) establishing the linkages between gender and biodiversity conservation can be prepared by the Secretariat for internal and external use through the knowledge management platform of the Convention on Biological Diversity and made available through, for example, its clearing-house mechanism. The website of the Convention on Biological Diversity needs to be expanded to include content on gender and biodiversity. It can provide links to other resources, events and partners working on the ground.

28. There is an opportunity to enhance the contribution of the CBD Secretariat to gender monitoring and evaluation including through recording the gender of meeting participants through existing meeting databases.

2. *Link gender, biodiversity and poverty eradication*

29. There is a need to develop or enhance guidelines on integrating gender equality into work under the Convention related to poverty eradication, with particular attention to the causes of inequality between women and men. These guidelines should be developed with support from external partners.

30. The CBD Secretariat should keep Parties informed of ongoing discussions on gender in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and provide input to the SDG process when relevant.

3. *Identify, develop/improve and promote gender-biodiversity implementation tools and methodologies*

31. Moving from concepts and policy to action in the enhanced implementation phase of the Convention will require implementation tools to mainstream gender into biodiversity-related activities. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity has already developed and adopted a number of work programmes, principles and guidelines to guide the work of Parties and others as they organize their approaches to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. These existing tools should be reviewed for any linkages to gender. Required work on gender and biodiversity can then be determined. A key action will be to develop additional tools to show Parties and others how to integrate a gender perspective into their biodiversity conservation activities.

32. Building a clear understanding of the links between gender and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets will be important. As such, the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and other relevant partners should develop and disseminate outreach material on gender and each target.

4. *Establish the basis for Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to integrate a gender perspective into the national biodiversity planning processes*

33. The implementation of the Convention and its Protocols is primarily actuated at the country level, through national biodiversity planning processes and the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and national biosafety frameworks. As such, dissemination of the guidelines for mainstreaming gender into NBSAPs, published as CBD Technical Series No. 49,¹ should be expanded. Furthermore, opportunities should be provided for Parties to report on their approaches, progress and obstacles encountered to the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the Conferences of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties (COP-MOPs) to the Convention's Protocols.

34. In order to promote the development of appropriate national level indicators on gender and biodiversity within the framework of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets there is a need to closely collaborate with the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership in order to include gender in the agenda of workshops, reports and other relevant activities.

D. Constituency sphere

35. In order to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in the mainstreaming of gender, it is important that the Convention on Biological Diversity mobilize partners and builds on existing efforts, best practices and lessons learned. Potential partners include, *inter alia*, United Nations agencies, academic institutions, indigenous and local communities, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations.

1. *Build partnerships and establish networks to promote the mainstreaming of gender under the Convention on Biological Diversity*

36. As a first step, a stocktaking and review of relevant partners should be carried out so as to identify opportunities for collaboration and to avoid overlap. This identification can be carried out in collaboration with known partners including, *inter alia*, UNEP, the Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network, and interagency task forces on gender.

37. Outputs could include a database of partners, their objectives and mandates, principal activities and an evaluation of their relevance to implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

¹ Guidelines for Mainstreaming Gender into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, <http://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-ts-49-en.pdf>.

38. Based on the review of partners, the Secretariat should seek to support such efforts through, for example, (i) the provision of technical advice and scientific information, (ii) support for resource mobilization for the implementation of COP- and COP-MOP-mandated activities, and (iii) knowledge sharing.

39. At the same time, the potential contributions of partners to the implementation of the Gender Plan of Action should be mobilized especially with regards to how their activities, tools, methodologies, etc. are relevant to the implementation of the Plan. In mobilizing these contributions it is important to define roles, responsibilities, timelines and conditions for collaboration through joint activities. Partnership agreements should take full account of cultural considerations (e.g. intercultural agreements).

40. It may also be useful to explore opportunities for the consolidation of partners at the regional and/or thematic levels in order to enhance information sharing and strengthen the capacities of relevant organizations. This could include facilitating the exchange of information through, for example, information technology and communication tools.

41. Building partnerships between relevant organizations and national focal points will also be important for the effective mainstreaming of gender. As such, details on regional and national gender-related organizations should be compiled and made available as an online database within the CBD website. Furthermore, national focal points should be made aware of other relevant international agreements concerning gender such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), in order to support the identification of national-level synergies.

2. Link the CBD Gender Plan of Action with the United Nations system's activities

42. There are a number of existing mandates on the mainstreaming of gender issues, which should be considered. Means to accomplish this include partnerships with gender focal points in multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and in United Nations agencies, so as to strengthen cooperation and support the work of the gender programme officer under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

43. The effectiveness of gender mainstreaming in work under the Convention on Biological Diversity could benefit from experiences, best practices, and lessons learned garnered through linking with ongoing gender mainstreaming efforts.

44. Further benefits will be achieved by connecting with interagency task forces on gender and by including gender in the agendas of the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio conventions (JLG) and the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG).

3. Build awareness of biodiversity issues among gender and women's organizations

45. In order to increase the understanding of biodiversity issues among women and gender-related organizations, it is necessary to implement an awareness-raising campaign - this for example could be done through the Global Initiative on Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA). This will allow participating organizations to identify opportunities for their full participation in the processes and implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

46. Additional material should also be developed including material on (i) the relevance of biodiversity to livelihoods, culture, traditional knowledge, health and food security, (ii) the link between biodiversity and the provision of basic human rights, such as access to water, and (iii) training modules on the relevance of biodiversity to the consideration of gender issues.

47. To enhance dissemination to relevant organizations it would be useful to identify regional or national organizations that could act as the repository for relevant material and include such organizations on the mailing list.

4. *Build capacity of women, particularly indigenous women, to participate in CBD processes and decision-making*

48. Convention processes will benefit from building women's capacity, and ensuring the equitable involvement of women, particularly indigenous women at all levels of decision-making relevant to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

49. To facilitate such capacity-building and equitable involvement in decision-making processes, a needs assessment in collaboration with gender experts and women, particularly indigenous women, should be conducted to analyse and plan for capacity-building needs of these groups.

50. Based on these needs, preparatory meetings and training for women, particularly indigenous women leaders, should be supported prior to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Support should also be enhanced for capacity-building on biodiversity and gender implemented by indigenous women's alliances and other relevant gender-related organizations including through the establishment of a pool of experts/facilitators to support capacity-building.
