



Statement by Astrid Schomaker, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity

International Women's Day (8 March 2025) “For all women and girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment” (Video message)

On this International Women's Day, we at the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity join the global call to promote equal rights, empowerment and opportunities for all women and girls.

Almost three decades ago, the world came together to develop the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a visionary and widely endorsed blueprint for securing the rights of all women and girls.

The Beijing Declaration has contributed to reshaping the global agenda, but its promise remains largely unfulfilled.

Women and girls make up half of the world's population, yet many still face gender-based discrimination, often depriving them of their rights and denying them a level playing field for access to opportunities.

This is nothing less than a moral failing. But more than that: At a time when the world is grappling with a multi-pronged environmental crisis at planetary scale, we need all to be able to contribute to their full potential. The world needs the leadership and engagement of women and girls in protecting, restoring and sustainably using biodiversity, addressing climate change and achieving sustainable development.

Indigenous women and girls bring unique knowledge and practices that are vital for biodiversity stewardship. Their empowerment is crucial for fulfilling the vision of people living in harmony with nature.

That is the vision that the world is pursuing through the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework—the KMGBF.

The contributions of empowered women, as part of a whole-of-society endeavour, are essential to the implementation of the KMGBF. The Gender Plan of Action, which was adopted alongside the Framework, aims to enable and foster those essential contributions.

Today and every day, let us promote the rights of women and girls and take action to empower them, for peace with nature and for our common future.