



Rio Conventions Pavilion Bulletin

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RIO CONVENTIONS PAVILION HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 20 JUNE 2012

The Rio Conventions Pavilion continued on Wednesday, 20 June, convening for Gender Mainstreaming Day. The event consisted of sessions on: mainstreaming gender in the three Rio Conventions - progress to date and way forward; linking research, policy and practice for gender-responsive action in forestry; political leadership and gender, and stakeholders panel; and a celebration of women's leadership in sustainable development. A special event on the economics of sustainable development also took place.



President Tarja Halonen, Finland, receives an award for gender leadership.

MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN THE RIO CONVENTIONS: PROGRESS TO DATE AND WAY FORWARD

Executive Director of UN Women Michelle Bachelet opened Gender Mainstreaming Day noting the UNCCD and the CBD recognized the importance of gender issues and participation at all levels from the onset, while the UNFCCC has moved from "gender blindness" to increased awareness and inclusion of gender-sensitive policies.

UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja said efforts to achieve zero net land degradation must recognize women's contribution to land stewardship and knowledge dissemination. He outlined ongoing initiatives to strengthen



UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres

gender mainstreaming in national implementation programmes, including extending resources from the UNDP small grants programme to scale up women's involvement, and a special prize for women as agents of change in land restoration.

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres, noted some progress made under the UNFCCC, including: more references of gender in the text and a self-imposed accountability team of women to alert the Secretariat to gender relevant developments in the negotiations. She emphasized that beyond addressing the vulnerability of women the UNFCCC Secretariat seeks to increase awareness of women as "agents of change" in their role as the link between food, water and energy issues on the ground.

Jaime Webb, CBD, noted Target 14 of the CBD Strategic Plan for 2020 takes account of the needs of women, indigenous communities, and the poor and vulnerable in conservation programmes. She called for improved collaboration between the three Conventions to enhance awareness at the national level and including experiences of women in developed countries to demonstrate that the need for gender mainstreaming is a universal issue.

Lorena Aguilar, IUCN, noted successes and challenges in bringing a human face to the environmental sector where gender mainstreaming and implementation remains fragmented despite increased inclusion in Conventions' texts and plans of action.

Ann Marie Sloth Carlsen, UNDP, noted the catalytic role of gender equality in advancing all the other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Underscoring that "size matters,"

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Panel (L-R): UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres; UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet; UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja; and Jamie Webbe, CBD Secretariat.

she outlined UNDP's contribution to gender mainstreaming highlighting capacity-building alliances to integrate gender considerations in global climate policy.

Margaret Groff, CFO, Itaipu Binacional, spoke of the company's gender equality actions to stimulate leadership and entrepreneurship.

LINKING RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE FOR GENDER-RESPONSIVE ACTION IN FORESTRY

Robert Nasi, Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), introduced the panel.

Anne Larson, CIFOR, discussed a project on Gender, Tenure and Community Forests in Uganda and Nicaragua that aims to improve women's rights to forest resources and enhance stakeholder participation to improve livelihoods. She said the project seeks to increase understanding of obstacles to participation in decision-making at all levels and promote advisory committees for multi-stakeholder dialogue.

Anne Marie Tiani, CIFOR, elaborated on the application of the adaptive collaborative management (ACM) methodology in western Cameroon, explaining that the participatory action research approach helped to amplify the "voice" of vulnerable women and address their livelihood needs through sustainable forest management. She noted that while ACM addresses power asymmetries it requires intensive facilitation and long-term engagement that is not easily aligned to short-term donor projects.

Moira Moeliono, CIFOR, presented on gender equity in Vietnam in the context of REDD+, finding no evidence of effective collaboration between local authorities and women, pointing to the need for: capacity building; empowerment of formal and informal women representatives; and adapting benefit-sharing mechanisms to local culture.

During discussions, participants highlighted the close links between gender inequality and culture, noting transforming gender relations is a slow and incremental process. Cautioning that a focus on the moral or equity aspects can be counterproductive, several speakers stressed the need to communicate the benefits to the whole community of enhancing women's skills and economic empowerment. Moeliono highlighted experience in Indonesia where women have taken advantage of equity legislation to certify their rights

to land and prevent appropriation by male relatives to illustrate the importance of creating an enabling environment at the national level.

On the role of researchers, Tiani stressed that while they can help raise awareness, "it is not our place to tell women they have a problem." She noted the role of the ACM methodology is to help women analyze their situation and support them in implementing the solutions. Noting that foresters can introduce their own gender constructs, one speaker stressed the need to raise awareness among development facilitators about the risk of inadvertently introducing new gender norms.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GENDER, AND STAKEHOLDERS PANEL

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres emphasized that successful leaders have a broader vision of the boundaries of action. She noted women, just as they bring up children, have two strengths they bring to negotiation processes, love that can inspire negotiators to think outside the box and discipline to challenge and hold policy makers accountable.



Executive Director of UN Women Michelle Bachelet



Julia Duncan-Cassell, Minister of Gender and Development, Liberia

Former President Mary Robinson, Ireland, noting the importance of the gender dimension in climate change action, highlighted the roles of Connie Hedegaard, Patricia Espinosa and Maite Nkoana-Mashabane as UNFCCC COP Presidents in driving the climate process. Calling them the Troika, she highlighted their leadership led to establishment of the Troika+, an alliance of over 50 leaders committed to raising the issue of gender in climate.

Yolanda Kakbadse, President, WWF, said to change, more men are needed in the room, noting their role in changing attitudes and minds. She stressed that women have different visions to address conflicts of social and environmental nature, saying “when on the edge of the precipice they will not step over the brink but will find another way to move forward.” She highlighted the private sector needs to do a better job of recognizing the value of women in boardrooms.

Carmen Becerril, President, ACCIONA Energy, spoke on behalf of the private sector noting it is still dominated by men. She stressed sustainability has to be on the agenda of education and any public or private enterprise and underscored that companies engaged with sustainability consider economic, environmental and social aspects as part of a long-term strategy in their decisions.

Julia Duncan-Cassell, Minister of Gender and Development, Liberia, stressed women and children in Liberia are most affected by the impacts of climate change. She reported Liberia’s strategy on gender and climate change involves discussions at all levels and training of women, including on solar energy.

President Tarja Halonen, Finland, emphasized the need to empower and increase representation of women in science, economics and politics where they have shown success and serious work. Noting the under-representation of women in multilateral negotiations, she suggested subsidizing female delegates from least developed countries.

Figueres emphasized women are at the nexus between energy, water and food, noting it is an anachronism that 50% of the world’s population is not appropriately represented in decisionmaking. Kakbadse and Duncan-Cassell called for education programmes for young girls, with Duncan-Cassell highlighting the importance of improving the retention of girls in African schools.



Participants at the Celebration of Women's Leadership in Sustainable Development

CELEBRATION OF WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Convened in remembrance of Marie Aminata Khan of the CBD Secretariat, moderator Lorena Aguilar, IUCN, said the President Award would be presented in honor of those leading the way towards gender equity and women’s empowerment.

President Tarja Halonen, Finland, highlighted the importance of women’s empowerment and full participation, finding it astonishing that it took so long to realize that we need both men and women - just like a bird needs two wings to fly. She stressed the transition towards a green economy is necessary to achieve sustainable development as “economic growth is needed for poverty eradication, but it has to contain the social dimension and respect the boundaries of our planet.”

Aguilar then saluted President Halonen for her visionary and pioneering leadership and presented her with the President Award.

Cate Owren, Executive Director, Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), highlighted the other awards to be presented for vision, leadership, advocacy and sustainable solutions.

Deputy Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs Rejoice Mabudafhasi, South Africa, and Satu Hassi, Member of the European Parliament, were presented with the Vision Award.



Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland



Panel (L-R): Pavan Sukhdev, The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) study leader; Robert Watson, former IPCC Chair and Blue Planet Laureate; Caroline Spelman, Secretary of State for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, United Kingdom; and Jeffrey Sachs, Director, Earth Institute and Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General.

The Leadership Award was presented to Benjamin Karmorh, Liberia, for being the first to raise the issue of gender from the floor of the UNFCCC negotiations. A second Leadership Award was presented to the Arab League of States for action on gender and climate change.

The Advocacy Award was presented to Maria José Ortiz, WEDO, for her work with indigenous communities and with WEDO in the UNFCCC process. The Sustainable Solutions Award was presented to Feri Lumapao, Aprotech Asia, for training and leadership on gender, technology and climate change.

CBD Executive Secretary Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias remembered the legacy of Marie Aminata Khan of the CBD Secretariat, highlighting her dedication to mainstreaming gender into the CBD. He said her passion inspired all to mainstream gender into their daily work.

SPECIAL EVENT ON THE ECONOMICS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Introducing the session, Caroline Spelman, Secretary of State for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, United Kingdom, welcomed the early agreement reached on the Rio+20 outcome, noting it allows for a focus on the practicalities of arriving at the future we want.

Pavan Sukhdev, The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) study leader, said that the core message of the TEEB study is the strong link between the economic invisibility of nature and the sustainable development challenges we face today. Underscoring that “there cannot be a paradigm of development that begins by destroying the livelihoods of the poor,” he stressed that measures to promote sustainable agricultural practices and restore ecosystems are critical for poverty reduction and building resilience of the poor.

Synthesizing the key messages from the paper “Environmental and Development Challenges: the Imperative to Act,” Robert Watson, former IPCC Chair and Blue Planet Laureate, stressed the need for an integrated approach to

climate change mitigation and adaptation. Noting that any sustainable solution must include putting a price on carbon and accelerating research and development of sustainable technologies, he underlined the need for political will at all levels to bring this about.

Jeffrey Sachs, Director, Earth Institute and Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General, emphasized that the challenges we face are unprecedented and complex, noting that organic farming methods cannot meet global food needs, nor can today’s renewable energy technologies address the energy deficit. Stressing that Rio produced three farsighted treaties “but they didn’t turn the needle on any of the three issues,” he expressed hope that Rio+20 would generate a set of simple messages to mobilize the world’s citizens to demand change.

In a vibrant discussion, participants raised numerous issues relating to how to achieve the transition to a more sustainable development path at time of global economic recession and political paralysis. Emphasizing that while not likely to meet all their targets, the MDGs have been critical in mobilizing action, Sachs underscored that if well communicated, non-binding Sustainable Development Goals are likely to be more effective than a legal document in rallying action. However, Watson noted that a mix of legally binding agreements and voluntary action will be needed, with Spelman adding that policy can make it easier for citizens “to do the right thing.”

While acknowledging that sustainable technologies are expensive, Sukhdev noted where there is an absence of cheaper alternatives, microfinance can be effective in scaling up adoption of new technologies, citing the case of solar energy uptake in Bangladesh. Sachs underscored the need for additional financial resources for developing countries, while Watson called for funds spent on perverse subsidies to be redirected to inclusive and sustainable development. Spelman noted the need to make a compelling case to finance ministers on the costs of inaction.

Concluding, Spelman underlined the need for new and courageous leaders that understand what is at stake for present and future generations and expressed the hope that Rio+20 will embody this spirit and send out a call for action.

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