

GENDER AND BIODIVERSITY



A Critical Look at the Implementation of International Agreements

Introduction

Women are central actors in the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity. Despite the recognition of this role on paper, concrete measures to strengthen their participation in decision-making processes and to acknowledge their knowledge are lacking. As a result, the implementation of global biodiversity goals falls short of its potential. OroVerde emphasizes the opportunities created by integrating gender aspects into international biodiversity conservation measures and calls for stronger commitments that go beyond mere recommendations.



FIND ME AT COP 16

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**Event: Un llamado Colectivo
a la Acción**
October 31 at 9 AM,
Banco de Occidente
Sala 5
Cali, Colombia

Background

The role of women in the protection of biological diversity is of great significance in many contexts, yet it is often marginalized. Studies and experiences from OroVerde projects demonstrate that women, particularly in rural areas, possess specific knowledge of sustainable practices related to natural resource management.

This knowledge is often essential for biodiversity protection, yet women remain underrepresented in political processes and project planning. In countries of the Global South, their participation is especially restricted by socio-cultural norms that exclude them from decision-making processes.

Although international agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) address gender equality, implementation often lags behind. In many cases, there are no clear mechanisms to ensure women's participation or to monitor progress.



Our demands

OroVerde calls for binding measures to ensure that women are equally involved in decision-making processes and benefit from biodiversity conservation.

1. Recognition of Women's Traditional Knowledge

Women are custodians of traditional knowledge that is crucial for the preservation of plant and animal species. This knowledge must be incorporated into biodiversity strategies and conservation projects, and their needs must be explicitly captured in political planning and research programs.

2. Equal Access to Decision-Making Processes

Women should be equally involved in local, national, and international conservation strategies. Governance structures in rural communities need to be made more inclusive to integrate the voices and knowledge of women. Community-based approaches that equally include women representatives should be promoted. Simply inviting women is insufficient, as cultural factors may prevent them from attending or speaking up.

3. Equitable Access to Resources and Economic Benefits

Women's access to resources and economic benefits arising from biodiversity conservation must be guaranteed. This includes the fair distribution of profits from genetic resources, as stipulated by the Nagoya Protocol. Additionally, technological and educational barriers must be overcome to enable women to ascend to leadership positions in conservation.

Critique of Previous Implementation

Past international efforts to integrate gender aspects into biodiversity conservation remain superficial. Although the CBD and the GBF acknowledge the importance of gender equality, specific implementation mechanisms are lacking. The language often remains vague, allowing too much leeway for inadequate implementation by states. Many national biodiversity strategies only marginally consider gender aspects or ignore them entirely. It often appears that gender issues are mentioned for completeness without developing genuine measures to address structural problems. Particularly problematic is the lack of funding and data for gender-sensitive conservation measures. Without sufficient resources, women's participation is limited to symbolic gestures.

Conclusion and Call to Action

The international community and civil society must strive harder to ensure that gender aspects in biodiversity conservation exist not just on paper. This requires:

- Concrete mandates for the integration of gender equality in national biodiversity strategies.
- Sufficient funding for gender-sensitive biodiversity conservation.
- Binding data collection and corresponding monitoring to track and enforce gender goals in biodiversity conservation.
- Awareness-raising and training regarding gender equality in biodiversity management.

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