



CHINMOY BISWAS / WOMEN4BIODIVERSITY

TOWARDS SB8(J)01 : POLICY BRIEF ADVANCING GENDER-RESPONSIVE, INCLUSIVE AND RIGHTS-BASED APPROACHES IN THE GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TARGETS 2 AND 3 OF THE KUNMING-MONTREAL GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

September 2025

MEENAL TATPATI, RESEARCH AND POLICY ASSOCIATE

Summary

COP 16 established the Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) to support Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in biodiversity conservation and restoration. As per the new Programme of Work, guidelines for Targets 2 and 3 must ensure meaningful, inclusive, and gender-responsive participation, particularly empowering women and girls from Indigenous and local communities.

Parties should safeguard gender-differentiated traditional knowledge, secure tenure and access rights, and ensure all conservation and restoration actions are implemented with Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).

Initiatives should adopt co-management approaches that share authority and benefits with Indigenous Peoples' and local communities (IPLCs), integrate diverse values of nature, and address power asymmetries.

Parties must collect and the CBD should monitor gender-disaggregated data for Targets 2 and 3 as well as Target 22.

Direct, flexible, and transparent funding should be made available for women-led conservation and restoration initiatives, enabling locally appropriate, culturally grounded, and gender-responsive restoration and conservation actions.

What is the issue?

At COP 16, Parties to the CBD took a historic decision to establish a Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) and other provisions related to Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities (IPLC), recognizing their unique role, knowledge, and practices in implementing the Convention and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF). A new Programme of Work on Article 8(j) was also adopted, to be guided by principles of meaningful, inclusive, and gender-responsive participation of IPLCs at every stage, aligned with the Gender Plan of Action (2023–2030), and built on partnerships grounded in ethics, equity, and mutual respect.

The Subsidiary Body's first task is to develop guidelines to strengthen legal and policy frameworks for implementing Targets 2 and 3, including in indigenous and traditional territories, to support IPLC-led protection and restoration practices. It is vital that these guidelines empower Indigenous women and girls, who play a vital role in biodiversity conservation and restoration but continue to face discrimination and marginalisation in decision-making, access, and resource ownership. Implementation of Targets 2 and 3 must address their rights, needs, and knowledge systems, ensuring their full and effective engagement in support of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

Why is it important?

Gender-responsive approaches to ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation are increasingly recognized in international treaties and conventions. The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) through its Gender Action Plan, and the UNFCCC Enhanced Lima Work Programme on gender,

its extension and the preparation towards adopting a new Gender Action Plan, all highlight the centrality of gender equality in advancing environmental outcomes. Similarly, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) general declaration No. 39 (2022) affirm women's rights to participate fully and equally in decision-making over land, territories, and resources. CEDAW/C/GC/34 also asks states to strengthen customary and statutory institutions and mechanisms for defending or protecting women's rights to land, water, and other natural resources. Despite this, restoration initiatives and targets often overlook the gender-differentiated knowledge, innovations, and practices of women from Indigenous and Local Communities. While Target 2 of the KM-GBF has set the restoration goal, it is silent on how to integrate gendered



knowledge. Similarly, conservation under Target 3 of the KM-GBF risks entrenching exclusion of the rights, participation, and leadership of women and girls that are not explicitly safeguarded. Ensuring that guidelines prescribe best practices in gender-responsive legal and policy frameworks will enable the Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) to build on these global commitments and align implementation with existing human rights obligations.

A gender-responsive approach is also critical to addressing the disproportionate burdens that women and girls in Indigenous and local communities face in the context of restoration and conservation. Women living in and around protected areas often confront insecure tenure, threats of eviction, and militarization linked to conservation enforcement, alongside risks of gender-based and sexual violence. The hurried implementation of Target 3 without adequate human rights safeguards could deepen these inequalities. Similarly, in restoration efforts under Target 2, failure to account for women's rights to control and access land and territories, natural resources and benefit sharing and capacity-building needs, risks undermining both equity and ecological effectiveness. Embedding gender responsiveness into the guidelines will ensure the full, equitable, meaningful, and informed participation and leadership of women, girls, and youth at all levels of action, engagement, policy, and decision-making on conservation and restoration.

What should be done?

The guidelines to strengthen legal and policy frameworks for implementation of Targets 2 and 3 to support Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities-led

protection and restoration practices need to incorporate the following suggestions:

Recognition of the unique gendered knowledge systems that protect and restore

Women's knowledge, practices and innovations, shaped by their roles as food producers, seed custodians, healers, and resource managers is central to the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resources within their lands, water and territories. Such knowledge systems not only ensure ecological balance but also strengthen community resilience, food security, and intergenerational transfer of knowledge.

States and relevant actors should recognise, respect, and safeguard the traditional knowledge, innovations, and practices of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities, with particular emphasis on the gender-differentiated knowledge and leadership of Indigenous and local women.

Legal and policy frameworks should integrate and uphold diverse ways of valuing nature, including cultural, spiritual, and customary values, alongside ecological and economic considerations.

Recognising these plural values is essential to designing inclusive approaches to restoration and conservation. In doing so, states must also strengthen the role of women as stewards of biodiversity, ensuring that decision-making processes address and overcome structural power asymmetries that limit their full and effective participation.

To operationalise this, Parties should conduct gender-responsive assessments

and collate case studies on how traditional knowledge contributes to restoration and conservation outcomes; document gender-differentiated impacts of KM-GBF implementation; and create enabling conditions for women and girls to transmit, adapt, and innovate knowledge systems in the face of environmental change.

Recognise and provide rights to tenure and access as per international human-rights based instruments

It is well recognised that customary territories of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities overlap with legal land management categories including conservation categories of Protected Areas (PAs) and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs). Therefore, it is crucial that states recognize, secure, and uphold the tenure and access rights (both statutory and customary) of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities, particularly women and girls, consistent with international human rights law, national legislation, and customary systems, as a foundation for effective conservation and restoration. Thus, Parties should adopt and strengthen legal and policy frameworks that provide for collective and individual land, water, and resource tenure security, ensuring these frameworks are gender-responsive and protect against dispossession, exclusion, or displacement in the name of conservation or restoration.

Legal and policy measures should guarantee equitable access to land, waters, and resources for women, girls, and marginalisedmarginalized groups within Indigenous Peoples' and local communities, while ensuring fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from conservation and



restoration measures. Parties should strengthen the capacities of women and girls in Indigenous Peoples' and local communities to claim and exercise tenure and access rights.

Ensuring and Securing Free Prior and informed Consent

States and relevant actors should ensure that no conservation or restoration measure, including the creation, expansion, or management of PAs OECMs, is undertaken without the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of affected Indigenous Peoples' and local communities. FPIC is a verifiable mechanism to guarantee recognition and respect for rights over indigenous and traditional territories, consistent with international human rights law and obligations under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ([UNDRIP](#)). Given persistent reports, including those noted by the [United Nations](#)

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, of protected areas being established without FPIC and of continuing human rights violations in the name of conservation, Parties should strengthen safeguards to ensure that conservation measures do not reproduce such injustices.

Shared Governance for Restoration and Conservation

Ensuring the co-management of restoration and conservation initiatives is essential to uphold the rights, knowledge, and priorities of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities whose territories often overlap with areas targeted under Targets 2 and 3 of the KMGBF. Co-management arrangements provide for shared authority, responsibility, and benefits between states and communities, embedding principles of equity and accountability. Such arrangements help prevent exclusionary conservation, while strengthening ecological outcomes by drawing on traditional knowledge systems, customary governance, and locally rooted stewardship practices.

Co-management must also be explicitly gender-responsive, recognizing that women and girls often play distinct and critical roles in biodiversity stewardship, yet face barriers to participation and decision-making. Legal and policy frameworks should therefore ensure women's equal representation, leadership, and influence in co-management bodies; support the recognition of gender-differentiated knowledge and practices; and establish safeguards to address power asymmetries. Embedding gender equity into co-management ensures that restoration and conservation initiatives are more just, inclusive, and sustainable, while advancing the broader objectives of the KM-GBF.

Monitoring gender-disaggregated data in Targets 2 and 3

Monitoring of Targets 2 and 3 remains largely ecological and area-based, overlooking gendered dimensions of participation, tenure, access, knowledge, and benefits. It is therefore crucial that the guidelines track indicators and efforts to develop gender-sensitive indicators¹ aligned with the CBD Gender Plan of Action (2023–2030).

Parties should collect, analyse, and disseminate gender-disaggregated data to understand the differentiated impacts of KM-GBF implementation, particularly for Targets 2 and 3. In this regard, the development of the methodology for the Headline Indicator for Target 22 should explicitly integrate effective and appropriate gender-disaggregated data collection and analysis including data on women from Indigenous Peoples and local communities in decision-making positions in biodiversity governance bodies.

Grievance and Redress Mechanisms in Conservation and Restoration

Parties should establish transparent, accessible, and rights-compatible grievance and redress mechanisms to address harms arising from conservation and restoration initiatives, including the creation and management of PAs and OECMs. These mechanisms should be inclusive of Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities, with special attention to women, youth, and other marginalised groups ensuring their meaningful participation and protection of their human rights. Mechanisms should align with international human rights standards and follow best practice principles such as legitimacy, predictability, equity, and

¹ A recent example is the collaboration between Women4Biodiversity and UNEP-WCMC in the co-development of an indicator to monitor the national implementation of the gender plan of action. It is vital that gender sensitive indicators are actively used by the Parties to the CBD to ensure gender-responsiveness across the framework.

and accountability. Integrating such mechanisms into legal and policy frameworks, co-management arrangements, and funding modalities will help ensure that conservation and restoration actions are equitable, rights-based, and socially just.

Accessible, transparent and flexible funding for women-led restoration processes

Parties should ensure that direct funding is made available to women-led restoration initiatives, recognising their critical role in biodiversity stewardship and ecosystem restoration. Funding mechanisms should also prioritise Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities, including women within these communities, particularly in and around PAs and OECMs. Financial support should be accessible, transparent, and flexible, enabling recipients to design and implement locally appropriate, gender-responsive, and culturally grounded conservation and restoration activities.

About this brief

This brief outlines Women4Biodiversity's key recommendations for a gender-responsive implementation of Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF).

References

- FAO, IUCN CEM & SER. 2021. Principles for ecosystem restoration to guide the United Nations Decade 2021–2030. Rome, FAO.
- Duarte, A (2024). Technical Brief: Bridging the Gap: Gender Responsive Ecosystem Restoration. Women4Biodiversity.
- Women4biodiversity(2024), Restore Her Rights Gender Responsive Approaches to Ecosystem
- IPBES (2022): IPBES (2022). Summary for Policymakers of the Methodological Assessment Report on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. Pascual, U., Balvanera, P., Christie, M., Baptiste, B., González-Jiménez, D., Anderson, C.B., Athayde, S., Barton, D.N., Chaplin-Kramer, R., Jacobs, S., Kelemen, E., Kumar, R., Lazos, E., Martin, A., Mwampamba, T.H., Nakangu, B., O'Farrell, P., Raymond, C.M., Subramanian, S.M., Termansen, M., Van Noordwijk, M., and Vatn, A. (eds.). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6522392>
- Women4biodiversity(2024), Restore Her Rights Gender Responsive Approaches to Ecosystem Restoration: A Global Summary. Published: September 2024

For more information please contact:

Meenal Tatpati
Research and Policy Associate
Women4Biodiversity
meenal.tatpati@women4biodiversity.org

Women4Biodiversity
227/31, Baan Wang Tan
Chiang Mai, 50230
Thailand
info@women4biodiversity.org
www.women4biodiversity.org



www.women4biodiversity.org
communications@women4biodiversity.org