



INTERVENTION BY
MR. AHMED DJOGLAF
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE HIGH-LEVEL LUNCHEON ON THE GENDER POLICY FRAMEWORK AND
ACTION PLATFORM FOR THE UNCCD AND HARMONIZATION ROADMAP TO
MAINSTREAM GENDER IN THE THREE RIO CONVENTIONS**

21 SEPTEMBER 2011
NEW YORK, USA



Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800, Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9, Canada
Tel : +1 514 288 2220, Fax : +1 514 288 6588
secretariat@cbd.int www.cbd.int



Life in harmony, into the future
いのちの共生を、未来へ
COP 10 / MOP 5

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Colleagues,

It is an honour to participate in this event, co-hosted here today by IUCN, and our sister convention, the United Nations and Convention to Combat Desertification. Through its partnership with IUCN, UNCCD today has joined the Convention on Biological Diversity in being unique among Multi-lateral Environment Agreements in having established a Gender Policy Framework and Action Plan. The CBD Gender Plan of Action is the Secretariat's and the Convention's continuing response to global commitments of the last decades as well as recommendations from international for a, and is in compliance with major mandates within the UN system. It is also a reflection of the increasing awareness that gender equality and women's empowerment are important prerequisites for environmental conservation and sustainable development.

The discussions here today are timely in that at the 2010 last year's High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, countries called for action to ensure equal access by women and girls to education, basic services, health care, economic opportunities and decision-making at all levels, recognizing that achievement of the MDGs depends largely on women's empowerment. World leaders also stressed that accelerated action on the goals requires economic growth that is sustainable, inclusive and equitable—growth that enables everyone to benefit from progress and share in economic opportunities.¹

Why is gender mainstreaming important for the Convention on Biological Diversity? 90 percent of the world's staple crops (rice, wheat, maize) are produced by women. This in turn provides up to 90 percent of the rural poor's food intake and women produce 60–80 percent of food in most developing countries. Gender equality and equity are a prerequisite to poverty eradication and sustainable development. The livelihoods of rural and indigenous peoples and those of communities living in poverty are often closely tied to use and conservation of biodiversity. In these communities, women play a leading role in caring for their families and communities, in sharing their intellectual and social capital, and in protecting and managing biodiversity resources. In many societies, women as well as men are agents of change, but their contributions do not receive equal recognition. Gender equality between women and men has a cumulative effect of improved biodiversity management and protection and poverty alleviation for communities.

We have seen similar discussions demonstrate the inter-linkages between climate change, biodiversity and sustainable land management (SLM), and that gender-sensitive approaches to these issues contribute to sustainable livelihoods, environment protection and sustainable development. Discussions have also stressed the need for governments and to provide financial support to gender equality initiatives within their responsible (environment) ministries as well as within the Rio Conventions.

To this end a special acknowledgment and thank you needs to be given to the government of Finland, who has been tireless in its efforts to provide financial support to the three conventions on gender mainstreaming initiatives. For the Convention on Biological Diversity this has especially been important as it is through the generous financial contribution from the government of Finland that we have been able to establish the position of a full time Gender Programme Officer.

The Convention, fully committed to the full and effective participation of women in its processes, has funded over 1258 women to attend its meetings including scientific and technical

¹ [http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/\(2011_E\)%20MDG%20Report%202011_Book%20LR.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/(2011_E)%20MDG%20Report%202011_Book%20LR.pdf)

meetings. Moreover, in November 2009 the Parties formed an informal cross-regional grouping called the “Like-Minded-in-Spirit Group of Women” - a platform to ensure that women’s voices are heard and their contribution is fully recognized in this Working Group on ABS and other CBD processes.

At its tenth Conference of the Parties (COP 10) in Nagoya in October of last year, the COP through its decision X/19:

- (i) emphasized the importance of gender mainstreaming in all programmes of work under the Convention in order to achieve the objectives of the Convention and its Strategic Plan for the period 2011-2020;
- (ii) requested the Executive Secretary in cooperation with other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to enhance efforts to fully implement the Plan of Action in order to mainstream gender considerations in all aspects of the work under the Convention and formulate clear indicators to monitor progress;
- (iii) invited Parties to consider gender as a core cross-cutting issue in the implementation of biodiversity-related activities; and
- (iv) urged Parties to promote the mainstreaming of gender considerations in developing, implementing and revising their national and, where appropriate, regional, biodiversity strategies and action plans, and equivalent instruments, in implementing the three objectives of the Convention, taking into account the guidance provided in Technical Series No. 49. In addition, 25/47 of the COP 10 decisions call for the mainstreaming of gender and/or the full participation of women.

Since 2008, we have envisioned coordination amongst the Rio Conventions and the GEF on gender mainstreaming and at COP 10 in Nagoya last year, we held the first joint Rio Conventions and GEF side-event on gender mainstreaming in collaboration with IUCN. This was followed in March of this year with the first joint coordination group on gender workshop (funded through CBD HIVO funds) in Costa Rica. At the eleventh meeting of the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions (JLG11) we endorsed the Joint Coordination Group on Gender and agreed to explore the possibility of an event to be held under the framework of the Rio Conventions Pavilion at the Rio Summit 2012 on gender mainstreaming within the Conventions. The CBD believes that the Rio Conventions Pavilion is an appropriate vehicle to build awareness about gender mainstreaming and the Rio Conventions.

Yes, our vision of coordination amongst the Rio Conventions has finally come to fruition; however we must not become complacent as we have a rocky road ahead of us. We must not forget our vision “To lift, by 2020, gender as a cross cutting priority and to ensure that it is integrated into thematic issues across the Rio Conventions and the GEF, to achieve the long-term objectives of these conventions”. We must also not forget that poverty is not simply the result of low income, but also reflects a deprivation of basic human requirements for well-being. Where the environment is degraded, the health impacts may be made worse by social and economic conditions. Just as the impact of biodiversity loss, climate change and land degradation is disproportionately felt by poorer communities; there are also disparities along gender lines. As the Millennium Development Goals emphasize clear linkages between gender equality, poverty alleviation, environmental degradation and sustainable development, we need to ensure that insights into these topics are included into our approach to reversing environmental degradation, reducing poverty and improving human wellbeing, health and equity.

Thank you for your kind attention.