

Decision 23/11: Gender equality in the field of the environment

The Governing Council,

Recalling principle 20 of the Rio Declaration,¹ paragraph 20 of the United Nations Millennium Declaration,² goals 3 and 7 of the internationally agreed goals of the Millennium Declaration and the targets on water and slums and paragraph 20 of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development,³

Recalling also its own decisions 17/4 of 21 May 1993, 18/6 of 26 May 1995, 19/7 of 7 February 1997 and 20/9 of 5 February 1999 on the United Nations Environment Programme and the role of women in environment and development,

Reaffirming the need to continue the implementation of Agenda 21⁴ and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation⁵ and to pursue gender mainstreaming in the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, in a spirit of full cooperation and global solidarity,

Concerned about the impact of environmental degradation on the livelihoods of communities, particularly for women living in poverty,

Underlining the importance of integrating into national sustainable development strategies and into poverty reduction strategy papers gender equality and the particular role of women as natural resource managers,

I

Equal participation in decision-making

1. *Invites* Governments to promote methods of work conducive to women's participation in environmental decision-making at all levels with the aim of achieving broad gender balance;
2. *Encourages* the Executive Director to work with other United Nations agencies to assist Governments in promoting the equal participation of women and men in policy formulation, decision-making, implementation, monitoring and reporting on sustainable development;
3. *Requests* the Executive Director to promote the sharing of good examples of gender-sensitive environmental initiatives of Governments and all stakeholders;
4. *Also requests* the Executive Director, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to develop a mentorship programme which would encourage

¹ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex I.

² General Assembly resolution 55/2 of September 2000.

³ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap.I, resolution 1, annex.

⁴ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

⁵ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap.I, resolution 1, annex.

young women to take an active role in environmental policy formulation and decision-making;

5. *Encourages* the Executive Director to enhance work, including at the regional level, to develop and disseminate gender-disaggregated analyses, data and information on United Nations Environment Programme issues and activities;

6. Encourages the Executive Director to strengthen further the involvement of women in United Nations Environment Programme activities;

II

Gender mainstreaming in environmental policies and programmes

7. *Calls on* the Executive Director to develop and promote a set of gender-equality criteria for the implementation of programmes;

8. *Requests* the Executive Director to apply the United Nations Environment Programme gender-sensitivity guidelines;

9. *Also requests* the Executive Director, in the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan on Technology Support and Capacity-building,⁶ to take into account paragraph 3 (e) thereof, which states, as one of the objectives of the Plan,

“To integrate specific gender-mainstreaming strategies, as well as education and training for women, in formulating relevant policies, and to promote the participation of women in environmental decision-making”;

10. Further *requests* the Executive Director to give an account of lessons learned about gender-related aspects of environmental issues in conflict situations and to apply its conclusions to the post-conflict assessment work of the United Nations Environment Programme;

III

Assessment of effects on women of environmental policies

11. *Requests* the Executive Director, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, to assist Governments in building capacity for gender mainstreaming in the context of the Bali Strategic Plan on Technology Support and Capacity-building;⁷

12. *Encourages* the Executive Director to collaborate with scientific institutions to promote research-exchange programmes on gender and the environment as an input to the Decade for Education on Sustainable Development;

13. *Also encourages* the Executive Director to work with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and other relevant human rights bodies in identifying lessons learned on gender-related aspects of environmental issues;

⁶ UNEP/IEG/IGSP/3/4, annex.

⁷ Ibid.

IV

Implementation

14. *Invites* Governments, in accordance with its decision 20/9 of 5 February 1999, to designate gender focal points and to notify the Executive Director thereof;

15. *Also invites* Governments actively to involve all stakeholders in their gender-equality and environment-related activities;

16. *Requests* the Executive Director to integrate further gender-equality and environment activities into the programme of work of the United Nations Environment Programme;

17. *Invites* the Executive Director, subject to availability of extrabudgetary resources, to explore options, in consultation with Governments, on the possibility of developing an action plan for gender mainstreaming within the work of the United Nations Environment Programme;

18. *Requests* the Executive Director to communicate the present decision to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and to report on the situation with regard to gender equality and the environment and progress in the implementation of the present decision to the Governing Council at its twenty-fourth session.