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GLOBAL GENDER AND ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK

The Critical Issues



GGEO

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GLOBAL GENDER AND ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK

The Critical Issues



Welcome to the *Global Gender and Environment Outlook The Critical Issues*. The authors and the UNEP Secretariat provide in this assessment an overview of critical evaluations and analyses of the interlinkages between gender and the environment, and their importance for gender-sensitive policy-making and actions.

The Global Gender and Environment Outlook (GGEO) was first proposed by the Network of Women Ministers and Leaders for the Environment (NWMLE) to UNEP at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). The 2014 United Nations Environment Assembly subsequently welcomed the development of the GGEO, and the use of social science information and gender relevant indicators to examine the links between gender and the environment (UNEP GC Decision 27/11).

The GGEO provides an overview of existing knowledge to generate insights and propose some answers to the following key policy-relevant questions:

- What social forces are producing the changes seen in the environment, and are they gender dependent?
- What are the large-scale consequences of ongoing ecological changes for social systems and human security, and are the impacts gender-differentiated?
- What do future projections and outlooks look like, are they gender-differentiated, and will there be different outcomes for women and men?
- What actions could be taken for a more sustainable future that will position women and men as equal agents in taking such actions, and which socio-economic factors will shape different outcomes and responses for women and men?

The GGEO has been developed and written by a global team of almost 50 experts, with inputs from major groups and international organizations. We wish to thank all those who have contributed to the GGEO and look forward to the uptake of its findings at the second United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2) in Nairobi in May 2016.

GGEO The Critical Issues is an abridged version prepared specifically for UNEA-2 of the comprehensive GGEO. The full report will be available later in 2016.



Foreword



Virtually everywhere in the world, environmental change has different impacts on women and men. Gender also has a role in determining how – and sometimes whether – people are able to act as agents of change on their own natural environments.

Perhaps recognizing this reality, the poet Maya Angelou has called on us “to recognize and celebrate our heroes and she-roses”. For me, these include people such as Rachel Carson, the author of *Silent Spring*, and Professor Wangari Maathai, who founded the Greenbelt movement in Kenya. It also includes the villagers in India who started the Chipko movement against deforestation, as well as the many people around the world who are protesting environmental degradation and the effects of climate change.

At the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), UNEP, in response to a request from the Network of Women Ministers and Leaders for Environment, committed to undertake a global assessment of the environment, focusing on gender. The result – which reflects the joint efforts of UNEP, UN Women and other partners – is the *Global Gender and Environment Outlook* (GGEO) report, the first comprehensive global assessment of the gender-and-environment nexus.

The GGEO report is essential reading for those interested in the social dimensions of environmental issues. For readers who want to better understand current environmental challenges, and for those seeking innovative and effective solutions, the report describes policy options and concrete opportunities to contribute to the future we want: a future of justice and equality that leaves no one behind. It reflects and builds on the groundbreaking work of hundreds of scientists, policy experts, gender advocates and members of community groups. And it examines a wide range of topics, including food production, water and sanitation, energy, sustainable consumption and production, fisheries and fishing communities, and forests and those who depend on them for their livelihoods.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development highlights the close links between gender and environment, and between gender and sustainable development more broadly. By working to eliminate gender inequalities in communities and societies around the world, we can open up new environmental solutions, and we can go a long way toward realizing all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

There has already been progress on many fronts. The importance of the gender-and-environment nexus has been acknowledged in several international agreements and many national policies. Analyses of gender-environment links are driving efforts such as the development of cleaner-burning cookstoves and more equitable water distribution schemes. The number of Global Environment Facility projects that take gender into account has more than doubled following the organization's adoption of a gender-mainstreaming plan.

But there is still a long way to go before both gender equality and a healthy environment are realized around the globe. The GGEO report represents an important step toward the development of more sustainable, just and equitable people-and-environment policies.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Achim Steiner'.

Achim Steiner

United Nations Under-Secretary-General and
Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ASM	artisanal and small-scale mining	ENERGIA	International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy
BAU	business-as-usual	EU	European Union
BPA	bisphenol-A	FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
BRS	the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions	FUGs	forest user groups
CBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity	GACC	Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves
CDKN	Climate and Development Knowledge Network	GBV	gender-based violence
CEDAW	United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	GDP	gross domestic product
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research	GGCA	Global Gender and Climate Alliance
CO ₂	carbon dioxide	GIAs	gender impact assessments
COP	conference of the parties	GLAAS	Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water (UN-Water)
DALY	deaths and disability-adjusted life years	GM	genetically modified
DCPI	Division of Communication and Public Information (UNEP)	GSSU	Gender and Social Safeguards Unit (UNEP)
DDE	dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene	HAP	household air pollution
DDT	dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane	ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
DEPI	Division of Environmental Policies and Implementation (UNEP)	IDRC	International Development Research Centre
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs	IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
		IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
		ILO	International Labour Organization

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