

*Information on the progress of implementation of the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan*

Submission by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)  
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The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) welcomes the opportunity to make this submission in response to the invitation by the UNFCCC COP in Decision 20/CP.26, paragraph 3, for “*information on the progress of implementation of the activities contained in the gender action plan, areas for improvement and further work to be undertaken, including, as appropriate, information on the multidimensional impacts of the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic on progress, and consideration of other diverse challenges that may impact future implementation of the gender action plan at all levels*”.

IUCN recalls the importance of Parties’ decisions regarding gender-responsive climate action and recognises both Party and non-Party stakeholder contributions at all levels to implement the Gender Action Plan (GAP) to date. IUCN is pleased to submit information related to its ongoing efforts to contribute across all areas of the GAP implementation, with its most-recent and forthcoming work informing this submission. IUCN remains committed to furthering the knowledge base on gender-climate links, providing new information and data to guide effective gender-responsive decision-making and programming on climate change, and providing technical support and capacity building to its state and non-state members and partners. Key contributions are summarized by GAP priority areas below.

**1. *Progress implementing activities relevant and contributing to the Gender Action Plan***

*Capacity building, knowledge-sharing and communication*

Recognising the fundamental importance of this GAP priority area, IUCN has continued to investigate emerging gender-climate links, generate new knowledge, train cross-sector policymakers and practitioners, and share information across its broad networks and partnerships, leveraging opportunities to engage its diverse membership, for more robust gender-climate information, tools and knowledge-sharing. In September 2021, for example, at IUCN’s [World Conservation Congress](#), which brought together more than 9,200 people from across different sectors from around the world, IUCN offered a [gender training](#) for Congress participants, including sessions on gender-based violence (GBV), Nature-based Solutions (NbS), and cross-sector strategies. Congress also featured the first-ever [thematic session](#) focused on GBV and environment ([GBV-ENV linkages](#)), organised in collaboration with diverse members and partners of the GBV-ENV Center – a flagship IUCN-USAID initiative to build knowledge, tools and cooperation to address GBV-ENV, including in relation to climate change.

In the last two years, the [GBV-ENV Center](#) has hosted and partnered on a series of webinars and events reaching more than 2,500 people directly. It has also curated a library of resources, and developed a series of tools – including a [Summary for Policymakers](#), an [expert paper](#) as contribution to the preparatory work of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), a [brief on GBV-climate links](#), and a joint communications campaign with the [Spotlight Initiative](#).

These raised awareness and know-how in understanding and addressing GBV and climate links with representatives from national governments, financing mechanisms, civil society, environmental and gender organisations, academia and others. In 2022, IUCN will launch the next phase of [RISE](#), a dedicated grant-making mechanism supporting projects addressing GBV-ENV. RISE grantees will participate together in a peer-learning cohort, generating new information and promising practice on tackling these issues.

In 2021, in advance of COP26, IUCN reviewed the updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) ([IUCN, 2021](#)) and compared findings with an IUCN baseline analysis of NDCs submitted in 2015 ([USAID and IUCN, 2016](#)). This review drew attention to progress on the integration of gender-responsiveness in national commitments and plans and has been presented in numerous events, including at and following COP26. At COP26 IUCN also participated in the [Virtual Gender Marketplace](#), sharing knowledge with participants and attendees on the various efforts IUCN has been implementing which link gender and climate change.

IUCN has also been working directly with the UNFCCC Secretariat's Gender Team to build the capacity of Parties and stakeholders on gender integration. This capacity strengthening included contributing to various Secretariat-hosted virtual workshops, including in two workshops (on Implementation of the GAP and Gender Analyses, the latter where IUCN presented its [gender analysis guide](#)), as part of the [#ActOnTheGAP: Virtual Workshop Series](#). IUCN also contributed to the virtual workshop hosted by the Secretariat focused on [Gender integration Into National Climate Actions](#). New knowledge products coming out in 2022 will continue to spotlight gender-responsive project strategies and results and enrich the knowledge base on GBV-climate links.

#### *Gender balance, participation, and women's leadership*

IUCN champions methodologies that ensure that women's participation and leadership can take centre stage. These include development, facilitation and implementation of Climate Change Gender Action Plans (ccGAPs) and related processes and designating gender task forces, women's networks, and women's "seats" in decision-making bodies at national and subnational levels. These have been a key pathway for change to enhance gender-responsive climate action. The ccGAP processes follow [IUCN's ccGAP methodology](#), which prioritises the involvement of women from community to national levels in the definition of these national policy documents. In 2022, the Government of Pakistan will finalise its national ccGAP, facilitated by IUCN with Readiness-phase support from the Green Climate Fund, elevating women's leadership across priority sectors. Meanwhile, with particular attention to the priorities and leadership of Indigenous women, the government of Guatemala is commencing its national ccGAP process, facilitated by IUCN with support from USAID.

Supported by USAID through the AGENT<sup>1</sup> programme, IUCN has also been implementing the [Regional Coastal Biodiversity Project \(RCBP\)](#), a project that aims to protect nature and livelihoods for future generations by reducing threats to biodiversity in coastal-marine ecosystems in Central America's Northern Triangle. As women make up the majority of populations in these ecosystems, but have limited access to adaptive support mechanisms,

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<sup>1</sup> See more here: <https://genderandenvironment.org/agent/>

gender-responsive action is a necessary component of the project. Women play vital roles in management and conservation, have the ability to transmit knowledge of fishing activities to others, and are open to the use of new technologies that allow the development of their communities. RCBP supports women's economic empowerment (sustainable approaches and biotrade), advancing women's leadership in natural resource governance, cultivating strategic alliances with local and governmental organizations working on gender issues in project sites, building and developing the capacities of municipal technical staff, institutions, members of fisher organizations and women's groups on the importance of gender and fisheries governance, and institutionalising gender throughout project management and administration, as well as in implementing organisations.

Finally, with support from the Green Climate Fund, IUCN has been implementing the Building Livelihood Resilience to Climate Change in the Upper Basins of Guatemala's Highlands project,<sup>2</sup> focused on reducing the impacts of climate change on the hydrological cycle in target watersheds through improved land use practices. With a duration of seven years, the project expects to directly benefit 132,000 people, of whom at least 30 per cent will be women, with a special emphasis on the participation of single-parent female-led households as a vulnerable sector of the population. A gender assessment analysed key issues and identified gender-responsive project interventions to overcome gaps. The project also designed a culturally-relevant gender and social inclusion strategy, allowing for social and cultural specificities to be integrated across all activities.

### *Coherence*

Coherence across global frameworks is a key enabler for designing and supporting a resilient and adaptive world, and cross-sector cooperation to combine capacities and make information more readily available to all diverse Parties and stakeholders can be a useful strategy. In partnership with WEDO and other partners, and as co-leads of the Feminist Action for Climate Justice Action Coalition under UN Women's [Generation Equality Forum](#), IUCN has co-conceived and is co-creating the Gender and Environment Data Alliance (GEDA). GEDA was designed to contribute to coherence across global frameworks, in particular through curating, communicating and applying gender data for more robust and informed climate action - a key opportunity to encourage collaboration and alignment.

In addition to GEDA, IUCN has also partnered with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), supporting efforts to integrate gender as Parties define the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and its implementation and monitoring, and the development and implementation of the post-2020 gender plan of action. In preparation for meetings in 2021, IUCN prepared a report with the CBD Secretariat on enhancing gender-responsiveness of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework monitoring framework ([CBD/WG2020/3/INF/10](#), [CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/30](#), [CBD/SBI/3/INF/42](#), 2021). The report provides a review of, and recommendations for, enhancing gender-responsiveness of the GBF monitoring framework through inclusion of gender indicators and identification of opportunities to disaggregate data by sex. It also includes learning outcomes from a survey developed and conducted by the CBD Secretariat and IUCN, designed to learn more about the ways in which Parties are collecting data on gender-biodiversity linkages; the challenges faced in collecting

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<sup>2</sup> See more here: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/project/fp087#details>

and reporting on gender data and indicators; and the support that may be needed to better address gender considerations in relation to the GBF goals and targets ([CBD/WG2020/3/INF/10](#), [CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/30](#), [CBD/SBI/3/INF/42](#), 2021). Information gathered through this survey is relevant for Parties, donors, implementing organisations and other stakeholders as they continue to identify key gender gaps and enabling conditions necessary for gender-responsive climate policymaking, programming and finance. For example, only about one-third of respondents, representing 53 countries, considered that they had strong familiarity with gender-environment links. The recommendations and survey findings echo similar gaps and needs on behalf of Parties to the UNFCCC; thus, IUCN expects the information note can be a helpful reference for the UNFCCC Secretariat as it considers further opportunities to mainstream and integrate gender throughout monitoring and evaluation efforts and capacity building activities.

#### *Gender-responsive implementation*

In addition to projects mentioned above such as RCBP and the Building Livelihood Resilience to Climate Change in the Upper Basins of Guatemala's Highlands project, IUCN is collaborating with Conservation International on the Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded Inclusive Conservation Initiative – supporting indigenous organisations across nine regions to receive and implement direct financing, recognizing the historical and modern roles indigenous peoples play in conserving and protecting the planet. ICI will support indigenous peoples and local communities to secure and enhance their stewardship over an estimated area of at least 7.5 million hectares of landscapes, seascapes and/or territories with high biodiversity and irreplaceable ecosystems. Through ICI IUCN strongly recognises that gender integration in inclusive conservation helps to close gender gaps, and also appreciates the potential for ICI to provide a crucial pathway for ensuring indigenous women's rights are mainstreamed and meaningfully integrated throughout. "The ICI strongly focuses on the use of gender-responsive models and approaches at all levels, from sub-projects on the ground to the global level. In addition, the impact strategies of 100% of the ICI sub-projects will include a gender-responsive strategy, which is a key aspect where indigenous peoples leading this initiative will ensure that the impacts on the on-the-ground are responding to the gender gaps in their communities." ([Anita Tzec, 2022](#))

#### *Monitoring and reporting*

IUCN recalls that serious gender data gaps exist, which hamper effective climate decision-making and action at all levels. The importance of continued attention to, strategies for, and investment in disaggregated data and gender-responsive information cannot be overstated. IUCN stands ready to support Parties and other stakeholders to implement and scale up existing strategies, and to strengthen communities of practice toward enhanced gender data collection and application in this regard. GEDA, described above, was designed as an attempt to directly address the issue of these data gaps. Currently in its initial design stages, GEDA aims to improve availability, accessibility, understanding, and application of quality and robust data and information at the gender and environment nexus. IUCN also continues to make new data and information available through analyses using its Environment and Gender Information (EGI) methodology, such as the NDCs analysis mentioned above.

## **2. Areas for improvement and further work to be undertaken, including information on the multidimensional impacts of the coronavirus 2019 pandemic on progress**

As the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to impact every aspect of life and work around the world, IUCN recognises that serious challenges persist, along with opportunities for prioritising adaptive management – which can contribute to climate-friendly project modifications as well as rights-based inclusion and representation, especially for diverse women. Identifying adaptive management challenges and promising practice could be a useful exercise to inform Parties and stakeholders. For example, due to travel and other restrictions, the Pakistan ccGAP was implemented almost entirely online; while this was a barrier to very-local women, it created new opportunities for greater and more diverse participation in virtual workshops.

Recalling that the pandemic has had a devastating impact on communities and diverse populations, IUCN emphasises the importance of generating, maintaining and fostering peer learning around the evidence base on how the COVID-19 pandemic impacts communities and intersects with gender and climate change. IUCN continues to work on and contribute to this peer learning; for example in 2020 it conducted research on the overlapping effects of environmental degradation and climate change with COVID-19 on GBV ([IUCN, 2020](#)).

## **3. Consideration of other diverse challenges that may impact future implementation of the gender action plan at all levels**

Recalling the CBD survey to countries noted above on understanding gender-environment links and capacities for collecting and using data, IUCN notes that, in many contexts, a key barrier for implementation is not the lack of willingness to act, but continued capacity gaps of national government representatives and institutions to develop and sustain gender-responsive processes. These gaps include those in capacity on data collection and in understanding links between gender and the environment, findings which have come through IUCN's engagement and through direct surveys conducted with Parties, such as the survey noted above. IUCN is working across various initiatives, including its work with the UNFCCC Secretariat and directly with governments on ccGAPs, to address this issue. GEDA will also be a key initiative to better identify and leverage joint capacities to fill gaps.

IUCN has also encountered the need for women's organizations, IPLC organizations and other smaller organizations to access capacity support focused on building institutional and management capacities. The Building Livelihood Resilience to Climate Change in the Upper Basins of Guatemala's Highlands project, after learning that women's groups required further support to access and manage small grants, has adjusted their strategy to include more direct support focused on managing funds and projects above a certain size. ICI has also been designed to address this capacity gap, aiming to support IPLC leadership and institutions in identifying their capacity gaps, strengthening existing capacities, continuing to support their engagement in relevant policy arenas, and building their capacity to access the larger volumes of resources required for larger-scale biodiversity conservation and natural resource management.

IUCN stands ready to support and collaborate with the UNFCCC secretariat, Parties and all other stakeholders to address these challenges and continue joint efforts to implement the Gender Action Plan.