



# Gender in the sustainable management of natural resources

Fiorela Shalsi  
Senior Gender Advisor – GWP-Med



# OVERVIEW

- Gender and sustainable management of natural resources – gender roles and differences in access and rights
- How to consider gender dimensions in SMNR
- Questions as food for thoughts

# Sustainable management of natural resources



- **SMNR** means *“using natural resources in a way and at a rate that maintains and enhances the resilience of ecosystems and the benefits they provide. In doing so, **meeting the needs of present generations of people without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs**”*

# Differences in access, rights and knowledge



- Due to **gender roles**, women and men have disparities in economic opportunities, access to productive resources and knowledge; engage differently in household care and public life and decision-making processes.
- Women **don't enjoy the same rights** as men to land – crucial resource for poverty reduction, food security and rural development.
- The different roles women and men have leads to different bodies of knowledge about the environment. Due to their roles in using resources like wood, water and forest products, not to mention subsistence agriculture, **women have a unique understanding** of the natural resources.

# Gender dimensions in SMNR



- **Different Use** - Women and men use natural resource in a different way due their gender roles, rights, and responsibilities at the household and community.
- **Different impact** - Environmental factors, including biodiversity loss, climate change, natural disasters, and energy development may affect men and women differently, due to different behaviors, roles as well as their physiological characteristics. Whether one looks at energy, water, agriculture, or consumption patterns a gender lens is key to understand differences in environmental impacts. For instance, women account for a large proportion of the more than 4 million deaths a year from in-door air pollution. Environmental degradation can also lead to increased gender-based violence.
- **Empowerment** - On the other hand, women's economic, social and political empowerment can help accelerate action on climate, environmental protection and conservation.
- **This understanding is essential** if we're to promote sustainable management, effective conservation and sustainable development of natural resources.



# **How to consider gender dimensions in SMNR?**



# 1. Better data, for better understanding, better management

- Lack of sex-disaggregated data and statistics hinders efforts towards gender equality.
- No efficient change can take place when there is no data to back up the process.
- Gender statistics capture the specific realities in the lives of women and men and they comprise:
  - ✓ Sex-disaggregated data
  - ✓ Data pertaining specifically to women or to men
  - ✓ Data that captures specific gender issues

# Gender data



Without gender data, statistics often fail to capture a range of differences between women and men such as:

- ✓ Access to and use of natural resources
- ✓ Impact of environmental change
- ✓ Economic empowerment
- ✓ Participation in decision making
- ✓ Use of time
- ✓ Intra-house inequalities
- ✓ Specific health concerns
- ✓ Exposure to violence



# New indicators



The OECD has identified three indicators that could be disaggregated by sex:

- ✓ mortality rates from air pollution,
- ✓ development of green technologies based on patenting activity,  
and
- ✓ exposure to environmental risks.

## 2. A seat at the table



Who is taking decisions from the national to local level and within family? Who is shaping the policies and actions?

While women have progressed in representing environment ministries (41% of environment ministers in OECD countries were women in June 2020), key decisions with an impact on the environment and gender equality are being taken in finance, economics, energy, industry, transport and trade ministries, which are often dominated by men.

# Women and environment



- While the “glass ceiling” persists, women assuming a larger role at higher levels of decision making could help accelerate climate action and the broader environmental agenda.
- According to research on policy making in the European Parliament, women MEPs are more likely than their male colleagues to advance environmental protection initiatives.
- National-level studies also indicate that women parliamentarians address environment-related topics more often than their male counterparts do.



**WATER, ENERGY, FOOD, ECOSYSTEMS**



# Questions as food for thoughts

- What are the key challenges to gender-responsive strategies?
- What are the most efficient measures to make national plans and strategies more gender responsive and inclusive?
- In which ways have women's active participation, voice, and agency in national decision-making processes been promoted and advocated for?
- How can we address capacity and resource gaps?
- How can gender data be improved? Who can collect it?
- What are some examples of how institutions have addressed these issues?
- How can international organizations, government agencies work more systematically with women's organizations to strengthen environment/climate resilience for men and women equally?
- How can we collectively make this an urgent priority?



# Questions as food for thoughts

- What social forces are producing the changes seen in the environment, and are they gender-dependent?
- What are the large-scale consequences of ongoing environmental changes for social systems and women and men security, and are these consequences 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 would position women and men as equal agents in taking such actions, and which socio-economic factors could shape different outcomes and responses for women and men?



# Thank you

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