

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Seventy-eighth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 3-8 February 2025

Strategic matters

CITES GENDER ACTION PLAN

1. This document has been prepared jointly by the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee.
2. At its 19th meeting (CoP19; Panama City, 2022), the Conference of the Parties adopted [Resolution Conf. 19.3](#) on *Gender and international trade in wild fauna and flora*.
3. The Conference of the Parties also adopted Decisions 19.51 to 19.53 on *CITES Gender Action Plan* as follows:

***Directed to the Secretariat and Chair of the Standing Committee***

**19.51** *The Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee, subject to available resources, shall draw on the available body of knowledge, lessons and experiences on gender and how it interacts with other identifying factors in matters related to legal and illegal international trade of wild flora and fauna, to develop a draft gender action plan for submission to the Standing Committee. The draft gender action plan should:*

- a) *consider the needs of indigenous and local peoples of all genders, especially women and girls, as well as how to incorporate their perspectives, skills and talents at all ages, and local and traditional knowledge;*
- b) *aim to ensure that women and girls in all their diversity have equal access to, ownership and/or control over the use of wild flora and fauna, can fully and effectively engage in international trade of species of wild fauna and flora, and receive a fair and equitable share of benefits arising from the use and trade of such wildlife; thus reducing poverty and gender gaps through the promotion of economic and decision-making freedom;*
- c) *aim to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in wild flora and fauna international trade chains;*
- d) *promote gender equality and increase and strengthen the participation and leadership of women at all levels of decision-making and participation in processes related to international wild flora and fauna trade;*
- e) *enhance the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of all genders, in particular women, in the implementation of the Convention, including through the engagement of civil society organizations, women's groups and women delegates, and provide opportunities for building their capacities; and*
- f) *identify specific actions to advance the objectives above, across international trade chains for sustainable and legal wild flora and fauna, including parts and derivatives, as well as associated activities, including harvesting, law enforcement, and policy-making.*

### **Directed to the Standing Committee**

**19.52** *The Standing Committee shall consider any draft gender action plan received from the Secretariat under Decision 19.51 and, if considered appropriate, submit a final version of that action plan, as an annex to the Resolution on Gender and international trade in wild fauna and flora, for approval by the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting.*

### **Directed to Parties and relevant stakeholders**

**19.53** *Parties and relevant stakeholders, are encouraged to:*

- a) *support the preparation of the “CITES Gender Action Plan” by sharing knowledge, case studies and other relevant experiences with the Secretariat;*
- b) *strengthen the evidence base and understanding of the gender-differentiated impacts of sustainable use and international trade in species of wild flora and fauna, and fair and equitable benefit-sharing; and*
- c) *provide financial support towards the development and implementation of the Gender Action Plan.*

### Update on the implementation of Decisions 19.51 to 19.53

4. The Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties [No. 2023/130](#) of 24 November 2023, inviting comments on a number of SC77 documents and agenda items, including on the CITES Gender Action Plan. Previously, Notification to the Parties [No. 2023/104](#) was issued on 23 August 2023 to invite Parties and other stakeholders to provide detailed information on knowledge, case studies, and other relevant experiences that may support the development of the CITES Gender Action Plan. A total of eleven inputs were received in response to the two notifications from the North America region, China, the European Union, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Sweden, the United States of America, Women4Biodiversity and the World Wide Fund for Nature. The overview of their inputs is summarized in Annex 1 to the present document. The responses to Notification to Parties No. 2023/104 will be used as resource for the development of the CITES Gender Action Plan.
5. The draft outline of the CITES Gender Action Plan was revised on the basis of the responses to Notification to Parties No. 2023/104. Further adjustments were made where necessary to ensure that the wording of the text is aligned with Resolution Conf. 19.3 and Decisions 19.51 to 19.53 and takes into account the discussions at CoP19. The revised draft outline is found in Annex 2 to the present document. For ease of reference, the full text of the inputs received by the Secretariat can be found in an information document to the present meeting.
6. The Secretariat has highlighted in grey in Annex 2 five proposed edits that the Standing Committee may wish to consider further due to their substantive nature:
  - a) The North America region proposed to include a reference to demand reduction efforts so that these efforts become gender-aware and gender-responsive.
  - b) The North America region also proposed to add “enforcement and engagement” so that representation and participation of all genders be enhanced in the implementation, enforcement and engagement of the Convention. Previously the text only mentioned the “implementation of the Convention”.
  - c) Mexico proposed to include the concept of “cultural relevance” in two sections of the outline. There is currently no reference to cultural relevance in the text of the resolution or the three decisions.
  - d) Mexico also proposed to be more specific in the “relevant organizations” referred to under the objectives, to include “*women’s and indigenous peoples’ organizations that promote indigenous women’s participation*”.
  - e) The North America region proposed to add “particularly women and girls as transmitters of knowledge, with their free, prior and informed consent”, when referring to the incorporation of the perspective and knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities as one of the strategies and interventions.

7. As a preparatory step for the CITES Gender Action Plan, the Secretariat collected information from other Multilateral Environmental Agreements, as well as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), regarding their gender policy, action plans, or equivalent, which is summarized in Annex 3 to the present document.
8. As noted in document SC77 Doc. 26, the Secretariat has received funds from the European Union towards the partial implementation of Decision 19.51, but no other donors came forward to co-finance the full implementation. The Secretariat was therefore unable to develop the draft gender action plan due to lack of financial and human resources for this new workstream. The Secretariat invites the Standing Committee to consider maintaining Decisions 19.51 and 19.53 in order to allow the implementation of this work in the upcoming intersessional period, and revising Decision 19.52 as contained in Annex 4 to the present document so that the final version of the action plan may be submitted for approval by the Conference of the Parties at its 21st meeting.

#### Recommendations

9. The Standing Committee is invited to:
  - a) review the revised outline contained in Annex 2 to the present document for the finalization of the outline; and
  - b) propose to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting to maintain Decisions 19.51 and 19.53, and revise Decision 19.52 as contained in Annex 4 to the present document.

RESPONSES TO NOTIFICATIONS TO THE PARTIES NO. 2023/104 AND 2023/130

Summary of responses to Notification to Parties No. 2023/104 of 23 August 2023

<b>Submitter</b>	<b>Summary of inputs provided</b>
Germany	An overview of publications, guidelines and concepts on Gender and IWT / wildlife trafficking / CITES / biodiversity. Also shared a document entitled "The Un-Common Heroes: Women Wildlife Rangers of Pakistan, their contribution and challenges" developed by WWF-Pakistan.
Mexico	A list of information, including documents developed by CONABIO, its partners, documents that may assist as input in the preparation of the Gender Action Plan, and a description on the relevant national legislation implementation
Sweden	Overview of experiences, insights, and initiatives that intertwine gender considerations with sustainable use of wild animals and plants as well as biodiversity conservation
United States of America	Resources for consideration from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), information specific to wildlife trafficking and trade, and information relating to biodiversity issues more broadly, in the Caribbean. Also shared USAID Issues Brief <i>Women in the illegal wildlife trade and wildlife enforcement in West Africa</i>
Women4 Biodiversity	Compilation of scientific articles, experiences and guidance materials related to gender and wildlife conservation including, case studies, and other pertinent experiences that can contribute to the development of the CITES Gender Action Plan

Summary of responses to Notification to Parties No. 2023/130 of 24 November 2023

<b>Response by</b>	<b>Summary of inputs provided</b>
North America Region	Provided detailed written inputs with track-changes to make several additions to the outline, under the "Objectives" section - including on demand reduction, gender-based violence, and representation in CITES processes as well as other additional edits
China	suggests to insert "especially women and girls" after gender and gender-specific in a number of locations in the text.
European Union and its Member States	Agreed with the draft outline of the CITES Gender Action Plan
Japan	Suggests that the plan should be implemented outside the core budget of the Secretariat
Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided detailed written inputs with track-changes pertaining to narrowing the plan to the CITES objective to avoid duplication of efforts or mandates with other initiatives.</li> <li>• Supports the Standing Committee's appreciation for the financial support to the European Union for the implementation of Decision 19.51 (develop draft gender action plan) and encourages other Parties and stakeholders to provide further support.</li> <li>• Supports the Standing Committee's request to the Secretariat to present a draft CITES gender action plan for consideration at SC78.</li> </ul>
World Wide Fund for Nature	Supported the work and provided a statement regarding integrating gender into efforts to prevent and counter illegal trade, and to support legal and sustainable trade, and on the importance of the social and economic structures that promote gender equality

## REVISED DRAFT OUTLINE OF THE CITES GENDER ACTION PLAN

(suggested deletion in ~~strike through~~, suggested new text in underline. Text for further consideration of the Standing Committee in grey shading.)

### 1. Introduction

- Background and mandates
- Linkages to the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda
- Linkages to the CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030
- Linkages to the Global Biodiversity Framework

### 2. Rationale

- The role of gender, particularly women and girls, in the international trade of wild flora and fauna, both legal and illegal
- The role of gender, particularly women and girls in all their diversity, in the conservation and sustainable use of wild fauna and flora
- Challenges of gender-blind approaches and opportunities for gender-aware strategies for the implementation of CITES

### 3. Objectives of the Action Plan (from resolution Conf. 19.3)

- Enhance Parties' understanding of gender, particularly women and girls and how it interacts with other identifying factors in matters related to legal and illegal international trade in wild species of fauna and flora
- Contribute to making Parties' research, programming, ~~and monitoring activities~~ and demand reduction efforts related to legal and illegal international trade in wild species of fauna and flora become gender-aware, and gender-responsive and culturally relevant.
- Contribute to ensuring that Parties and relevant organizations, including women's and indigenous peoples' organizations that promote indigenous women's participation, include gender-specific indicators in their strategic planning for CITES implementation
- Enhance the representation and participation of people of all genders, particularly women and girls, in conservation, the implementation, enforcement, and engagement of the Convention and address issues relating to legal and illegal international trade in wild species of fauna and flora
- Increase public awareness about gender, particularly women and girls, ~~and conservation in wild species of fauna and flora~~ and how it interacts with other identifying factors in matters related to legal and illegal international trade in wild species of fauna and flora
- Share information about gender-based violence in wild flora and fauna international trade chains

### 4. Strategies and Interventions

- Data collection broken down by gender, age and other demographic factors as appropriate
- Representation in CITES meeting delegations
- Capacity-building
- Research on the role of gender in legal and illegal wildlife trade
- Incorporation of ~~IPLC~~ the perspectives, and knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities, particularly women and girls as transmitters of knowledge, with their free, prior and informed consent
- Collaboration and partnerships
- Extrabudgetary resource mobilization
- Etc.

### 5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Development of gender-specific indicators with cultural relevance
- Reporting

- Periodic progress review

## **6. Conclusions and recommendations**

## **7. Annexes**

- Case studies, shared experiences, and other relevant information collected for the development of the Action Plan

INFORMATION FROM OTHER MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS (MEAS) AND UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP) ON THEIR GENDER POLICY

MEA/Organisation	Information about gender policy and related activities
Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS)	<p>The <a href="#">BRS Gender Action Plan</a> (BRS-GAP) was developed in 2013 and updated in 2016, 2019 and 2023. The main objective is to ensure that the principles of gender equality are firmly embedded in activities undertaken by the BRS Secretariat in line with applicable United Nations and UNEP gender policies.</p> <p>The Action Plan highlights a number of areas for action, including to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a baseline on gender-related issues and measuring progress in achieving Gender Action Plan objectives and implementing activities;</li> <li>• Ensure that the Secretariat’s programmes and projects are planned and implemented from a gender equality perspective;</li> <li>• Promote the consideration of gender issues in hazardous chemicals and wastes management at the national and regional levels; and</li> <li>• Support staff in achieving a sustainable work-life balance.</li> </ul>
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	<p>The <a href="#">Gender Plan of Action</a> (GPA) was adopted at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15, Montreal, 2022) to support and promote the gender-responsive implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). The adoption of the GPA alongside the GBF with the same implementation timelines is commendable and other conventions and United Nations processes should follow suit.</p> <p>The GPA will deliver 3 main outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expected outcome 1: All people in particular all women and girls, have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention</li> <li>• Expected outcome 2: Biodiversity policy, planning and programming decisions address equally the perspectives, interests, needs and human rights of all people, in particular of all women and girls</li> <li>• Expected outcome 3: Enabling conditions are created to ensure gender responsive implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework</li> </ul>
Minamata Convention on Mercury	<p>The fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-5) adopted decision <a href="#">MC-5/15</a> which welcomed the gender action plan for the Minamata Convention on Mercury and invited Parties and the Secretariat to implement priority activities under the gender action plan as integrated in the Programme of Work and Budget for the biennium 2024-2025.</p> <p>Since 2020, the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention has undertaken several activities with the objective of mainstreaming gender within its programme of work. In 2020, the Secretariat collected scientific, technical and policy information on gender and mercury from Parties and stakeholders, which was used to develop communication and awareness raising material, including a <a href="#">Minamata insight publication on gender and mercury</a> and a video. The Secretariat has also organized dedicated online events and products, including a <a href="#">Online session on Promoting gender equality in the implementation of the Convention</a> and <a href="#">Mainstreaming gender in capacity-building projects</a>, and an <a href="#">InforMEA e-learning course on mercury and gender</a>.</p> <p>Principles of gender equality are also embedded in the current Programme of Work of the Minamata Convention, including through the support delivered through its financial mechanism. The Secretariat released a story to show how projects under one of the components of the financial mechanism, the Specific International Programme, are taking full account of gender considerations.</p>
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands	<p>In 2018 Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands adopted <a href="#">Resolution XIII.18 on Gender and Wetlands</a>, which recognizes the importance of addressing gender equality and women’s empowerment in the implementation of the Convention.</p>

	<p>Contracting Parties further committed to mainstream a gender perspective in the Convention's work, recognizing that women play a vital role as agents of development, and to acknowledge that gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is crucial to making progress against all Sustainable Development Goals and targets.</p> <p>The Resolution encourages Contracting Parties to be gender-responsive in the implementation of the Convention, recognizing the role of women, including Indigenous and local women, in the provision, management and safeguarding of wetlands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Guidance on Mainstreaming Gender Under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands</a></li> </ul>
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	<p>The UNCCD <a href="#">Gender Action Plan</a> places gender equality firmly at the core of its mandate as a vital catalyst of environmental progress.</p> <p>UNCCD has undertaken an <a href="#">analytical study</a> to establish a baseline for monitoring gender parity across the Convention in UNCCD subsidiary bodies and institutions: Committee on Science and Technology, Science Policy Interface, Bureau of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC), Bureau of the Conference of the Parties (COP), UNCCD Secretariat staff, and national delegations to CRIC and COP. The study provides a snapshot of the gender parity situation in each of these bodies, as well a recommendations tailored for each, on how to achieve a better gender balance.</p>
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	<p>The At the 25th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 25), Parties agreed a 5-year enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan (<a href="#">Decision 3/CP.25</a>). At the 26th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) Parties adopted the <a href="#">Decision 20/CP.26</a>. The Decision includes, among other, aspects of the review of the Gender Action Plan implementation. The review of the implementation of the gender action plan is currently underway, with the final review to be concluded at the sixty-first session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation in November 2024 (<a href="#">Decision 15/CP.28</a>).</p> <p>The final review of the implementation aims to identify progress, challenges, gaps and priorities in implementing the GAP, and further work to be undertaken. The draft conclusions proposed by the Chair are available <a href="#">here</a>.</p>



DRAFT DECISIONS ON *CITES GENDER ACTION PLAN*

(new text is underlined and deleted text is in ~~strike through~~)

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