

JOINT FEMINIST LEARNING SESSION on the Rio CONVENTIONS

WOMEN & GENDER
CONSTITUENCY

GENDER
CAUCUS

CBD Women

COP29
Baku
Azerbaijan

UNCCD
COP16
Riyadh | 2024

COP16
COLOMBIA
Purification

Gender Caucuses of the Rio Conventions Stand united for Triple COPs

SEPTEMBER 17, 2024

On September 17th, a landmark moment unfolded as the CBD Women's Caucus, the CSO representatives of the UNCCD Gender Caucus, and the Women and Gender Constituency (WGC) for UNFCCC proudly co-hosted a Joint Learning Session. This session brought together gender advocates, feminists, and women's organizations engaged in the Rio Conventions—the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)—as part of the preparations for the upcoming Triple COPs: CBD COP16, UNFCCC COP29, and UNCCD COP16, all taking place within a two-month period in 2024.

The session presented a unique opportunity to align our efforts to address the interconnected crises of biodiversity loss, land degradation, and climate change. It also reminded us of the visionary work of our founding mothers, who mobilized and united for the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 as a powerful force for the health of both the planet and its people.

A Call for Inclusive and Gender-Just Outcomes

Participants from across the three conventions engaged in vibrant discussions, recognizing that biodiversity, climate, and desertification issues do not occur in isolation. Rather, they are deeply intertwined, with each crisis exacerbating the other, resulting in devastating impacts on ecosystems and communities, especially in the Global South.

As we prepare for the Triple COPs, the task before us is urgent and clear: *To develop a holistic, integrated, and gender-responsive approach to addressing the planetary crisis.* Our focus is on the following key areas:

1. Gender-Responsive Governance

We call on all Parties to recognize that the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, and desertification are gender-differentiated. Any solution must integrate gender considerations at every level, ensuring that women—particularly Indigenous, rural, and frontline women—have a meaningful seat at the decision-making table. Inclusive governance is essential to achieving just and sustainable outcomes.

2. Triple COPs: A Moment of Convergence

The simultaneous convening of CBD COP16, UNFCCC COP29, and UNCCD COP16 presents a unique opportunity to align the outcomes of these three global processes. As gender advocates, stand united in calling on Parties and the United Nations to ensure coordinated, ambitious, and gender-just decisions at each COP. Harm prevented in one COP must not be allowed to reappear in another. This alignment is critical to avoiding policy fragmentation and ensuring that gender considerations are fully embedded across all environmental governance mechanisms.

3. Holistic Solutions for the Planetary Crisis

No single convention can solve the planetary crisis on its own. The challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation must be tackled in tandem, recognizing their interconnected impacts on ecosystems and vulnerable populations. A failure to take this holistic approach will undermine efforts within each individual convention.

4. Protecting and Restoring Natural Systems

Ecosystem protection is essential to addressing the climate crisis. We demand that strategies for biodiversity protection and climate resilience be aligned and reinforced across all three conventions. It is also critical to reject false solutions—those dangerous distractions that may seem to address issues in one convention but cause irreversible harm in another.

5. Financing for Gender-Responsive Action

We call on Parties to commit public and debt-free finance over private-sector mobilization. It is crucial that the most vulnerabilized, including women in all their diversity, have direct access to resources for adaptation, resilience-building, and restoration efforts. Public finance must be dedicated to initiatives that are grounded in gender justice and equity.

6. Advancing Women's Leadership

We celebrate the essential role of women in all their diversity as custodians of biodiversity, land, and climate resilience. Women are often the first responders to crises, yet their contributions are undervalued, and their voices are too often marginalized in policy spaces. We must amplify women's leadership in environmental governance and ensure that their knowledge and experiences are recognized and centered in decision-making processes.

7. Protecting Gains and Preventing Regression

We must resist any efforts to weaken environmental or gender-related commitments in any of the three COPs. It is crucial to protect the progress already made toward inclusive and equitable environmental governance and ensure that the gains achieved through hard-fought advocacy are not lost.

As the world converges for the Triple COPs, the gender caucuses of the Rio Conventions stand in solidarity. This is our moment to push for transformative change, rooted in gender justice, human rights, and the recognition that the future of our planet depends on inclusive, equitable, and holistic solutions.

We call on Parties, governments, and decision-makers to listen to the voices of women, feminists, and grassroots activists. The world cannot afford to delay or deny the urgency of this moment. The outcomes of the Triple COPs must reflect the lived realities of those most affected by environmental degradation, land loss, and climate change.