



CBD Women

# CBD Women's Caucus at CBD COP16

*Full Report*



December 2024

# Introduction

The participation of the CBD Women's Caucus at CBD COP16, during October 2024 in Cali, Colombia, marked a critical step forward in advocating for gender-responsive biodiversity policies and ensuring that women's voices, particularly those from Indigenous Peoples and local communities, were heard and included in global biodiversity governance. Through a **dynamic mix of policy advocacy, strategic communications, capacity-building efforts, and collaborations**, the **CBD Women's caucus contributed meaningfully to shaping the outcomes of CBD COP16 while laying the groundwork for continued action.**

**This report** provides a comprehensive overview of the work carried out by the CBD Women's Caucus during CBD COP16, structured into key sections:

**1. Policy Outcomes:** A detailed review of the major policy items addressed during CBD COP16 and the gender-related achievements, challenges, and advocacy led by the Caucus.

**2. Communications Outcomes:** Highlights from our communications strategy, including press conferences, the launch of a dedicated website, social media campaigns, and the Gender & Biodiversity Champions platform.

**3. Events Outcomes:** A summary of the Women Forum, the Women's Pavilion, and events organised, co-organized, or ones that the CBDWC participated in, both in the blue and the green zone, to advance its agenda.

**4. Internal Outcomes:** Insights into how the Caucus strengthened its internal structures, including preparatory meetings, consolidation efforts, and enhanced coordination and governance.

**5. Collaborations:** Key partnerships with human rights organisations, UN agencies, governments, and other stakeholders, showcasing the power of collective action in amplifying gender justice priorities.

**6. Next Steps:** A forward-looking section outlining plans for continued advocacy, capacity-building, and engagement leading to CBD COP17 and beyond.

# Key Achievements

## 01 Policy Outcomes

- Advocated for gender equity in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), with a focus on Target 23 (gender responsive implementation and women land rights) and the Gender Plan of Action.
- Pushed for gender-responsive National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and benefit-sharing mechanisms like the Cali Fund.

## 02 Events Outcomes

- Organized the Women Forum, which launched the Gender & Biodiversity Champions Platform to unite stakeholders and embed gender equity into biodiversity strategies.
- Hosted the Women's Pavilion, a central hub for gender-responsive dialogues and capacity-building workshops.

## 03 Communications Outcomes

- Social Media: Achieved over 295K views, amplifying the Caucus's advocacy across global platforms.
- Website: Launched a dedicated site hosting resources, webinars, and live updates, engaging diverse audiences.
- Press Conferences: Highlighted key demands and achievements, increasing visibility for gender-responsive biodiversity governance.

## 04 Capacities Development

- Conducted tailored training sessions to prepare members for effective advocacy.
- Supported grassroots and Indigenous women leaders to engage in negotiations and policy discussions.



CBD Women's caucus representatives standing to take the floor and speak at the plenary session of the COP16, Credit Photo by IISD/ENB | Mike Muzurakis

# Policy Out- comes

# Policy Outcomes

The CBD Women's Caucus celebrated notable wins outside the negotiation rooms—such as the highly successful Women's Forum, the launch of the Gender & Biodiversity Champions platform, and a very well-attended Women's Pavilion. Moreover, women and girls' voices resonated strongly in side events, panels, and informal spaces resulting in increased recognition of women's contributions to biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and restoration, and more effective inclusion of women in the works of the Convention.

However, these successes contrasted sharply with the realities inside the negotiation rooms, where gender equity and human rights were sidelined. Negotiations revealed a complex interplay of procedural and political barriers, and a general reluctance to integrate human rights into the language of the decisions.

Procedural barriers such as lack of transparency in contact groups further marginalised civil society voices, especially when observers attempted to raise concerns. In many instances, interventions were dismissed due to time constraints or procedural pressure. Undoubtedly, co-chairs were also under pressure to deliver, but not allowing the interventions and contributions of observers, especially major groups, constitutes a dangerous precedent in the otherwise inclusive practices established in CBD so far.

Conflicting views on the human-rights-based approach, gender equity and the whole of society continue to emerge and were played out during negotiations of key items like items 11, 14, 16, and 20, with some delegations resisting progressive language on gender equality and human rights, and thus weakening previously agreed commitments. As a result, in many negotiations, some Parties consistently objected to the inclusion of references to Target 23, the Gender Plan of Action, as well as other relevant considerations including the recognition of contributions by non-state actors to the Global Review, as one way to ensure that the whole of society approach is implemented.

# Policy Outcomes

The discussions and decisions at COP16 revealed a recurring tension: although gender justice and human rights were addressed in the rhetoric, these principles were often sidelined in the formal policy outcomes. In this context, the CBD WC offered an assessment of these outcomes from a gender lens, highlighting the areas where significant strides were made, as well as key shortcomings that must be addressed moving forward.

- **National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (Item 8):** Inclusive participation was emphasised in NBSAPs, but proposals for stronger gender and rights-based implementation were largely missing. Gender-responsive approaches and alignment with the Gender Plan of Action (GPA) remain limited to symbolic references.
- **Digital Sequence Information (Item 9):** The establishment of the Cali Fund marked progress, with 50% of monetary benefits allocated to Indigenous Peoples and local communities. However, women and youth in other sectors like science and academia were overlooked, thus perpetuating invisibility.
- **Mechanisms for Planning, Monitoring and Reviewing (Item 10):** The inclusion of binary indicators for Target 23 and the component indicator of Gender Plan of Action implementation are steps forward, but the lack of a headline indicator for gender equality and limited disaggregation by sex/gender weaken the ability to track progress effectively.
- **Resource Mobilisation and Financial Mechanism (Item 11):** Divisions between developed and developing countries delayed decisions on financial mechanisms. Direct funding for women, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities remains a critical unmet demand. Gender-responsive financing continues to face resistance.
- **Capacity-Building and Knowledge Management (Item 12):** While women are encouraged to participate in capacity-building and knowledge-sharing, a lack of clear pathways and resources risks sidelining their engagement, particularly in under-resourced regions.

# Policy Outcomes

- **Article 8(j) on traditional knowledge (Item 14):** The adoption of a New Programme of Work and the establishment of a permanent Subsidiary Body mark milestones for Indigenous Peoples, local communities and people of African descent. Gender-responsive language is included, but operational mechanisms for women and girls' leadership and enhanced contributions need strengthening.
- **Scientific and Technical Needs for the GBF (Item 16):** Human rights, gender equality, and equity were reinstated as key 'needs' in the decision on scientific and technical needs for GBF implementation. The decision identifies these as critical gaps and invites submissions from Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women, and youth organisations, enhancing opportunities for their participation.
- **Coastal, Marine, and Island Biodiversity (Item 20):** The decision highlights opportunities to enhance women's participation in the workshops for the description and modification of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) and other marine biodiversity processes. Women experts must be involved early in decision-making, ensuring their knowledge informs conservation outcomes. The decision also encourages synergies with the BBNJ Agreement under UNCLOS for marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction.
- **Synthetic Biology (Item 24):** Negotiations on synthetic biology shifted focus from broad oversight to promoting biotechnology solutions. While references to women, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and youth were retained in capacity-building contexts, robust mechanisms for horizon scanning and monitoring were weakened. A new action plan emphasises capacity-building, technology transfer, and knowledge sharing, aligning with GBF targets but with limited safeguards for risks.
- **Biodiversity and Climate Change (Item 25):** References to strong gender-responsive and human rights language were diluted, and women's land rights were largely ignored in decisions about adaptation and mitigation policies.



COP16 Delegates celebrating the establishment of the Subsidiary Body for Article 8(j) , Credit to : (Photo by IISD/ENB | Mike Muzurakis)



The Participants of the Women's Forum During the First Day, 25 October, picture credit to the UN Women

# Events Out- comes

# Events Outcomes

## Launch of the Gender & Biodiversity Champions Platform

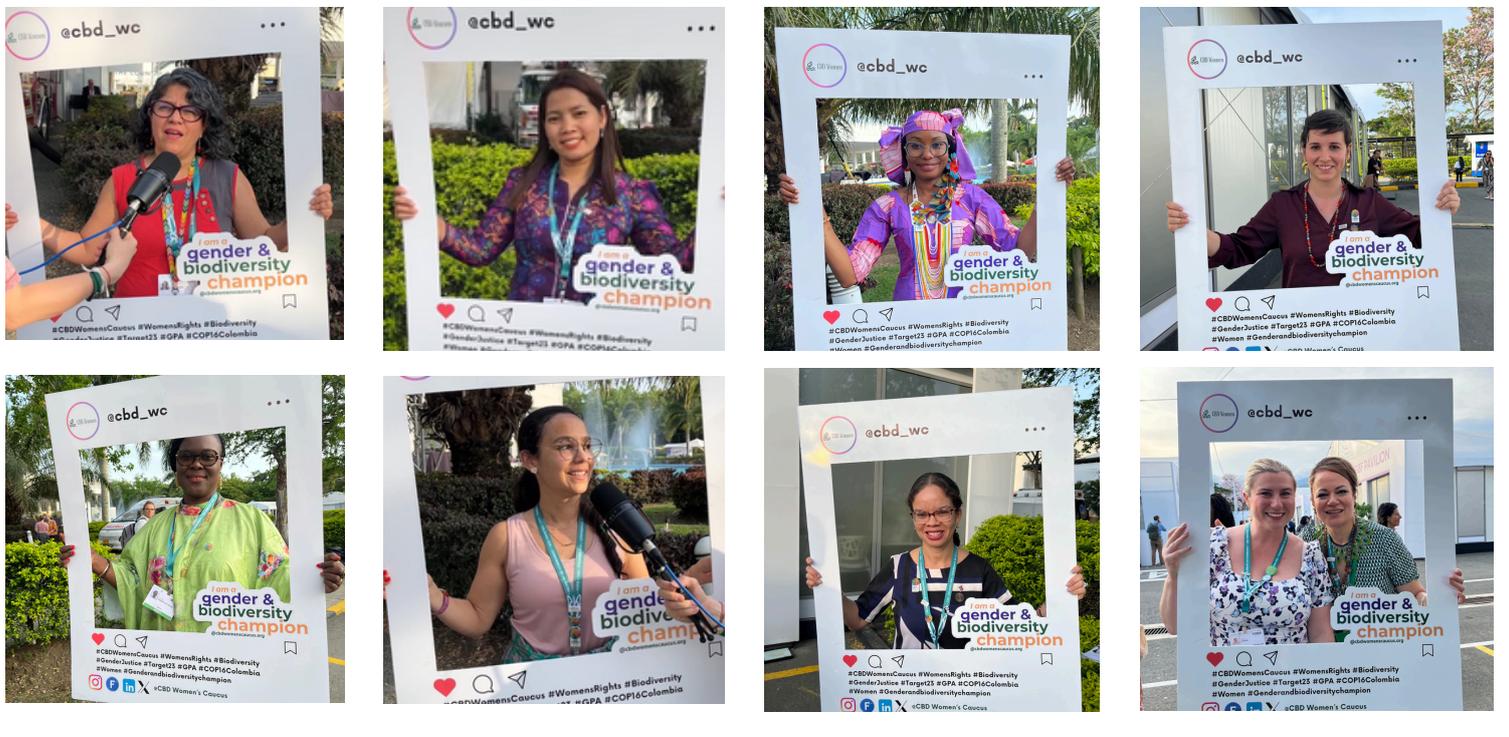
The Launch of the Gender and Biodiversity Champions Platform, an initiative by the CBD Women's Caucus, was a key moment in driving the full implementation of the Gender Plan of Action (GPA) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The platform emphasizes that gender equality, equity, and justice are fundamental for achieving sustainable biodiversity outcomes. The session expressed an urgent call for global commitments to fully implement the GPA and ensure women's contributions are recognized and supported in biodiversity policy and action

High-level speakers included H.E. Meas Chanthya, Under Secretary of State, Cambodia; Mrs. Bopreang Ken, Director of the Department of Biodiversity, Cambodia; OBE Dr. Gemma Harper, Chief Executive of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, UK and Northern Ireland; Ms. Tamara Ospina Posse, Vice-Minister of Women, Colombia; Dr. Gnido Amandine Assogba Deleke, Directorate of the Fauna, Biodiversity and Nature Conservation, Benin; Ms. Paulina Stowhas, Ministry of Environment, Chile; Ms. Nanthaya Nittaphonh, Senior Official, Environmental Policy Division, Lao PDR; Ms. Hindou Ibrahim, Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues; Ms. Catarina Carvalho, Intergovernmental Division of UN Women; Ms. Katrin Münch, Project Manager for GIZ's Capacity Development Initiative ABS; Ms. Jimena Puyana, Environment Programme Officer, UNDP; and Dr. Adriana Moreira, Global Environment Facility (GEF). Moderated by Ms. Amelia Arreguín, Coordinator of the CBD Women's Caucus.

The second session: Launch of the Gender & Biodiversity Champion Platform. Picture credit: UN Women.



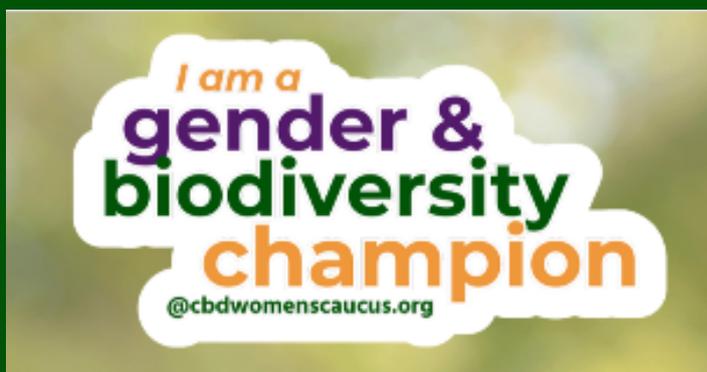


Pictures by CBD Women's Caucus.

# Be a Gender & Biodiversity Champion!

The Gender & Biodiversity Champions are agents of change committed to implement the Gender Plan of Action (GPA) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

It brings together leaders from various sectors: national and local governments, intergovernmental agencies, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, civil society, funders, private sector, academia & more!



**SIGN UP**



+ info: <https://cbdwomenscaucus.org/gender-and-biodiversity-champions/>



December 2024

# Events Outcomes

## CBD WC Preparatory Meeting

On October 20, 2024, just ahead of COP16 in Cali, Colombia, the CBD Women's Caucus convened a 4-hour preparatory meeting, bringing together members from diverse regions and backgrounds. This gathering was a vital opportunity to meet new members who had been actively participating online for a long time, fostering a sense of unity and collaboration within the Caucus.

To ensure inclusivity and meaningful participation, interpretation was provided in English, French, and Spanish, enabling all participants to engage fully in the discussions. The meeting focused on key negotiation items, unresolved policy issues, and strategies to strengthen our advocacy for gender-responsive policies. We also reviewed our communications and advocacy strategies, discussed our involvement in key events during COP16, and ensured that all members were well-prepared and well-informed to effectively navigate the COP16.



Preparatory meeting group picture. Picture by CBD Women's caucus

# Events Outcomes

## Daily Meetings

The CBD Women's Caucus held daily gatherings from October 21 to October 25, and again from October 28 to November 1, in the Marie Kahn Room, Blue Zone. These meetings, held from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., were exclusively for Caucus members—no press, party representatives, or external observers were allowed. This created a safe and confidential space where members could openly discuss daily updates, share insights from negotiations, and reflect on events and pavilion activities.

To ensure inclusivity and broad participation, the daily meetings were also held in a hybrid format, allowing members who could not attend in person to join virtually. Interpretation was provided in English, French, and Spanish, ensuring that all members could fully engage in the discussions and contribute to shaping our collective advocacy.

This daily meeting was crucial for reviewing developments in key negotiation areas, addressing emerging challenges, and continuously refining our advocacy strategies. They also provided an opportunity to strengthen our collective efforts, ensuring our voices remained unified and focused on advancing gender-responsive, human rights-based policies.



CBD Women's Caucus members during the daily meeting. Picture by CBD Women's caucus

# Events Outcomes

## Women Forum



High level opening panel. Picture credit to UN Women

The Women's Forum at COP16, held on October 25 and 29, 2024, in Cali, Colombia, served as a pivotal platform to advance gender-responsive approaches to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Organized collaboratively by the CBD Women's Caucus and its partners, the Government of Colombia, and the CBD Secretariat, the Forum addressed critical gaps in achieving Target 23 under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF). With a key focus on implementing the Gender Plan of Action (GPA), the Forum fostered high-level discussions, knowledge exchange, and collaboration among stakeholders, emphasizing the disproportionate impacts of biodiversity loss experienced by women and girls and their indispensable contributions to conservation and restoration efforts.

Check out the full report here: <https://cbd womenscaucus.org/institutional-reports>

# Events Outcomes

## Side events

The CBD Women's Caucus organised and co-organized a number of meaningful and impactful side events during COP16 in Cali, Colombia, aimed at addressing critical gender equality and social inclusion issues in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. These side events focused on topics such as capacity building, gender-responsive monitoring, women's land and ocean rights, and empowering Indigenous women environmental defenders. By bringing together a diverse range of stakeholders, including governments, UN agencies, girls and women, youth, indigenous communities, and civil society organisations, the Caucus fostered cross-sector collaborations and advocated for gender-responsive policies within the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF). Notable achievements included the launch of the Gender and Biodiversity Champions Platform, strategic discussions with global leaders, and the formation of new partnerships aimed at supporting women-led biodiversity conservation and restoration efforts.



CBD Women's Caucus Side Event: "Women's Land, Coastal, and Water Rights" Photo Credit: International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF Group)

# Events Outcomes

## Women's Pavilion

The CBD Women's Caucus organised and facilitated Women's Pavilion at COP16 which provided a safe and inclusive space for 33 women's organizations to showcase their work efforts in biodiversity conservation and the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). It served as a platform to amplify women's voices in environmental decision-making, foster discussions on the connection between gender and biodiversity, and advocate for gender-responsive approaches to achieving global biodiversity targets, emphasizing the vital role of women in advancing the KMGBF .

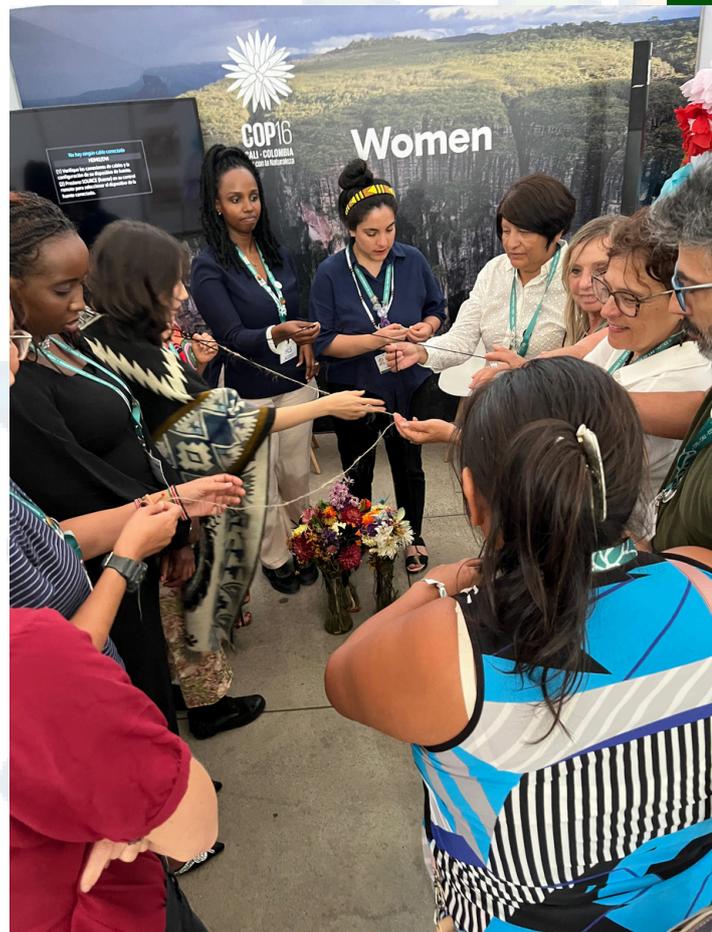
Check out the full report here: <https://cbd womenscaucus.org/institutional-reports>



Group Photo at the end of the Side Event at the Women's Pavilion. Picture by CBD Women's caucus



Panel Discussion and Attendees at the Women's Pavilion. Picture by CBD Women's caucus



Game during the Closing Ceremony of the Women's Pavilion. CBD Women's caucus



The CBD Women's Caucus Representatives at the First Press Conference Credits: Photo by John Gonzalez / Cali24horas

# Comms Out- comes

# Communications Outcomes

## Press conferences



The CBD Women's Caucus Representatives at the First Press Conference Credits: Photo by John Gonzalez / Cali24horas

As Communication Lead for the CBD Women's Caucus, Fatima El-Aaraby coordinated and led **two press conferences during CBD COP16**, each amplifying the CBD WC commitment to gender-responsive biodiversity action. Both events were widely promoted across our platforms and the media advisories were translated into Spanish and English and were shared with the media list suggested by the CBD Secretariat to ensure accessibility for a global audience.

**The first press conference, "Championing Women and Girls for Biodiversity Action: CBD Women's Caucus Demands for CBD COP16," held on October 21, 2024**, gathered speakers from diverse regions, including Africa, Latin America, and Asia, who shared the Caucus's core demands. Key topics included integrating the Gender Plan of Action (GPA) into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), advocating for **human rights-based finance mechanisms, and positioning Indigenous women as direct beneficiaries of new biodiversity funding sources**. This press conference also marked the unveiling of our CBD COP16 policy positions booklet and announced a high-level event on gender and biodiversity during CBD COP16. [Watch the full press conference here.](#)

# Communication Outcomes

## Press conferences



The CBD Women's Caucus Representatives During the Second Press Conference. Picture by CBD Women's Caucus

**The second press conference, "CBD Women's Caucus: Achievements and Challenges on Gender Justice at CBD COP16," held on October 31, 2024,** provided an assessment of CBD COP16 outcomes, spotlighting achievements and challenges in gender justice. With speakers also from different regions, the press conference addressed progress on gender integration in biodiversity actions, the need for gender-responsive indicators, and urgent calls to action for COP17. Speakers emphasized the need for direct access to funding, legal recognition of Indigenous rights, and collaboration among CBD parties to advance gender equity in biodiversity policies. [Watch the full press conference here.](#)

# Communications Outcomes

## Press conferences



At the Third Press Conference: CBD Women's Caucus Representatives with International Land Coalition Representatives.  
Picture by CBD Women's caucus

Both conferences were widely promoted, with press releases distributed to media outlets and shared across all CBD Women's Caucus communication channels. In addition to these two press conferences primarily organized by the CBD Women's Caucus, we also hosted a press conference in collaboration with the International Land Coalition. This press conference, titled *Women: The Key to Equitable and Effective Conservation at COP16*, focused on the critical role of women's land rights in achieving sustainable and inclusive conservation outcomes. The session highlighted the intersection of gender, land rights, and environmental justice, featuring key speakers from both grassroots and global organizations.

[Watch the full press conference here.](#)

# Communications Outcomes

## Special Website for CBD COP16



COP16 Website page flyer

Launch of the CBD Women's Caucus Dedicated Website: the CBD Women's Caucus successfully designed and launched a special dedicated website. The website page serves as the primary platform for sharing and organizing all Caucus activities, announcements, and resources before, during, and after the CBD COP16 event. The website was developed to consolidate information, provide structured access to events, and enhance the visibility of the Caucus's work for diverse global audiences. The website was launched in September to address several key objectives: to provide a centralized source of information for CBD COP16 activities, ensure inclusivity by facilitating broad access to the Caucus's initiatives, and create a structured repository where different stakeholders can stay updated on ongoing and future events. Through this digital platform, the CBD Women's Caucus has been able to maintain a consistent presence, gathering and engaging its members and allies in one accessible location. In the lead-up to CBD COP16, the website played a pivotal role in hosting a series of preparatory activities, such as webinars (e.g. Webinar: Women towards COP16 – An informative session held on July 16, 2024), the capacity-building training sessions ("COP16 training: A guide for women and allies" which is a training series of three virtual sessions, each lasting two hours, to prepare the Caucus members and allies for active participation in the COP16, in addition to a Webinar under the title of: Advancing Gender Justice in Biodiversity – Policy Recommendations for CBD COP16).

# Communications Outcomes

## Special Website for CBD COP16

The website was meticulously structured to showcase and provide access to several high-profile events and resources organized by the CBD Women's Caucus, including:

- **Program Agenda of the Women Pavilion:** An interactive schedule detailing the full agenda of events held at the Caucus Pavilion. This calendar feature was designed to help participants track sessions of interest and networking events. (Check the Women pavilion section for more information)
- **Press Conferences:** Updates on the two key press conferences organized by the Caucus. (Check the press conference section for more details)
- **Side Events:** The website showcased the full agenda of the side events organized or co-organized by the CBD Women's Caucus during CBD COP16. The agenda included details about each event's focus, speakers, and topics (Check the side events t section for more information)
- **Women Forum:** The website hosted a comprehensive agenda for both parts of the Women Forum, featuring detailed information on session topics, speakers, and the program schedule. (Check the Women Forum section for more information)
- **Gender & Biodiversity Champions Platform:** As part of the campaign developed by the CBD Women's Caucus and launched during Part Two of the Women Forum, this dedicated section on the website invites people to join as "Gender and Biodiversity Champions" by signing up through an [online form](#). (Check the campaign section for more information)
- **Policy Positions and Advocacy Booklet:** A digital booklet containing the Caucus's policy demands, statements, publications, and key advocacy positions was made available in four languages (English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese ). (Check the Booklet section for more information)
- **Resources Library:** Beyond the booklet, the resource library was regularly updated with official statements, publications, and supplementary materials that reinforced the Caucus's advocacy work. This repository ensures that all stakeholders and interested parties can access the information necessary to support and promote the Caucus's mission.

# Communications Outcomes

## Social media



CBD Women's Caucus Group Photo at Women's Pavilion after a side event. Picture by CBD Women's Caucus

The CBD Women's Caucus launched a successful social media campaign before, during, and after COP16, amplifying gender-responsive and human rights-based outcomes in biodiversity conservation. The campaign featured over 40 posts across three languages (English, Spanish, and French) including infographics, policy highlights, event updates, and videos. During the month of October, the videos (Reels) alone garnered over 295K views, significantly increasing engagement across platforms.

On [Instagram](#), views reached 33.5K, marking a 355.8% increase, and the account's reach expanded to 7K, a 226.7% growth. On [Facebook](#), the campaign exceeded 3.8K views, with reach growing by 221.1%. [LinkedIn](#) saw reactions increase by 79.2%, comments by 275%, and reposts by 333.3%, with the platform surpassing 1,000 followers. [Twitter/X](#) also showed significant growth in follower engagement.

- Key collaborations included [@franciamarquezm/](#) [@vicepresidenciacolombia](#) (Vice President of Colombia), [@onumujerescol](#) (UN Women), [@GYBN](#) (Global Youth Biodiversity Network), and Colombian ministries like [@minambientecol](#) (Ministry of Environment) and [@minigualdadcol](#) (Ministry of Equality).
- This campaign achieved a 30% increase in follower interaction and effectively highlighted gender justice's critical role in biodiversity conservation, while also driving key policy conversations and raising awareness across global audiences.

# Communications Outcomes

## Gender & Biodiversity Champions campaign

This is a global call to action for leaders & decision-makers across all sectors to commit themselves as champions for pursuing gender justice in the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), and supporting the full achievement of the Gender Plan of Action. As part of our efforts to celebrate and amplify the gender and biodiversity champions, we rolled out a comprehensive campaign during COP16 and SBI5. This campaign, building on initiatives started earlier this year, included the following key elements:

- **Platform Launch:** On 29 October, during part two of the Women Forum, we officially launched the “Be a Gender and Biodiversity Champion” platform. This platform encourages actors to sign up, commit to being Gender and Biodiversity Champions, declare their dedication to the movement, share experiences, and strengthen efforts toward gender-responsive biodiversity conservation.
- **Champion Recognition:** The campaign celebrated outstanding women leaders from diverse regions and different backgrounds on the second part of the women forum (29 October), recognizing their vital contributions to gender equality and biodiversity advocacy efforts.



The preparatory meeting Group picture . Picture by CBD Women's Caucus

# Communications Outcomes

## Gender & Biodiversity Champions campaign

- **Video Storytelling:** Interviews with these champions were conducted to capture their voices and stories. They reflected on what being a Gender and Biodiversity Champion means to them. These interviews will be shared as a video series across our communication channels, ensuring their voices inspire and mobilize action globally.
- **Campaign Materials:** To raise awareness and foster engagement, we distributed branded materials such as stickers, pins, bags, and frames to COP16 visitors and delegates. These materials helped increase visibility and encouraged participation in the campaign.
- **Social Media Engagement:** The campaign also leveraged social media platforms with the hashtag **#GenderAndBiodiversityChampion** to broaden its reach and foster a global dialogue.



During the interview with Andrea Cruz-Angón, Ministry of Environment, Mexico. Picture by CBD Women's caucus



During the interview with Paulina Stowhas, Ministry of Environment of Chile. Picture by CBD Women's caucus

# Communications Outcomes

## Podcast

The podcast series '[CBD Women's Caucus](#)' available on Spotify and Youtube, was launched at the end of week 1 of CBD COP16. It features interviews with active members of the Women's Caucus and allies, such as panelists from events organized by the CBD WC.

### Current episodes:

- [Launch of the Women's Pavilion](#) with Scovia Ampumuza, team member of the communications team of the Women's Caucus and organizer of the Women's Pavilion at CBD COP16.
- [Why does gender matter at COP16?](#) with Katherine Despot Belmonte, Programme Lead on human rights and gender equality at UNEP WCMC (UN Environment, World Conservation Monitoring Center)

[Taking an intersectional lens](#) with Elisa Morgera, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Climate Change

**Future episodes** (to be released in the coming weeks) will bring policy insights from Cristina Eghenter, Global Governance Policy Senior Expert at WWF International, and reflections following the Women's Forum by Grove Harris, Representative to the United Nations for the Temple of Understanding. It will also include an episode in Spanish, featuring an exclusive interview with Tamara Ospina, Colombia's Vice Minister of Women.



Louise Romain conducting an interview with Katherine Despot Belmonte. Picture by CBD Women's caucus



The Participants of the Women's Forum During the First Day, 25 October, picture credit to the UN Biodiversity

# Key collabo rations

# Key collaborations

## Secretariat of the CBD and the Colombian Government as CBD COP16 Presidency

A pivotal collaboration during CBD COP16 was with the Secretariat of the CBD and the Colombian government, which held the CBD COP16 presidency. Together, we co-organized the Women's Forum, a landmark event that brought together diverse voices to spotlight gender justice in biodiversity governance. Their support was instrumental in amplifying the Caucus's outreach and ensuring the representation of our priorities across key spaces. Notably, the Secretariat and Colombian government facilitated Caucus participation in the High-Level Segment ministerial dialogues and other critical sessions and meetings in both the Blue and Green Zones. These platforms enabled Caucus representatives to voice gender justice priorities, fostering deeper integration of gender-responsive perspectives into the conference outcomes.

## CBD major groups

The Caucus continued to engage with the Major Groups under the CBD, fostering stronger collaboration across diverse sectors to ensure gender-responsive biodiversity action. By working with representatives from the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB), the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN), the CBD Alliance, the academia representatives, the CBD WC reinforced the need for inclusive participation in decision-making processes. These partnerships were instrumental in building a collective voice that called for the integration of gender equity into the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The Caucus, alongside other major groups, lobbied for gender-sensitive indicators and the full implementation of the Gender Plan of Action, amplifying the collective demands for a more inclusive and equitable biodiversity agenda.

# Key collaborations

## UN Women, IUCN, CGIAR and OHCHR

Throughout CBD COP16 we worked closely with UN Women, IUCN, and OHCHR on advocacy and lobbying efforts, organizing events and joint actions aimed at integrating gender equity into biodiversity governance. These partnerships were instrumental in advancing gender-responsive policies and ensuring the full implementation of the Gender Plan of Action. In addition to these collaborations, with CGIAR, we developed a policy brief, which was presented during a side event at the CGIAR Pavilion. The Caucus moderated the session, and a speaker was invited to share their insights on the crucial intersection of gender and biodiversity.

## Human Rights and Biodiversity Working Group

During CBD COP16, the Caucus further strengthened its engagement with the Human Rights and Biodiversity Working Group, an essential partnership for integrating human rights perspectives into biodiversity policies. This group includes key actors such as the Forest Peoples Programme, the International Land Coalition, the IUCN CEESP, GIZ, Sedbio and others. Collaborative efforts focused on ensuring that the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and women are central to the biodiversity agenda. The group worked together to advocate for the recognition of human rights-based approaches in biodiversity frameworks, the importance of gender equity and justice in biodiversity conservation. Through joint advocacy, the Caucus and the working group pushed for the inclusion of human rights safeguards in biodiversity financing mechanisms and policy processes, reinforcing the interconnections between environmental sustainability and human rights protections.



CBD Women's caucus representatives at the opening plenary session of the COP16, Credit Photo by IISD/ENB | Mike Muzurakis

# Next steps!

# Next steps!

## Fundraising and Securing Resources

To ensure the continuity and growth of its impact, the CBD Women's Caucus will prioritise fundraising efforts to support its participation and advocacy during CBD intersessional meetings and beyond. A comprehensive resource mobilisation strategy will be developed, targeting grants, partnerships, and sponsorships to secure unrestricted and sustained funding. By establishing a robust funding base, the Caucus will be equipped to ensure that women's voices from all regions, particularly Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, remain central to biodiversity policymaking. Funds will be allocated for capacity-building initiatives, communication campaigns, and the development of materials that strengthen advocacy and outreach efforts, as well as providing support for travel, accommodations, and logistical needs for a diverse delegation at each CBD session, consolidating the Caucus's approach for sustained influence in the CBD process.

## Gender & biodiversity Champions

To advance the Gender & Biodiversity Champions platform, priority will be given to consolidating its structure and expanding its reach. Immediate next steps include formalising membership criteria and creating an ensuring diverse representation across sectors and regions. The platform will also develop a robust communications strategy, including a dedicated webpage for tracking commitments, sharing best practices, and showcasing success stories. Additionally, dialogues will be organised to foster cross-sectoral partnerships and align efforts with the CBD Gender Plan of action and Target 23 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. By securing funding and establishing a clear operational plan, the platform aims to drive transformative, gender-responsive biodiversity action globally.

# Next steps!

## Capacity Strengthening and Sharing

To enhance its advocacy efforts, the Caucus will conduct a capacity needs assessment through surveys and feedback from participants at CBD COP16. This will inform a tailored program designed to address the identified gaps, with training initiatives developed in collaboration with other stakeholders. The program will cover technical knowledge of biodiversity policy items and essential advocacy skills such as analysing policy documents, crafting statements and position papers, and mastering public speaking and media interactions. These efforts aim to empower Caucus members to engage more effectively in biodiversity governance and advocacy.

## Policy advocacy & lobby

The Caucus will begin its post-CBD COP16 work with a comprehensive assessment of the conference outcomes, focusing on achievements, gaps, and opportunities for advancing its goals. This will include internal debriefs with the policy team and the broader Caucus to reflect on experiences and refine strategies. To engage a wider audience, an open webinar will be organised to share the assessment and foster dialogue on the path forward. Taskforces will regroup to address unresolved agenda items, preparing revised positions and materials for the resumed CBD COP16 sessions. Advocacy campaigns will be launched in multiple formats and languages to amplify the Caucus's messages, complemented by a robust lobbying strategy to build momentum ahead of the resumed sessions. During these sessions, the Caucus aims to maintain a strong presence through active participation, lobbying efforts, and the dissemination of communication materials such as position papers. Continued engagement with national and gender focal points, major groups, and key allies will ensure the Caucus remains at the forefront of biodiversity policymaking.

# Next steps!

## Communications

Media engagement will be a priority as the Caucus looks to amplify its work and reach new audiences. The website, which was instrumental during CBD COP16, will continue to be updated with additional content, including post-conference analysis, event announcements, and resources to support ongoing advocacy efforts. The social media campaign will evolve, leveraging new content such as infographics, videos, and interactive posts to maintain high levels of engagement. The podcast series will expand, offering interviews with influential figures and reflections on biodiversity and gender issues in multiple languages. A newsletter will be launched to provide regular updates, insights, and calls to action for Caucus members and allies. Finally, the Gender & Biodiversity Champions Campaign will continue to spotlight inspiring leaders and provide platforms for global collaboration.

## Events

The Caucus will document its CBD COP16 activities through a series of blog articles written by representatives, capturing the essence and impact of each event. These articles, along with highlights of the events, will be shared extensively on social media to ensure they reach a global audience. A consolidated report of all events will be produced to evaluate their impact and inform the planning of future initiatives. This report will serve as a valuable resource for measuring the Caucus's contributions and refining its approach for upcoming conferences and activities.

# Acknowledgement

The CBD Women's Caucus extends its heartfelt gratitude to all contributors and partners who supported its mission at COP16.

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