

United Nations

High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, July 2020

Preparatory process

### **Session: Protecting the planet and building resilience**

*Pursuing policies, investments and innovation to address disaster risk reduction and protect the planet from degradation*

#### **Introduction**

The 2030 Agenda is rooted in the idea that human development and wellbeing cannot be achieved without simultaneously safeguarding and investing in nature and managing disaster risk in a systemic manner—otherwise development gains will be short lived and unequally distributed. Biodiversity loss, land and forest degradation, climate change, and disasters are threatening progress toward sustainable development. Actions to advance economic and social development need to address these threats and build resilience including through nature-based solutions, sustainable consumption and production practices and accounting for the true value of nature.

The past decade—in particular the COVID-19 crisis—has revealed the systemic nature of risk and the cascading impact of disasters across all three dimensions of sustainable development. The natural environment is humanity’s first line of defense against many hazards, and nature-based solutions must be scaled up to manage disaster risks, build resilience and leave no one behind. These issues are addressed directly in SDGs 12, 13, 14, and 15, but they are foundational to the entire 2030 Agenda, including poverty eradication, health, food security and inclusive economic growth and sustainable livelihoods. The current session will highlight opportunities and innovations that can build resilience and manage risk while securing livelihoods and safeguarding the planet.

#### **Guiding questions**

Please consider the 4 questions below and submit written responses totaling **2000 words or less**. (Though the average should be 500 words per question, it is fine to use more words on one question and fewer on another, to total 2000.) Please draw from your field of expertise and experience and be as concrete and tangible as possible. Please provide your responses in a Word document by **12 May** to [rambler@un.org](mailto:rambler@un.org).

## 1. **Systems transformation**

*What are the fundamental systems transformations needed to halt nature degradation, reverse loss and manage risk, while eradicating poverty, ensuring food security for a growing population, securing livelihoods and promoting resilience?*

- Transforming national and global systems towards green and inclusive economic growth. This entails making national policies gender-responsive, investing in data collection for visualising women's roles and contributions, enhancing women's participation in decision-making processes, and investing in women-led sustainable enterprises.
- Examples of countries that are transforming national systems and enhancing partnerships towards the achievement of environmental outcomes (SDGs 13, 14,15) and gender equality (SDG 5) are Costa Rica and Malawi, some of the steps taken by these countries to drive transformation are provided in question 2 below.

## 2. **Specific actions to drive transformation**

*Please describe 2-3 specific, promising actions at different levels that can drive these systems transformations. These actions could relate for instance to scaling up the use of nature-based solutions, sustainable consumption and production, or other approaches. How have these actions helped (or how could they help) break down siloes, support the systemic management of risk, and trigger positive changes in society? How can co-benefits between actions be maximized and the risk in trade-offs stemming from these actions (i.e. negative impacts on other aspects of the 2030 Agenda) managed?*

- Some of the actions taken by Costa Rica and Malawi towards the achievement of environmental and gender equality outcomes include the following:
  - enacting and implementing policies that ensure that women and men have equal participation in the environment and natural resource sector
  - collecting data to understand women and men's roles and contributions on the conservation of nature and sustainable use
  - making use of data for evidence-based decisions to benefit men and women (for example making use of sex disaggregated data to map priority areas for ecosystem restoration to benefit women and men)
  - seeking funding and mobilising financial resources in favour of inclusive green growth (e.g. women-led sustainable enterprises linked to landscape restoration)

## 3. **Means of implementation and the global partnership for development (SDG 17):**

*Achieving the 2030 Agenda relies on a combination of means of implementation to catalyse action and engagement, harness synergies and reduce tradeoffs. Please discuss the means of implementation, including finance, partnerships, and capacity building, needed to make the necessary transformations. How can science, technology*

*and innovation (STI), including social innovation and local and indigenous knowledge, be mobilized to advance these transformations?*

- In terms of financing, capacity building and partnerships, for facilitating means of implementation: women's disproportionate access to finance can be addressed through a direct or dedicated channel of access to financing mechanisms and/or establishing of financing windows that are specifically crafted to target the needs of community-level and women's organizations.
- With regard to social innovation and local and indigenous knowledge: women as sources of innovative solutions and specialized knowledge need structures for communication and collaboration. In Belize, the annual Women in Fisheries Forum (WIFF) highlights the importance of women in the fishing industry and gender mainstreaming in the small-scale fisheries sector.
  - From Belize's 6th National Report: Bringing together women for the WIFF in Belize helps women to collectively learn from each other and develop strategies to mitigate the challenges of stigmatization of women, who are often not seen as productive as males in the fisheries sector. Admittedly, the forum also allows for women leaders to learn from each other as they participate in decision-making exercises where strategies are developed to help women at the community level access technical resources in terms of training and other capacity development opportunities. The WIFF also provides a safe environment for women to discuss issues that affect them, particularly issues surrounding safe working conditions for women aboard vessels when they go fishing with men and how to address personal health and hygiene concerns on these expeditions. Other areas of support are provided in the provision of data for women to access formal credit, scholarship opportunities, and seek capacity development in forming cooperatives and women groups that have the capacity to collectively lobby for scarce resources through a strengthened and supportive network.
  - Other information sources include:  
<https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/166958>;  
<https://www.facebook.com/WCSBelize/posts/third-annual-women-in-fisheries-forum-in-dangriga-over-thirty-women-from-all-over/2323344114420208/>
  - Women in Fisheries Forums have also been held in Fiji -  
<https://womeninfisheriesfiji.org/national-forum-women-in-fisheries/>;  
<https://www.fiji.gov.fj/Media-Centre/Speeches/MINISTER-VUNIWAQA-S-ADDRESS-AT-THE-WOMEN-IN-FISHER>;  
[https://spccfpstore1.blob.core.windows.net/digitallibrary-docs/files/45/45519607354bf519b6a2826061feaa60.pdf?sv=2015-12-11&sr=b&sig=2RzcfDz20sSdENkG2Z7P611fdr5Ohidct7rSidN3sJU%3D&se=2020-11-03T15%3A35%3A27Z&sp=r&rsc=public%2C%20max-age%3D864000%2C%20max-stale%3D86400&rsct=application%2Fpdf&rscd=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22WIF28\\_17\\_Mangubhai.pdf%22](https://spccfpstore1.blob.core.windows.net/digitallibrary-docs/files/45/45519607354bf519b6a2826061feaa60.pdf?sv=2015-12-11&sr=b&sig=2RzcfDz20sSdENkG2Z7P611fdr5Ohidct7rSidN3sJU%3D&se=2020-11-03T15%3A35%3A27Z&sp=r&rsc=public%2C%20max-age%3D864000%2C%20max-stale%3D86400&rsct=application%2Fpdf&rscd=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22WIF28_17_Mangubhai.pdf%22); <https://fijiwomensfund.org/women-in-fisheries-network-fiji/>

- As well as in Barbados - [https://www.cavehill.uwi.edu/cermes/projects/gift/docs/wif\\_forum\\_2019\\_summary\\_report\\_27\\_may\\_2019.aspx](https://www.cavehill.uwi.edu/cermes/projects/gift/docs/wif_forum_2019_summary_report_27_may_2019.aspx)

#### **4. Covid-19 crisis**

*What does the Covid-19 crisis reveal about the human-nature relationship and systemic risk creation? How can nature-based solutions contribute to a post-COVID-19 economic and social recovery that is more sustainable, equitable and resilient? What immediate and medium-term steps are needed to ensure that the post-COVID-19 economic and social recovery is sustainable, equitable and resilient. How can we redirect financial flows and direct recovery efforts to create better outcomes for people, prosperity and the planet?*

- We could discuss the importance of enhancing women's participation in decision-making processes. Potentially providing the example of how female leaders seem to be more successful at managing COVID-19 crisis: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/25/why-do-female-leaders-seem-to-be-more-successful-at-managing-the-coronavirus-crisis>
- Domestic violence against women in context of Covid-19: <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/issue-brief-covid-19-and-ending-violence-against-women-and-girls-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5006>