



## **Interactive Dialogue**

### **Environmental conservation, protection, and rehabilitation**

**Wednesday, 19 March 2025, 15.00 – 16.30**

#### **Concept Note**

##### ***Overview***

Over the past 30 years, environmental and climate disasters have worsened, disproportionately affecting women and girls by exacerbating gender inequalities and threatening their rights, livelihoods, health, and wellbeing. Despite their crucial role in conserving biodiversity, working on the land, and effective environmental and climate governance, women remain underrepresented in decision-making. Women and girls, particularly from Indigenous communities and local communities, lead environmental advocacy, often without adequate protection or resources. To achieve sustainable development, it is essential to ensure women's equal participation in green, blue, and care economies and significantly increase gender-responsive climate finance.

This dialogue will bring together stakeholders, including government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC active in the areas of climate and environmental action and the United Nations system. The interactive dialogue will include testimonies from women and girls affected by and taking action on climate and environmental disasters and hear reflections from duty bearers and stakeholders on their planned action and investments for adaptation and mitigation measures.

The objective of the interactive dialogue is to highlight good practices and discuss gaps, challenges and opportunities for accelerating gender-responsive environmental and coordinated response to the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, ensuring no one is left behind in the implementation of Beijing Platform for Action and the realization of the SDGs.

##### ***Format and participation***

The interactive dialogue will be chaired by Ms. Robin Maria de Vogel (Netherlands), Vice-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women. A moderator will support the Chair. The dialogue will include presentations by speakers active in climate and environmental action from diverse backgrounds and regions, followed by comments, questions and contributions from Member States and other stakeholders. Panelists will respond to any questions posed and make short concluding comments, time permitting.

Member States will participate in the dialogue on a voluntary basis. No speakers' list will be kept. UN-Women will facilitate an online application process for representatives of NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC. The list of NGOs proposed for participation in the event will be distributed to Member States through respective Bureau members.

### ***Leading questions***

The below set of suggested questions are intended to support the discussion.

What institutional mechanisms have governments put in place to ensure women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in decision-making processes related to environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation?

What are the key barriers Indigenous women face in securing land and resource rights? And how can governments and non-State actors, e.g., academia, civil society and international organizations better support Indigenous communities in overcoming these challenges?

What are the gaps between policy and practice that hinder young people, particularly young women, from pursuing education and careers in the fields that enable their effective participation in the green and blue economies?

Looking ahead to 2030 and beyond, what best practices and strategies can be replicated to harness the synergies between the Beijing Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals in relation to gender-responsive climate and environmental action?

### ***Outcome***

The outcome of the discussion will be in the form of a summary by the Chair of the Commission, prepared in consultation with the regional groups, through the members of the Bureau.



### Interactive dialogue

### Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

Wednesday, 19 March 2025, 3.00 - 4.30 pm

#### Speaker bios

**Moderator: Ms. Lorena Aguilar:** is a global leader passionate about human rights, inclusion, and sustainable development with over three decades providing strategic contributions to national and international policies. Ms. Aguilar currently the Executive Director of the Kaschak Institute for Social Justice for Women and Girls at Binghamton University who has previously served as Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica.

**Manasiti Omar:** is an indigenous pastoralist climate justice activist and the Founder and Executive Director of Spring of the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (SASAL). She is a Global Citizen Scholar with the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens and the Feminist Action for Climate Justice action coalition youth leader. Her work connects grassroots realities with global policy, amplifying indigenous voices in climate solutions.

**Astrid Puentes Riaño:** is the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. Ms. Puentes has more than twenty years of experience in environmental law, human rights and climate change, and the intersection of these, with a perspective of climate justice, diversity, equity and inclusion. She teaches at the Berta Cáceres Environmental Justice Clinic at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico.

**Sascha Gabizon:** is Executive Director of Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF) and Co-Facilitator of the Women's Major Group on the Sustainable Development Goals. She joined WECF in 1994 to prepare the contribution to the 4th World Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995. She has been WECF's Executive Director since 1996, which has evolved from an initial EU, Eastern Europe and Central Asia focus to a global scope.

**Valbona Mazreku:** is the founder and director of Milieukontakt Albania since 2000, has extensive experience managing national and regional programs in environment, sustainable development, ecotourism, and public participation. Her expertise has been pivotal in shaping Albania's environmental movement through development programs, training, and advising organizations nationwide.

**Yuli Velásquez:** is the Amnesty International's 2024 Human Rights Award recipient, is an environmental guardian and human rights defender in Barrancabermeja, Colombia. An artisanal fisher woman, she fights pollution and conserves endangered species such as the West Indian manatee. Under Fedepesan, her

organization, she has documented and denounced hydrocarbon pollution since 2014 while facing threats and attacks.