

Intervention Women major group 27 febr. Cross cutting issues / interlinkages.
(by Lesha Witmer, chair commission sustainable development Netherlands Women's council and BPW International).

Thank you madam Chair.

Looking at the comments made by several member states, we welcome the attention that is paid to the position of women and especially the specific reference to women as actors and decision makers. Many governments have endorsed 30% of women's participation in decision-making. This percentages should increase and be the case for all levels of decision making, backed up by measures to assure implementation, including budget allocations and mandates to develop capacity and strengthen leadership skills among women farmers and professional women.

We stress again that water and sanitation as cross cutting issues, deserve specific attention of the CSD, also as follow up of the review of CSD13 and new emerging issues. For women as water managers, these are essential as prerequisite for agriculture, land management etc.

We call for transfer of knowledge and technology that is "women proof"; in that context we stress again that the precautionary principle including informed consent, as agreed in Rio, has to stay the starting point of use of e.g. GMO's. Female farmers see the possible added value, but care even more for the health of their families and environment.

Longitudinal research into the effects of new technologies is very necessary. Food security is not enough but also safe food.

We agree with the approach as stated by Norway when it comes to biomass production: it can be a chance for small scale holders, but has to be certified incl. responsible behavior.

The right to land and safe tenure, the right to water and sanitation and the right to food are linked together and should be implemented in National law and plans. A Rights based approach we feel is essential.

Furthermore we recommend that:

- before developing or deciding on any program, transfer of knowledge and experience takes place, so stakeholders from all major groups can make informed choices and make it really demand driven;
- design extension services especially for women farmers that takes into consideration the multiple roles of women and their workload and time constraints they have.
- ensure that agricultural institutions at all levels incorporate gender and equity into the way "they do business" including (not limited to) their internal structures and processes.
- ensure that fiscal, trade and investment policies do not have adverse effects on livelihoods, health and food security especially for poor women, e.g. by using gender budgeting tools
- Create employment opportunities and alternative means of income generating for rural (landless) women and reward their work in providing eco-services.

With so much consensus on the floor, we as women expect clear deliverables from CSD17; we have submitted some more concrete action points to the bureau for your consideration.

As you can see, the major groups this time have over compensated the lack of gender balance in other instances. Madame Chair, Last but not least, we applaud the more gender balanced Bureau and expect this will continue in the future. Agriculture and land have a women's face.