



Bhutan+10: Gender and Sustainable Mountain Development in a Changing World
15–19 October 2012, Thimphu, Bhutan

Conference Declaration

Preamble

We, the participants of the Bhutan+10 Conference on Gender and Sustainable Mountain Development in a Changing World, representing mountain women and men from civil society organizations, NGOs, governments, development organizations, donors, private sector, policy-makers, researchers, academics, media professionals and environmental leaders gathered here in Thimphu, Bhutan in October 2012, the tenth year after the Celebrating Mountain Women conference; the conference carried out a comprehensive stock-taking and sharing of the state-of-the art on gender aspects of mountain development and natural resource management since the Celebrating Mountain Women Conference in 2002, and also set the agenda for gender transformative change in the post Rio+20 world and beyond the Millennium Development Goals;

Have reflected on the impacts of natural resource management policies, governance arrangements, scientific discoveries, grassroots experiences, institutional mechanisms, and different drivers of change including migration and climate change on the lives of mountain women and men, gender relations, and property and tenure rights at different scales from the local to the global;

Understand that some progress has been made in addressing gender issues in mountain development policies and natural resource management practices, but that progress has been uneven when it comes to advancing the status of mountain women, especially economically poor and socially excluded women; and

Know that inequalities between women and men persist in terms of skewed division of labour, access, ownership and control over land and non-land based resources, decision-making, and participation in setting policy agendas for change, even though women are often at the forefront of natural resource management and climate change adaptation.

We recognize that

- Mountain women and men use land and non-land based natural resources and scientific and indigenous knowledge in different ways with varying degrees of access to resources;
- Major barriers remain at the local, national, regional and global levels for understanding the gender dynamics of mountain natural resource management, which have serious implications for livelihood and ecosystem management and the wellbeing of women, men, and children living in the mountains as well as downstream;
- The roles of mountain women as primary users, managers, and rights holders in natural resource management need to be carefully considered at every stage of policy making and development, from design to implementation to evaluation;
- Mountain poverty and problems experienced by mountain women and men in rapidly changing socio-cultural, environmental, and political economy contexts cannot be countered without robust strategic actions and commitments from decision-makers and the support of women and men as gender champions in addressing gender and social disparity;

- A lack of focus and integration of gender analysis and perspectives in policies, programmes, organizational change processes, and capacity strengthening seriously hinders the capacity of countries and organizations to address mountain development issues and effectively achieve sustainable development goals;
- Monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes of mountain development and gender initiatives are needed at all levels; and
- Differentiation among women based on class, ethnicity, and caste is essential for equitable mountain development outcomes.

We reaffirm our commitment to

- Promote the development and use of gender analytical expertise, gender disaggregated data, and gender transformative change processes that focus on understanding and challenging unequal power relations between and among men and women and promote opportunity for meaningful participation and benefit sharing by the most disadvantaged;
- Recognize mountain specific socio-cultural issues and gender equity concerns in technological, programmatic, research, and policy innovations required for sustainable management of mountain ecosystems, livelihoods, and adaptation to climate change;
- Ensure mountain women's inclusion in policy dialogues, negotiations, and decisions in national, regional, and global settings and in all decision-making bodies at various levels and scales; and
- Enforce and ensure gender equity principles and women's human rights as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources (IPGR) for Food and Agriculture.

We call for

- A better integration of mountain perspectives in sectoral, local, national, regional, and international development agendas;
- The systematic strengthening of gender perspectives and indigenous knowledge in all mountain development policies, strategies, and programmes and in national and regional organizations working on mountain development;
- Allocation of sufficient human and financial resources to promote women scientists working on mountain issues and those from mountain regions, to enhance their leadership skills, and to meet their networking needs; to institutionalize gender disaggregated data and analysis; and to ensure that mountain development actions are gender responsive and sensitive, thereby addressing gender issues in the mountains;
- Affirmative action and strengthening of local governance bodies to support inclusive and integrated mountain development which would fulfil the needs of both women and men on an equal basis;
- Technical assistance of regional and international organizations to mountain countries to support the development of interdisciplinary knowledge for mountain development and gender-responsive strategies;
- Recognition of women's strengths, knowledge, and capacities in adapting to climate change and emphasis on women's social capital;
- Action to make the results of research available to mountain women in language that is accessible and relevant to ensure impacts;
- Investment in technologies, infrastructure, and institutional strengthening that are responsive to gender-specific needs, reduce women's workloads, improve their leadership skills and access to information, break their isolation and exclusion from economic and governance bodies, support girls' education, and increase their access to basic services, financial resources, and markets;
- Promote the Gross National Happiness of women and men in mountain countries.