

Statement by Women's Major Group

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Youth Coalition

Thank you very much Mr. Chair,

We very much agreed with the conclusion of the panelist from CIFOR this morning that the need to avoid sectoral silos, and governance, are the key challenges to address the devastating loss of forests and other ecosystems that undermines the livelihood of billions of women, and men, especially in rural communities.

We see one integrated goal on ecosystems conservation and land use, that includes forests, as essential to avoid the sectoral silos that have led some to see forests as random collections of trees rather than biodiverse ecosystems. And that goal should specifically address governance, including in particular the governance and rights of the women, including young women, that for generations have conserved their lands and territories in a sustainable manner, like Indigenous women, but also the women in other communities that have proven to be capable of conserving their lands, and areas.

Indigenous territories and Community Conserved Areas should be recognized in the SDG framework as area-based conservation mechanisms that are even more effective than protected areas, and that provide far more socio-economic and cultural benefits related to the implementation of all SDGs. However, these ICCAs are under severe threat by the drivers of biodiversity loss, including in particular unsustainable livestock production, large-scale industrial bioenergy production, including industrial wood-based bioenergy production and other forms of unsustainable agriculture, which together count for 80% of forest loss alone. As we highlighted yesterday, these drivers currently receive far more financial support than the sustainable practices and governance systems that have conserved so many areas until now. That is why fiscal reform and redirection of subsidies are key to ecosystem conservation.

As a last point I want to mention the value of involving young people in eco system conservation, and also involving young people as a crosscutting issue for the entire SDG framework. This will not only give young people the rights we are entitled to, but also be a huge resource for the fight for a sustainable society,

Thank you.