

Women Major Group Statement

To the delegates of the 26th UNEP GC/GMEF
20 February 2011

International Environmental Governance

The women's major group sees the need for **fundamental reform** of International Environmental Governance

According to the UN figures, 70% of 1,5 billion poorest of the poor are women. The poor are in need for environment justice more than anyone. We believe that a reform of IEG needs to ensure a legally binding framework, rather than voluntary partnership, to insure the rights of the most vulnerable and protect their environment, access to information, natural resources, and livelihoods.

We therefore call on governments to support such fundamental reform, which can take the form of a World Environmental Organisation. We need however to assure that this organisation remains headquartered in Africa.

Reform of IEG needs to include reaching out to women, and assuring full participation of women in the decision-making.

Reform of the IEG needs to address the need for a compliance and accountability mechanism. Reporting should include gender disaggregated data, to allow us to monitor progress.

Green Economy

We call for a green economy which promotes social equity, gender equity, healthy and decent jobs for women. We would like to see many more women in leadership positions, driving the green economy process, since women have always been the custodians of the environment.

Many women work in unpaid jobs or informal jobs, and their contribution to the economy is never recognized. However, we are sure that, if all housewives and mothers would go on strike tomorrow, - if all the kitchens and care centres would be closed - it would deal a major blow to the global economy.

We are asking governments to commit to set targets for women's jobs in the green economy. To assure these women's jobs in the green economy we need enabling measures, such as childcare, paid maternity leave, measures against gender-based harassment, and access to secure land, property and resource rights. We would like to see governments commit to aiming at 40% of new green jobs to benefit women.

Green jobs also need to be healthy jobs, not exposing women and their children to harmful substances in their work places and communities.

Women should have access to funding. We call for creating earmarked funding for women green entrepreneurs, assuring affordable interest rates, as well as seed grants for market development.

We hope that at Rio+30, when we look back, at least 80% of women will have a livelihood either direct or indirectly from the green economy!