



Women's participation and gender considerations in country representation, planning and reporting to the BRS Conventions

EGI Report

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Key findings

The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions cooperate to protect human health and the environment from the negative effects of hazardous pollutants. This Environment and Gender Information (EGI) platform analysis explores how women are represented as delegates to the Conferences of the Parties (COPs), members and observers of Conventions' Subsidiary Bodies, and national focal points. It investigates how gender equality considerations are included in Parties' reporting mechanisms to the BRS Conventions, including initial National Implementation Plans (NIPs) to the Stockholm Convention and the most recent National Reports to the Basel and Stockholm Conventions. This study also explores how gender considerations are included in the Rotterdam Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Circular.

As key stakeholders reflect upon the progress being made toward meeting the objectives of the BRS Gender Action Plan (BRS-GAP), the results of this study are encouraging, particularly with respect to women's participation in key decision-making processes and the inclusion of gender considerations within initial NIPs. A staggering number of initial NIPs (91%) contain at least one *women* and/or *gender* keyword—indicating recognition to some extent of gender considerations and, most commonly, to the differentiated impacts of chemicals and pollutants on women and men. This study finds that there are many available entry points for enhancing gender mainstreaming to achieve the objectives of the BRS-GAP. However, Parties are not yet fully integrating or mainstreaming gender considerations within their planning and reporting documents.

Acronyms

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| BRS Conventions | Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions |
| BRS-GAP | BRS Conventions Gender Action Plan |
| COP | Conference of the Parties |
| CRC | Chemical Review Committee |
| EGI | Environment and Gender Information |
| ERS | Electronic Reporting System |
| EU | European Union |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| HBCDD | Hexabromocyclododecane |
| ICC | Implementation and Compliance Committee |
| IUCN | International Union for Conservation of Nature |
| IUCN GGO | IUCN Global Gender Office |
| LAC | Latin America and the Caribbean |
| M&E | Monitoring and evaluation |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MEA | Multilateral Environmental Agreement |
| MENA | Middle East and North Africa |
| MUDE | Mujeres Dominicanas en Desarrollo (Dominican Women in Development) |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NIP | National Implementation Plan |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OEWG | Open-ended Working Group |
| PIC | Prior Informed Consent |
| POP | Persistent Organic Pollutant |
| POPRC | Persistent Organic Pollutant Review Committee |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SGP | Small Grants Programme |
| SOPs | Standard Operating Procedures |
| SSA | Sub-Saharan Africa |
| STEM | Science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields of study and work |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| UNCED | United Nations Conference on Environment and Development |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNIDO | United Nations International Development Organization |
| WEPCO | Women Environment Preservation Committee |

Introduction

Gender inequality is detrimental to effective and efficient environmental conservation and sustainable development, limiting women's access to, control over and benefits from resources and equitable participation in decision-making spheres. To successfully protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous chemicals and wastes, a comprehensive, gender-responsive approach is needed. A key aspect of this is ensuring that the needs, interests and priorities of both women and men are included in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes at all levels, and across sectors.

Many international frameworks and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) acknowledge the benefits of adopting gender-responsive policies, programmes and practices, as illustrated recently by Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—including SDG 5 on gender equality in particular. The adoption of gender action plans and the inclusion of gender considerations in programmes and projects across sectors are steadily increasing in international policy frameworks and through the

implementation of MEAs, yet evidence of how gender equality is incorporated into environmental management remains limited. Insufficient data on gender gaps and the progress made to tackle them perpetuates an inadequate understanding of how environmental actions can contribute to women's empowerment, and vice versa.

Therefore, this report in partnership with the BRS Secretariat aims to bridge that gap by developing gender indicators and gathering baseline data on how women are participating in key decision making processes and bodies and how gender considerations are being included in the reporting mechanisms of the Parties to the BRS Conventions. The baseline data collected will be essential to measure the future progress in the integration of gender considerations within the BRS Conventions and help develop evidence-based actions to mainstream gender. The indicators developed for this study, and the baseline results of these indicators, can be used by the BRS Secretariat to develop targets, and actions Parties can take towards reaching those targets, in order to progress on these issues.

The Environment and Gender Information (EGI) platform

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Environment and Gender Information (EGI) platform aims—through data and analysis—to convey the value of gender responsive environmental conservation and sustainable development. By providing new evidence-based information and knowledge products, the EGI platform guides action toward a more just world. From its inception in 2013, the EGI has evolved into a source for new knowledge creation and dissemination—and for revealing progress and challenges in meeting commitments to

women's empowerment and gender equality in environmental spheres.

This EGI report examines how women and gender considerations are included in the texts and the work of Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS Conventions), including through their national reports and national implementation plans, participation at Conferences of the Parties (COPs), membership of Conventions Committees, and designation of national focal points and contacts.

Background on the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

Emerging awareness of the potential risks of hazardous chemicals, such as pesticides, and wastes in the 1970s and 1980s tightened the environmental legislation in many industrialised countries, escalating the costs of chemical disposal, particularly for hazardous wastes. These regulations and increased costs pushed some corporations and governments of industrialised countries to seek less expensive solutions. In some cases, this meant that hazardous chemical waste was shipped to countries in Eastern Europe, Africa and other regions lacking regulations and enforcement mechanisms. This waste management system, including transboundary movement and often-unregulated disposal, negatively impacted the environment and contributed to health problems for communities in the receiving countries.¹

This new scenario raised concerns among environmental organisations and practitioners and incentivised governments to advance negotiations and address these concerns.

From 1989 to 2001, three major international conventions were adopted: the Basel Convention, the Rotterdam Convention and the Stockholm Convention. Though separate conventions, BRS Conventions share a common objective of protecting human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals and wastes. In 2006, the three Conventions started a process to enhance their cooperation and coordination while maintaining their legal autonomy. The respective COPs adopted the first synergy decisions in 2008 and 2009 to strengthen their implementation at national, regional and global levels; provide coherent policy guidance; and enhance their support of the Parties by reducing their administrative burden and advancing an efficient and effective use of resources.² The Conventions provide for subsidiary bodies and maintain specific committees to guide and monitor implementation and reporting mechanisms and requirements, as noted below; analysis of these informs the datasets presented in this report.

THE BASEL CONVENTION

The Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, known as the Basel Convention, was adopted in 1989 in Basel, Switzerland, and entered into force in 1992. As of June 2017, 186 Parties, including the European Union (EU), have ratified the Convention and subscribed to the objectives of reducing the generation of hazardous and other wastes, promoting environmentally sound management techniques and regulating transboundary movements to restrict those that do not respect the principle of environmentally sound management.ⁱⁱⁱ The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides the Secretariat for the Basel Convention.

In order to support the implementation of the Convention, COP 6 established a Committee for Administering the Mechanisms for Promoting Implementation and Compliance—known as the Implementation and Compliance Committee (ICC)—in 2002.^{iv} The 12th COP (2015) elected Committee members in accordance with the terms of reference (ToR) set out in the appendix to decision VI/12 for a term ending at the close of the 14th COP (2019).

Additionally, COP 6 established the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) in 2012 to assist the COP in the development and monitoring of the implementation of the Basel Convention's work plan, specific operational policies and decisions taken by the COP, as specified in *Article 15* of the Convention.^v

Pursuant to *Article 13*, the Parties transmit yearly reports with information regarding the implementation of the Convention; for example

on transboundary movements in which the Party has been involved, studies on effects on human health and the environment, and agreements with other Parties. The reporting is done through a questionnaire on the Electronic Reporting System (ERS) hosted via the Secretariat.^{vi}

THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION

The Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, known as Rotterdam Convention, was adopted in 1998 in Rotterdam, Netherlands, and entered into force in 2004. A key aspect of the Rotterdam Convention is the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure, a mechanism for collecting and disseminating decisions, introduced by UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 1989. As of June 2017, 157 Parties, including the EU, have ratified and are legally bound to the Rotterdam Convention. The Rotterdam Convention aims to advance the shared responsibility and cooperative efforts among Parties in the international trade of certain hazardous chemicals in order to protect human health and the environment from potential harm. The Convention also promotes the environmentally sound use of those hazardous chemicals by facilitating information exchange about their characteristics, providing a national decision-making process on their import and export and disseminating these decisions to Parties.^{vii} The Rotterdam Convention is jointly administered by the FAO and UNEP.^{viii}

Article 18, paragraph 6 of the Rotterdam Convention establishes the creation of the Chemical Review Committee (CRC). This

subsidiary body of the Convention includes experts in chemical management who have the responsibility to review Parties' formulations on the ban or restriction of certain chemicals and offer recommendations as to the inclusion of these substances in the list of chemicals subjected to the PIC procedure (Annex III of the Convention). The CRC is composed of 31 members¹ nominated by governments and appointed by the COP with an equitable geographic distribution, including a balance between developed and developing Parties. The CRC ToR notes that members of the Committee must be experts in chemical management and shall be appointed to an initial term of either two or four years and subsequent terms of four years for no more than two consecutive terms. Recommendations by the CRC should be made by consensus when possible but may be made by a two-thirds majority when consensus cannot be reached.

The Rotterdam Convention does not have a periodic reporting system, but Parties are required to inform on whether they will allow the import of each of the chemicals listed in Annex III of the Convention, and they must notify on any new decision. The Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention informs all Parties on the import status of each chemical every six months through a PIC Circular.^{IX}

THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION

The Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), known as the Stockholm Convention, was adopted in 2001 in Stockholm, Sweden, and entered into force in 2004 with the aim of

restricting and/or eliminating the production, trade, use, storage and release of POPs, as well as ensuring the environmentally sound management of existing POPs stockpiles and wastes. As of June 2017, 181 Parties have ratified the Stockholm Convention.^X UNEP provides the Secretariat for the Stockholm Convention.

POPs are carbon-based organic chemical substances that are long lasting; can be distributed globally, particularly through air; and bio-accumulate in the fatty tissue of humans and wildlife, posing a risk to their health. The effects of POPs can cause cancer, birth defects, endocrine disruption and dysfunction of the immune and reproductive systems.^{XI}

The Stockholm Convention, pursuant to *Article 8*, established the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC), a subsidiary body responsible for reviewing the chemicals proposed by Parties for inclusion in the lists of elimination, restriction and/or unintentional production.^{XII}

Members of the POPRC are nominated by Parties and confirmed by the COP. The COP identifies which Parties will nominate Committee members for each term, ensuring an equitable geographic distribution and balance of developed and developing Parties.

In accordance with *Article 7* of the Stockholm Convention, Parties are required to develop a National Implementation Plan (NIP). The NIP has to be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect the progress made by the Party and to include new obligations adopted by the COP. Similar to the Basel Convention, the Stockholm Convention

1 Only 23 members attended the 2016 CRC meeting included in this study.

established an ERS to support Parties with transmitting national reports, in compliance with *Article 15* of the Convention. The National reports are transmitted every four years, with the most recent being the third iteration in 2014.^{xiii}

GENDER CONSIDERATIONS IN THE BRS CONVENTIONS

An increasingly comprehensive policy framework linking gender equality with sustainable development has unfolded over the last few decades, beginning substantively with Agenda 21 and other key outcomes of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro, and more recently as reflected in the gender mandates agreed by Parties to the so-called Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD).^{xiv} However, with respect to the area of chemicals and waste, gender issues were not considered in environmental decision making until the adoption of the Stockholm Convention in 2001.

The Stockholm Convention is the only one of the three leading Conventions on chemicals and waste management that includes gender considerations in its initial Convention text. A key reason for this is the recognition of the potential impacts of POPs on human health, particularly on women, including pregnant and breastfeeding women. The preamble to the Stockholm Convention states that it is “aware of the health concerns, especially in developing countries, resulting from local exposure to persistent organic pollutants, in particular impacts upon women and, through them, upon future generations.”^{xv}

In addition, the Stockholm Convention acknowledges the important role and contribution of women’s groups, and advances the inclusion of women in activities. In *Article 7*, the Convention advises countries to cooperate with and “consult their national stakeholders, including women’s groups and groups involved in the health of children,” while *Article 10* promotes the “development and implementation, especially for women, children and the least educated, of educational and public awareness programmes on persistent organic pollutants.”^{xvi}

The first step in advancing gender equality as an important issue for all three conventions was in 2012 with the establishment of a Gender Task Team to mainstream gender internally within the BRS Secretariat and externally with Parties and stakeholders. The development of the Gender Task Team was in response to previous discussions on gender equality and the impact of hazardous chemicals and wastes on vulnerable groups such as women and children.

The BRS Gender Action Plan (BRS-GAP), originally developed in 2013 and updated in 2016, envisions gender equality as “an integral part of the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, including the secretariat activities”^{xvii} and aims at implementing gender-mainstreaming activities within the Secretariat and with partners.^{xviii} The original BRS-GAP was provided for Parties’ consideration at the 2015 COPs as an information document.

The five objectives of the BRS-GAP are as follows:

1. Developing an understanding among and support from BRS staff on the issue of gender equality, particularly in the context of BRS operations and activities;
2. Developing a baseline on gender-related issues and measuring progress in achieving BRS-GAP objectives and implementing activities;
3. Ensuring that the Secretariat's programmes and projects are planned and implemented from the gender equality perspective;
4. Promoting the consideration of gender issues in hazardous chemicals and wastes management at the national and regional levels; and
5. Supporting staff in achieving a sustainable work-life balance.^{xix}

The BRS-GAP is the guiding framework to ensure that gender concerns are mainstreamed throughout the work of the BRS Conventions. The second objective calls for gender indicators and baseline data, specifically with regards to participation and representation of women and gender concerns in the context of Parties' compliance with the Conventions. This EGI report aims to provide information for this objective as well as support the broader goals of the BRS-GAP.

Methodology

SAMPLE

Based on BRS-GAP objectives, specific texts from the Conventions themselves (see boxes to follow on page 10) and EGI methodology, the following eight indicators were developed for this study, and respective results comprise the content of this report:²

1. The percentages of women and men in the current membership and participants of the most recent Basel ICC, Rotterdam CRC and Stockholm POPRC Committees.
2. The percentages of women and men Party delegates to the 2013 and 2015 COPs.
3. The percentages of women and men observer delegates and observers to the 2013 and 2015 COPs.
4. The percentages of women and men country contacts to the BRS Conventions.
5. The inclusion of gender considerations in initial NIPs.³ Of 181 Parties to the Stockholm Convention, 164 have transmitted an initial NIP.⁴
6. The inclusion of gender considerations in the most recent National Reports to the Stockholm Convention (the most recent of which are the Third National Reports, which were due in 2014, with some transmitted as recently as 2016). Of 181 Parties to the Stockholm Convention, 121 have transmitted a National Report questionnaire.
7. The inclusion of gender considerations in the most recent national report to the Basel Convention (ranging from 2001 to 2015). Of 186 Parties to the Basel Convention (as of June 2017), 162 have transmitted at least one National Report questionnaire for the years in the range of 2011-2015.⁵
8. The inclusion of gender considerations in the most recent PIC Circular to the Rotterdam Convention.

2 The documents and participation/membership lists analysed for this study are available and accessible through the BRS Conventions website. See, <http://www.brsmeas.org>; documentation was confirmed with the BRS Conventions Secretariat.

3 Annexes of the NIPs have been included in this analysis

4 Only initial NIPs, and not supplemental NIP updates, are included in this analysis. Barriers regarding language or technical difficulties have reduced the dataset sample to 150 initial NIPs.

5 The 2015 National Reports were due by the end of 2016.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This study includes two primary types of analyses: reviews of gender parity within participation lists and a study of gender mainstreaming within documents. The first involves determining the gender identity of individuals listed as delegates, observers, Committee members, or country contacts. In the case of the BRS Conventions, participation lists include a prefix for each individual. The EGI methodology follows social conventions for surnames in English, Spanish and French (i.e. an individual with the prefix Mr. is coded as a man, Ms. or Mrs. as a woman, etc.). For individuals with a gender neutral prefix—such as Doctor, Honourable or Attorney—the gender identity of the individual is confirmed through other research means, including reputable sources like news articles or press releases, personal biographies and professional online profiles.⁶

For the analyses of gender considerations within documents, the following methodology was followed. A keyword analysis to identify the inclusion of gender keywords was conducted for 162 National Reports to the Basel Convention, 121 National Reports and 150 NIPs to the Stockholm Convention and the PIC Circular from December 2016. The qualitative data analysis software MaxQDA was used to identify gender keyword mentions in all the documents, which were reviewed individually for context to confirm their relevance to this study.⁷ IUCN GGO's gender keyword dictionary includes a set of 95 terms in English, Spanish and French that are grouped into eight broad categories: *gender, sex, female, woman, women, girl, equity and equality*.⁸ The gender keyword dictionary includes multiple forms and all the variations of keywords to ensure counting of every mention; for example, the terms gender, genders, gendered and gender-based were included in the search, among others, to capture all instances of discussion related to gender.

6 If the gender identity of an individual cannot be confirmed via the participation list or another reputable source, that individual is not included in the final results (this is discussed in relevant sections to follow).

7 Keywords were excluded if they were found in acronym lists, table of contents, citations or as directly copied text from the Convention texts or the MDGs. For example, *Articles 7 and 10* of the Stockholm Convention, which include the keyword *women*, were excluded if they were merely listed, but if the Party mentioned either of these articles as one of its objectives or activities, or provided further explanation of why the article was important or how they planned to address it, the keyword was included.

8 This report excludes analysis of 31 additional gender keywords grouped into four additional categories, male, men, man, and boy, as the inclusion of these words did not show that gender considerations are being included. The results reported only reflect analysis of the 95 keywords and eight categories listed above.

The results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the initial NIPs to the Stockholm Convention are shaped (to some extent) by the inclusion of gender considerations in

the Stockholm Convention text. *Articles 7 and 10* support gender equality and women's participation as follows:

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION ARTICLES PERTAINING TO GENDER CONSIDERATIONS AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION ARTICLE 7 (2): IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

The Parties shall, where appropriate, cooperate directly or through global, regional and subregional organisations, and consult their national stakeholders, including women's groups and groups involved in the health of children, in order to facilitate the development, implementation and updating of their implementation plans.

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION ARTICLE 10 (1.C): PUBLIC INFORMATION, AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

Each Party shall, within its capabilities, promote and facilitate: Development and implementation, especially for women, children and the least educated, of educational and public awareness programmes on persistent organic pollutants, as well as on their health and environmental effects and on their alternatives.

Following the quantitative analysis, the context of keywords were further analysed qualitatively. The EGI methodology for qualitative analysis considers a variety of topics including how women are characterised (see Table 1), whether there are funded and monitored activities that aim to explicitly include or empower women and whether sex-disaggregated data is used. The

EGI methodology adapts to the field of research to better understand the context of gender considerations within a specific topic or sector. As such, the methodology was expanded for this analysis to include a review of the health impacts of hazardous chemicals and waste on women and women's direct contact with such chemicals.

TABLE 1: EGI METHODOLOGY FOR CATEGORISING KEYWORDS: HOW WOMEN ARE CHARACTERISED

| | KEYWORDS WERE CATEGORISED AS: | WHEN: |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| How are women viewed? | Vulnerable | Parties discuss women’s vulnerability, e.g. to gender-based discrimination, or identify women’s unique vulnerability to chemicals and waste |
| | Beneficiaries | Parties discuss programmes or policies that include women as recipients of economic, social or other benefits, including educational and capacity-building opportunities |
| | Stakeholders | Parties discuss women as decision makers or as a group targeted for participation in decision making |
| | Agents of Change | Parties describe women as driving activities or having a voice in policy change or action |

CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Considerations and limitations to this study include the following:

- The gender identity of some COP participants, Committee members and observers, and country contacts could not be confirmed.
- This study only includes documents produced in English, Spanish and French. A few documents were excluded due to language barriers.
- A few documents were excluded due to technical reasons.
- The most recent National Reports from each Party to the Stockholm and Basel Conventions

are included; however, many Parties have not updated these documents recently (e.g. Basel Convention National Reports in this study range from 2001 to 2015) and as such, they may not provide up-to-date information on how Parties are incorporating gender into their work.

- At the time of this study, the submission of the 2015 National Report to the Basel Convention is still on-going. Therefore, the 2015 National Reports include only those transmitted by 15 March 2017.
- The Rotterdam Convention does not have a reporting mechanism for Parties that could be analysed for this study.

Indicator 1: Current membership of Convention Committees

BASEL CONVENTION ICC

This study includes an analysis of the participants of a recent Basel Convention ICC meeting that took place in Nairobi, Kenya, on 4-6 June 2016; this was the 12th meeting of the ICC. Meeting participants included ICC Members and observers from “Parties concerned by a submission” to the Committee, namely Parties with implementation and compliance concerns.”

There are 15 members of the Basel Convention ICC, 12 of which participated during the 2016 meeting; of those, five (42%) were women (Figure 1). Of nine representatives from Parties concerned by a submission participating as observers, one (11%) was a woman (Figure 2). Overall, six (29%) of the total participants at the 12th ICC meeting were women.

Figure 1: Percentages of women and men Basel ICC Members

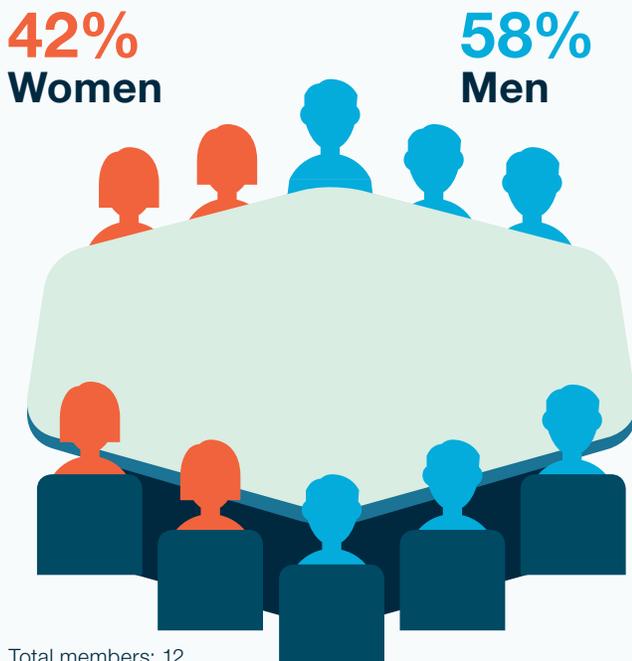
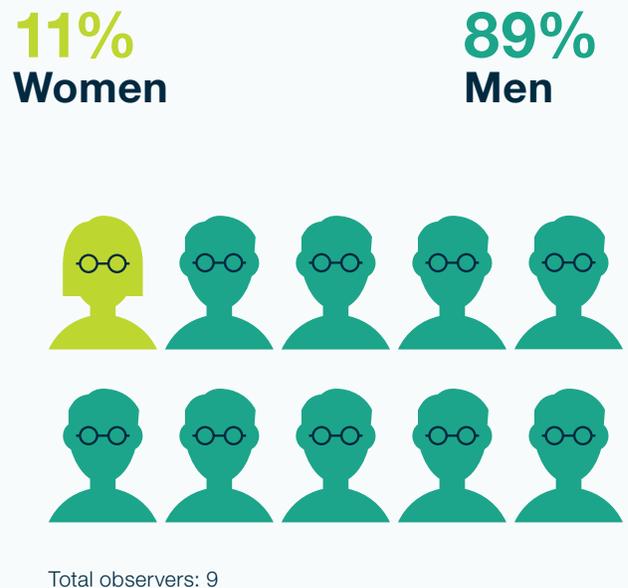


Figure 2: Percentages of women and men Basel ICC Observers



ROTTERDAM CONVENTION CRC

This study includes an analysis of the participants of a recent Rotterdam Convention CRC meeting that took place in Rome, Italy, on 14-16 September 2016; this was the 12th meeting of the CRC. Meeting participants included Committee members and observers; observers include Party delegates and representatives from NGOs. Observers are welcome in accordance with the rules of procedure of the COP.

There are 31 members of the Rotterdam CRC, 23 of which participated in the 2016 meeting; of those, 11 (48%) were women (Figure 3). Of 37 observers, 18 (49%) were women (Figure 4). Overall, of 60 total participants, 29 (48%) were women.

Figure 3: Percentages of women and men Rotterdam CRC Members

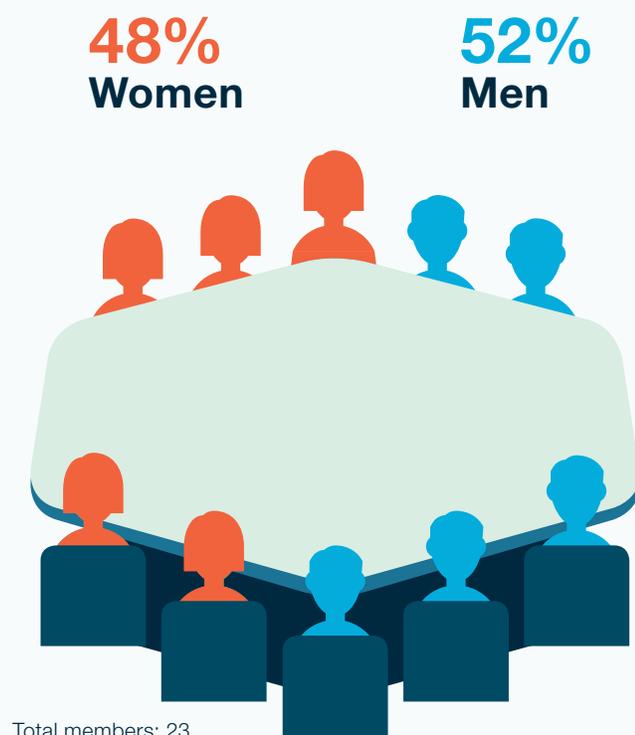
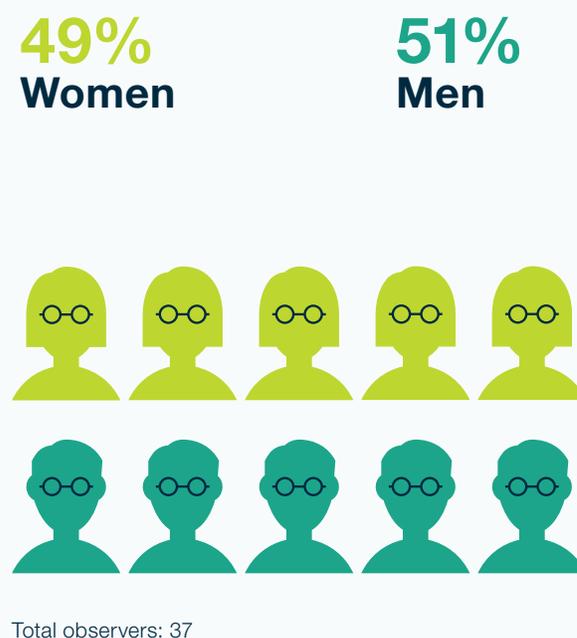


Figure 4: Percentages of women and men Rotterdam CRC Observers



STOCKHOLM CONVENTION POPRC

Also included in this study is an analysis of the participants of a recent Stockholm Convention POPRC meeting that took place in Rome, Italy, on 19-23 September 2016; this was the 12th meeting of the POPRC. Meeting participants included Committee members and observers.

Of 31 Committee members, 13 (42%) were women (Figure 5). Of 101 observers, 39 (39%) were women (Figure 6). Overall, of 132 total participants, 52 (39%) were women.

Figure 5: Percentages of women and men Stockholm POPRC Members

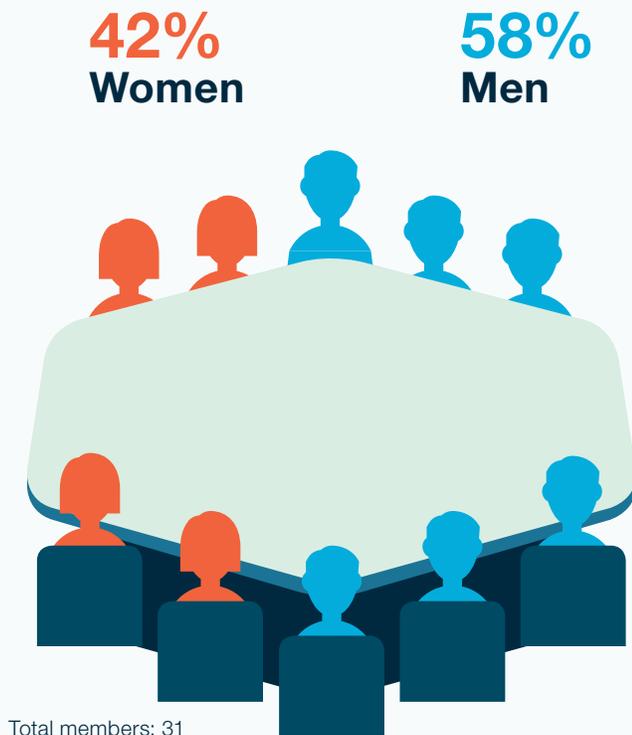
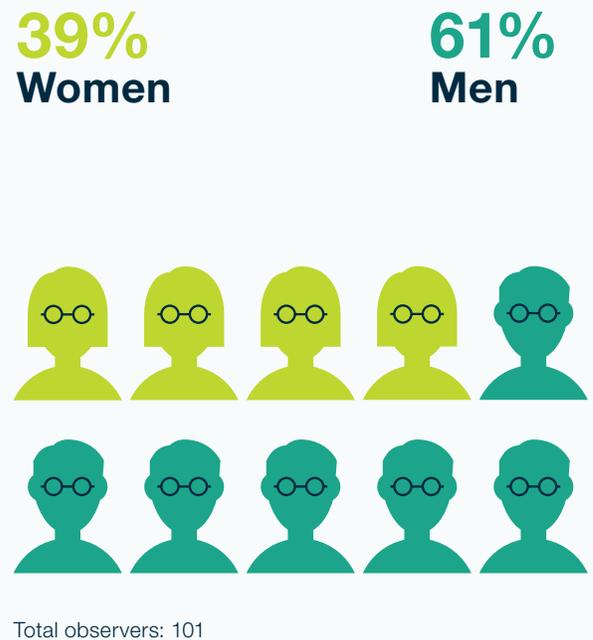


Figure 6: Percentages of women and men Stockholm POPRC Observers



Indicator 2: Party delegates at COPs

2013 COP

There were 894 Party delegates at the 2013 BRS COP; the gender of 10 individuals could not be confirmed, bringing the sample size to 884. Of these participants, 355 (40%) were women (Figure 7).

2015 COP

There were 842 Party delegates at the 2015 BRS COP; the gender of one individual could not be confirmed, bringing the sample size to 841. Of these participants, 381 (45%) were women (Figure 8).

Figure 7: Party Delegates at the 2013 BRS COP



Figure 8: Party Delegates at the 2015 BRS COP

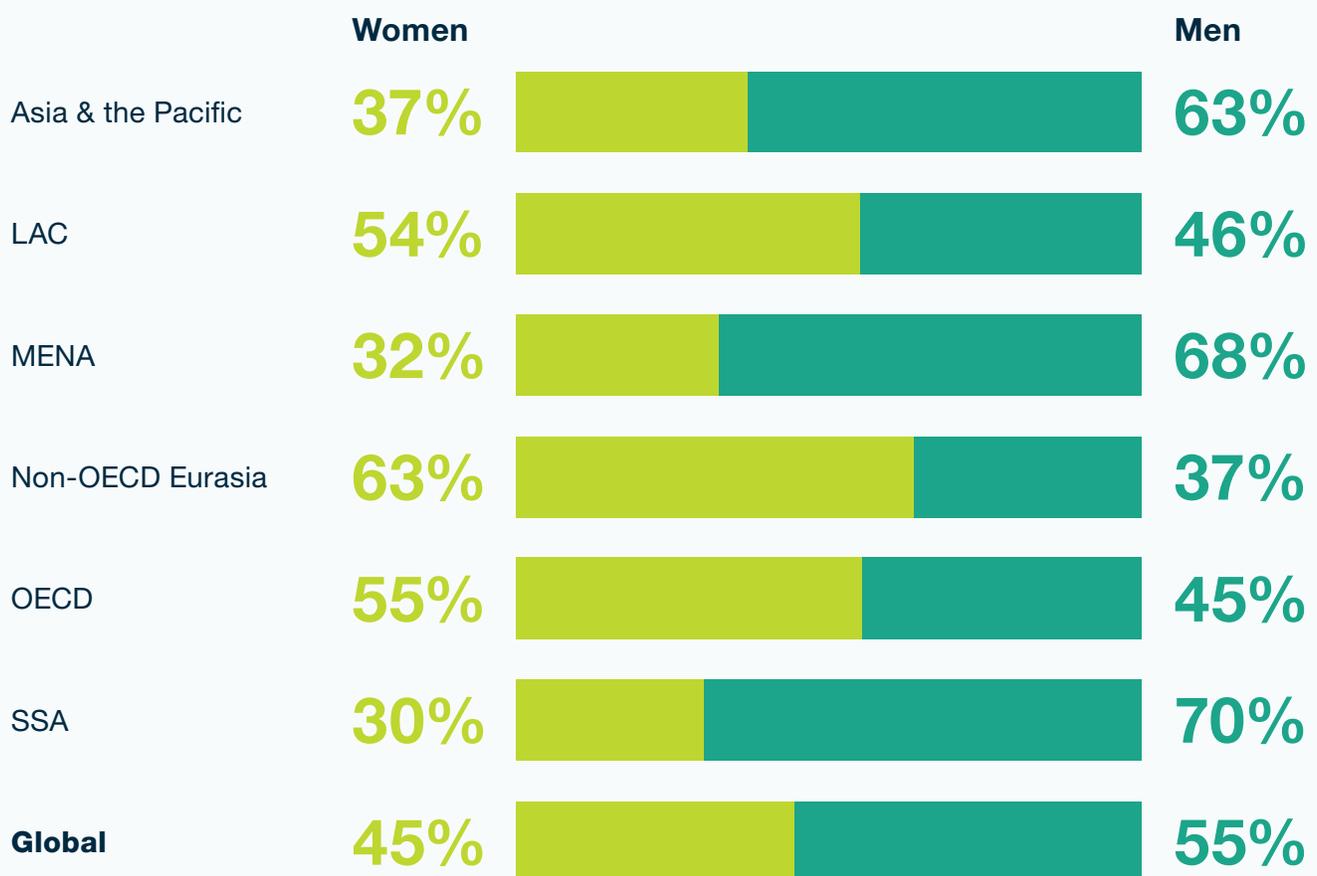


REGIONAL ANALYSIS

A regional breakdown of Party delegates to the 2015 BRS COP can be found in Figure 9.⁹ Thirty-seven per cent (37%) of the delegates coming from Asia and the Pacific were women; 54% of Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) delegates were women; 32% of the delegates

from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) were women; 63% of non-OECD delegates were women; 55% Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) delegates were women; and 30% of sub-Saharan African (SSA) delegations were women.¹⁰

Figure 9: Regional Analysis of Participation in 2015 BRS COP



⁹ Nations within the EU that were represented by individual delegations are included in this regional analysis, within OECD or non-OECD Eurasia, as appropriate. The EU as a whole was also represented by a delegation that is not included in the regional analysis. The EU delegation was 42% women.

¹⁰ Under the BRS Conventions, the regional groupings include Africa, Asia-Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), Western European and Others Group (WEOG). These regional groupings are different than those used in the EGI methodology, as presented in this report

Indicator 3: Observer delegates at COPs

2013 COP

There were 286 observer delegates at the 2013 BRS COP; the gender of six individuals could not be confirmed, bringing the sample size to 280. Of these participants, 102 (36%) were women (Figure 10).

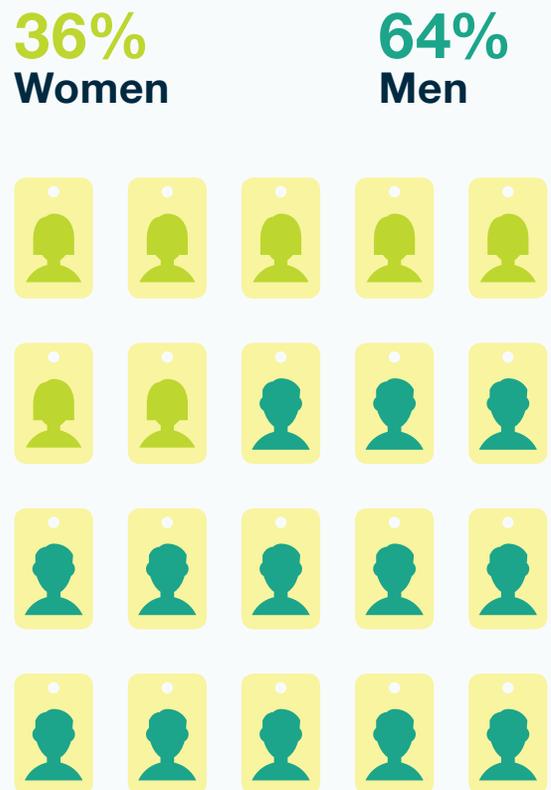
2015 COP

There were 325 observer delegates at the 2015 BRS COP; the gender of all individuals could be confirmed. Of these participants, 118 (36%) were women (Figure 11).

Figure 10: Observer Delegates at 2013 BRS COP



Figure 11: Observer Delegates at 2015 BRS COP

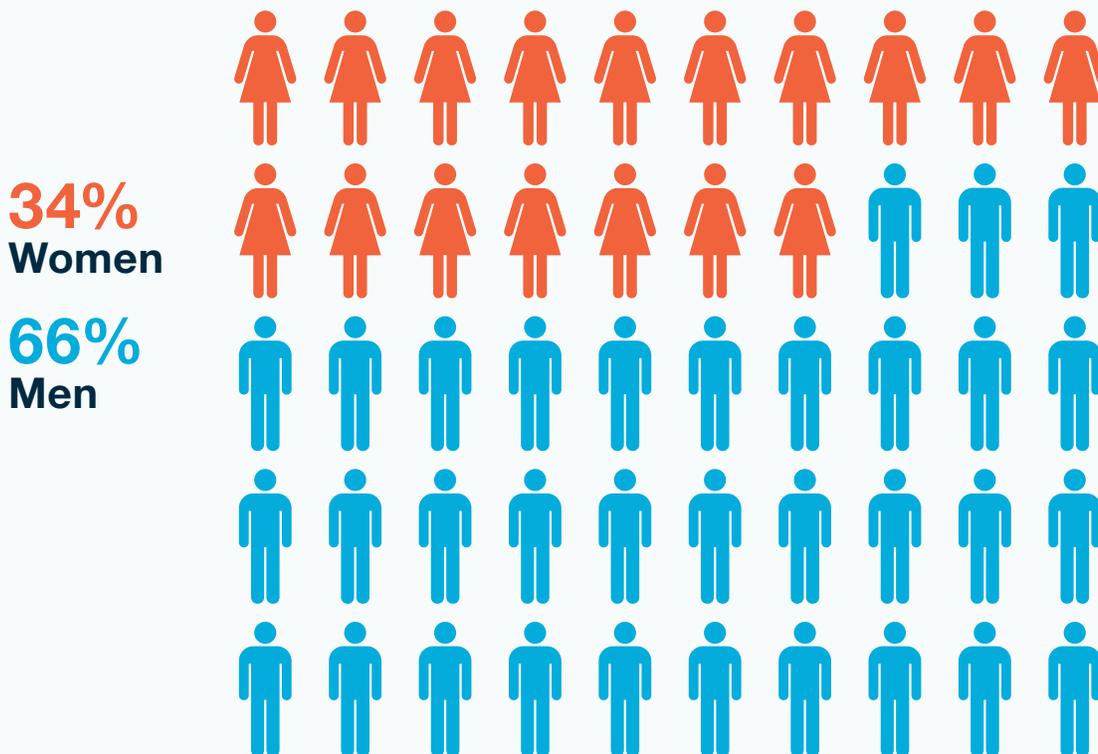


Indicator 4: Country contacts

As of 5 March 2017, the names of 713 country contacts to the BRS Conventions, were available on the BRS website. Some countries include the title or position of their country contact(s) but do not include the name(s) of an individual(s); those

countries were not included in this analysis. The gender of two individuals could not be confirmed, bringing the sample size to 711. Of those, 241 (34%) were women.

Figure 12: Country contacts to the BRS Conventions

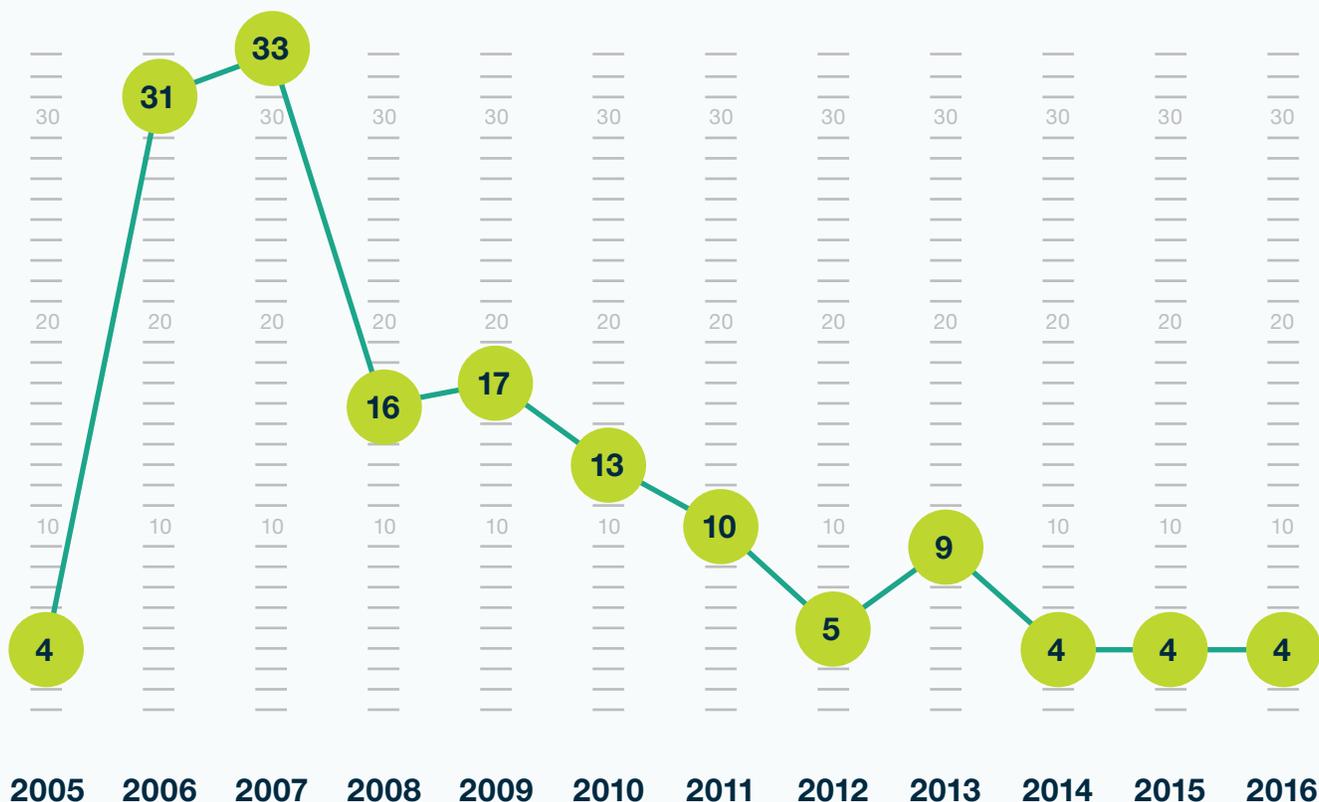


Indicator 5: Stockholm National Implementation Plans

The Stockholm Convention has received 164 initial NIPs from 164 Parties over an 11-year time period, 2005 to 2016 (Figure 13). Some of the Parties have updated their initial NIPs to comply with the subsequent amendments to the Convention, mainly regarding the inclusion of new chemicals.

This report analyses the initial NIPs to create a baseline on gender considerations included in the documents. Due to language and technical limitations, only 150 NIPs from, respectively, 150 countries were analysed and included in this report.

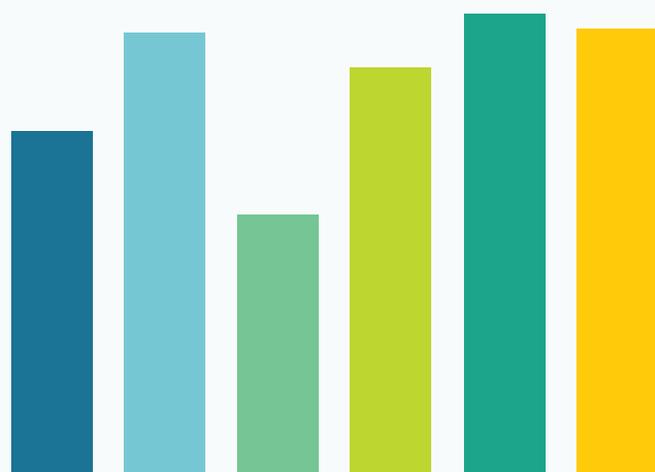
Figure 13: Number of initial National Implementation Plans transmitted each year



A regional distribution of Parties that have transmitted an initial NIP is shown in Figure 14. It must be noted that the amount of countries per region is unbalanced and thus the number of countries that transmitted initial NIPs per region also varies, in relationship to the number of countries in the region. For example, 46 Parties to the Convention are from SSA, while only 17 Parties are from MENA.¹¹

Figure 14: Percentage of Parties that have transmitted an initial NIP, by region

70% 90% 53% 53% 53% 90%



- Asia & the Pacific: 23 of 33 Parties, 70%
- LAC: 26 of 29 Parties, 90%
- MENA: 9 of 17 Parties, 53%
- Non-OECD Eurasia: 20 of 24 Parties, 83%
- OECD: 29 of 31 Parties, 94%
- SSA: 42 of 46 Parties, 91%

INCLUSION OF GENDER KEYWORDS

Of the 150 initial NIPs that were analysed, a total of 137 (91%) included at least one *women* and/or *gender* keyword.

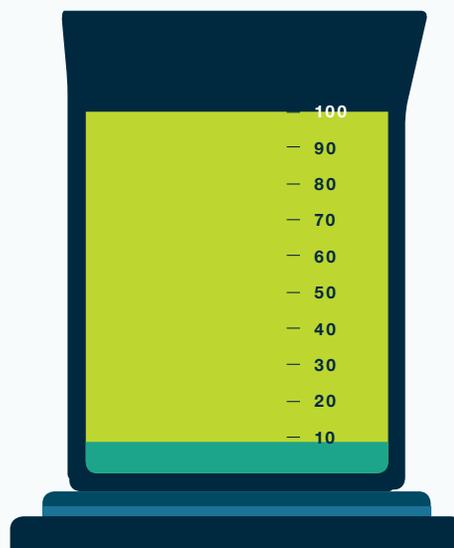
Figure 15: Inclusion of *women* and/or *gender* keywords in 150 initial NIPs

91%

Include keywords

9%

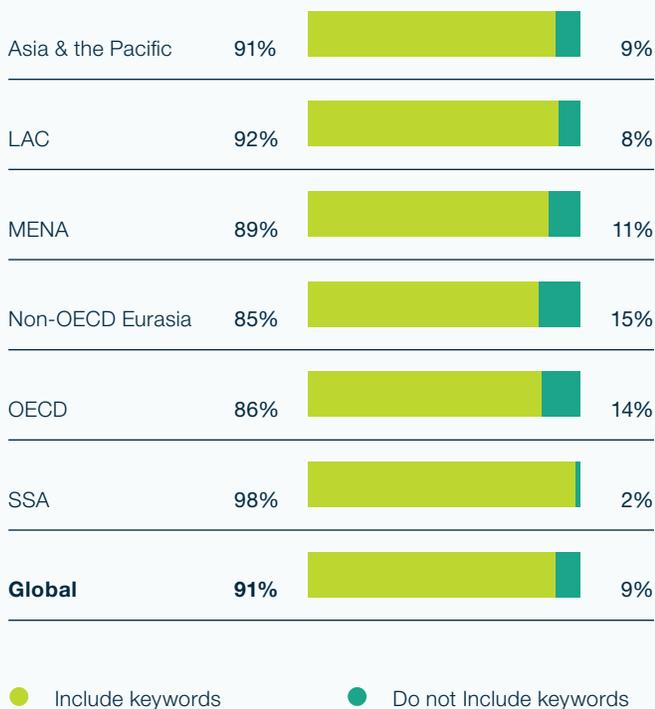
Do not include keywords



¹¹ For regional analyses throughout this report, nations within the EU that transmitted individual NIPs are included in this regional analysis, within OECD or non-OECD Eurasia, as appropriate. The EU as a whole transmitted a NIP, but it is not included in this regional analysis. Therefore, while 150 NIPs have been analysed, only 149 are incorporated into the regional analysis.

The inclusion of *women* and/or *gender* keywords by region is similar to the global average, in which 91% of the countries included at least one keyword mention in their initial NIP. SSA is the region where more countries comparatively have included *women* and/or *gender* keywords (98%, compared to the global average of 91%), whereas the non-OECD Eurasia region has comparatively fewer countries that transmitted NIPs with *women* and/or *gender* keyword mentions (85%, compared to the global average of 91%).

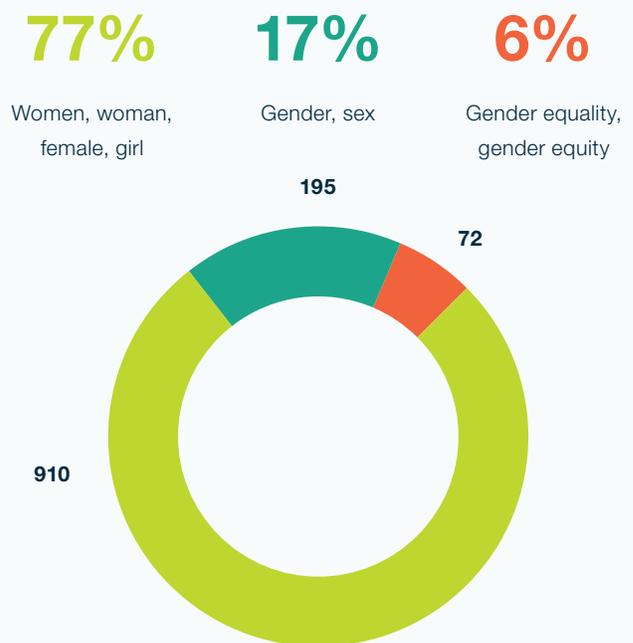
Figure 16: Percentage of initial NIPs that include *women* and/or *gender* keywords, by region



Women, woman, female and *girl* are the keywords used most frequently in the reports, accounting for 77% of the total keyword mentions. *Gender* and *sex* account for 17% of keyword mentions and the least used terms are *gender equality* and *gender equity*, which represent 6% of the total keyword mentions.

Parties' initial NIPs vary considerably in length—from 10 pages to 408—and in inclusion of keywords. Overall, the average number of keywords mentioned per document is 7.8, with some countries greatly outperforming this number, such as **Bosnia and Herzegovina** that mentions *women* and/or *gender* keywords 173 times and **Mexico** that includes 43 *women* and/or *gender* keywords.

Figure 17: Distribution of gender keywords mentioned in the initial NIPs



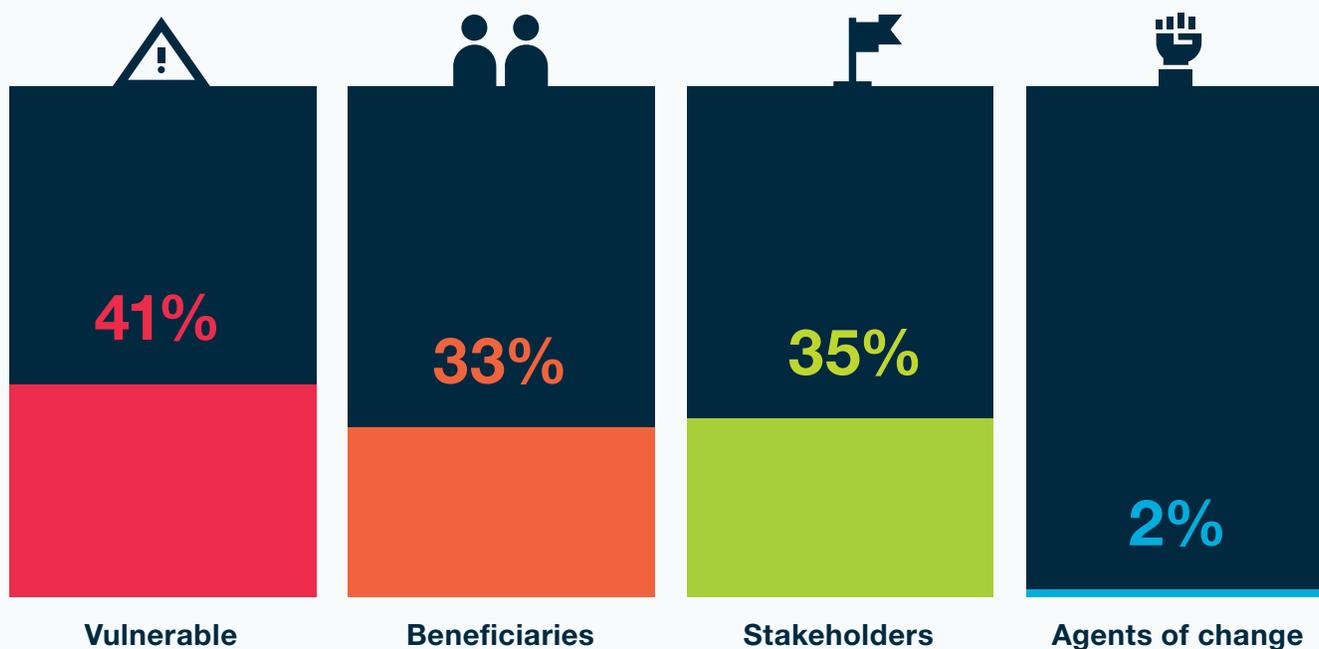
CHARACTERISATION OF WOMEN

Key findings:

- **41%** of NIPs analysed (62 countries' documents) characterise women as vulnerable
- **33%** of NIPs analysed (49 countries' documents) characterise women as beneficiaries
- **35%** of NIPs analysed (52 countries' documents) characterise women as stakeholders
- **2%** of NIPs analysed (3 countries' documents) characterise women as agents of change

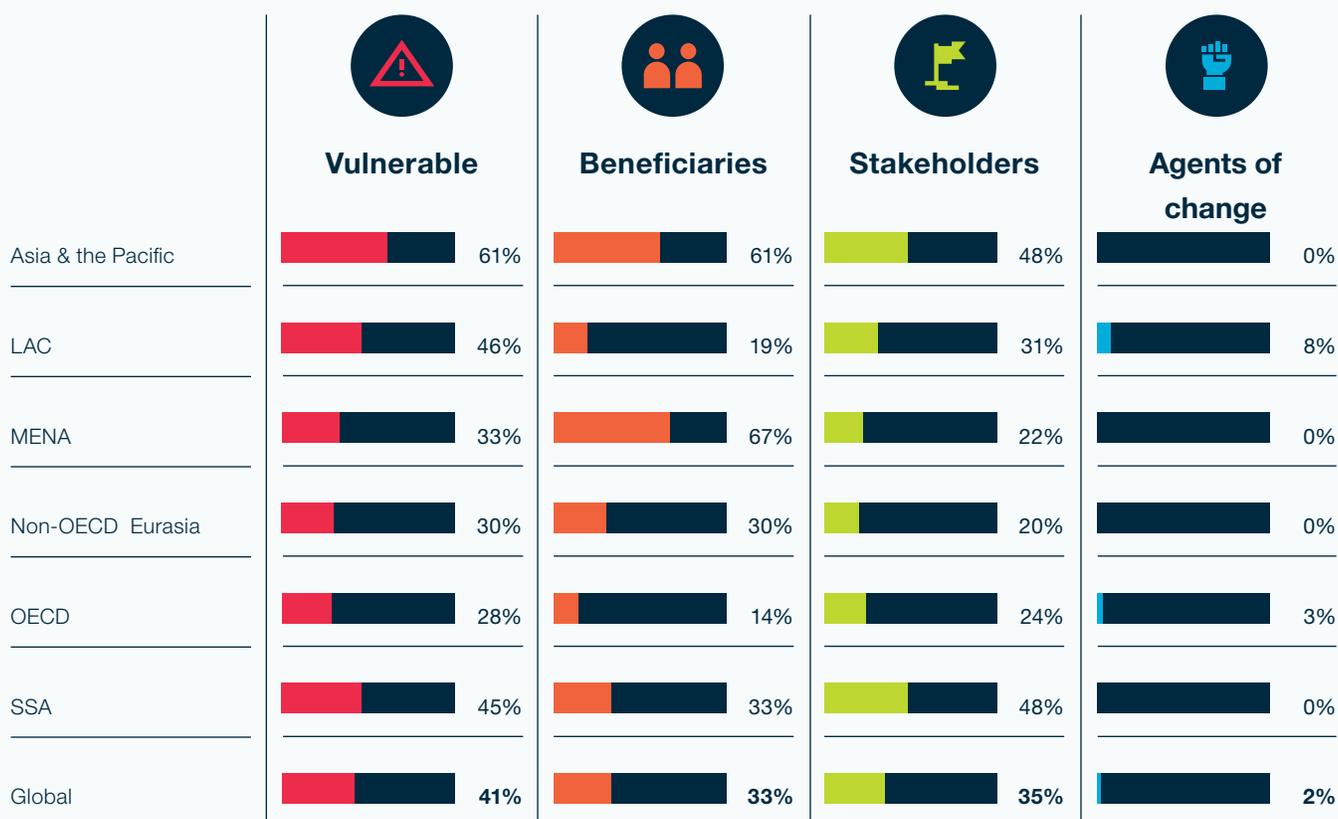
As mentioned in the methodology section above, the initial NIPs that included at least one *women* and/or *gender* keyword were further analysed qualitatively. This section examines how women are portrayed in the NIPs, identifying them as vulnerable; as beneficiaries of environmental policies, programmes and activities; as stakeholders in the management and decision-making processes; and/or as agents of change, leading the efforts in POPs management. Countries can characterise women in all or none of these ways; the categories are not mutually exclusive.

Figure 18: How women are characterised in the initial NIPs from 150 Parties



A regional breakdown of how women are characterised within NIPs is shown in Figure 19. Overall, countries are more likely to characterise women as stakeholders than as agents of change in their NIPs. The Parties that include women as agents of change are from the LAC and OECD regions.

Figure 19: How women are characterised in the initial NIPs, by region



Women as vulnerable

Sixty-two countries (41%) characterise women as vulnerable in their initial NIP. Women are considered vulnerable when they are perceived to suffer from gender inequalities, including in access to and control over resources and with respect to participation in project management, especially in the decision-making process. For example, **Cabo Verde** identifies rural women as one of the groups most affected by unemployment in its NIP, whereas the NIPs from **Sri Lanka** and **Malawi** explain how there is a correlation between gender inequalities and poverty, causing rural women to be the most likely to live in poverty.

However, in the context of the BRS Conventions, women’s vulnerability references are mainly related to the physiological differences between sexes that make women more affected by hazardous chemicals. As **Bosnia and Herzegovina’s** NIP explains, women are more vulnerable to hazardous chemicals because they generally have a higher proportion of fatty tissue, which is where dangerous chemicals are stored, and because of the biological structure of their reproductive system. The Stockholm Convention acknowledges women’s vulnerability to POPs in the preamble of the Convention text and many Parties have reflected it in their initial NIPs. **Tanzania’s** NIP notes that, “it is well documented

that women and children are mostly affected by POPs” and explains that children are exposed directly or indirectly through their mothers, which may affect their development.

Acknowledging women’s vulnerability to POPs is essential toward the adoption of gender-responsive actions, which include as a first

step identifying and responding to the different needs of men and women at all levels. Of the 62 countries’ NIPs that identify women as vulnerable, 38 include activities to address gender gaps that are often systemic, mainly targeting women in educational and public awareness programmes on POPs (this will be further discussed later in the report).

In a significant number of NIPs, pregnant and nursing women are considered as a sub-group of women because they are even more vulnerable to the adverse effects of POPs. Fetuses and babies are particularly vulnerable, and women can transfer POPs through the placenta and their breast milk. As the NIP from **Nauru** explains, women tend to accumulate POPs more readily than men, in part because “pregnancy and breast-feeding draw on maternal bodily fat reserves, so POPs are readily transmitted to infants.” As a recommendation, the NIPs from **Denmark, Finland** and **Sweden**, advise women of childbearing age, pregnant women and nursing mothers to limit their consumption of fish, which can contain high quantities of POPs such as dioxins.

Women as beneficiaries

The NIPs from 49 countries (33%) consider women as beneficiaries of actions in the management of POPs. As previously mentioned, the Stockholm Convention encourages the implementation of educational awareness programmes for women, children and the least educated on POPs management and effects of POPs on health, explicitly identifying women as one of the beneficiaries of these programmes. Reflecting on the Stockholm Convention, many countries identify women as one of the target groups of such actions and include actions and programmes on educational and public awareness, including the creation of informative

leaflets, training workshops and audio-visual education programmes. Examples of the identification of women as beneficiaries include the following:

Mali’s NIP remarks that the strengthening of all the actors relevant to POPs will be done with environmental information and education, as well as formal and informal training for all the social strata, particularly women and young people, with the aim of obtaining their support and active participation in the implementation of environmental protection actions.

The NIP from the **Philippines** mentions the *Pesticide Safety Awareness Symposium for Farm Women* that took place in different regions during 2012. Women were the primary participants and benefited from the symposium about the safe and prudent management of pesticides and food safety control.

Women as stakeholders

Fifty-two countries' NIPs (35%) identify women as stakeholders in the management of POPs. Based upon the Stockholm Convention, many countries' NIPs mention *Article 7*, which encourages Parties to consult national stakeholders, including women's groups, in all phases of the implementation process. Following the requirements of the Convention, many Parties have appointed women's organisations, associations and/or ministries as implementing agents of specific activities and programmes of the NIP, and others have included these entities in the planning of the NIP (this will be further discussed in the section on gender equality integration in the NIPs).

The recognition of women and women's groups as stakeholders in the decision making process has been included by some countries. For example:

Bolivia remarks that gender equality is a national priority and a cornerstone for the NIP implementation, as women's participation has been taken into account in the development of the NIP.

However, fewer countries clarify the measures to be taken to support women's participation or acknowledge the existing unequal gender relations and roles that may interfere with their participation. For example:

Botswana takes women's needs and interests into consideration by acknowledging in its NIP that their participation in traditional meeting places is minimal and thus other outreach strategies need to be adopted so they can freely interact and fully participate in the decision making process. Yet, they do not identify or address any specific actions to bridge this gap.

Women as agents of change

Three countries (2%) characterise women as agents of change in their initial NIP. They identify women as leaders in environmental health and climate change, as well as in social networks, supporting their inclusion in the decision making process.

Ecuador highlights the predominant role of women in information and awareness activities, identifying them as agents of behavioural change in the family.

Canada recognises the key role of indigenous women in environmental health and supports their involvement in federal efforts to meet environmental commitments.

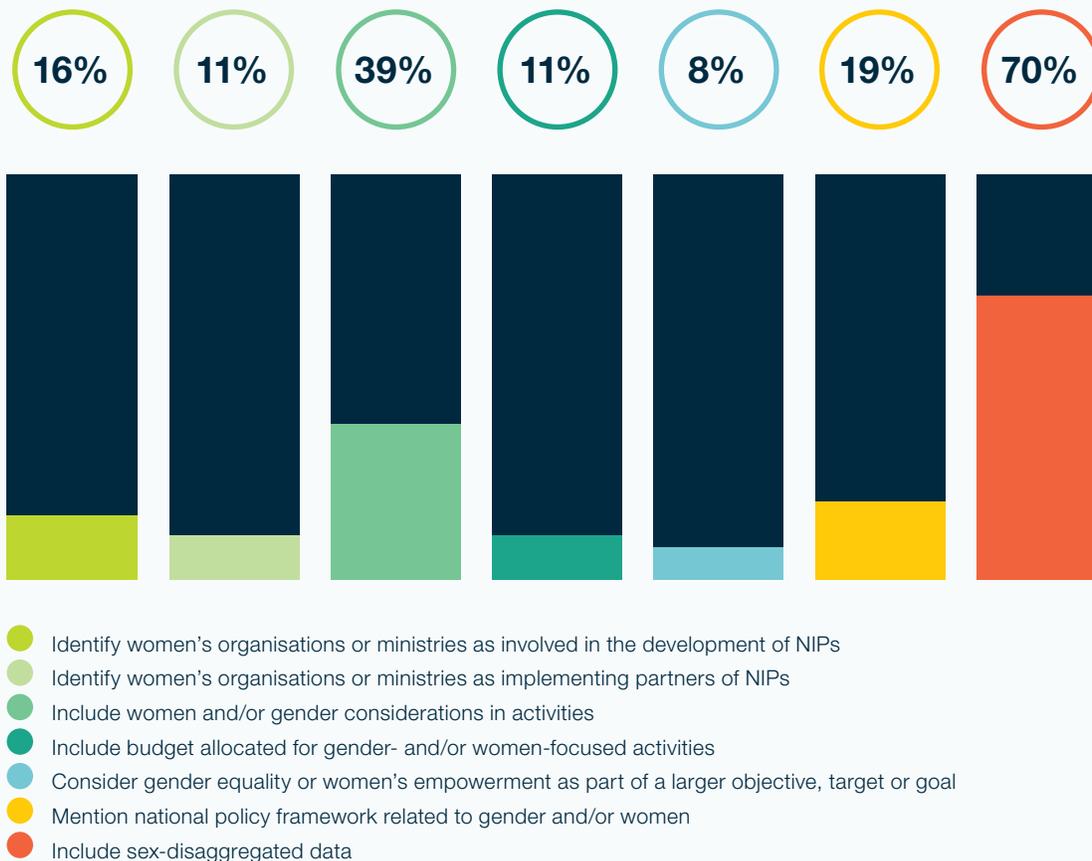
Panama advocates for the inclusion of women in the public policy process on climate change, due to their proven leading role in the process.

INTEGRATING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE NIPS

Key findings:

- **16%** of NIPs analysed (24 countries' documents) identify women's organisations/ ministries as involved in the development of the initial NIP
- **11%** of NIPs analysed (16 countries' documents) consider women's organisations/ ministries as implementing agencies
- **39%** of NIPs analysed (58 countries' documents) include activities that aim at empowering women and mainstreaming gender
- **11%** of NIPs analysed (17 countries' documents) allocate budget to gender- or women-focused activities
- **8%** of NIPs analysed (12 countries' documents) consider gender equality or women's empowerment as part of a larger objective, target or goal
- **19%** of NIPs analysed (29 countries' documents) mention national policy framework related to gender/women
- **70%** of NIPs (105 countries' documents) include sex-disaggregated data

Figure 20: Gender considerations included in NIPs, by percentage of total NIPs



- Identify women's organisations or ministries as involved in the development of NIPs
- Identify women's organisations or ministries as implementing partners of NIPs
- Include women and/or gender considerations in activities
- Include budget allocated for gender- and/or women-focused activities
- Consider gender equality or women's empowerment as part of a larger objective, target or goal
- Mention national policy framework related to gender and/or women
- Include sex-disaggregated data

Women's organisations involved in development and implementation

Twenty-four documents (16%) identify women's organisations or ministries as involved in the development of the initial NIP (Figure 20). The organisations and ministries are generally listed in the annexes or in the background section of the NIP. The Parties have listed these organisations as stakeholders in the developing process of the NIP but many do not specify their roles in the process.

Sixteen countries' documents (11%) identify women's organisations or ministries as implementing partners of NIPs activities (Figure 20). Many of the Parties identify women's organisations as the only partner of specific activities, sometimes within a section on the role of NGOs. For example:

Zambia includes the organisation Women for Change that advocates for "policies and practices that are gender sensitive, just and effectively respond to the plight of the vulnerable in society."

The **Dominican Republic** highlights the role of a women's organisation, Mujeres Dominicanas en Desarrollo (MUDE), which works towards the empowerment of low-income communities, especially women, by offering environmental capacity building and other services that include information on the effects of pesticides. Between 1997 and 1999 this organisation implemented the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/Global Environment Facility (GEF)/Small Grants Programme (SGP) *Pesticides Pollution Project* in two regions, conducting

workshops to create awareness on the need to protect the environment from pesticide pollution.

Based on their initial NIPs, OECD and non-OECD Eurasia are the only regions from which no Parties include women's organisations or ministries as implementing agencies.

Women's empowerment and gender equality inclusion in objectives and goals

Twelve countries' documents (8%) include women's empowerment or gender mainstreaming as part of a larger goal or objective in their initial NIP (Figure 20). Parties mainly identify women as a vulnerable group that should be a recipient of education, awareness and training programmes. For example:

Egypt's NIP identifies as a priority raising the awareness of women and children on POPs and the training of several groups, including women.

Bolivia advocates for taking a gender perspective into consideration in the promotion of awareness and capacity building programmes in its initial NIP.

Only two countries' NIPs (1%) include women's empowerment or gender mainstreaming as an objective of the initial NIP.

Azerbaijan considers improvement the knowledge of pregnant women and young mothers in the matter of POPs as one of the objectives of an information campaign on POPs in its initial NIP.

St. Kitts and Nevis' NIP identifies evaluating exposure of pregnant women to non-POPs pesticides as an objective of a POPs study research programme.

Linking chemicals and gender equality policy frameworks

NIPs often include a list of national and international policy frameworks that are relevant to chemicals management and sustainable development. These policies guide the development of the NIP and illustrate the benefits of adopting gender responsive actions.

At the international level, the Stockholm Convention is the flagship on the advancement of gender equality in the chemical field. Sixty-two countries (41%) mention or quote international policy frameworks in their initial NIP, mainly *Articles 7 and 10* of the Stockholm Convention. A few of them include references to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), specifically MDG5 on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and recognise how NIPs contribute to their achievement. However, most of these documents only quote the Convention text or the MDG target and do not explain further the relation between these texts and the advancement of gender equality.

Twenty-nine documents (19%) mention national gender policies or other national policies or plans that include a gender aspect in the context of the NIP. The incorporation of national plans and policies that include *women* and/or *gender* equality indicates there may be a provision for the mainstreaming of gender within the implementation of the NIP and illustrates that the

NIP is not created in a vacuum, but it is interlinked with other action plans.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's NIP is the only one to include an entire section on the importance of mainstreaming gender. This section introduces Bosnia and Herzegovina's *Law on Gender Equality* and highlights the importance of advancing gender and conducting gender analyses before planning activities, in order to develop a gender responsive NIP. While it indicates commitment to mainstream gender in the activities, Bosnia and Herzegovina clarifies that the lack of sex-disaggregated data has limited the activities focused on gender, a gap that will be improved in the updates of the NIP.

Activities to support gender equality and women's empowerment

As previously mentioned, the Stockholm Convention recommends that Parties consult their national stakeholders, including women, for the development, implementation and updating of their NIP, and encourages the development of education and public awareness programmes on POPs for women, children and those who are the least educated. This analysis examines whether or not a NIP includes activities that aim to advance gender equality, keeping in mind the articles of the Stockholm Convention.

Fifty-eight NIPs (39%) include at least one activity that aims to empower women and/or mainstream gender equality. Most of the activities follow *Article 10* of the Stockholm Convention and include women as one of the recipients of

education and public awareness programmes, which include training, awareness raising workshops and information campaigns on POPs. For example:

Egypt incorporates several activities to raise awareness on POPs, especially targeting women and children, and to train different groups, including women's organisations, on how to deal with these pollutants. One of these training workshops for women was conducted by the National Women Council in 2004 and dealt with the health impact of POPs. In this case, women are characterised as beneficiaries and stakeholders in the implementation of Egypt's NIP.

A few countries' NIPs identify as an activity the analysis of POPs accumulation on women to create a baseline and assess the impact of chemicals on human beings; for example, **Bulgaria** includes several activities on conducting research on the accumulation levels of POPs in women.

Despite that 35% of the Parties' NIPs identify women as stakeholders, as previously presented, fewer countries consider them as stakeholders of the activities actually proposed in the NIP. For example, **Mexico's** NIP includes an activity that advocates for the inclusion of a gender perspective when involving the public and private actors in the implementation of the NIP.

In some cases, women's organisations are the implementing agencies of specific activities. For example, the organisation Women Environment Preservation Committee (WEPCO) in **Nepal** is responsible for the empowerment of women to manage solid wastes in their communities.

Budgeting of gender- or women-focused activities

Seventeen countries (11%) allocate a budget to gender- or women-focused activities in their initial NIP. The budgeted activities include education and awareness raising projects, assessment of women's needs, training and investigations on the accumulation of POPs on women. Examples of activities with allocated budget include:

Pakistan's NIP incorporates an activity to develop and implement strategic interventions to address the capacity needs of women's groups, among others, and facilitate awareness-raising activities.

Sudan, more specifically, aims to create a new alternative project to replace current cooking facilities and practices in the household, including women's organisations, universities and research institutions in the process.

Monitoring and evaluation efforts in gender- or women-focused activities

Two countries include M&E mechanisms in their initial NIP, both of them related to the existence of POPs in humans and their harmful effects.

Spain includes the implementation of activities to properly monitor the existence of POPs in highly exposed groups and vulnerable groups, including women, to evaluate the risk posed by these hazardous chemicals.

Tajikistan incorporates the monitoring and evaluation of the effects of POPs by analysing breast milk, blood samples and other human tissues from pregnant women.

Gender analysis

This category refers to whether or not the NIPs mention the need for a gender analysis and whether or not they conducted one for the development of the NIP. Two countries acknowledge the need for the inclusion of a gender analysis but none of them has included an analysis in its initial NIP.

Ghana lists gender analysis as one of the areas of expertise needed for the implementation of the national priorities regarding the implementation of the NIP.

Bosnia and Herzegovina explains in detail in its NIP the characteristics and phases of a gender analysis, using as a reference the guidelines for gender equality and women's empowerment from the United Nations International Development Organization (UNIDO). The country includes gender analysis of laws, strategies and action plans as one of the commitments of its *Law on Gender Equality* and its Gender Action Plan.

Gender indicators and sex-disaggregated data

The majority of Parties (70%) use sex-disaggregated data in some way in their initial NIP. Twelve NIPs include data on the number of women that have participated in POPs analyses and/or the percentage of women affected by

determined hazardous chemicals. However, most of the Parties use sex-disaggregated data in relation to demographics and background information of the country. These include disaggregated breakdown of general population, expected lifespan by sex, fertility rates, pregnancy rates, education and enrolment rates by sex, and employment breakdown by sex.

Four countries' NIPs (3%) have gender indicators to measure the outcome of the activities proposed in the document. All of them are directly related to *Article 10* of the Stockholm Convention and refer to activities to educate and create public awareness, especially for women, on the impact of POPs. Two of these indicators only include the sub-group of pregnant and nursing women.

Latvia's indicators include pregnant women informed about the potential risks of consuming fatty fish from the Baltic Sea during pregnancy.

Lithuania's indicators similarly include information to pregnant and nursing women on the harmful effects of POPs and the methods to prevent exposure.

Malawi's NIP includes as an indicator the existence of specific media education programs, including for women and children.

Morocco includes the sensitisation of women and other groups regarding POPs as an indicator in its initial NIP.

CROSSCUTTING THEME: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ON POPS AND WOMEN

Key findings:

- **40%** of NIPs analysed (60 countries' documents) include references to health impacts of POPs on women
- **16%** of NIPs analysed (24 countries' documents) mention specific cases where women are in direct contact with POPs

As noted, POPs bioaccumulate in fatty tissues, and it is scientifically proven that the most vulnerable groups, without considering the exposure factor, are women, children and fetuses. This section discusses the crosscutting theme of the health impact of POPs on women as noted in initial NIPs, especially in cases where women are in direct contact with these chemicals due to their gender roles and livelihoods. As discussed in many NIPs, clinical tests on women's breast milk, blood and fatty tissues are indicators of how POPs are affecting humans in different communities.

Figure 21: Percentage of 150 initial NIPs that mention effects of POPs specifically on women's health

40%

Include mention of POPs and women's health

60%

Do not include mention of POPs and women's health



Sixty countries (40%) include references to the impacts of POPs on women's health in their initial NIPs. In this context, countries acknowledge the existence of POPs in humans and highlight their harmful effects, especially on women. Some Parties mention prior analyses of POPs and women, while others aim to conduct future studies as part of their NIP's activities. For example:

Kyrgyzstan explains in its NIP that breast milk of women living in the region of Osh tested positive for four different POPs in 35% of samples in 1992 and in 56.4% of samples in 2001; the concentration of these pesticides was up to 10 times higher in summer. They associate this increase with the fact that the Osh population is growing vegetables and fruits for consumption on the land, in the land where cotton and tobacco plantations were until 1995.

As **Brazil's** NIP explains, "the increased incidence of cancer, of conditions that affect the reproductive system and other chronic effects are examples of adverse consequences of exposure to these substances, affecting particularly vulnerable populations such as women, children, workers and farmers, notably in developing countries."

However, in many countries, these studies only include a small number of samples, mainly of women; only 10 countries have included male samples in their analyses. **Croatia** points out in its NIP that samples must be representative of both men and women and must be taken in all regions of the country.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE ARCTIC

Despite the small population living in the Arctic and the limited industrial production, POPs have been found in the region. The persistence of POPs over a long period of time and their ability to be transported by air and water contribute to their spreading on a global scale. In **Canada**, indigenous people from the north are more vulnerable due to their consumption of traditional food. "Scientific evidence show that" breast milk of Inuit women contains up to nine times higher levels of POPs than breast milk of women living in southern Canada. Due to POPs biomagnification process, animals at the top of the food chain accumulate more pollutants, posing a significant hazard for humans who are at the top of that chain.

POPs released into the environment can be transported by air and water currents and affect ecosystems situated far away, with increased impact on women and children. In addition to the exposure of POPs in the environment, women are in direct contact with POPs through their jobs and/or gendered division of labour. Twenty-four NIPs (16%) identify cases in which women are in direct contact with POPs in their communities. Nine countries' documents (6%) identify women as resource managers, mainly in agriculture, often noting that women's direct exposure to POPs is related to their role as agriculture (particularly fish smoking) managers.

As **Bosnia and Herzegovina** explains, women are exposed to chemicals in the health sector due to their professional roles as nurses and pharmacists. In many cases, women are unknowingly in contact with these hazardous chemicals. In **Benin**, women's role in smoking fish contributes to the inhalation of fumes, partly because of poor infrastructure and indoor air pollution. The lack of awareness on the harmful effects of POPs makes practices such as smoking fish or burning wires—which, in **Côte d'Ivoire**, is mainly done by women and children—common among these vulnerable groups.

Indicator 6: National Reports to the Stockholm Convention

The National Reports prepared and transmitted by Parties to the Stockholm Convention report on actions associated with Convention texts and decisions and update on the progress of the National Implementation Plan (see section above).

National reporting is supported by questionnaires and guidance supplied by the Conventions Secretariat. The First National Report questionnaire template does not include any questions directly asking about inclusion of gender considerations. For the Second and Third National Reports, the questionnaire template asks specifically about activities proposed under *Article 10* of the Convention, including the “development and implementation, especially for women, children and the least educated, of educational and public awareness programmes on persistent organic pollutants, as well as on their health and environmental effects and on their alternatives.”^{xx} This study analyses how many Parties responded to that particular question, as well as any other instances of *women* and/or *gender* keywords.

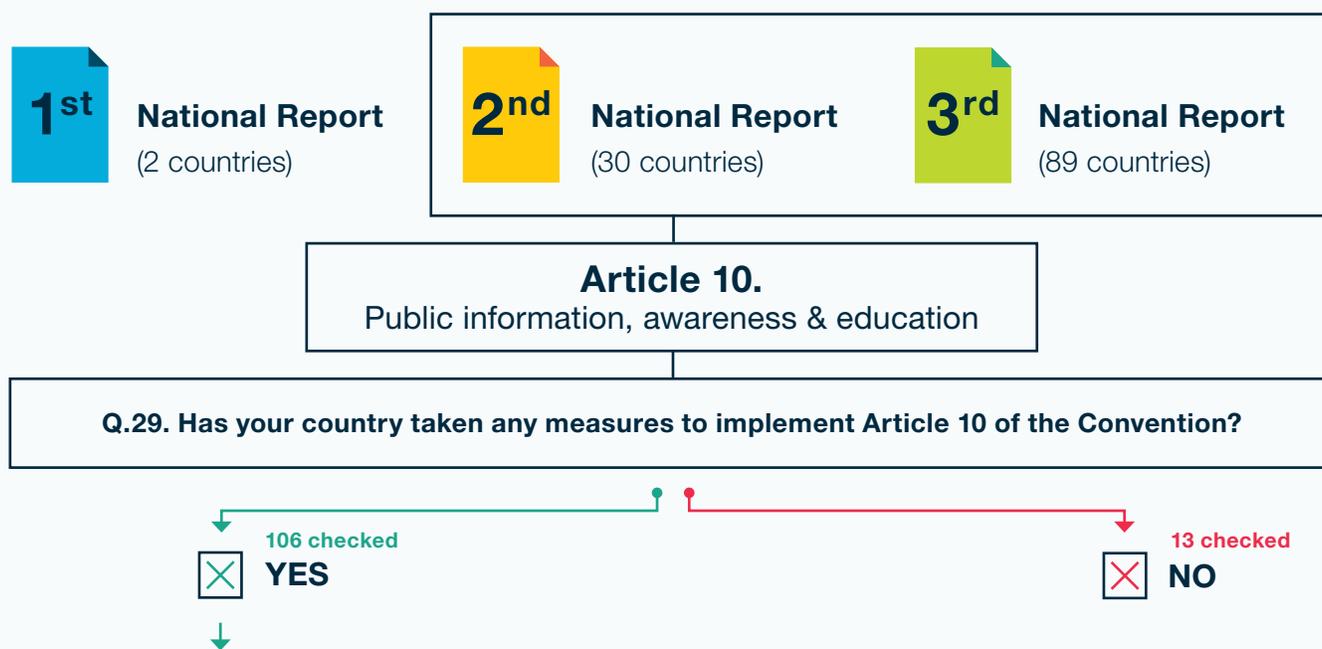
In this dataset, only the most recently transmitted National Report from each Party is included.

From the 121 Parties that transmitted at least one National Report, this analysis thus includes, as the most recent from each: 89 Third National Reports, 30 Second National Reports and two First National Reports.

INCLUSION OF GENDER KEYWORDS

Only those countries reporting via the questionnaire associated with the Second or Third National Report, as indicated above, had the option of “checking” the box associated with the gender-specific question, i.e. marking that they have taken measures towards the implementation of *Article 10* of the Stockholm Convention regarding the development and implementation of educational and public awareness programmes on POPs, especially directed to women, children and least educated. Figure 22 is a flow-chart illustrating the questionnaire process, indicating that there is only one question on social issues, explicitly pertaining to *Article 10*, and that question must be answered affirmatively before Parties are asked specifically about the inclusion of gender considerations in their work.

Figure 22: Inclusion of gender keywords within National Reports to the Stockholm Convention



Q.29.2. Please select all that apply

- 45 checked
Development and implementation of educational programmes especially for women, children and the least educated.
- _____

Of the total of 121 Parties that transmitted a National Report, 106 countries' reports (88%) marked that they have adopted measures to comply with *Article 10*. Fifteen Parties' reports (12%) did not, whether because their most recent report is the First National Report (i.e., with the First National Report questionnaire; only 2 Parties), or because they did not implement *Article 10* in their NIP (13 Parties). Out of the 106 countries that noted compliance with *Article 10* in their national reports, 45 Parties' reports (37% of the total of National Reports) confirmed to have implemented educational and public awareness programmes on POPs, especially for women, children and the least educated, characterising women as beneficiaries.

None of these countries' reports included further references to women and/or gender, either because they did not give further explanations or they did not mention *women* and/or *gender* keywords in the comments.

Serbia's Third National Report to the Stockholm Convention is the only report analysed that mentions the keyword *gender*. Serbia explains that it received funding from the GEF to review and update its National Implementation Plan, with the help of UNIDO, and identifies the consideration of gender aspects in POPs management as one of the overall objectives.

Indicator 7: National Reports to the Basel Convention

INCLUSION OF GENDER KEYWORDS

The National Reports prepared and transmitted by Parties to the Basel Convention report on the actions taken towards the implementation of the Convention texts and on the decisions and actions adopted regarding the export, import, transboundary movements and disposal of hazardous wastes and other wastes.

The National Reports to the Basel Convention are transmitted annually via a questionnaire. In addition to questions of a more technical nature requesting information about the volumes of transboundary movements, etc., a section is included on the effects of the generation, transportation and disposal of hazardous wastes and other wastes on human health and the environment. Out of the 162 Parties that have transmitted at least one national report to the Basel Convention, only **Saint Lucia** has included one gender keyword mention in its most recent report. In this example, Saint Lucia updated the information on its Designed Competent Authority and Focal Point, noting that the organisation now responsible for these roles is the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development, thus identifying the Ministry as an implementing agency.

Indicator 8: The Rotterdam Convention PIC Circular

The Rotterdam Convention does not have any reporting mechanism per se, but it disseminates a Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Circular biannually to provide Parties with relevant information on chemicals, including decisions adopted by Parties regarding specific chemicals as well as examples of specific environmental and health concerns. The latest Circular from December 2016 included a total of four *women* and/or *gender* keywords in the final regulatory action submissions by Brazil and Norway.

Brazil's notification mentions women and/or gender keywords three times in its rationale to ban phorate. The notification cites an incident in India, where 40 rural women experienced phorate poisoning on a tea plantation. Most of these women were severely poisoned and stayed in the hospital for two days. In another mention, the notification by Brazil recognizes that gender is a contributing factor to the increased risk of poisoning by organophosphates.

Norway's notification cites a scientific study on the detection of the chemical Hexabromocyclododecane (HBCDD) levels in women throughout Norway and Russia to inform its decision to severely restrict HBCDD.

Discussion and conclusions

A main purpose for this study, conducted in partnership with the BRS Secretariats, is to support the goals of the BRS-GAP by developing indicators and gathering baseline data on how gender considerations are being incorporated in the work of the Secretariats and Parties to the Conventions and how women are participating in key decision making processes and bodies.¹² The results of this study are rather encouraging—especially with respect to women’s representation as Party delegates at COPs and the inclusion of gender considerations within initial NIPs—as the BRS Secretariats consider the progress being made toward the goals of the BRS-GAP.

Key areas in which the Secretariat is striving toward successes are reflected in the BRS-GAP goals relating to gender parity: incorporating gender equality in the standard operating procedures (SOPs), specifically encouraging women to participate in meetings and training activities, and promoting gender balanced participation in meetings of the Conferences of the Parties and subsidiary bodies is clearly having impact. The data shows that although there is room for further improvement, strides have been made in these areas. Of Party delegates to the 2015 COPs, 45% were women, a 5% increase from 2013 and remarkably close to gender parity. Similarly, 42% or more of the members to the BRS Committees in 2016 were women. Committee

members must be experts in the field, and thus the high percentage of women represented is particularly noteworthy for women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.

A staggering number of initial NIPs (91%) contain *women* and/or *gender* keywords that point to some recognition of how women and men are impacted differently by chemical management in the action planning for the sound management of POPs. Many Parties characterise women as vulnerable by acknowledging their physiological vulnerability to POPs, in some cases including clinical tests on women’s breast milk and fatty tissue, indicating the recognition of the differentiated impact of hazardous chemicals on women and men. Many Parties, complying with *Articles 7 and 10*, characterise women as stakeholders and as beneficiaries of educational and public awareness activities. However, the participation of women or women’s organisations in the development of the NIP or their apparent leading role in environmental activities is limited, and only a few consider women’s engagement and gender considerations as an objective. This indicates that Parties acknowledge women’s vulnerability and the differentiated impacts on women and men but are not fully integrating or mainstreaming gender considerations within their initial NIPs.

¹² One goal of the BRS-GAP is to measure the progress in achieving BRS-GAP objectives and implementing activities within the Secretariat, including by collecting measurable information on gender, relating to both qualitative and quantitative indicators.

Parties evaluate how their NIPs are implemented via their National Report to the Stockholm Convention, in which 37% of Parties confirm to have implemented educational and public awareness programmes, especially for women, complying with *Article 10*. Despite the percentage being similar to the amount of women-related activities in the NIPs, 19 Parties that mentioned these activities in the NIP did not indicate in their National Report that they have implemented them; similarly, 26 Parties did not include any reference to women-related activities in their NIP but have implemented them according to their National Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In considering this data and the goals of the BRS-GAP, some recommendations for fully embracing gender entry points within this work can be considered.

As the data from this report indicates, the participation of women in the scientific committees and in the COPs is noteworthy, and the BRS Secretariat should continue supporting women's participation at all levels, encouraging Parties to include qualified women and men in their delegations and as Committee members. The BRS Secretariat likewise can ensure information sharing and promotion of documentation across women's organisations and networks to broaden stakeholder understanding and engagement, to complement Party representation.

Additional future studies, including long-term monitoring of the indicators developed here as well as studies exploring other aspects of this work, i.e. the connections and relationships between NIPs and national level strategies on sustainability and strategies on women, can support the goals of the BRS-GAP.

Another goal of the BRS-GAP is to include gender-related information in the reporting/evaluating forms and format. The BRS Conventions have different procedures and reporting mechanisms, and therefore the initiatives to better mainstream gender equality in the BRS should be tailor-made.

This study finds that there are some available entry points to include gender in order to promote the success of this goal. The format of the national report questionnaires, adopted by the COP, shapes Parties' understanding of and capacity to include gender considerations, especially since they are largely tailored to the text of the Convention. This is particularly obvious in National Reports to the Basel Convention, for which the National Report format does not ask any questions pertaining to gender or social issues and, as such, Parties are not reporting on any gender work they may or may not be doing. The National Report questionnaire for the Stockholm Convention only includes one question on social issues, and the question must be answered affirmatively before Parties are prompted to a follow-up question that asks about their gender-related work. However, as the

results show, none of the Parties has given further information in relation to that question. Capacity building around the importance of including gender considerations in reporting mechanisms can be very useful to raise awareness among Parties, especially since the Secretariat has limited influence in the adjustment of the national reporting format.

Similarly, many Parties transmitted their initial NIP prior to the development of the BRS-GAP, and since it is an informative document, Parties are not required to include gender considerations in the updates of their NIPs. As the data of the report indicates, previous efforts to mainstream gender considerations in relation to chemicals have yielded results, and Parties have expressed concerns about women's vulnerability and the harmful impact of hazardous chemicals on them in their initial NIPs. In this vein, many Parties to the Stockholm Convention have complied with *Articles 7 and 10* in their NIP, showing an interest in including gender considerations in future work. The BRS Secretariat, with the help of the Gender Task Team, and with consideration of the upcoming socio-economic guidance on NIPs development and guidance from the GEF implementing agencies which rely on the GEF gender policy and action plan, can support the inclusion of gender considerations as part of one of the future NIP addendum. The development of specific Gender Action Plan components to the NIPs (and associated capacity building) could be taken into consideration in future updates of the BRS-GAP. If the BRS Secretariat hopes to learn more about the gender work Parties

are conducting as part of their commitments to the Conventions, reporting mechanisms should request this information and provide Parties the opportunity to explain these aspects of their work. Communication and capacity building are key.

The BRS Secretariat has recognised the importance of training and developing the skills of the BRS staff on gender issues, as well as of supporting awareness-raising and outreach activities with partners to and stakeholders of the Conventions. These efforts should be strengthened, and capacity building and training should be supported at all levels, both internally and externally. Communications strategies can also support these goals.

The results from this report were presented at a side event, *Lessons and best practices integrating gender into the implementation of the BRS Conventions*, at the 2017 COPs. Side events such as these are important opportunities for information sharing, awareness raising, capacity building and building collaborations. Through side event dialogue, as elsewhere, questions around and recommendations for further technical training, financial support, and partnering opportunities may propel further advancements in BRS-GAP implementation—and toward enhanced implementation efforts that serve the needs, protect, and improve the lives and livelihoods of women and men worldwide. COPs should continue to feature side events specifically discussing gender considerations, highlighting new research and projects successfully implemented.

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