

Intervention Statement – Women

Distinguished speakers and guests, good morning, it is a pleasure and a privilege to present the perspective of women in the ASEAN region in the third ASEAN Conference on Biodiversity with the theme Towards 2050: Living in harmony with Nature. Gender equality and biodiversity goals have always been held at arm's length from each other. But as we all know by now, both these topics are crosscutting and actions on one can critically affect the other. And as such, we cannot emphasize enough the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment in achieving biodiversity goals and vice versa. Women's participation in biodiversity planning, if any, is usually limited to traditional structures and is rarely inclusive. The future Global Biodiversity Framework for a better normal is just one example of where women are included, can participate, and provide their unique perspective which will further gender equality goals. As practitioners, we have to actively engage women and other genders at all levels of society in our processes. Yes, there have been significant gains for gender equality and for women in various aspects in the region, however, women's role as stewards of the environment and their contributions to biodiversity conservation and protection still goes largely unnoticed. Recent initiatives by the Convention on Biological Diversity, the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity, the various ASEAN member-states, and our other partners seek to overturn this particular trend. They have committed to build the understanding and the capacity to address gender issues among biodiversity policymakers and other stakeholders. As well, gender equality advocates are enjoined to be more familiar with biodiversity issues and how these would affect the genders differently. CBD in partnership with UNEP, ACB and GIZ launched a training workshop on Gender and Biodiversity designed to further deepen the understanding of the linkages between these two topics and their practitioners. My role, our role, as both biodiversity practitioners and advocates for gender equality, is to support initiatives like these where all genders get to participate and contribute to, and benefit from biodiversity goals. And maybe then, we, the women and men and other genders will, in 2050, be living indeed in harmony with nature. Thank you. Maraming salamat po.