

## **Women's Strategies for Earth Summit 2002: Women's Action Agenda for a Healthy Planet 2002**

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*Women do not want to be mainstreamed into a polluted stream. We want to clean the stream and transform it into a fresh and flowing body. One that moves in a new direction—a world at peace, that respects human rights for all, renders economic justice and provides a sound and healthy environment.*

*Bella Abzug WEDO co-founder and honorary president (1920-1998)*

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), in Rio de Janeiro, 1992, was an important event for women worldwide, underlining their crucial role in achieving a different type of development—one that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. Agenda 21, the official document of the conference, acknowledges the need to integrate women and gender at all governmental levels and in the related activities of all UN agencies in a chapter entitled, Global Action for Women Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development.

The extent of the involvement of women was one of the most important aspects of UNCED. Women entered the UNCED process with a comprehensive and integrated vision that emerged from the First Women's World Congress for a Healthy Planet, organized by the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) in November 1991. At the Congress, 1,500 women from 83 countries formulated and adopted their own platform—*Women's Action Agenda 21*.

*Women's Action Agenda 21* covers issues of governance and decision making; environmental ethics and accountability; militarism; global economic issues such as trade and debt; poverty, land rights and food security; women's rights, reproductive health and health and environment; biodiversity and biotechnology; energy; science and technology; women's consumer power; and information and education.

These issues remain critical in efforts to achieve sustainable development from a gender perspective—even though the framework and approaches may have changed. Recognizing this, WEDO, partnering with other women's organizations and NGOs in different parts of the world, is undertaking a major review and revision of *Women's Action Agenda 21* in the lead-up to Earth Summit 2002, slated for Johannesburg, South Africa. The updated version, ***Women's Action Agenda for a Healthy Planet 2002***, will be launched at the Johannesburg Summit and will include feedback from broad consultations organized throughout the preparatory process.

***Women's Action Agenda for a Healthy Planet 2002*** will serve as a vision for the future and a document of principles that women worldwide could both contribute to and use for their own advocacy globally, nationally and locally with their own governments. It will be facilitated by a Working Group<sup>1</sup> of women advocates with experience of UN procedures and who are familiar with the activities of women's networks from around the world.

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<sup>1</sup> Thais Corral (REDEH, facilitator), Irene Dankelman (WEDO/WECE), Minu Hemmati (UNED Forum), Annkathrin Linck (HBS), Anita Nayar (SAGE), Annabell W. Waititu (ELCI), June Zeitlin (WEDO)

The Working Group's commitment to sustainable development is premised on a broad and integrated approach, one that includes environmental justice as well as the social and economic dimensions of development, specifically gender equality. It is therefore critical that Earth Summit 2002 build on the outcomes and achievements of previous UN world conferences including the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994), Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) and Habitat II (Istanbul, 1996), and key UN Conventions and Treaties such CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women), Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, and those that address key issues of biodiversity, climate change and persistent organic pollutants (POPs).

In the international meetings of the preparatory process for Earth Summit 2002, WEDO will convene the Women's Caucus, a space for women from all regions to plan and coordinate their lobbying efforts. The Working Group will support the efforts of women's groups in South Africa to advance a gender agenda and showcase women's projects in the region, as part of the Summit activities. The group will also seek gender balance among NGO participants at the regional and global meetings and consult widely with women at these events.

## LINK UP AND GET MORE INFORMATION

- **WEDO (Women's Environment and Development Organization)**

355 Lexington Ave, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, New York, NY 10017, USA. Tel: 1.212.9730325; fax: +1.212.9730335

e-mail: [june@wedo.org](mailto:june@wedo.org); website: [www.wedo.org](http://www.wedo.org)

- **REDEH (Network for Human Development)**

Rua Alvaro Alvim, 21/16 andar, Rio de Janeiro, RJ 20031-010, Brazil. Tel: +5521.2621704; fax: +5521.2626454

e-mail: [thaisc@redch.org.br](mailto:thaisc@redch.org.br)

- **UNED Forum**

3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL, UK. Tel: +44.2078397171; fax: + 44.2079305893;

e-mail: [minush@aol.com](mailto:minush@aol.com); websites: [www.unedforum.org](http://www.unedforum.org) and [www.earthsummit.2002.org](http://www.earthsummit.2002.org)

- **ELCI (Environment Liaison Centre International)**

P.O.bos 72461, Nairobi, Kenya. Tel: +254.02.562022 / 576154; fax: +254.02.576125; e-mail: [elci@alphanet.co.ke](mailto:elci@alphanet.co.ke)

- **WECF (Women in Europe for a Common Future)**

c/o Irene Dankelman, Univers.Nijmegen, Hatertseweg 41, 6581 KD Malden, Netherlands. Tel: +31.24.3652091;

fax + 31.24.3564834; e-mail: [irened@sci.kun.nl](mailto:irened@sci.kun.nl)

- **COWAN (Country Women Association of Nigeria)**

7, Awosika Crescent Ijapo Estate, P.M.B. 809, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria. Tel/fax: +234.34.244489 (office);

e-mail: [cowanhoney@infoweb.abs.net](mailto:cowanhoney@infoweb.abs.net)

- **Network of NGOs of Trinidad & Tobago for the Advancement of Women and CWN (Commonwealth Women's Network)**

P.O.Box 410, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. Tel/fax.+868.6289655; e-mail: [network@wow.net](mailto:network@wow.net)

- **Korea Women and Environment Network (KWEN);**

c/o Eun-Kyung Park, e-mail: [ekpi@hotmail.com](mailto:ekpi@hotmail.com)

- **World Council of Churches Ecumenical Team**

c/o Gail Lerner, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA. Tel: +1-212 867-5890; fax: +1-212 867-7462;

e-mail: [unlo@wccia](mailto:unlo@wccia)

- **NGO Committee on the Status of Women**

c/o Leslie Wright; Wold Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, 135 Earsteran Parkway, Brooklyn, New York 11238, USA, Tel

+1 718 398 3561, Fax +1 718 789 4640, e-mail: [waggs@yahoo.com](mailto:waggs@yahoo.com)

- **SAGE Strategic Analysis for Gender Equity**

c/o Anita Nayar, 20 Watersude Plaza #23K, New York, NY 10010, USA, Telefax: 1-212-683.4389;

e-mail: [nayanarita@hotmail.com](mailto:nayanarita@hotmail.com)

- **Heinrich Boell Stiftung**

c/o Annekathrin Linck, Hackesche Höfe, Rosenthaler Straße 40/41, D-10178 Berlin, Germany

## Women's Caucus Information

Website: [www.earthsummit2002.org/wcaucus/csdngo.htm](http://www.earthsummit2002.org/wcaucus/csdngo.htm)

Listserv: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/women-csd/>