

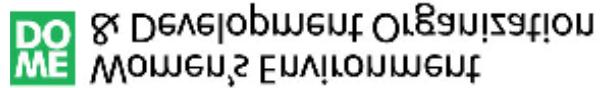


Women in Europe for a Common Future

VAM – Voices of African Mothers



BIC – Baha'i International Community



Call for Women's Participation in Rio+20 – United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 2012

The United Nations General Assembly has decided to hold a follow-up to the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro (which is commonly known as the 'Earth Summit'). Brazil has again agreed to be the host. The follow-up will be the 'UN Conference on Sustainable Development 2012', and it is being called informally 'Rio+20'. The themes of the conference are:

1. A green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and
2. The institutional framework for sustainable development.

The 1992 Earth Summit brought the need for sustainable development to the global agenda, led to a number of key Conventions designed to reduce environmental degradation and limit the impacts of climate change, and to move the world towards fair and green development and eradication of poverty. The Earth Summit also led to Agenda21, in which women were - for the first time - defined as one of the nine major groups¹ with a critical role to play in the formulation and implementation of policies for sustainable development.

Many of the women-led environmental and development organisations which were created in preparation for the 1992 Earth Summit, or to respond to its requirements, are now joining forces to work together to create a global women's movement for equitable and green development, with women as leaders and catalysts for change.

Currently the women's organisations involved in the preparation are:

- Voices of African Mothers, VAM, organising partner for Rio+20 for UNDESA
- Women in Europe for a Common Future WECF, organising partner for Rio+20 for UNDESA
- Baha'i International Community, organising partner for Rio+20 for UNDESA
- Women's Environment and Development Organization, WEDO
- Energia International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy

What is at Stake at Rio+20 in 2012?

Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising those of future generations. The 1992 Earth Summit led to worldwide recognition that

¹ 9 Major Groups: Farmers, Business, Indigenous Peoples, NGOs, Trade Unions, Science, Youth, Women, Local Authorities

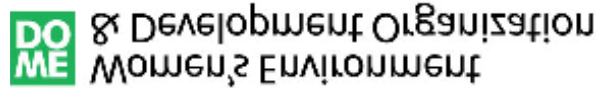


Women in Europe for a Common Future

VAM – Voices of African Mothers



BIC – Baha'i International Community



the current development model is not sustainable - that we need to decouple economic and social development from resource depletion and environmental pollution, and also restructure inequitable systems that perpetuate poverty. The Earth Summit led to historic Conventions, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). But global environmental and development governance has been fragmented and thus too weak to ensure real change, especially in terms of implementation of agreements. Global trade agreements and financial institutions have had more influence on development than Agenda 21, and lack of adequate national legislation and frameworks for sustainable development have also contributed to the lack of progress so far in achieving the aims of the Earth Summit.

Rio+20 will need to reform our global environmental and development governance, to ensure that sustainable development becomes the leading paradigm for international, national and local policy makers. It will need to produce international agreements to implement sustainable development, based on green, just and equitable economic indicators and tools. Rio+20 will also need to upgrade public participation, allowing and supporting civil society organisations to participate meaningfully in the discussions and negotiations, with women's full engagement and leadership.

What women are planning for Rio+20 so far:

International preparations:

We are inviting women organisations from all sectors and regions to join in the preparations for the Rio+20. We are setting up a coordinating group to steer our activities towards Rio+20 and have set up a list-serve to share our plans and documents.

Together with WEDO, who organized the World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet in 1991 as a preparatory conference for the Earth Summit, we will be organising a 2011 global women's congress for sustainable development, to again help prepare women's inputs into Rio+20.

We will organise a women's best practice fair during the prepcom for Rio+20 in 2011, and share our experience through best-practices publications.

We will coordinate with media organisations and organise media events and press contributions, including through new media.

National and regional preparations

We encourage women to become active in the national and regional preparation processes for Rio+20. Together with other major groups, governments, local authorities, parliamentarians, sustainable

