

Report back from WMG at 1st Environment Assembly, Nairobi, 23-27 June

A small delegation of the Women's Major Group participated in the 1st UNEA, with representatives from Kenya, Uganda, India, Colombia, Nigeria, Netherlands, Philippines, Cook Islands.

WMG presented input on the decision regarding chemicals management and financing, sustainable development goals, financing the 'green economy' and sustainable production and consumption, and gave interventions in the plenary and ministerial high-level segments. The interventions have been uploaded on the website www.womenmajorgroup.org

The UNEA presented new global reports, a.o. on illegal trade in wild animals, timber and charcoal, with estimated amount of 1.9 billion US in Africa alone, part of which funds terrorist organisations as well as on micro-plastic pollution of oceans, some 60% of marine litter are plastics. An international symposium on environmental rule of law presented its conclusions. The delegate negotiated till late at night a number of decisions (chemicals, rule of procedure, illegal wildlife trade,..) and a "ministerial declaration" which are available on <http://www.unep.org/unea/en/> Accord Africa organised a side event on grassroots women involvement with speakers from Actionaid, SWAGEN etc. and the Women's Major Group also held a side-event on Sustainable Development Goals with speakers from IPEN, ETC group, GFC and WECF International.

Based on paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 outcome document, a draft decision to strengthen access to information and major group and stakeholder implementation were proposed, but a number G77 countries including China and Argentina, tried to weaken it so much – i.e. retaining the right to refuse registration (access) to NGOs they don't agree with – that in the end, no decision was taken on this agenda point. This means that a decades old rule (69) will continue to be guiding. Major Groups and Stakeholders organised a protest action.

GENDER FORUM

The secretariat at UNEP for the "Network of Women Ministers and Leaders for the Environment" organised 2 half-day Gender Forums with three high level panels and 4 break out groups. Speakers included the Ministers of Environment, vice-president's spouses, heads of environmental agencies, African Development Bank, deputy and executive directors of UNEP (Steiner), UNDP and UNWOMEN (Puri) and Women's Major Group members. From WMG presentations were given by Imogen Ingram on waste, mining, chemicals, marine litter and gender, by Isis Alvarez on the SDG's and gender, and by Caroline Usikpedo on Extractive industries. Esther Mwaura, GROOTS, Kenya and Christina Kwangwari, ActionAid, presented in the session on climate and gender. Participants also joined from a delegation of 5 Ugandan grassroots participants (support for women in agriculture and environment), FEMNET, GWP and ENDA. The session on recommendations for better integrating gender and environment throughout the Sustainable Development Goals was facilitated by Sascha Gabizon and the recommendations were presented to the women ministers present at UNEA at a breakfast meeting (picture). A copy can be found on website www.womenmajorgroup.org



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS / Post2015

The UNEA ministerial segment **focussed on SDGs**, with Ministers interventions throughout the day, and a ministerial lunch, attended by Helen Clark (UNDP), John Ashe (President of the UN General Assembly), Ambassador Kamau (co-chair OWG on SDGs) and Amina J. Mohammed, USG for Post2015.

Co-chair Kamau announced that the 2nd version of the zero draft on SDGs will have 17 goals (applause from several participants), “a set of goals we can all be proud of”. He said that moving from the 8 goals of the MDGs which were not addressing all 3 dimensions of sustainable development, and were not universal, the double amount of goals were a sensible proposal. Kamau explained that the OWG had broken new ground and with all 193 involved in an open consultation as well as extensive consultations involving over 2000 Major Groups and Stakeholders from Civil Society. The OWG wants to have global ownership. It is not easy to build an integrated, universal agenda which includes all dimensions, and he recommended not to worry too much about the numbers, but worry more about the agenda. The OWG has already heard from FAO, WHO, Bretton Woods Institutions, and expect also from UNEA a strong voice. We need to have the same attention for the ministers of environment, as the finance minister get.

Amina J. Mohammed, gave her vision for the next phase. She warned that we need goals which countries can put into action. At country level it is a challenge to coordinate amongst ministries and speak in one voice in NY. Regarding MOI, “we should not pre-empt the Financing for Development process. Most MDG funds were domestic. But when we implemented the MDGs if we had not have had debt relief we could not have done it. We want to close the gap between countries”.

The role of technology in MOI is not only one of transfer, but of bringing to scale. Unlike the climate change summit the SDGs are non binding, and once decided for the global level, the national level has to integrate them into policies and plans. The climate change negotiations leads to legally binding agreement, and the SG wants to fuel the way to Paris, with his event in Sept, so that when we get to GA 2015, we have a set of goals which are aligned with environmental and development processes.

The SG synthesis report post2015 will provide clarity for post2015 negotiations, planned to start at end 2014. The SG will add the results of work of financing for SD expert committee. The synthesis report will have 4 elements: 1) chapeau, 2) goals and targets 3) MOI 4) Accountability for non legally binding formats. Regions have different accountability demands and needs. She does not want to “negotiate anything of the environmental dimension out of the post2015 agenda”.

Amina is convinced that we will have a final set of goals and targets in 2015, the UN is good at doing that. But will it they be ambitious enough, and can they go to scale?

UNEP presented a vision for better integrating all dimensions into the SDGs, as presented by Maryam Niamir Fuller, with 7 core areas integrated into 3 dimension 1) life of dignity for all 2) living within available space 3) building sustainable assets for the future.

