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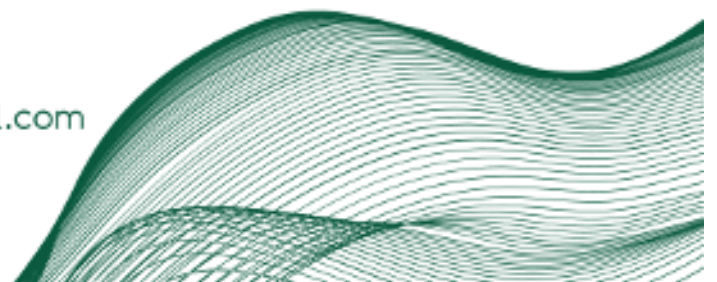
BENCHMARKING THE GLOBAL STATE OF GENDER AND FORESTS

A paper prepared for the Forest Stewardship Council
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Executive Summary

- This green paper provides common ground on gender equality in forests to function as a starting point for engaging with gender equality in the FSC system, provides a common understanding of gender issues in forests, and identifies entry points for FSC to pro-actively address gender inequality in its work.

- Although significant progress has been made by many countries, the gender gap remains prevalent, also among countries that have undertaken steps to address it. This paper therefore urges FSC member countries to not become complacent in advocating for gender action, but instead collaborate to achieve gender equality throughout the FSC system.

- The gendered impacts of the gender pay gap, access to resources and tenure, and gendered participation in FSC decision-making are global in nature, and as such, these impacts are present across the work of FSC. Gender roles can change with context and time, for example, through exposure and increased awareness, and addressing gender inequality is, therefore, an ongoing process.

- For FSC to effectively address gender, it is essential to move beyond a 'gender sensitive' approach towards being actively gender responsive, and to move beyond identification of gender inequalities towards identifying and proactively integrating gender actions in FSC that will help to overcome gender biases. This will allow women and men to equally engage with and benefit from forests and will foster women's and men's participation in FSC value chains.

- Caution needs to be exercised not to polarize masculine and feminine value on binary classifications but instead to demonstrate that different stakeholders can hold different values related to forests, and that these can, and need to, co-exist in the FSC system.

- Recognition of ecosystem services in the FSC system is an area where far greater recognition of women's and men's roles in forests can be achieved. Furthermore, with recognition of ecosystem services also come additional roles in forests, such as managing the ecosystem service design, monitoring, and reporting, which provides important entry points for gender action.

- Possible entry points for discussion for addressing gender in FSC value chains include an interrogation of the value systems that drive FSC as an organization; shifting focus from addressing gender action at the individual level towards addressing structural power relations; innovation in value chains; and acknowledging the multifunctionality of forests, which includes increasing awareness, focusing on SMEs and smallholders in the value chain, and utilising multiple knowledges.

- A focus on practicing gender mainstreaming is important – for example, by building on existing principles, standards and criteria; a joined-up approach to gender equality in which gender is mainstreamed across the FSC principles;

training and awareness-raising across multiple levels in FSC; development and implementation of context-sensitive indicators at the local level (in which there is encouragement to adopt or adapt gender-responsive indicators rather than drop them); participation for impact; and leading by example.

- Achieving gender equality is an iterative and ongoing process, and gender considerations therefore need to be mainstreamed across the work of FSC, from inception to certification, all the way to long-term monitoring and evaluation.

- When gender intersects with other axes of marginalization, women are more likely to experience additional layers of discrimination. Intersectionality, which is based on the understanding that women and men have layered identities that result from social, historical, and power structures, is a tool that can be applied in addition to gender-responsiveness to better handle this discrimination. A deeper understanding of these multiple identities in addition to gender can help tailor more effective responses.

1. Introduction

This Green Paper benchmarks the global state of gender and forests and identifies possible entry points for the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) to pro-actively address gender inequality in its work worldwide. Access to resources, the gendered division of labour, decision-making power, and access to markets are global in scope. As such, these impacts are present in all aspects of the work of FSC. Gender is also central to human dynamics in all stages of using and managing forests and their value chains and is present at all levels of the organization, from global boardrooms to local communities and the individuals within them (Ryan 2018). At present, the majority of people who "formally manage forests and forest use … tend to be male and tend to come from privileged urban backgrounds" (Deal 2014). To achieve its mandate, FSC needs to work towards a situation in which all forest managers can contribute to fulfil FSC's mission, regardless of their age, gender, gender identity, disability, race, caste, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, or any other status.

The global gender gap is real, also in the forest sector. Therefore, sustained urgent action is needed to address deep-rooted gender equalities. The Global Gender Gap Index is developed by the World Economic Forum and benchmarks the gender gap in countries based on four key dimensions, including: economic participation and opportunity; educational attainment; health and survival; and political empowerment. The 2021 report shows that the Gender Gap remains large, and of countries with large forest areas, rankings include Finland (2), Norway (3), Sweden (5), Rwanda (7) and Germany (11). The top 20 also includes countries such as Costa Rica (15), the Philippines (17) and South Africa (18). In North America, Canada is ranked 24 whilst the USA ranked 30. Figure 1 shows the expected time needed to close the economic gender gap, with expectations of regional closure of the gender gap to take up to 61 years in Western Europe, 74 years in Latin America and the Caribbean, up to 165 years in North America, and 171 years in the Pacific (Figure 1).

When are regions likely
to close the economic
gender gap?

WORLD
ECONOMIC
FORUM

Region	Years	
Western Europe	61 years	
South Asia	70 years	
Latin America and the Carribean	74 years	
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	124 years	
Sub-Saharan Africa	136 years	
Middle East and North Africa	153 years	
North America	165 years	
East Asia and the Pacific	171 years	
World Average	108 years	

WORLD AVERAGE
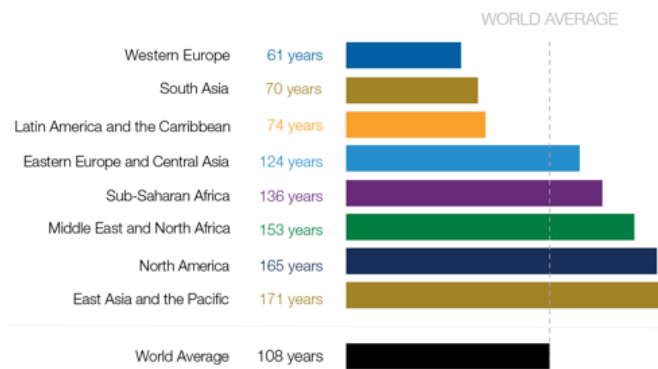
Source: Gobal Gender Gap Report 2018, World Economic Forum

Figure 1 Global Gender Gap - estimated time required to close the gender gap per region

Although enormous progress has been made in the past decades towards gender equality worldwide, the above figures show there is no reason for any country to slow their efforts towards gender equality. In addition to the challenges and inequalities that cisgender people face,[1] the challenges of trans and nonbinary people require attention, as people who do not identify exclusively as a man or a woman face structural barriers, biases, and discrimination at work because of their gender identity and expression. This discrimination can take severe forms and requires urgent addressing; however, they are not the focus of this paper, and this paper does not pretend to capture their experiences and challenges. This warrants its own investigation, as does the gender inequality, to avoid conflation of issues and challenges that affect both causes and which each need our undivided attention.

Although not the core focus of this paper, this document may be of relevance to addressing inequality related to the trans and nonbinary communities because the gender binary sustains gender discrimination, and gender stereotypes and work structures influence access to work, access to resources, and policies. Recent research demonstrates that men face backlash for straying from masculine gender norms (Mayer 2018) and meritocracy and biological differences between men and women are two ways that organizations justify gender inequalities in promotion practices. To illustrate, trans women report losing high powered work positions once they come out as women (Griggs 1998), while trans men report being more respected once they are seen as men compared to when they were perceived as women at work (Schilt 2010). Therefore, although this

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[1] meaning individuals who identify with the biological sex assigned at birth

paper is focused on the gender binary of women and men, this paper will touch upon areas that are of relevance for trans and non-binary communities.

1.1 FSC's principles and standards and gender equality

Appropriate management and utilization of forest resources help both local people and society at large to enjoy the long-term benefits of forests (FSC 2015). To achieve this, FSC has developed a voluntary, market-linked approach to improve forestry practices worldwide since its establishment in 1993. FSC's vision for 2050 is to achieve "resilient forests sustaining life on Earth," in which the world's forests are treasured for the value and benefits they provide (FSC 2020). Its mission is "Forests For All Forever," which FSC will promote through environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests. In its Global Strategy 2021-2026, FSC reaches back into its roots as an organization and confirms a commitment to promoting forest stewardship in a way that enables the resilience of forests and creates environmental, social and economic value and benefits (FSC 2020). This value is holistic and changes over time.
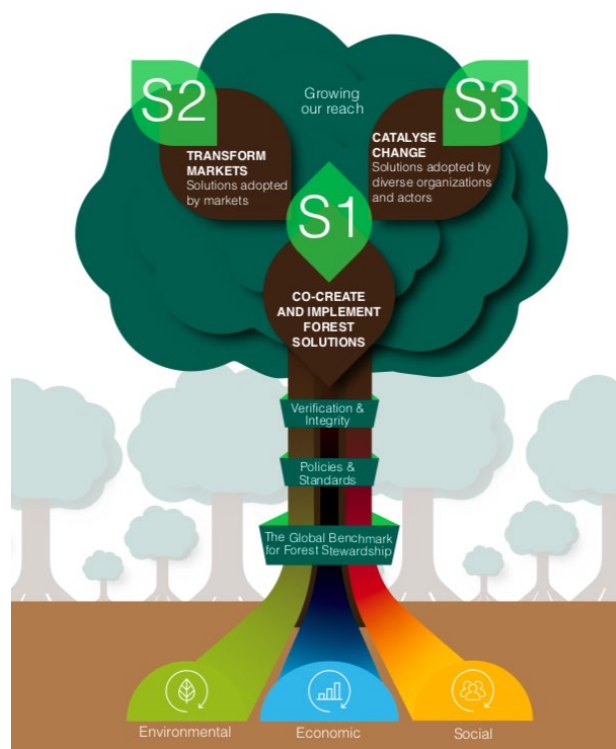
Figure 2 the 2050 vision: resilient forests to sustain life on earth (FSC 2020)

The 2021-2026 Strategy is built on three key pillars:

1. Co-creation and implementation of forest solutions, which will invigorate certification to drive the spread of forest stewardship by making it attractive, usable, and viable for potential users. This encompasses protection of the credibility of FSC, the demonstration of impact through modern technology, and,

together with our members and partners, co-creation of solutions to forest-related challenges.

2. Transforming markets, through fostering market uptake of FSC to drive outcomes on the ground and provide greater value to certificate holders, supporting the shift to bio-based and low-carbon circular economies. Through improved data and communication, FSC will highlight the social, environmental, and economic value and benefits of FSC-certified forests and their products and services. To achieve this, close collaboration with market actors that will enhance and satisfy demand for certified products and services is envisaged, focusing on sectors with the greatest opportunity for impact to achieve the 2050 vision.

3. Catalyzing change. Crucially, the above sets out to achieve the realization of, "A new forest paradigm…where the true value of forests is recognized and fully incorporated into society worldwide" (FSC 2020, p. 11).

FSC provides a system for voluntary accreditation and independent third-party verification so stakeholders in forest value chains can source from sustainable suppliers and communicate this to their customers. Two standards drive this process: (i) forest management (FM) standards, which set rules for forest operators to comply with responsible forest management requirements; and (ii) chain of custody (CoC) standards, which set requirements for the verification of FSC-certified materials and products along the production chain from the forest to the consumer. Within these, areas of work encompass the setting and development of Standards and Principles for FSC certification; certification and auditing of value chains; management of disputes; and delivery of training, marketing, and communication.

A set of 10 principles is applied across FSC certification of forest management (Table 1). The principles are intrinsic to all forest management standards used by accredited certification bodies, and therefore form the foundation of FSC forest management certification decisions.

Principle 1: Compliance with laws
Comply with all applicable laws, regulations and nationally-ratified international treaties, conventions and agreements.
Principle 2: Workers' rights and employment conditions
Maintain or enhance the social and economic wellbeing of workers.
Principle 3: Indigenous peoples' rights
Identify and uphold Indigenous Peoples' legal and customary rights of ownership, use and management of land, territories and resources affected by management activities.
Principle 4: Community relations
Contribute to maintaining or enhancing the social and economic wellbeing of local communities.
Principle 5: Benefits from the forest
Efficiently manage the range of multiple products and services of the Management Unit to maintain or enhance long term economic viability and the range of environmental and social benefits.
Principle 6: Environmental values and impact
Maintain, conserve and/or restore ecosystem services and environmental values of the Management Unit, and shall avoid, repair or mitigate negative environmental impacts.

Principle 7: Management planning
Have a management plan consistent with its policies and objectives and proportionate to scale, intensity and risks of its management activities. The management plan shall be implemented and kept up to date based on monitoring information in order to promote adaptive management. The associated planning and procedural documentation shall be sufficient to guide staff, inform affected stakeholders and interested stakeholders and to justify management decisions.
Principle 8: Monitoring and assessment
Demonstrate that, progress towards achieving the management objectives, the impacts of management activities and the condition of the Management Unit, are monitored and evaluated proportionate to the scale, intensity and risk of management activities, in order to implement adaptive management.
Principle 9: High conservation values
Maintain and/or enhance the High Conservation Values in the Management Unit through applying the precautionary approach.
Principle 10: Implementation of management activities
Management activities conducted by or for the organization for the management unit shall be selected and implemented consistent with the organization's economic, environmental and social policies and objectives and in compliance with the Principles and Criteria collectively.

Table 1 Principles of the FSC (FSC 2021a)

The FSC Policy for Association is a core document in the FSC system that helps address issues along the value chain. This policy aims to protect the reputation of FSC and the entities associated with the FSC system by acting as a safeguard against organizations involved in unacceptable activities such as the illegal harvesting or trade in forest products; violation of human rights within the forest sector; violation of any International Labour Organization (ILO) core labour conventions; significant degradation of high conservation values in forests; significant conversion of forests to plantation or non-forest use; and use of genetically modified trees for commercial purposes (FSC 2015a). If an organization is found to act in violation of the policy, all contractual ties with the organization can be terminated. Crucially, the Policy for Association enables FSC to reach beyond certified areas as it requires all associated organizations to commit to avoiding a breach of the above activities. FSC is currently developing remedy procedures and related processes to assist implementation of the policy. Gender is of relevance to several of these harmful activities and therefore essential to consider in the Policy for Association and its implementation.

In 2018, FSC launched its Ecosystem Services (ES) Procedure (FSC-PRO-30-006), which aims to create incentives for the preservation of valuable ecosystem services in responsibly managed forests. Ecosystem services include a range of benefits, including clean water, recreational benefits, climate regulation, and others. The new procedure will facilitate access to ecosystem services markets by providing forest landowners, smallholders, and communities with the tools to verify and derive value from their positive impacts on ecosystems. Furthermore, it can facilitate 'payments' for ecosystem services and adds business value for those who responsibly manage forests and those who take action to preserve forest ecosystem services. The ES procedure is an optional addition to the FM standard, yet it has significant potential for increasing gender visibility and equity if promoted as it elicits the range of benefits that forests create.

1.2 Gender in the FSC principles and standards: What is the current status?

Addressing gender equality is not a new goal for FSC, and several steps have been undertaken to increase its gender inclusiveness since the "Social Strategy" discussions in the late 1990th. These steps include representation within the organization itself, stakeholder engagement, inclusive and diverse working groups and committees, and the establishment of a Gender Steering Committee in 2013, followed by a Diversity and Gender Taskforce in 2018. The Task Force was established to advance diversity and gender within the organization, including its network partners, and works toward achieving positive gender and social inclusion impacts in the FSC system.

One of the key issues tackled in this area has been the alignment of the FSC with ILO conventions and the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on Gender Equality. This resulted in the introduction of Criterion 2.2 into the FM standard as a key mechanism for gender inclusion. The criterion specifically focuses on workers' rights and sets out to ensure equality in participation across levels of employment at FSC, equal wages, as well as parental leave for both men and women. This has thus created a mandate to further promote gender equality in the work of FSC. Criterion 2.2 is defined by nine indicators focused on enhancing the consistency of implementation of gender equality in all its standards (Table 2). Criterion 2.2 is FSC's most specific effort to date to encourage and enforce gender equality in forestry, because it offers practical strategies for standard development groups and other stakeholders to incorporate gender equality in their organizations (FSC 2016a).

The Promoting Gender Equality in National Forest Stewardship Standards (FSC-GUI-60-005) guidance document was developed to assist standard developers, FSC staff, and other stakeholders (e.g., auditors and foresters) involved in developing and/or approving National Forest Stewardship Standards. This document, which was developed in consultation with external gender experts and auditors, aids stakeholders in addressing criterion 2.2, explains the nine International Generic Indicators (IGIs) on gender, and addresses potential practical challenges related to the implementation of the criterion (FSC 2016b). Furthermore, GUI 60-005 is equally meant to guide auditors and foresters to understand the challenges for implementation.

International Generic Indicators for Criterion 2.2
2.2.1 Systems are implemented that promote gender equality and prevent gender discrimination in employment practices, training opportunities, awarding of contracts, and processes of engagement and management activities
2.2.2 Job opportunities are open to both women and men under the same conditions, and women are encouraged to participate actively in all levels of employment.
2.2.3 Work typically carried out by women (nurseries, silviculture, nontimber forest product harvesting, weighing, packing, etc.) is included in training and health and safety programs to the same extent as work typically carried out by men.
2.2.4 Women and men are paid the same wage when they do the same work

2.2.5 Women are paid directly and using mutually agreed methods (e.g. direct bank transfer, direct payments for school fees, etc.) to ensure they safely receive and retain their wages
2.2.7 Paternity leave is available and there is no penalty for taking it.
2.2.8 Meetings, management committees and decision-making forums are organized to include women and men, and to facilitate the active participation of both
2.2.9 Confidential and effective mechanisms exist for reporting and eliminating cases of sexual harassment and discrimination based on gender, marital status, parenthood, or sexual orientation.

Table 2 International Generic Indicators (IGI) accompanying Criterion 2.2 (FSC 2016b)

The adoption of criterion 2.2 led to a revision of the CoC Standards to include the ILO core conventions.

1.3 Rationale for this Green Paper

The timing of this Green Paper is critical as FSC has released its Global Strategy 2021-2026, in which an increasingly holistic approach to forests is taken. As a market-linked system, FSC connects to actual market dynamics and consequently, FSC has iteratively redefined its focus and goals since its inception. This includes a transition from forests largely in terms of timber-related products towards a more encompassing approach that includes the diverse and multiple value chains evident in forests, as well as a broadened view of forests and forest landscapes (e.g., through FSC's Focus Forests Green paper). Steps towards this holistic view of forests are incremental but significant and will provide a promising platform for advancing FSC's gender equality agenda.

Although both women and men use forests extensively, the benefits and burdens from forests are not equally distributed, and neither is representation in decision-making processes. This applies not only to FM Standards, but also to the broader FSC system, including Standard Developers, FSC staffing, working groups, and other decision-making entities in FSC. Cultural and religious differences, as well as underlying value systems and perceptions, have resulted in diverse geographical and regional patterns of gender inequality in the forests and value chains in which FSC operates, which echo in its management systems and value chain. Furthermore, gender equality makes business sense. Women and men bring different skills and assets to the table, which can drive efficiencies and improve the system (FSC 2016a). Gender, therefore, is a cross-cutting issue of relevance for all FSC stakeholders. This paper identifies key areas of gender inequalities in forest value chains and identifies areas for discussion with FSC stakeholders to serve as a starting point for proactively addressing gender inequalities in forests.[2] This is fundamental for informing future investments in sustainable forest management and can be a stepping stone for further inclusive action in the FSC system.

This paper is structured as follows: in Section 2, the importance of gender in forest stewardship is discussed, followed by an assessment of the systematic factors affecting

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[2] When reading this Green Paper, it is important for the reader to take note that everybody is enmeshed in gender systems of their own, which means we are all influenced by a range of factors in our own lives, geographies and local contexts that shape the way in which we view things. As such, nobody can fully escape our own experiences and consequently our own biases.

gender equality in forests in Section 3. In Section 4, gender is discussed in the context of forest value chains, which is further explored in Section 5, which identifies key gender issues in forest that are of direct relevance to FSC. Section 6 then identifies entry points for addressing gender in FSC value chains, which can serve as a starting point for the organization; this is followed by concluding remarks.

2. The importance of gender in forest stewardship

This section points out the importance of considering gender in forest stewardship and explains key gender terms and trends in forests and the intersection of gender with other questions of diversity.

2.1   A broadened vision of stewardship

Forest stewardship is the core value of FSC. In essence, stewardship means being responsible for something and taking good care of it (Smith and Finley 2006). In the context of forests, this means protecting the forest and using its resources carefully without harming or wasting them. However, the term forest stewardship gives rise to several key questions: Who are the stewards of the forests in the FSC system? How has this vision changed over time? How are the stewards represented in FSC?

Since FSC's establishment, a shift can be observed in the focus of its activities, which initially was dominated by a focus on the timber (and associated products) value chain as this was the only real market that FSC was able to connect to at the time. More recently, the focus on timber is being supplemented by significant activities in other forest value chains. This allows for an understanding of the value of forests beyond sustainable use only and recognizes intrinsic and non-monetary values, leading to a much broader understanding of stewardship that includes a range of use and non-use values in addition to environmental, economic, and social perspectives. Environmental degradation and the threats of climate change have further driven the expansion from a focus on sustainable use of forest resources towards sustainable and resilient forests. This is a crucial shift in focus as an expansion from a viewpoint in which forests are predominantly conceptualised as 'timber' resources, allowing for many more voices to become acknowledged and heard as stewards of the forest.

Yet, many of these forest stewards remain under-represented and under-resourced in forest management. To illustrate, the voices of Indigenous communities, who have always been stewards of the forest, are still struggling to be heard. In 2013, a permanent Indigenous Peoples' Committee was established to give a formal voice to Indigenous Peoples in the FSC principles (FSC 2021b). Similarly, a Diversity & Gender Task Force was established, and in 2015, Criterion 2.2 on gender equality was adopted into the new Principles and Criteria for the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC 2015). Criterion 2.2 states that: "The Organization shall promote gender equality in employment practices, training opportunities, awarding of contracts, processes of engagement and management activities" (FSC, 2015).

2.2   Gender, gender equality and gender equity

Gender can be defined as the social, behavioural, and cultural attributes, expectations and norms associated with being male or female. Gender represents a set of culturally specific characteristics defining the social behaviour of women and men, boys and girls, and the relationships between them (Tandon et al. 2018). Thus, rather than being focused on natural differences between women and men, gender is concerned with how societies give meaning to differences in femininity and masculinity (Laven 2009). Gender roles then refer to the socially defined tasks, responsibilities, and behaviours that are considered appropriate for men and women (Manfre and Rubin 2012). However, gender is often used shorthand for a focus on women, rather than on the relations between women and men. This is problematic because, to develop gender equitable and sustainable outcomes in forests, it is essential to consider the impacts on both men and women, their interactions (Haverhals et al. 2014), and the basis upon which those interactions are founded.

Driven by socio-cultural norms, women and men (across ethic groups, ages, religion, etc) have different needs, uses, and knowledge in relation to forest ecosystems (Aguilar 2016). Furthermore, the expectations and norms associated with being male or female that inform opinions of what is suitable for men and women also apply to forest settings. Consequently, these expectations form the basis upon which work is divided and remunerated tasks are designed and evaluated, including criteria for promotions (e.g. Piamonte et al. 2018), and other ways in which women's and men's activities are valued.

If gender is about both women and men, why are gender-focused interventions often focused on women? This is because gender equality requires that women and men can equally enjoy socially-valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards. In cases where gender inequality is prevalent, it is generally women who are excluded or disadvantaged as compared to men in relation to access to economic and social resources and decision-making. Furthermore, although often used interchangeably, there is an important difference between equity and equality: Whereas equality means that everyone receives the same treatment, regardless of individual differences, equity instead means that everybody is provided with what they need to succeed (Rise to Win 2021). Equity, therefore, leads to equality. Gender equality efforts often have a strong focus on women because women are disadvantaged in many areas of forests and their usage.

In the gender equity process, strategies and measures address women's historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field. A critical aspect of promoting gender equality is, therefore, focused on redressing power imbalances and giving women more autonomy to manage their own lives (UNFPA 2005). Achieving gender equality thus requires women's empowerment in order to ensure that access to resources and decision-making processes are no longer weighted in men's favour. Only then will women and men be able to fully participate as equal partners in social, productive, and reproductive life (UNFPA 2005).

This is not as easy as it sounds. Gender blindness, for example, refers to a lack of recognition that the roles and responsibilities that are assigned to different genders are ascribed to, or imposed upon them in a specific set of social, cultural, and economic contexts (European Institute for Gender Equality 2021). This is detrimental for sustainable forests and results in lost opportunities to achieve multiple benefits, including gender equality (Colfer et al. 2016; Elias et al. 2017). In many instances, women's role in forestry is not or is poorly acknowledged, let alone understood by those making decisions, resulting in gender blind policies and strategies for equality at best. A gender equitable approach to forest governance starts with an increased understanding of the unique role that women play in the management of forest resources (Aguilar 2016).

A growing body of research has highlighted the gendered nature of forest access, management, and use, as well as participation in their value chains and their associated benefits (see e.g. Mai et al. 2011 for a systematic review of gender in forest, agroforestry and tree resources and their markets). Failure to take full account of the diverse societal contexts and the way in which this 'genders' the use of forests has hindered initiatives in the forest sector (Aguilar 2016). Worldwide, the lack of women in forest value chains and environmental decision-making positions will ultimately result in missed opportunities for sustainable utilization of forest resources or for capitalization on the range of unique knowledge and experiences of natural resources that women and men hold (Elias 2015). As Aguilar (2016) rightly states, "If environmental initiatives fully embrace the principles of gender equality and women's empowerment, they can have an unprecedented impact" (p. xxvii).

2.3   Gender and Gender Responsiveness
Effective action for gender equality in forests requires planning and resources to ensure that general principles are translated into action. Adopting a gender approach includes:
- Analysis of the differential impacts of proposed interventions on women and men respectively
- Full recognition of women's and men's different needs, based on consultations that purposely seek advice from both women and men
- Recognition of the respective potential of women and men to play an active role in forest value chains and sustainable management of forest resources
- Recognition of the need to tackle institutional barriers that limit women's participation in the forest sector
- Recognition of the potential of women and men to participate in different forest value chains
- A focus on context-specific gender-mainstreaming that is anchored in local systems (de Groot 2018).

2.4   Key trends in gender and conceptualization of forests
Gender equality is not just a means to achieve sustainable forests. As Colfer et al. (2016) state: "Ignoring the crucial role that gender relations play in forestry not only undermines

local resource conditions, it also prevents women and girls from realizing a full range of their capabilities" (p.3). Worldwide, there has been a growing recognition that gender roles, knowledge, and interests have been grossly underacknowledged in value chains, including in the forest sector (see Reed and Christie 2008, Lidestav and Reed 2010, Pottinger and Mwangi 2011). Fortunately, the critical link between gender and forests and forest-based livelihoods is gaining recognition. Gender roles can change with context and time, and true conservation and management of forests will require a further paradigm shift, particularly with regard to more inclusive leadership roles, where all forest work incorporates gender considerations from its inception to implementation to monitoring and evaluation (Aguilar 2016).

Two trends in the forest sector can be observed where gender has become acknowledged in the way in which forests conceptualized and managed. Firstly, whereas traditionally the forest sector (including FSC-certified organizations) conflated the forestry industry with the forest sector as a whole, these concerns are evolving to a more holistic view of forests, moving away from forests solely as a 'timber' value chain towards encompassing multiple and connected value chains[3]. A holistic approach further requires a thorough look at value chains and livelihoods within and near forests and will elicit women's involvement and interests much more clearly (Colfer 2013). Furthermore, it will demonstrate that both women and men are essential in forest value chains. A second trend represents the understanding of the range of ecosystem services that forests provide, and in which notions of value increasingly also include non-monetary and intrinsic value in addition to a monetary focus. As a result, elements such as biodiversity, ecological processes, and human livelihood concerns are increasingly recognised and incorporated into forest management and utilisation (Colfer 2013). To illustrate, this is incorporated in FSC's Principle 5, which draws attention to a range of products and services and the need to enhance their long-term economic viability as well as the range of environmental and social benefits.

2.5 Diversity and gender

Diversity is defined as recognising the range of human differences and acting upon the visible and invisible differences that exist among people. Human difference leads to a variety of ways in which people experience, behave, value, communicate and work in relation to forests. The complex structures in which people exist have resulted in realities where not everybody benefits equally from forest use and management or is represented equally in decision-making. Degradation of forests has severe consequences for people depending on forest resources, but it disproportionately affects the most vulnerable sectors of society, particularly women and children – the very people who have the least influence on decision-making.

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[3] These value chains include wood products, pulp and paper products, and non-timber forest products, which can range from fruits and nuts, animal products, medicines, essences, resins, and palms, as well as a range of fibres such as bamboo and rattans, which can be harvested in the wild or farmed.

At the local forest level, it is problematic to view 'communities' or 'stakeholders' as homogenous and harmonious, or to assume that people share the same interests. Such an approach does not account for differences in opportunities, interests, and power dynamics that are based on social, economic, cultural, and geographical factors and that play out at the local level. If diversity is not considered and addressed in the design and implementation of FSC's work along the supply chain, social inequalities can become further entrenched and people can be further marginalized and disadvantaged. There is also a very pragmatic imperative for increasing diversity in the FSC system, because the more diverse stakeholders are, the more likely they will succeed in the face of uncertainty and ambiguity because they bring different backgrounds and experiences to the table, resulting in better outcomes.

At present, the majority of people who "formally manage forests and forest use … tend to be male and tend to come from privileged urban backgrounds" (Deal 2014). To achieve its mandate, FSC needs to work towards a situation in which all forest managers can contribute to fulfil FSC's mission, regardless of their age, gender, gender identity, disability, race, caste, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, or any other status. When gender intersects with other axes of marginalization, women are more likely to experience additional layers of discrimination. Intersectionality, which is based on the understanding that women and men have layered identities that result from social, historical, and power structures, is a tool that can be applied in addition to gender-responsiveness to better handle this discrimination. A deeper understanding of these multiple identities in addition to gender can help tailor more effective responses (Kangas 2014).

This section has shown the importance of incorporating gender in the work of FSC. Furthermore, for FSC to effectively address gender, it is essential to move beyond a 'gender sensitive' approach, in which gender issues are merely identified or not exacerbated, towards being actively gender responsive and proactively integrating gender actions in FSC that will help to overcome historical gender biases. Such an approach allows women and men to equally engage with and benefit from forests and fosters women's and men's participation in FSC value chains. Taking this approach will enable FSC to place women's and men's experiences in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of FSC activities.

3. Systemic factors influencing gender in forest systems: towards a multi-layered understanding of gender inequality

The governance of forest resources and their value chains encompasses local and global levels. Understanding how this governance operates provides important insights into the relation between actors and control of value chains, as well as the power dynamics between actors (Gereffi and Humphrey 2005, Helmsing and Vellema 2011). It also

provides important gender-related insights as forest value chain-related activities are implemented by a range of individuals and organizations, including harvesters, processors, traders, retailers, and service providers in the chain.

Forests, their management, and value chains operate at multiple levels, and so does gender inequality. So-called nesting of local and larger institutional arrangements accommodates the interests of groups and individuals organized at different spheres of influence (see Brondizio et al. 2009, Mwangi and Wardell 2012). To address gender issues in forests, a systematic understanding is necessary, as layers of influence on any given woman and man need to be visible in forest value chains in order to address the inequalities within them. For gender equality to occur, multiple layers of representation, negotiation, and decision-making processes need to take place across scales. This section briefly describes this systemic level that affects gender equality in the work of FSC.

3.1 A systemic understanding of gender in forests at macro, meso and micro level

The diversity of the world's forests and the people that are part of forest value chains are not clearly cut into categories, and the boundaries can be both fluid and fuzzy. However, three broad spheres of influence can be identified:

(i) The macro level: The macro level refers to the context level and backdrop activities that affect forests and gender and encompasses formal agreements on forests and gender predominantly at the international level, as well as broad-based, global rules. The macrolevel thus forms the backdrop against which decisions are made and determine the degrees and level of participation value chain or sector. Examples of where FSC operates at a macro level include the FSC General Assembly. Although macro-level forces may be beyond the scope of FSC to directly change, they remain relevant for several reasons. Firstly, gender in the FSC system will be affected by macro-level forces, and even if FSC may not be able to directly affect the landscape level, its advocacy can contribute to forces of change. Secondly, FSC's partnerships and certification tools can be used globally and can demonstrate compliance with global agreements.

(ii) The meso level: The meso-level refers to policies, regulations, and practices at the national level, and is therefore of high relevance to FSC's FM and CoC certifications and processes. Culture, religion, and social norms also form a key aspect affecting gender issues across forests at a national level. Furthermore, the meso level considers social patterns from landscapes to the national level that influence people's behaviour in relation to forests, affect access to resources, and affect land tenure, as well as ideas of masculinity and femininity. Within this, there are several areas considered important for gender, including: hierarchy (Colfer 2013), for example,

gender hierarchies within societies; hegemonic masculinity (Barker and Ricardo 2006; Amuyunzu-Nyamongo and Francis 2006, Silberschmidt 2001),[4] including which characteristics are considered feminine and masculine in forest management and business environments; religion (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2012, Hope et al. 2012); and modernity (See Arora-Jonsson 2012, and Pigg 1996)[5]. Activities at the meso level are highly relevant for national FSC offices and working groups, especially the Standard Development Groups, who recruit from and consult within these contexts.

(iii) The micro level: The micro level is the most powerful in determining the day-to-day gender-related realities in forests, but it is also the place where factors at the macro and meso dimension (e.g., policies, notions of modernity, and culture) may have adverse or unintended consequences if they do not fit within the local context. Within the micro level, there are a range of broad identifiable issues that can be identified that affect gender in forests. Within this scale, some key gender-related issues, as viewed through a lens of the relevant topics for forests and the work of FSC, include gendered economic roles, which determine women's socially defined roles activities in forest value chains (see Sen and An 2006, Gondowarsito 2002); cultural roles and values; valued domestic roles which include unpaid care work and subsistence activities; and intra-household power dynamics. Examples of where the micro-level is relevant for FSC include FM certification, stakeholder mapping and engagement, and conflict resolution processes at the local and certificate holder levels.

A framework for analyzing gender implications in forest and tree management utilizing the three levels described above is shown in Appendix 1. The levels represent a more continual than discrete set of layers that mutually interact. Yet, they provide an excellent basis from which to analyze possible gender implications of forest and value chain management. The levels are important for identifying and understanding areas where FSC can make material impacts in improving gender equality in forests.

3.2   The dilemma: where to address gender equality from at the FSC?

The above has shown that the systemic factors that affect gender equality operate at multiple levels. Yet often the level where change seems most effective (e.g., regulations and policies to enforce gender equality) may not necessarily translate in changes on the ground. Co-creation of solutions, as set out in the Global Strategy, thus needs to effectively be adopted by both market actors and affect other actors, including governments and communities.

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[4] which creates and/or reinforces gender hierarchy. Within this, the masculine ideal portrays the male role as protector provider and dominator within families

[5] A key lens through which gender is often viewed is through modernity, as narratives of modernity, paired with unequal geographical power balances, have varied effects on the ground and link to human rights, modernity and tradition, Indigenous knowledge, etc. To illustrate, researchers have stressed the inherent links of 'modernity' and 'tradition' as two notions that are oppositional rather than complementary.

Within the remit of FSC, there will be areas of focus where the organization can make a considerable difference in gender equality and areas where this will be much harder. The above, however, raises a key question: is it more effective to work within existing patterns to achieve gender-related changes, or would an approach that tackles the existing social, cultural, and power structures that underly gender inequalities in FSC value chains be more beneficial?

Colfer (2013) suggests that, on the one hand, the approach to work within existing patterns is usually efficient to achieve short-term gains, yet this may reinforce existing gender stereotypes. On the other hand, a more confrontational approach also has significant risks, not just for improving gender equality, but also for important ethical questions relating to power inequalities, north-south power balances, neo-colonialism, and cultural relativity – for example, with regard to peoples' rights to determine their own direction of change and its speed. There are thus no easy or one-size-fits-all solutions to this question.

To address gender, a range of questions needs to be considered, including the goals FSC wants to achieve by taking a gender approach and how this can be operationalized with regard to: a) the ways in which this may affect the focus and structure of FSC systems, for example, in relation to achieving the Global Strategy; b) the diverse geographical areas in which this approach is implemented; and c) how this affects each forest value chain of which FSC is part (or into which it plans expand). This will help FSC to identifies ways to contribute to global efforts to increase gender equality whilst respectfully engaging on the ground.

4 Gender in forest value chains

Having discussed the systemic levels affecting gender in forests, this section zooms into forest value chains specifically, and engages with the new paradigm of ecosystem services, in which forests' true value is recognized beyond timber. When reading this section, it is important to recognize that although in general women are often marginalized in forest value chains, there are also women who hold powerful roles in forest systems and/or are pushing the boundaries of existing systems and challenge stereotypes. Some of these women are in the FSC system and form influential networks. These women are important role models, form case studies, and provide a basis for informing future change. Despite these women, there are significant gender inequalities across forest value chains, which will be discussed in this section.

4.1 Defining forest value chains

Forest value chains are defined as market, supply, or commodity chains, or production to consumption systems of forest resources, and concern all activities that take timber and non-timber products from the tree or forest, to processing and product development, to product sales. Forest value chains include activities such as planting, harvesting, cleaning, transport, design, processing, production, transformation, packaging, marketing, distribution, and support services (Haverhals et al. 2014; Larson & Evans 2018). Each

process step in the chain of activity gives the product more added value, and the added value can be seen as the difference between the expenses to produce the final sales price of the product (EIP-AGRI 2016, Teischinger 2009). However, often the development of value chains does not consider the negative ecological impacts they may have on the forest as a whole (von Geibler et al. 2010).

Value chains represent much more than a combination of inputs and outputs; they represent important causal links between socio-economic and ecological dynamics in the current production and consumption patterns (Banikoi et al. 2018) and are therefore relevant for understanding gender issues. Value chains and forest products embody multiple relations of value, which are often explicitly economic, although social, cultural, and environmental value can also be embodied in forest products (see Cocks et al. 2011 for two excellent examples of the cultural value of berries and mushrooms in Northern Europe, and how traditional brooms in the Eastern Cape in South Africa represent the reciprocal interaction between the urban and the rural). Per Larson and Evans (2018, para. 5):

> Anything that happens to the forest affects people's spiritual relationship to it, their culture, the income coming into the village, leadership, the governance context, whether things are happening in secret, whether there's corruption – a forest is so much more than the resources inside it.

Gender is evident across forest value chains, and numerous studies have highlighted gender differences and power dynamics in different forest value chains, for example in timber, paper and pulp, non-timber forest products, and ecosystem services.

FSC's ecosystem services procedure allows certificate holders to demonstrate their beneficial impacts which in turn can be used to enable promotional or creating market benefits. Four types of ecosystem services can be identified, including (i) provisioning services, which include goods obtained from ecosystems such as wood, food, fibre and water; (ii) regulating services, which refer to the benefits obtained from the regulation of an ecosystem process such as air quality regulation, climate regulation, pollination, and natural hazard regulation; (iii) cultural services, which are nonmaterial benefits that human beings receive from the ecosystem e.g. through aesthetic experience, recreation, and spiritual use; and (iv) supporting services, which are fundamental to maintaining essential services like photosynthesis, nutrient cycling, and wildlife habitat (Mengist and Soromessa 2019). Recognition of ecosystem services in the FSC system thus simultaneously creates sustainability benefits, but also commodifies them. This is an area where there can be far greater recognition of women's and men's roles in forests, especially if the motions on ecosystem services and cultural values are successful. Furthermore, with recognition of ecosystem services come additional roles in forests, such as managing the ecosystem service design, monitoring, and reporting, which provides important entry points for gender action.

4.2 Gendered divisions in forest value chains

This section links gender more closely to the value chains in which FSC operates. Both women and men are active users of the forest yet engage in a range of different activities. This is often poorly understood or simply not acknowledged (den Besten 2011). To illustrate, women's main activities often include collecting firewood, fruits, and vegetables, often for subsistence purposes, whilst hunting and forestry are important areas of engagement for men. However, there is an important additional dynamic that affects gender division in forests. Trends in the literature shows that (i) men participate more in forest value chains when the value of the products increase; (ii) men typically participate to commercialize products; (iii) women participate to gather foods for their own and household use, and to generate a family income, often in informal markets (Haverhals et al. 2014); and that (iv) migration affects gender dynamics, where the absence of men because of migration impacts women's roles, for example through increased autonomy and decision-making power (Shipton 2007). FSC has a number of safeguards in the Principles and Criteria to recognise gendered divisions in forest value chains, in particular in local rights (e.g. through promoting that informal rights holders are supported in having their rights formalized). However, these are predominantly focused on currently certified areas and related stakeholders, and therefore are often focused on a narrow range of activities, e.g. in timber value chains.

Another important gendered division in forest value chains is the different knowledges held by men and women about the forests. To illustrate, Holmgren and Arora-Jonsson (2016), who examine Swedish approaches to forest management, point to the implicit and explicit ways in which knowledge shapes climate, gender, and forest policy (Colfer et al. 2016). Furthermore, women and men hold different knowledges on the sustainable management of its resources and contribute differently to the sustainable use of forest resources. Whereas men are often involved in the timber forest chain, as well as asset-intensive uses of the forest, women are primary users of the forest on a day-to-day basis (Aguilar 2016, Colfer et al. 2016). Coulibaly-Lingani et al. (2011) identified that women constitute about 75 per cent of forest users globally in their role as carers and are often responsible for feeding their families and harvesting forest species for food, fuel, and medicine. As a result, they have extensive knowledge about the relative abundance of forest species, their location, state, and rates of depreciation, and they bear the brunt of most negative forest management policies (Coulibaly-Lingani et al. 2011, Ogunjobi et al. 2010, Eneji 2015). Furthermore, and essential for addressing gender in forests, is that women's heavy dependence on forests and their associated products means that they are often heavily impacted when forests are degraded or when forest access is denied (Colfer et al. 2016, Aguilar 2016, Shackleton et al. 2011).

As FSC has a strong presence in a large number of value chains, this section is organized according to type of value chain. FSC under its CoC certification involves more than 50,000 companies worldwide (FSC 2021b), certifying timber and a range of non-timber forest products. Some of the main value chains that are certified include furniture,

construction, textile and apparel, rubber, and the fibre value chain (FSC 2013). For the purpose of this green paper, forest value chains will be discussed in two product groups: timber products and non-timber forest products (NTFPs) (FSC 2013). However, it is crucial to note that to make gender impacts, FSC may need to move beyond the existing value chains in which it operates to encompass other areas of forest value chains.

4.2.1 Timber supply chains

The timber supply chain in its simplest sense encompasses raw timber (referring to unprocessed logs), which is organized in sawtimber and pulpwood as well as hardwoods and softwoods (Fu 2014) (See Figure 1). Depending on the type and size of wood, those logs will be turned into a number of products, such as newspapers, cardboard, framing lumber, flooring, cabinets, copier paper, railroad tiles, furniture, etc.

To illustrate, timber is a key high monetary value forest product, and its value chain starts from the growing of the trees through the final sales of the timber and its products. Timber value chains comprise a range of activities, processes, and actors involved in the production (e.g. the growing of trees and general management of forests), harvesting, transportation, and finally consumption (von Geibler et al. 2010). A range of inputs are also part of the value chain, including seeds, equipment and machinery at various stages, and land and water resources, as well as other services such as design and branding (Kaplinsky and Morris 2002).
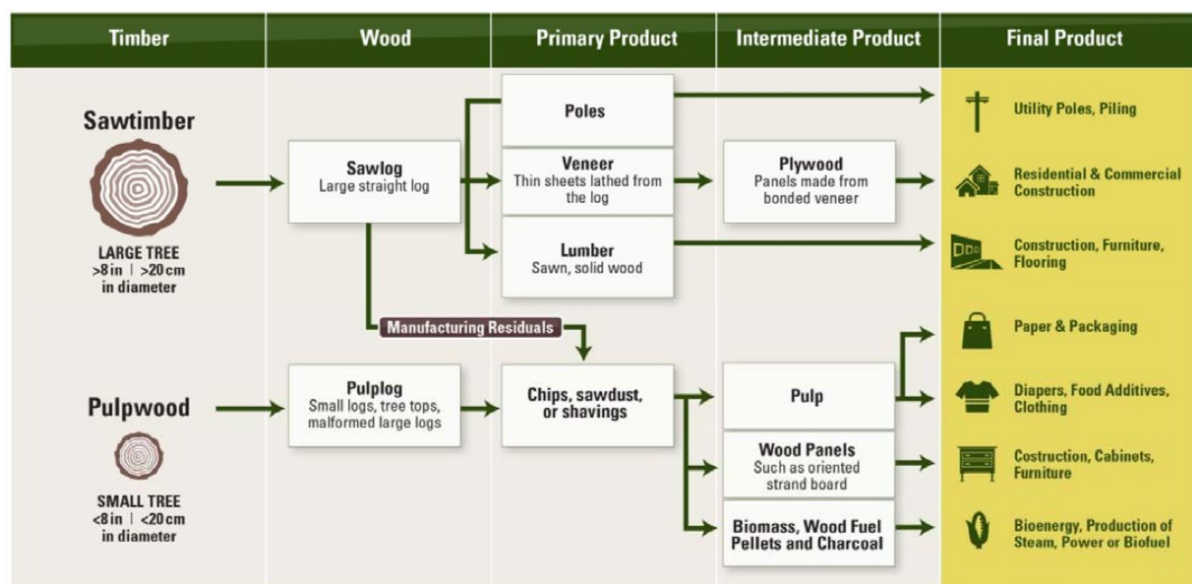
Figure 1 Flow diagram of value-added process of timber (Fu 2014)

The timber supply chain is highly gendered, and worldwide, men often dominate and control most stages of the timber value chain. Although women are present in this value chain, their efforts are often based at the least profitable end of the value chain, and they play a very minimal role (e.g., Irawanti et al. 2017, Piamonte et al. 2018, Purnomo et al. 2011). To illustrate, in this value chain women are sometimes paid 50 per cent less than

men for working the same hours (e.g., Purnomo et al. 2011.). Furthermore, in the wood value chain, women's activities are sometimes 'invisible,' or simply unacknowledged, despite being essential for the value chain. Hoskins et al. (2016), for example, show that women's tree growing activities, or their role in providing seedlings, often seemed invisible to those describing the value chains.

The furniture value chain is also male-dominated yet women are generally are involved in all furniture value chain stages. Purnomo et al. found in a 2011 study in the Indonesian context, that women tend to be concentrated in minor value chain activities, such providing finishing touches to furniture. Men, on the other hand, were noted to work in more activities along all value chain stages, operating in areas that are distinct from women's work. For example, they designed furniture, sourced furniture materials, lifted logs or furniture pieces, milled timber, maintained sawyer equipment, did carpentry, and carved and packed heavy articles. This enabled them to make more decisions and work in better-paying jobs than women. A range of stereotypes were also observed, including that women were perceived to lack furniture-making skills and that the work was perceived as too risky for women (i.e., operating complex machinery). Furthermore, cultural norms hindered women's participation in many value chain activities, including perceptions that women are responsible for reproductive work (tending the home, cooking food, and educating children), whilst men are considered responsible for productive work (to earn money) (Purnomo et al. 2011).

A study on wood value chains in Vietnam found that between 2 million to 3 million women are involved in wood production, processing, and marketing, most of whom were involved as owners of small or micro-enterprises, members of the household labour force, or hired labourers (Forest trends 2019). The study found that while those small and micro-enterprises provided an entry point for women in the sector, women experienced significant gender inequality. For example, the gender pay gap is large, and women are often paid up to 60 per cent less than men, even when they do similar jobs. They also have greater job insecurity and fewer opportunities to influence decision-making, are poorly represented in trade associations, and have less access to resources (e.g. credit and technical assistance) (Forest trends 2019). Eneji et al. (2015) further stress in a Nigerian case study that the cultural constraints combined with a considerable amount of inputs limit women in general from participating in the timber value chain.

4.2.2 Non-Timber Forest Product (NTFP) Value Chains

The list of NTFP products in value chains is long and extremely diverse, encompassing any product or service other than timber that is produced in forests. Products include fruits, nuts and vegetables, fish and game, and medicinal plants, as well as resins, essential oils, bark, fibre, grasses, rubber, and many other products (Gore 2018). Communities living adjacent to forest reserves, particularly in developing countries, rely to a great extent on NTFPs for their livelihoods (Mahonya et al. 2019, Angelsen et al. 2014; Shackleton and Pullanikkatil 2018), including as an income-generating opportunity based on casual or fulltime trade in village and urban markets. There has

been longstanding interest to commercialise NTFPs as a vehicle for poverty alleviation (Mahonya et al. 2019). NTFP value chains are, therefore, increasingly recognised as important value chains for forests and people alike.

Within NTFP value chains, there is broad-based evidence that men tend to be more cash-oriented and that they engage more with high-value and processed resources like rubber and timber, whereas women are more active in non-timber or unprocessed forest products (See Awono et al. 2002, Awono et al. 2010, Shackleton et al. 2011, Colfer 2013). In line with these findings, men may be more likely to participate in formal markets and women in informal and subsistence uses of the forest (Shackleton et al. 2011, Colfer 2013). However, there are large geographical differences, and these gender findings tend to be context specific.

NTFP are crucial for understanding gender in forests, because among the many value chains that constitute NTFP, the collection and/or management of many NTFPs are the domain of women, both subsistence-based and increasingly also for commercial systems (Colfer 2013). The majority of NTFPs are used for people who harvest them as food, construction materials, fuel, or medicine. Because, women are often responsible for food security and collection of fuel, there is an important gender dimension to NTFPs. Although some NTFPs are sold, many others are not or are sold only in small amounts, which prevents their use from being measured and recorded by official economics statistics. As a consequence, their importance to people has been vastly underestimated, despite their significant non-cash and subsistence benefits (Gore 2018). Studies suggest that around one-third of NTFPs are consumed in local, informal economies without entering the market (Gore 2018, Suleiman et al. 2017). This has a number of important implications for the work of FSC. For example, a focus on NTFP value chains needs to consider local economies and should not negatively impact these, yet at the same time, the two-thirds of the NTFP that are traded beyond local markets could attract certification.

The day to day use and collection of food and firewood is a good example of local consumption of NTFPs and has been documented extensively (See e.g. Gupte 2004, Agarwal 2010a). Torri (2010) reported significant gender discrimination of women in an Indian case study as they collect fuel wood, as this has been declared by male and elite-dominated community forest management groups as illegal. Furthermore, studies have noted important gender-related differences in interaction with NTFPs, including in the areas of: conservation of the maobi tree for its many NTFP uses (see Veuthey and Gerber 2010); women's hunting among Aka communities in the Central African Republic – which is one of the most gender equitable groups on earth (see Noss and Hewlett 2001); and gendered patterns of forest use in Brazil, where men were prime actors in timber, rubber and Brazil nuts, whereas women dominated the babaçu palm value chain (see Porro and Stone 2005). Similarly, regarding livestock and forests, studies found significant gender differences, in particular in animal ownership. For example, where men often own larger animals (such as cattle, sheep, and camels), women often own smaller animals such as

poultry and pigs (Colfer 2013, Deere et al. 2010, Medvecky 2012). However, a few studies also found shared cattle care (see Mukul et al. 2012 for a case study in Bangladesh).

A study by Shackleton et al. (2011), which examined three NTFPs value chains that could empower women, found that in the honey value chain, the production and collection stages were dominated by men. This was a result of the labour intensity of making and placing of hives and the requirement of certain skills and strength that excluded women. Furthermore, collectors had to be in the forest for extended periods of time and cultural norms of the area prevented women from climbing trees. As such, women who participated in the honey value chain had to pay men to make hives and to harvest honey, resulting in reduced profits as compared to men who were beekeepers (Meaton et al. 2020, Shackleton et al. 2011). Men also dominated the processing stages of the honey value chain, which was attributed to the physical strength required topress honey. However, the grading of honey at household level was done by women. Although women also participated in the marketing stages, it was noted that women tended not to travel beyond local areas to sell due to their household responsibilities. Within NTFP value chains, there can thus be a range of configurations and gender dynamics throughout the chain.

Rubber is a value chain that is of increasing interest to FSC that is also highly gendered. A recent study by Kusakabe and Chanthoumphone (2021) in Lao PDR identified several key reasons for the gendered nature of the value chain. Firstly, rubber was introduced through the government, a stakeholder with which women rarely interact, leaving women out of engagement activities. Secondly, rubber required an initial investment, and because women did not have access to funds or land, they were unable to capitalize on the opportunity. Thirdly, rubber yielded a relatively large cash income, but only after seven years of planning, resulting in being largely male-dominated. Women, who were responsible for the family's food security and started to intercrop rice and corn in the rubber fields, participated in the sector through wage work and NTFP collection, yet benefited the least from the rubber value chain (Kusakabe and Chanthoumphone 2021).

Nosa Betty (2018) also identified that men dominated the rubber value chain. In this case study in Nigeria, this was due to the necessary tapping skills, which were largely held by local men. The task was also considered be too tedious and labour-intensive for females. An interesting side effect was also identified: the exposure to outsiders that resulted from an increase in local participation in the rubber market brought changes in the position of women in communities in Lao PDR, including changes in eating practices (where women and men now would eat together with visitors), interactions with outsiders, increased mobility, increased decision-making, and control over finances in the family (Kusakabe and Chanthoumphone 2021). Men remain dominant in household decision-making, but women's voices are gaining strength regarding the purchase of household goods and intra-household finances. This is an important idea that can be built on in the future.

In conclusion, women in most forest communities worldwide concentrate more on the exploitation of NTFP, as they do not have access to the inputs (e.g., financial resources) required for harvesting and management and are constrained by a range of social and cultural factors. Koirala et al. (2008) conclude that the combination of a lack of access to resources and socio-cultural factors have resulted in a situation where women engage more in NTFP value chains and less in timber value chains. As to date, the incentive for certification has largely revolved around timber, the expansion of forest stewardship for multiple benefits results in many more forest types becoming of interest and relevance, including coastal forests (e.g., mangroves and their importance for climate change, savannah, for herding and agroforestry, etc.). This is in line with the ecosystem services approach in FSC and provides an important entry point for addressing gender.

5. Identification of key gender issues in forests of relevance to the FSC

The previous section briefly touched upon the gendered nature of the timber and NTFP value chains. This section identifies several key factors across the value chains that contribute to the discrepancy between women's and men's benefits and burdens of forests and their inclusion in planning and decision-making processes, including: (i) the gender pay gap; (ii) access to resources, land tenure, and ownership rights; and (iii) gendered participation of stakeholders in decision-making.

5.1 The gender pay gap

As shown in Section 4.2, although women are present in both the timber and NTFP value chains, their efforts are remunerated less than men's activities, sometimes up to 60 per cent less for similar work (Purnomo et al. 2011, Forest trends 2019). This is a serious issue of relevance to the work of FSC as core labour requirements cover the principle of non-discrimination in respect to employment and occupation, including equal renumeration for men and women who produce work of equal value.

Based on the discussion earlier in this report (see section 4.2), there are significant gender biases in the ways in which work is perceived or visible in the value chain, as well as how the work is valued. And although FSC's alignment with ILO labour requirements is a step in the right direction, it does not challenge notions of masculine hegemony, invisibility of women's work in the value chain, or address the structural inequalities that women face in forest value chains, simply by assuming an 'objective' evaluation is possible in a sector that is highly gendered, both in visible and invisible ways. To illustrate, FSC guidance indicates (GUI60-005) that:

> Differences in remuneration between workers are not considered discriminatory where they exist due to inherent requirements or specifics of the job, due to length of employment, experience, technical expertise, and performance.

Each of these factors is affected by gender norms and inequalities. Simply stating that differences in renumeration are not a problem when they relate to these factors lacks a firm commitment to addressing gender issues because it neglects the underlying reasons of why women and men have different access to education (which leads to skills), lengths of employment (gender inequality in relation to employment equity), or the experience they are able to gain in the sector.

An example of smallholder farms in Thailand illustrates this. The study shows (SEI 2019) shows that landless labourers, migrant and seasonal workers, frequently lack formal written contracts, making it very difficult for FSC auditors to monitor labour standards on smallholder farms. If, such as in the case of the new Thai national FSC standards, gender and social equality issues like these are to be addressed, they will need to move beyond the current focus on labour standards on larger plantations and pay more attention to smallholder farms, from which many women operate.

Similarly, it is well-documented in the Canadian forest sector that there is a highly gendered division of labour in forest-based communities (Egan and Klausen 1998, Teske and Beedle 2001, Reed 2003, Mills 2006). In many Canadian forest-based communities, there is a bimodal income distribution in which high-income earners, typically men, are employed in the professional, scientific, and extractive positions, and low-income earners, typically women, are in service and support positions (Fullerton 2006, Reed 2008). Furthermore, the Canadian 2001 census revealed that women in forestry were over-represented in part-time jobs and under-represented in full-time, full-year employment; consequently, women were found to be concentrated in lower-income brackets relative to men (Martz et al. 2006). Therefore, application of the principle of 'equal pay for equal work', can be problematic in itself, in particular when this is linked to an 'objective evaluation of the work performed', as set out in IGI2.2.2.

Similarly, whereas the principle of equality relates to all the elements of remuneration, including salary or ordinary wage and other basic fees and benefits, directly or indirectly paid, in money or in-kind, this fails to account for the range of women's activities that have low visibility or that support livelihoods and survival at the local level. As a way forward, and as suggested in the FSC Guidance: Promoting Gender Equality in National Forest Stewardship Standards guidance (FSC 2016), companies should have policies encouraging promotion practices for both genders in recruitment, training, and promotions etc.

The FSC Policy and Standards committee and national committees need to ensure that the above issues are properly taken into account in FSC schemes, whilst ensuring their own representation is inclusive, which can contribute to identifying and recognizing the above issues. There may be large differences across geographies with some countries having made significant steps towards addressing these issues and others having only recently starting to engage with them. Additionally, the external male and female auditors

who grant FSC certificates would benefit from training in gender and social equality issues to make sure any improved standards that are being implemented on the ground are gender responsive and remove inherent bias from the system and are implemented in a context-appropriate manner. The auditors, with their in-depth knowledge of both the local context and FSC standards and criteria, would be essential stakeholders in this process. The FSC's smallholder-focused schemes also offer good opportunities to address these issues (Aung et al. 2018).

5.2   Access to resources, land tenure and ownership rights

A key gender difference between women and men is their access to resources, land tenure, and ownership rights. There are several key areas in which access to resources affect gender in forests. Already discussed in more detail in Section 4, in relation to where women and men operate in the value chain, access to resources is a key gender issue. Women often have much less access to resources than men do, which often results in women operating in subsistence activities, informal economies, or as wage labour in value chains. This is because their lack of resources constrains them from investing in the sector or ownership of forest resources, or accessing capital to do so, thus gaining a foothold in more profitable forest sectors.

Gender differences in land tenure and ownership is a key constraint for gender equality in the FSC system. In many places, women's rights to land and forests are often not as secure as those of men. For example, customary systems of property tenure, which account for large areas of land in many African and Asian countries (Sage 2005), tend not to grant gender equality in access to land. Even in places where there are policies in place, women in around half the world's countries are unable to assert their equal land and property rights (The World Bank 2019). Larson (2016) stresses that women's relationship to men (e.g. their husbands, fathers, brothers) and their social position (e.g. single, married, widowed) together form a complex matrix of factors that affect the rights women have to the land, and consequently, their dependence on men for their land-based livelihoods. In 2015, the UN Women's World Survey (2014) confirmed that women's access to, use of, and control over natural resources has a direct link to environmental sustainability and meeting global goals on sustainable development more broadly (Aguilar 2016), which provides a clear imperative to address land tenure and ownership.

Five land rights can be identified, which together are commonly referred to as ownership: 1. access – the right to enter the land; 2. withdrawal, which refers to the right to remove things from the land (e.g. gathering or fishing); 3. management, consisting of the right to change the property (e.g. planning crops or cutting trees); 4. exclusion, referring to the right to keep others off a property; and 5. alienation, which gives the owner the right to transfer the rights of the property to others, e.g. through sales, gifts or inheritance (Schlager and Ostrom 1992). In practice, the definitions and differences between them are not always clear-cut (e.g. men and women can generate benefits from land even without full ownership rights). What is clear, however, is that improving access to land

to women does not necessarily translate to ownership and fails to provide the same benefits that one can generate from owning the land. Meinzen-Dick et al. (2019) who analysed women's land rights as a pathway to poverty reduction, stress that ownership extends beyond user and control rights to sale and other forms of disposal that is backed by formal legal institutions and is enforced on the ground.

Studies have also suggested that land title increases the access to credit and therefore access to finance and other opportunities. Positive gender impacts have been noted, for example, in the case of Brazil, where access to credit increased for about 60 per cent, including for women (Piza and Serpa Barros de Moura 2011). Furthermore, Ghebru and Holden (2013) in an Ethiopian study identified that more secure land rights allowed women to earn an income from the land through lease or rental, which increased food and economic security. However, it is crucial to note that stronger land rights for women may result in gender conflict, as threat to male authority or masculinity can result in violent responses due to a perceived loss of control (Markham 2015).

Due to a lack of enforcement in many areas of the world, as well as persistent social and cultural norms, women may not be permitted to control their own plots, be included on land titles, or even inherit land, regardless of whether land is individually owned or under collective ownership. Furthermore, women's *de facto* access to land is affected by a lack of implementation of existing laws, by customary law, and by traditional and social practices, norms, and power structures within communities and households (Sage 2005). This affects the security women have against practices such as land grabbing and overutilization of its resources.

Even in cases where the law guarantees women's rights, in practice, women are sometimes forced to obtain access to land and natural resources through husbands and sons (see Lastarria-Cornhiel 2011). This is very problematic because land tenure, for both women and men, provides the foundation of livelihoods, shelter, and security for families. Furthermore, it provides economic opportunity and creates an important pre-condition to empowerment: access to resources, because secure land rights provide assets that can be leveraged for development of agriculture or businesses and can increase financial stability of individuals and families (The World Bank 2019).

The academic literature supports this point. In the case of Africa, a study by Gaddis et al. (2018) shows that less than 13 per cent of African women under the age of 49 have sole ownership of land compared to 36 per cent of men. In some country contexts, this drops to below 10 per cent. This is no surprise as under African customary law, women do not often own or inherit land, and they can only access land by marriage or through their male children (Aguilar 2016). Similarly, in Latin America, the majority of individual land is in the hands of men, with the largest percentage of land owned by women in Chile (30 per cent), and the smallest percentage owned by women in Belize (8 per cent) (Jarroud 2021), which means that only a small percentage of those working the land are

considered farmers/foresters in the economic sense. In general, activities carried out to improve the land tenure situation have failed to take women into account.

Crucially, even in countries where women now have equal legal rights to land and ownership, land ownership remains unbalanced in practice. Even in Sweden in 2013, where 50 per cent of the forest land is owned by around 328,000 individual forest owners, ownership is divided into 38 per cent female and 61 per cent male ownership (SFA 2013).

Limiting access to forests is a key issue of gender inequality related to the visibility and invisibility of people and forest uses in forest value chains. Hoskins et al. (2016) stress that forestry projects can disadvantage women if they are planned close to communities and made off-limits to non-foresters. Under those conditions, local people (often women) who were stewards of the forests for generations and whose families were dependent on forests for fuel, food, fodder, and income, become 'poachers' engaged in illegal activities in their local area (Hoskins et al. 2016). Thus, a host of social, cultural, economic, political, religious, legal, and environmental factors affect women's rights and their access to and control over forest resources.

There are a range of gendered nuances to the control over land and resources. To illustrate, a host of informal rights may be established in communities where women and men have different access to parts of the forests or even the trees within it (i.e., women may have access to the leaves but not to the wood and vice versa). This differentiation of access to resources and forest use by gender have major implication for ownership and access, as well as to usufruct rights to forest products (Bandiaky-Badji et al. 2016). Furthermore, a gendered understanding of this is needed for effective participation (e.g., land, capital, assistance, markets, time) and decision-making in forests.

5.3   Gendered participation of stakeholders in decision-making

Participation in decision-making is a key area of importance for gender. A stakeholder, in the context of FSC, refers to "any individual or group whose interests are affected by the way in which a forest is managed" (FSC 2009). Through its Vancouver Declaration, FSC is committed to ensuring that all people in and around forests will be engaged in decisions affecting their forests. Stakeholder engagement and democratic processes are at the heart of the FSC system at macro, meso, and micro levels.

Women and men are thus both important stakeholders in decision-making, regardless of whether they own the land. When it comes to solving complex problems or creating innovations, such as solutions for adapting to and mitigating climate change or managing forest resources, there is ample evidence that a diverse group of competent stakeholders almost always outperforms a homogenous group by a significant margin (Pellergrino and Weisberg 2011), thus creating a clear imperative for inclusive stakeholder engagement processes.

In practice, participation in decision-making is highly gendered, and women often have much less input than their male counterparts. To illustrate in the context of REDD+, there is ample evidence that women have less input than men in forest communities and participate less in decision-making in forest and forest resources (See e.g., Saigal 2000, Agarwal 2001, Gupte 2004, Jackson and Chattopadhyay 2010, Sunam and McCarthy 2010). A study conducted by Larson et al. (2016) on REDD+ initiatives found that on average, the share of women in decision-making bodies was 24 per cent, albeit with large geographical differences. For example, a share of 48 per cent female participation was observed in Peru, but this dropped to 30 per cent for Tanzanian participants, and to only 4 per cent in the Indonesian context. In 17 of the 76 bodies, women had no input at all. The lack of women in decision-making processes is problematic also from a pragmatic point of view, because the combination of women's and men's knowledge of forest resources will enable decision-making on forest use and management that is both equitable and contributes to gender equality.

Physical presence on boards, committees, or at meetings is far from guaranteeing voice and influence (Agarwal 2001). In addition to the 'numbers' of participation, Hoskins (2016), in the context of the Swedish forest sector, describes that a key gendered difference is the space for agency that women and men as social groups have in relation to the masculine culture that characterizes the sector. This masculine culture not only restricts the ways in which women can act and engage in forest-related issues (see e.g., Arora Jonsson 2012), but also marginalizes diverse local perspectives in both public forest policy processes and their implementation (Hoskins 2016).

There is ample evidence in the literature that more inclusive participation leads to better outcomes. For example, in the Indian context, studies have shown that increasing the presence of women in decision-making bodies tends to have positive impacts on forest conservation and regeneration outcomes (Agarwal 2009), and that this is not just with regard to the inclusion of women in principle, but actually increasing the critical mass of women rather than a single woman or a small number (see e.g., Agarwal 2009, 2010 a,b). The importance of having diverse and balanced inclusion of both male and female voices is high. To illustrate this point, a study comparing data from Kenya, Uganda, Bolivia, and Mexico, argued that forest user groups with more women than men perform less well than more equally mixed or male-dominated groups in adopting forest-enhancing behavior (Mwangi et al. 2011). This brings home the point that taking a gender-responsive approach to forests requires consideration of both genders.

Participation in decision-making is not a straightforward process and can involve almost anything that involves people. Participation is often used as a 'buzzword' for processes that are neither participatory nor inclusive and are therefore more correctly labeled 'information sharing' (Haque et al. 2021). Agarwal (2001) identifies a spectrum of participation (Table 2), which ranges from nominal participation to active participation, described below:

Form/Level of participation	Characteristic features
Nominal participation	Membership in the group
Passive participation	Being informed of decisions *ex post facto*; or attending meetings and listening in on decision-making, without speaking up
Consultative participation	Being asked an opinion in specific matters without guarantee of influencing decisions
Activity-specific participation	Being asked to (or volunteering to) undertake specific tasks
Active participation	Expressing opinions, whether or not solicited, or taking initiatives of other sorts
Interactive (empowering) participation	Having voice and influence in the group's decisions

Table 3 Typology of participation (Agarwal 2001)

- Nominal participation – which is the least effective form of participation – is largely a physical presence but with no input. Having merely a physical presence on boards, committees, and or at meetings is a far cry from having voice and influence on decisions. Already in 1969, Arnstein called this 'tokenism engagement,' where those with power award those without a voice insufficient resources to ensure that their voices are heard or acted on. This includes processes where stakeholders are informed/consulted or placated about decisions which have already been made, or where stakeholders have minimal or no capacity to be involved in actual decision-making. Haque et al. (2021), who refer to such participation as 'nominal,' further state that such participation serves primarily to legitimize top-down interests and the status quo, rather than an active effort to include a range of perspectives. Unfortunately, this type of participation is prevalent in the forest sector, in particular in gender inclusive processes. This can be because there is no real intention to consider different voices in decision-making, because of a lack of resources, because of a lack of skills and expertise to conduct high quality stakeholder engagement, or a combination of the above.
- Interactive and empowering participation allows participants to take initiative and exercise influence. Haque (2021) indicates that this can be instrumental, representative, and transformative, or a combination of them. These active forms of participation include the opportunity to express opinions (solicited or not) or to take initiative within the participatory process. Equally important is to have influence on the group's decision, rather than speaking out and not being taken into account in the final decision (Agarwal 2001).

To achieve empowering and interactive participation, the procedural element of participation is crucial, because even with specific efforts at inclusion, there may be factors that hinder equal participation of women and men, as well as the opportunity to be heard (Mai et al. 2011). However, inclusive participation is not always straightforward. For example, participation can be a burden, especially for women who are mostly responsible for care and reproductive responsibilities in addition to their other activities. Even with specific efforts at inclusion, women often lack the experience, confidence, and skills to engage effectively in stakeholder consultations (Mai et al. 2011). Nevertheless, there is a clear imperative to include them in both timber and NTFP value

chains, because they have essential views and knowledge regarding forest resources e.g. in relation to resource supply, access to land in forests, water supplies, climate variation, forest conservation, or the cultural value of forests (see Mairena and Cunningham 2011). Understanding and ensuring women's participation in forest decision-making requires in-depth knowledge of specific local social norms and gender dynamics and is therefore a highly localized or value-chain specific process. Despite these challenges, this is essential to incorporate the gender differentiated ways in which men and women use forests.

6. Moving forward: entry points for addressing gender inequalities in FSC value chains

The previous sections outlined key gender issues that affect gender equality in the FSC system. This section now identifies several entry points for discussion gender in FSC value chains that can improve FSC's gender responsiveness on the ground.

6.1 Interrogating the underlying values of forests as 'businesses' and exploitation opportunities

To address gender equality in forests, FSC and its stakeholders need to reflect on the values guiding their thoughts and actions and create a common framework to prioritize certain values. The first entry point for opening a discussion on gender equality and social inclusion therefore interrogates one of the key pillars upon which FSC was founded: that of 'exploitation' of forest resources for financial gain. In other words, reflecting on its market-based approach.

It has been discussed extensively in the literature that there are different values in the forest, ranging from considering it a resource to be exploited to an ecosystem that has intrinsic or non-use value. Some studies have linked these values to masculine and feminine notions of forests and their values, thus making an important gender link. Nordlund and Westin (2011), for example, identified that female forest owners in Sweden value the forest for recreational and ecological purposes to a greater extent than men do, and were found to hold management attitudes that were more focused on humans and on environmental sustainability. Similarly, Hoskins (2016) stresses that current dominant values of economic growth, individualism, and a faith in markets, have led to the privileging of forest production at the cost of environmental concerns. The authors conclude that in practice, these values result in a privileging of forest production, competitiveness, and profitability – all values that are deeply embedded in a masculine notion of forests as well as patriarchal systems, which in turn affect gender inequality.

The point made here is not to polarize masculine and feminine value on binary classifications but instead to demonstrate that different stakeholders can hold different values related to forests, and that these can, and need to, co-exist in the FSC system. Therefore, "resisting the tendency of masculine hegemony to exploit the land" (Kennedy

2016) could have important impacts not only on the environmental quality of forests, but also on the wellbeing of those who are dependent on forests for their survival. The continued trend of increased ownership of women of forests, and the resources within it, can create an environment in which those values can echo in forest management (Nordlund and Westin 2011). The value systems underlying the broader FSC system and its market-driven approach are thus important to reflect on, as they may be juxtaposed to a more holistic vision of forest stewardship. Alignment of these two sets of values is therefore an essential discussion point in the FSC's gender equality journey.

6.2 Addressing structural power relations instead of targeting individual women

Continuing from the point above on masculine and feminine notions of forest value, the underlying reason for addressing gender inequality also warrants discussion. The work of FSC is already strongly focused on business interests, and its main engagement with gender to date has been Criterion 2.2 in the Principles and Criteria for forest stewardship policy. Although this is an excellent starting point, it is important to avoid a situation in which gender equality is reduced to women's 'right' to become part of the forest sector within current dominant structures and value chains. Hoskins (2016) confirms this and indicates that too often, gender is turned into an issue of individual opportunities predominantly aimed to increase the overall business opportunities related to forests.

The focus on individual women over addressing the underlying uneven power structures between genders that result in inequality is problematic. Hoskings (2016) indicates that the pursuit of the dominant value of production and profit leads not only to privileging forest production at the cost of environmental concern, it also 'problematizes' individual women rather than the power relations between women and men as groups. Similarly, Andersson et al. (2018) show in a study of Swedish forest organizations that committed themselves to gender mainstreaming their policies that the subject of their policies appeared to be individuals (women), rather than the gender dynamics within the organization itself. Furthermore, in this case, the dominant position in company policy towards 'gender issues' was that women lacked skills and competences and needed 'help', rather than interrogating the structural issues underlying the gender inequality in their organizations (Andersson et al. 2018). This shows the dominant value systems that were present in organizational processes and structures, but more problematic was that gendered power dynamics and conflict were largely absent from the companies' understanding of gender equality.

The above approach hinders progress towards gender equality, as it conceals power structures and limits the political space for change. What the Swedish example shows is that women were seen as a means to increase production and as a workforce ready to help the sector in its current shape and form, rather than as partners in decision-making and goal setting.

In essence, we need to stop 'changing individual women,' rather than changing what makes women underrepresented or 'inactive' in the forest sector. To illustrate, Hoskins (2016), indicates that in many cases, female employees are attributed with a host of natural differences and that a reconstructed version of these values is a 'value' to be tapped into. Consequently, rather than creating space for the range of values that exist among women and men, the 'making of the female employee', still mainly reflects values that instill profitability and competitiveness. Hoskins (2016) therefore concludes that the change that Sweden's gender strategy in forests is trying to achieve is to increase timber production rather than to increase gender equality per se. This points to the need to reassess the traditional 'productionist' model of increasing production and profits and to explore whether the ambition is to find new and innovative ways of relating to and generating income from forest resources, stimulate entrepreneurship, and value multiple forest services. A crucial learning for FSC here is to critically reflect on which values are reflected in the FSC standards, how they are articulated, and their final goal in implementation. Moreover, is an opportunity to reflect on the aspirations of FSC's strategy, potential steps of the transition towards a holistic approach, and the application of the consultation standards.

6.3 Value chain innovation and recognizing the multifunctionality of forests

A key area in which the market-based approach and increasing gender equality can go hand in hand is in value chain innovation and increased recognition of the multifunctionality of forests. In line with FSC's expanded reach from a timber-focused organization to a more holistic approach to forests, a gender-responsive approach would place additional emphasis on timber *and* non-timber forest products in its system. This can contribute to gender equality, as this green paper demonstrated that women and men work in different areas of the value chain and even within value chains occupy different areas.

Value chain innovation can thus be important for making gender-wins in forests, as it can provide opportunities for developing new value chains of forest products and services which are currently used less. If these new value chains are also focused on areas that are gender diverse and inclusive, gender equality can be advanced whilst furthering FSC's agenda. A main entry point into this area would be the emerging NTFP value chains and ecosystem services certification.

6.3.1 Increasing awareness and appreciation of forest-based products across value chains

Creating awareness of the multi-functionality of forests among currently certified entities and reaching out to potential new organizations interested in FSC certification is vital. New value chains, emerging either from already-certified forests or entirely new areas of work, provide an opportunity to increase the awareness of value chain actors about the holistic approach to forests whilst instilling important gender equality values. Crucially,

this needs to extend into creating increased gender awareness of both participation of women in decision-making regarding forest resources (including women's knowledge in the management of forest resources), awareness of customers through marketing approaches, availability of resources, knowledge of sustainable yields, harvesting, processing, and market access, oftentimes for different scales of markets and user groups and therefore complementing each other.

Increasing the appreciation and value (in the form of added value) of forest-based products in timber and NTFP value chains (EIP-AGRI 2016) is also important. This can lead to opportunities for commercialization of 'alternative' forest products, including those considered in the current paradigm as 'low value' or products of which the value has not been explored yet, including through raising awareness and marketing. This can diversify and increase income for forest owners and those generating an income from forest products and can strengthen the role of the forests in the context of rural development and bioeconomy (EIP-AGRI 2016). Crucially, this will create opportunities for women to enter the forest value chain. However, caution is needed in this process as there is evidence of displacement of those traditionally involved in the value chain by outsiders when marketing was improved (Hoskins 2016). Safeguarding women's rights, improving asset and land tenure, as described in Section 5.2, can mitigate this.

6.3.2   Consider a focus on SMEs, smallholders and local value chains

A next entry point within the context of value chain innovation is a focus on the incorporation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in value chains. SMEs are often the backbone of value chains and supply to the downstream processors of final products. Forest value chains can be relatively short, particularly if they originate from a local setup and service a local market. Improved linkages across the value chain and business support for (women's) enterprises can provide benefits for women's enterprises, e.g. by reducing the number of middlemen, increasing skillsets of women entrepreneurs, and helping them better understand the market. Similarly, structures can be explored in which one company can act as a value chain leader through which many smaller companies can benefit. Similarly, cooperatives, networks, and clusters of SMEs could achieve benefits as a group to reach economies of scale, become more competitive in the market through costs, and collectively implement (or bargain for) gender equality measures (FAO n.d.). Yet, only a fraction is FSC-certified because of the cost of certification the late return of investment, and the large number of requirements, which make it difficult for smallholders to comply. The stepwise approach toward certification, however, can make an important difference in this area and can stimulate both SME and smallholder involvement in FSC, as well as promote gender action at the local level.

6.3.3   Utilize multiple knowledges

Part of acknowledging multifunctional forests is to include multiple types of knowledge in the FSC systems. Value chain innovation can include traditional knowledge or gendered knowledge in its design and rollout. The following example illustrates the importance of the inclusion of both women's and men's knowledge and views of forests.

A study undertaken in the Amazon using gender-sensitive methodologies set out to identify unconventional plants and found 45 new species that to date remain undocumented (Marin 2014). These species remained invisible using standard/traditional methodologies that were often gender-blind yet could be an alternative income source or contribute to the food security of the local communities, particularly in the face of climate change. These findings highlighted women's role as knowledge sources and demonstrate the different knowledges of forests that are held by women and men. Sharing this type of knowledge is crucial for forest management and conservation policies and strengthens food sovereignty of local communities (Shackleton and Cobban 2016). This example not just underscores the need for identifying and addressing women's and men's roles, responsibilities, and specific knowledge of forests separately, but it also creates an imperative for promoting women as decision makers, ensuring that policy and planning is informed by a diverse set of knowledges. As women hold significant traditional and other relevant knowledge of forests, markets, and value chains, the inclusion of their knowledge and skills in value chain innovation aids both the process of value chain development and furthering gender equality in the sector (EIP-AGRI 2016).

6.4.1 Practicing gender mainstreaming gender in the FSC system – building on existing Principles, standards, and criteria

As indicated in Section 1.2, FSC sets diversity as a cornerstone of the organization through its current foci on worker's rights, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and, increasingly, gender. This will help ensure that people who depend on forests for their livelihoods will be protected alongside the forest resources themselves (FSC, 2021c). To achieve this, FSC builds approaches to promote equality in its certification schemes (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Main types of FSC certifications (FSC 2021c)

The main mechanism through which this is currently done is through Principle 2 of the FSC Principles and Criteria, as well as FSC Core Labour requirements, which were approved in January 2021. These requirements represent the integration of the principles of the ILO Core Conventions and the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) and are integrated into FSC's CoC standards (FSC 2021). In general, the FSC platform could be leveraged to be more proactive in pushing

the gender agenda, for example by demonstrating compliance with global agreements through its partnerships and certification tools.

6.4.1 A joined-up approach to gender equality

Taking a gender approach in FSC requires gender consideration across its principles and standards to achieve a joined-up approach. Criterion 2.2, which was adopted in 2012, states that "The Organization shall promote gender equality in employment practices, training opportunities, awarding of contracts, processes of engagement and management activities." Whereas applying gender criteria to Principle 2 may be the most straightforward way to demonstrate progress towards gender goals, gender also needs to be considered across other principles. In Principle 4, for example, which addresses community relations, there is enormous scope for considering gender in the broader application of relevance to its value chains and forest management activities, as the key local gender issues discussed in this document will affect community relations, as well as the wellbeing of both women and men. To make these differences visible, the participation of both women and men is required in the process. This is similar for the application of Principle 5, that of benefits from the forest. As identified in Sections 4.2 and 5, men and women have different benefits and burdens when it comes to forests, and these need to both be considered in order to enhance the economic viability as well as the range of environmental and social benefits derived from forests.

If FSC is serious about the aspiration to recognize true value of the forests, then it is essential to make this visible in the FSC process. As women and men sometimes operate in different value chains (see e.g. the discussion on timber and NTFP value chains in Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2), gender considerations need to become an integral part of management planning, monitoring and evaluation (Principle 7). Further support to implement the management plan is required to ensure that the staff involved have the necessary tools, skills (e.g. gender training), and support to achieve this. Furthermore, important areas to consider are targeted applications of context-specific, gender-responsive criteria in self-assessments and audits to ensure that the indicators are a true reflection of the situation on the ground. To illustrate, this may also encourage stakeholders to adopt or adapt a criterion rather than drop it, hereby creating a much more responsive environment for addressing gender at the national level.

Access to assets, whether to land, finance, or otherwise, has been an important theme of this green paper and is an important entry point that can be considered by FSC in their criteria. As described in Section 5.2, issues of access and ownership are essential to address gender inequalities across the value chain, but they are of particular importance at the FM certification level, as well as the steps along the value chain that are closest to the original resource. A pro-active gender approach in the FSC certification process can therefore consider ownership of assets in its assessment.

6.4.2 Training and awareness raising

To achieve the points outlined above, gender needs to be integrated in general training and awareness-raising in FSC processes. In a guest special, Rulita Wijayaningdyah, member of the FSC board of directors, indicates that:

> The road forward should focus on widespread access to education, skills training, and available jobs including management and leadership positions. A lack of access or awareness, combined with the underrepresentation of women in management positions, means training and job opportunities are either not visible or simply not accessible (FSC 2016a).

This statement, made in 2016, holds true today, in particular in those areas of the value chain that are closest to the forest resource itself.

Gender-responsiveness training is a key entry point for FSC to promote gender equality. This training and awareness raising would need to reach those involved in auditing processes and standard setting, as well as those involved generally across FSC and partner staff where relevant. However, rather than designing new training programmes that increase the 'burden' of the FSC certification process for those involved, a much more productive way of achieving this is through gender mainstreaming existing training programmes when possible and designing new ones where relevant. Examples include the NEPCon FSC Forest Management Course and the FSC Chain of Custody course. This is not only a cost-effective way of ensuring gender-responsive training programmes, but it also embeds gender in regular discussions and hereby increases awareness. The suggestion therefore is to only develop new training programmes where it is not possible to modify current training programmes to be gender-responsive, for example, when new value chains are being developed for which no training exists. Examples of how this can be done include making the FSC budget available at a national level for each country that has Standard Development Groups to train relevant target groups, perhaps starting with countries where the need is highest or the interest the greatest. Crucial to gender equality progress is that rather than dropping the indicator, it is imperative that there is encouragement to adopt or adapt gender-responsive indicators. Training can assist in this process.

Similarly, there should be a focus on preparing auditors to conduct gender-sensitive auditing, as they are the link between what is happening in the FSC system and what is happening on the ground. External organizations specialized in gender mainstreaming and inclusion can support the development and roll-out of gender mainstreaming existing programmes and designing new training programmes, including Gordian Development Services (focused on the design and implementation of gender-mainstreaming training modules, as well as the provision of technical gender-mainstreaming assistance) and Value for Women (which focuses on inclusive business support).

6.4.3 Context-sensitive indicators and their implementation

There are large geographical differences in gender equality across FSC's membership, and therefore also in the ways in which gender-responsive measures may be implemented. To illustrate, Scandinavian members were some of the first countries to consider gender equality in forestry, which resulted in the creation of local policies, establishment of networks to strengthen female influence in the sector, and increased awareness of gender equality in responsible forest management (FSC 2016a). In other geographical regions, laws may exist that do the exact opposite and hinder women's rights. As a consequence of these large differences in context, there is a real risk of compliance with FSC indicators being watered down or dropped completely because of the perceived and/or real difficulties of measuring the indicator. This complicates the application of Criterion 2.2 yet makes addressing gender equality through FSC's market mechanism even more relevant. Crucial to gender equality progress is that rather than dropping the indicator, it is imperative that there is encouragement to adopt or adapt gender-responsive indicators. A carrot, rather than a stick. would be the best mechanism to achieve this. Although producing guidance documents and strategies to address gender inequality and training is no panacea, it can help increase awareness and capacity and dispel stereotypes, while in the process improving the industry (FSC 2016a).

Auditors, who assess whether the requirements are implemented, are of crucial importance in measuring progress. Auditors that have a high awareness of issues of gender equity will avoid so-called gender-blind assessments, in which the system chooses not to see differences between genders, towards gender-responsive auditing (FSC 2016b). As indicated in the guidance document for promoting gender equality in National Forest Stewardship Standards, gender inequality in forests is fundamentally rooted in practice. FSC is a tool to improve forest management using an incentive-based approach. This can also apply to addressing gender issues. Due to the existence of significant gaps between theory and practice and the novelty of gender indicators in forestry, the introduction of gender indicators in quality assurance mechanisms may be more difficult to implement than other indicators that address issues that are not novel or are more familiar to that sector (FSC 2016b).

6.4.4 Participation for impact

The importance of gender-responsive participation has been extensively discussed in this green paper. Therefore, a key entry point for FSC to achieve gender impacts is to continue a participatory approach with a strong focus on impact rather than numerical representation. Such an approach is both pragmatic (because of the different knowledges women and men bring to the table) and also the right thing to do. This requires specific efforts for each of the different types of participation in consultation processes at the macro, meso, and micro levels. Such participation requires an understanding of those moderating or facilitating the conversations of the gendered dynamics of participation (e.g., socio-cultural norms of appropriate behaviour of women and men) or ensuring that the activities are inclusive in their organization and enable both women and men to

attend (e.g., in relation to childcare and other responsibilities that often hinder women's participation). This needs to happen at all levels of FSC operations, including at the policy development level (e.g., the General Assembly) and within working groups and Standard Development Groups, but also during public consultation as part of an audit. As this is highly context dependent, considerable thought needs to be given on how this applies in each situation.

6.4.5 Lead by example

A final point is for FSC to lead by example in gender-responsiveness. This includes gender mainstreaming within FSC's internal workings, e.g., with regard to the organization's structure, gender representative staffing, and participatory processes. Concerning the latter, it is essential to create a space in which to acknowledge women's and men's different ways of contributing to processes, taking e.g., account of socio-cultural and religious, geographical, and experiential differences. Furthermore, to create lasting impact, the organization needs to develop an action plan that sets out how it plans to effectively integrate gender in the design, monitoring, and evaluation of activities, and to account for contextually different value chains. This encompasses the contextual differences that affect the ways in which men and women interact and differ with regard to key FSC processes and value chains and their implementation on their respective sites, including decision-making processes and procedures, access and rights to a management of land and natural resources, and information dissemination. Strong leadership in gender equality at an organizational level may create an environment in which FSC can create lasting impact on gender equality in the forest sector.

5. Concluding remarks

This green paper has provided common ground on gender equality in using forests and has identified entry points for FSC to pro-actively address gender inequality in its work. The gendered impacts of the gender pay gap, access to resources and tenure, and gendered participation in FSC decision-making are global in nature, and as such, their impacts are present across FSC's work. Possible entry points for discussion for addressing gender in FSC value chains include an interrogation of the value systems that drive FSC as an organization; shifting focus from addressing gender action at the individual level towards addressing structural power relations; and innovation in value chains and acknowledging the multifunctionality of forests, which includes increasing awareness, focusing on SMEs and smallholders in the value chain and utilizing multiple knowledges. Furthermore, a focus on practicing gender mainstreaming is important, for example by building on existing Principles, standards, and criteria; a joined-up approach to gender equality in which gender is mainstreamed across FSC principles; training and awareness raising; development and implementation of context-sensitive indicators at the local level; participation for impact; and, last but not least, leading by example.

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Appendix 1: A Framework for analysing gender implications in forest and tree management (Colfer 2013)

Consider how these factors function in your site. In what ways might they hinder or reinforce your work at the field level? Do these topics actually transcend scales?
I. Macro scale - broadly based, global 'rules' that affect people's interactions with forests
A. Are there formal, global laws and policies that affect local people and forests? How?
B. What religious traditions, narratives of modernity or equity, or other less formal, global, intellectual forces affect local people and forests?
II. Meso scale - Social patterns from landscape to national levels that influence people's behaviour in relation to forests
A. How is access to resources gendered? Are there broadly accepted notions that influence land tenure, inheritance and residence?
B. What are the gendered norms of behaviour that affect people's interactions with trees and forests (e.g. masculinity ideals, seclusion of women, witchcraft beliefs)?
C. Are there gendered differences in access to education (both formal and informal)? How do they affect men, women and forest management differently?
D. How important is cash in the regional system, and how has this affected men and women differently?
III. Micro scale - human behaviours from household to village levels that affect forests and people's well being
A. How do men's and women's day to day economic roles differ—especially in terms of agriculture, forest products, livestock?
B. What gendered demographic issues affect forests and people locally (e.g. migration, population changes, access to birth control)?
C. What essential/valued domestic roles do men and women play, respectively (e.g. cooking, hygiene, child and elder care, health, fuel wood collection) that affect their respective involvement in forests?
D. What patterns are identifiable in intra-household power dynamics? In what ways do men's and women's interests conflict and converge? Are there bargaining strategies used by each?
E. What are the features (e.g. collective action, access to technology, distribution of benefits, time constraints/conflicts) of locally available, alternative economic strategies designed to enhance people's livelihoods, trees and forests? How do these differentially affect men and women?

Appendix 2 Initiatives focused on gender equality in forests

The EcoCiencia Foundation has developed various conservation and development initiatives in the Waorani Territory. The Foundation raises populations' and their leaders' awareness of their territory and resources through innovative and highly participatory mechanisms and tools. Through this, the foundation stimulates the exercise of governance at all levels and the preservation of tangible and intangible heritage. It has also developed a of series of socioeconomic alternatives to generate economic income for Waorani families. As such, the organization has also launched a *sustainable agroforestry program*. Through the program, women and communities are provided opportunities to contribute and to be more involved. -Ana María Acosta & Elizabeth Riofrío, 2021

For more information visit: https://www.iucncongress2020.org/newsroom/all-news/strengthening-capacities-indigenous-women-alleviate-pressures-forests-amazon?utm_source=iucn-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=202108-Women-as-key-players-in-nature-conservation-and-sustainability&utm_content=Strengthening-the-capacities-of-indigenous-women

The International Climate Initiative (IKI) has funded the Locally Empowered Area of Protection (LEAP) project. This project **empowers coastal communities and especially women** in an inclusive, resilient, and more sustainable way. The project takes a gender-responsive approach, with the specific needs, priorities, and expectations of men and women recognized and addressed in the design of the sustainable management action plans. The project's approaches are linked to conservation actions by creating permanent and temporary community reserves through the creation of mangrove nurseries, and the *promotion of replanting actions* in degraded areas. It also promotes financial education for the coastal communities. - Tsotsane, 2021

For more info visit: https://www.iucncongress2020.org/newsroom/all-news/women-ocean-ambassadors-coastal-districts-mozambique?utm_source=iucn-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=202108-Women-as-key-players-in-nature-conservation-and-sustainability&utm_content=Women-as-ocean-ambassadors-in-coastal-districts-of-Mozambique

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has invited a consortium of the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Alliance of Biodiversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), these centres will in work selected IFAD projects to *promote and strengthen women's land rights through the integration of gender transformative approaches in rural development interventions*. - Arwen Bailey, 2021

For more info visit: https://forestsnews.cifor.org/73913/new-global-initiative-transforming-gender-norms-in-land-and-resource-rights?fnl=en

The Finland-FAO Forestry Programme surveys key informants, including village leaders and knowledgeable people who are interested in the management of forests, non-wood forest products, and herbal products. Data obtained from the programme from

both men and women is often different and is used to ***improve policies***, *including by removing discrimination between women and men in access to and use of forest resources*. The programme applies these tools for forest assessments and inventories in five pilot countries: Ecuador; Peru; the United Republic of Tanzania; Viet Nam; and Zambia. – FAO, 2021

http://www.fao.org/forestry/gender/91677/en/

FAO's non-wood forest products (NWFPs) programme gathers analysis and disseminates information on NWFPs; assesses the social and economic contribution of NWFPs in rural development; encourages networking among NWFPs in rural development; and provides technical assistance. The programme particularly focuses on the ***development of small NWFP-based enterprises, especially those manged by women***. – FAO, 2021

http://www.fao.org/forestry/gender/91677/en/

FAO's Participatory Forestry ensures that all stakeholders are included in all relevant aspects of forest management, decision-making, and policy formulation. Using participatory forestry approaches, FAO Forestry promotes consensual negotiation among government agencies, civil society, forest users, and private sector-management. FAO forestry purposefully tries to include the representative groups most affected by forest activities such as small informal forest enterprises and women. -FAO, 2021

http://www.fao.org/forestry/gender/91677/en/

The ***Global Gender Transformative Approaches initiative*** is a global initiative with the overarching goal to ***promote and strengthen women's land rights*** through the integration of gender transformative approaches in rural development interventions in Bangladesh, Colombia, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Kyrgyzstan, Niger, and Uganda. The project is implemented by IFAD and a consortium comprised of the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry Centre (CIFOR-ICRAF), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and the Alliance of Biodiversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT). -IFAD

For more info visit : https://www.ifad.org/en/gender_transformative_approaches

The Indigenous Information Network (IIN) in Kenya and the Programme Intégré pour le Développement du Peuple Pygmée (PIDP-Kivu); Women2030 program and GFC's Gender Justice and Forests Campaign have come together and formed community social solidarity groups. In these groups, ***Indigenous women and girls are trained to build skills that can empower them***. As well as help them to fight poverty, thisencourages good governance and sustainable management of forests and other natural resources, which in turn increases climate resilience. – Global Forest Coalition, 2021

For more info visit: https://globalforestcoalition.org/indigenous-peoples-day-2021/

The **Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and World Agroforestry (ICRAF)** implemented the West African Forest-Farm Interface (WAFFI) project between

2016 and 2019. It incorporated such mechanisms as multi-stakeholder forums and facilitated social learning to explore the potential to *improve the influence of underrepresented people – particularly women – in decision-making processes affecting access to natural resources*. - Julie Mollins

For more info visit: https://forestsnews.cifor.org/74545/shaping-a-future-that-ensures-women-are-at-the-center-of-the-ghana-shea-trade?fnl=en

The **COMMIT initiative,** launched in November 2012, is an initiative for governments to take a stand by making new and concrete national commitments to **end violence against women and girls**. By the end of 2013, more than 63 countries and the European Union had joined the initiative and announced specific measures to address and prevent violence against women and girls. These ranged from passing or improving laws, ratifying international conventions, launching public awareness campaigns, providing safe houses or free hotline services and free legal aid to survivors, and supporting education programmes that address gender stereotypes and violence, as well as increasing the number of women in law enforcement, peacekeeping forces, and frontline services.- UN Women, 2021

For more info visit: https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/take-action/commit

The **Conservation International** through its **Indigenous Fellowship** has **supported women** from Kenya, Colombia, and Tanzania to research traditional ecological knowledge, and its contribution to conservation, and share findings at the United Nations. The organization has also supported the initial **development of the Gender-Environment index**, which assess women's participation in environmental decision making across 72 countries. -conservation.org, 2021

For more info visit: https://www.conservation.org/priorities/gender-equality

USAID's Resilient, Inclusive, & Sustainable Environments (RISE): A **Challenge to Address Gender-Based Violence in the Environment** funds organizations to innovatively adapt and implement promising or proven interventions that have been used to effectively *prevent and respond to GBV in other sectors to environmental programming*, or to integrate GBV prevention and response interventions into existing environmental programming.

For more info visit: https://digital.iucn.org/gender/gbv/addressing-the-violence-of-inequality/

IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and USAID developed the violence of inequality initiative which *addresses gender inequalities and gender-based violence* as priorities across various sectors. Through the research process, IUCN found that the pervasiveness of linkages across multiple environment-related contexts indicated urgency for cross-sectoral solutions. -IUCN

For more info visit: https://digital.iucn.org/gender/gbv/addressing-the-violence-of-inequality/