



Abstract

Gender and Biodiversity The World Bank Track Record

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Because women play a vital role in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, it is environmentally and economically imperative that women fully participate in policy making and implementation around biodiversity conservation. The Convention on Biodiversity recognizes women's central role in conserving biodiversity. While more men than women migrate away from farms to earn a living, agriculture has increasingly feminized in the developing world including in China. As a result, women are key in conserving cropland, seeds, forests, and other biodiversity while men tend to be more involved in converting these natural resources into cash.

Gender Action's updated analyses of World Bank projects in China reveal that they inadequately consider gender implications. World Bank investments in China, concentrated on rural, environment and infrastructure projects, have critical impacts on biodiversity. Typical World Bank project areas in China, with a strong focus on the western region, include wastewater, air quality, irrigation, water supply, sanitation and rural development. Gender Action's latest analysis of World Bank projects in China demonstrates that they continue to neglect gendered roles in handling biodiversity; the need for women farmers to learn about preserving biodiversity as agriculture feminizes; the harmful reproductive effects on female farmers who handle pesticides in their farm work while pesticides harm biodiversity; and other gendered impacts. Overall, World Bank investments fail to target women as natural resource managers who must play a critical role in environmental conservation. Although many World Bank projects in China organize participatory consultations, few convene specific meetings for men and women affected. This presentation demonstrates how World Bank investments neglect to identify and address gender roles affecting China's biodiversity and discusses how they must do so to contribute to sustainable development in China and globally.