

2 Recent progress in mapping the gender-environment nexus

In recent decades, much progress has been made on the gender equality agenda. Likewise, some important decisions and actions have been taken on the environmental sustainability agenda. Yet these processes have only occasionally been brought together. The full range of interlinkages between gender and environmental goals has not been sufficiently visible or adequately prioritised in areas such as infrastructure, urban development, green jobs, innovation, and sustainable consumption. Ensuring women's presence in leadership positions in the public and private sector will be key to driving a more integrated agenda. While women often play important roles in environmental action, they are often underrepresented in the decision-making of environment-related matters and even less so areas such as finance, which ultimately define environmental outcomes. The COVID-19 pandemic has also been a dramatic reminder of how systemic gender inequalities can be exacerbated by global shocks and crises, and how closely environmental factors are linked to people's well-being. To bring together the gender and environmental sustainability agendas, the massive shortage of gender-disaggregated data needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

2.1. Key findings

This chapter provides a description of the state of affairs in evidence gathering and policy actions with respect to the gender-environment nexus, including the following findings:

- The United Nations SDG framework provides ample focus on stand-alone gender equality issues and environmental goals, but falls short in embedding gender equality in the nine environment-related SDGs. More could be included on the specific impact of climate change, environmental damage and biodiversity loss on women, and on the role of women in sustainable consumption. Out of the 231 unique indicators in the SDG framework, 114 have an environmental angle, and only 20 of those provide for gender-specific and/or sex disaggregation, constituting a meagre 9% of the total. The current SDG indicator framework falls short in supporting policy makers in designing gender-responsive policies and measures.
- No gender data is systematically available, even for OECD countries, for the indicators under eight of the nine environment-related SDGs. This is either because no indicator has been identified as gender-related in the SDG framework – as is the case for oceans (SDG 14) and biodiversity (SDG 15) – or because no data is available for a sufficient number of countries - as for water, sustainable production, climate, energy and cities. Data is systematically available for only one of the two unique gender-environment indicators, under SDG Target 9.5, on the share of women inventors, and on researchers per million inhabitants.
- There are a number of international initiatives to further develop gender-disaggregation of environmental data. Many of them focus on developing countries where data availability is more limited. The lack of data is a key challenge to overcome if policy makers are to leverage and address the gender-environment nexus. Further efforts are also needed in advanced economies, and there is an important role for the OECD to play.
- There is a wide spectrum of efforts across OECD countries to integrate the gender-environment nexus in policy making. Seventeen out of thirty OECD countries who replied to a survey on the nexus said they consider gender aspects in environmental policy making, either systematically or occasionally. Gender equality and women’s empowerment considerations are most integrated into policies relating to climate change, green entrepreneurship and jobs (including the agricultural and forestry sectors), and women’s participation and leadership in environment-related decision making.
- There are a number of policy areas that need better and more effective integration of the nexus, such as taxation, budgeting, regulatory impact assessments, development cooperation, trade and investment. As an example, and despite “women and the environment” being one of the twelve critical areas under the Beijing Platform for Action, the link is slowly being picked up by OECD DAC Members. On average, about 19.4% of total aid allocated to environment for the period 2002-2017 had a focus on gender equality. The trend is improving and the share exceeded 34% in 2017 (OECD, 2020^[11]).

2.2. Parallel advances on the gender equality and environmental sustainability agendas

Collective awareness of gender inequality and its importance in public policy has grown, both nationally and internationally. There is a similar if not greater increase in awareness of environmental emergencies such as climate change, pollution, shrinking biodiversity and the growing damage to oceans and seas. These two agendas have occasionally been brought together, especially at the international level, but more could be done to enhance the interaction between gender equality and environmental sustainability.

The 2030 Agenda has laid out gender mainstreaming in the interlinkages between gender equality and all other SDGs, and as such provides an opportunity to integrate gender equality and environmental sustainability goals more systematically. Governments around the world are stepping up their sustainability actions, but the implications for and role of women are not always sufficiently addressed.

Many gender equality initiatives to address inequality have looked at the issue from an economic and social angle, focusing on discrimination, education, labour and health policies (OECD, 2017^[2]). Clearly, these are *sine qua non* conditions to address and leverage the gender-environment nexus. However, the differential environment impacts on women and the effects of gender inequality on environmental outcome, as well as the specific behaviours and preferences of women, have not always been the subject of adequate research or policy focus. The full range of interlinkages between gender equality and the environmental SDGs have not been sufficiently visible or adequately prioritised. For example, gender equality perspectives are rarely a priority in infrastructure or urban development,¹ green jobs and innovation, or sustainable consumption, yet gender equality could play a significant role in delivering more sustainable outcomes and achieving the SDGs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how systemic gender inequalities can be exacerbated by global shocks and crises. As the OECD paper [“Women at the core of the fight against the COVID crisis”](#) shows, women make up almost 70% of the health care workforce and are exposed to a greater risk of being infected with the virus (OECD, 2020^[3]). Women shoulder much of the burden at home, with school and childcare facility closings coupled with longstanding gender inequalities vis à vis unpaid work. Women also face a high risk of job and income loss, and an increased risk of violence, exploitation, abuse or harassment, in times of crisis and quarantine. Climate change and drivers of biodiversity loss such as deforestation and wildlife trade may increase the risk of further pandemics, as well as vector-borne or water-borne infections. As women and vulnerable groups are often affected most by such environmental degradation – especially in developing countries where women and girls are often responsible for providing water, food and fuel for their families using surrounding environmental resources – it is important that countries integrate a gender equality and inclusiveness perspective in their environmental action.

The socio-economic stresses of the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on movement have also significantly increased the risk of gender-based violence (GBV) (IUCN, 2020^[4]). Women and girls are at greater risk of human and transnational sex trafficking, and child marriage. GBV is a pervasive barrier to (i) improving women’s overall disproportionate vulnerability to environmental degradation, and (ii) enhancing their ability to realise their rights as leaders in conservation and environmental stewardship (Table 2.1). Programmes such as USAID’s Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Environments (RISE) Challenge promote greater awareness of the intersection between environmental degradation and GBV. The RISE Challenge funds organisations to adapt and implement promising or proving practices to prevent and respond to GBV in other sectors to environmental programmes. It incentivises partnerships between environmental organisations, local and indigenous communities and gender and GBV experts to build an evidence base of effective interventions (USAID, 2020^[5]).

Table 2.1. Interlinkages between gender-based violence and environmental issues

Environmental issues and threats that exacerbate tensions	Associated effects exacerbating gender-inequality	Gender-based violence dimensions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource scarcity • Restricted access to/control over natural resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food insecurity • Household stress • Inter-communal conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimate partner violence • Child marriage • Coerced transactional sex • Abduction and rape
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deforestation • Land degradation • Land-use change • Desertification • Droughts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and girls travel longer distances to collect resources, particularly when increasingly scarce/restricted • Decrease in life expectancy and quality of life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and girls exposed to sexual violence and <i>abduction en route</i> • Women lose direct access to natural resources, driving economic Gender Based Violence • Child brides (Chamberlain, 2017^[6])
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsustainable extraction • Environmental crimes • Biodiversity loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land grabbing and dispossession • Militarisation • Abuse of drugs and alcohol • Migration/displacement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual violence Sex trafficking (including forced prostitution) • Women lose direct access to natural resources, driving economic Gender Based Violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather-related disasters • Sea level rise • Climate change • Climate-related conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destruction of natural resources that underpins livelihoods (driving scarcity and poverty) • Damage to infrastructure services • Displacement and disruption of /communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and children exposed to sexual and intimate partner violence in and outside of evacuation camps • Inequitable access to (or availability of) recovery services, information or support • Coerced transactional sex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in ocean pollution (plastics) • Increase in land waste • Lack of clean water and sanitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irreversible destruction of biodiversity • Worsened health • Lower quality of life and life-expectancy • Perpetuating social reproduction of poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women lose direct access to natural resources, driving economic Gender Based Violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy poverty • Increase in air pollution (from agriculture, transport and energy) • Pollution from Industrial processes • Increased density in cities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased conflict for resources due to unsustainable resource depletion • Increase in poverty • Barriers for education (Specially for young girls - Decrease in women's empowerment due to lower education rates d • Exposure to dangerous chemicals • Lower quality of life • Lower quality of health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in gender based violence • Continued subjugation of women due to low education rates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsustainable consumption and production chains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's increased poverty • Lower quality of health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased exploitation • Abuse of labour • Women lose direct access to natural resources, driving economic Gender Based Violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination in the workplace • Discrimination in environmental work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple layers of discrimination based on gender, age, ethnicity and sexual orientation • Ineffective implementation of projects • Economic violence through inequity of pay, advancement and opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual harassment • Sexual violence • Women lose direct access to natural resources, driving economic Gender Based Violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-blind conservation projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worsened livelihoods for local communities • Abuse of power, particularly in relation to control and management over resources • Increased community violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual and physical violence • Sexual exploitation • Economic gender-based violence • Intimate partner violence

There are three main action channels for leveraging the gender-environment nexus: (i) enhancing more mechanisms at all levels for assessing the impact of environmental policies on women; (ii) advancing

gender-responsive programming and policies to achieve sustainable development; and (iii) engaging women more in environmental decision making. This chapter reviews recent progress on the gender equality and environmental agendas, comments on the main available evidence on the gender-environment nexus, and identifies the main policy actions taken by high-income and developing countries to support the three action channels mentioned above.

2.2.1. Cross-country progress on gender equality and women's empowerment

The year 2020 marked the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Approved in 1995 by 189 countries at the Fourth World Conference on Women, the agreed text set a global policy framework for achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls around the world. The 12 critical areas of concern covered under the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action are more pertinent than ever today. Progress has been achieved, with one billion fewer people trapped in extreme poverty since 1995, and parity in education being reached on average at the global level (UNWomen, 2020^[7]). However, in the context of COVID-19, newly released data from UNDP and UN Women shows that 435 million women and girls will be living on less than USD 1.90 a day by 2021, 47 million of those as a direct result of the pandemic (Azcona et al., 2020^[8]). Given that no country has achieved gender equality, recovery efforts and stimulus should be gender-inclusive. As countries reorient their priorities, it is important to embed gender equality in longer-term strategies such as environmental policies.

On a global scale, women aged 25 to 34 continue to be 25% more likely to live in extreme poverty than men. Women continue to spend over 4 hours per day on unpaid care and domestic work, whereas men only spend 1.7 hours per day on such tasks (UNWomen and UNDESA, 2019^[9]). Existing gender wage gaps and glass ceilings exacerbate a persisting gender gap in labour force participation. Women all over the world experience violence, discrimination and fewer opportunities for gainful employment. Even when they have more opportunities – for example, in agriculture, forestry and fisheries women account for 39% of the workforce – women are rarely owners. Only 14% of agricultural landholders are women, making them less able to fight the effects of climate change and environmental degradation (OECD, 2019^[10]); (UNWomen, 2020^[7]).

The gender gap in global labour force participation came to 27% in 2019, a decrease compared to the 1990 figure of 29.1% (ILO, 2020^[11]); (ILO, 2018^[12]). The gender gap is widest in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions- and energy-intensive economic sectors such as energy, transport, construction, and manufacturing processes (Section 3.4).

Women's welfare across different economic sectors could worsen as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Not only do women make up almost 70% of the healthcare workforce, but they are also generally concentrated in lower-level health sector jobs. They represent 25% of decision-making and leadership roles and face a gender pay gap of 28% (WHO, 2019^[13]); (OECD, 2020^[14]).

Women make up roughly 47% of employees in the air transport industry, 53% in food and beverage services, 60% in accommodation services, and 62% in the retail sector. Such sectors that have been hit hardest by the pandemic. Women are more likely than their male counterparts to be in temporary and precarious employment. To make matters worse, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that almost 25 million jobs could disappear worldwide due to COVID-19, leading not only to a surge in overall poverty but also to a sharp increase in gender inequality (ILO, 2020^[15]).

To support the gender equality agenda, G20 countries agreed in 2014 to the “25 x 25” goal: to reduce the gap in labour force participation rates between men and women by 25% by the year 2025. The OECD, together with the ILO, has been monitoring progress on this goal. The report “Women at Work in G20 countries: Policy action since 2019”, found that while the gender gap in participation has declined in almost all G20 economies, these gains are threatened by challenges associated with the COVID-19 crisis, such as the added burden of unpaid care work (ILO and OECD, 2020^[16]).

Another important aspect is the gender digital divide. The OECD report “Bridging the Digital Gender Divide: Include, Upskill, Innovate” (OECD, 2018^[17]) identified this divide as complex as it requires different interventions according to the specific digital technology barriers faced by women and girls.

OECD research on the social and economic facets of gender inequality has been advancing, supported by mainstreaming gender into various work streams under the OECD Gender Initiative. Work has also advanced on integrating gender equality in OECD databases, including through gender indicators on employment, education, entrepreneurship, health, development and governance tracked within the OECD Gender Data Portal and OECD.Stat for OECD Member countries and selected non-Members. This data enables tracking progress on the OECD Gender Recommendations: the 2013 *Recommendation on Gender Equality in Education, Employment, and Entrepreneurship* and the 2015 *Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* (Box 2.1). In 2017, the OECD Ministerial Council meeting identified three urgent gender equality issues: violence against women, the gender wage gap, and unequal sharing of household tasks (OECD, 2017^[2]).

Box 2.1. The OECD Gender Recommendations

The OECD Gender Recommendations are rooted in the OECD Gender Initiative, which started in 2010, the All on Board for Inclusive Growth initiative, launched in 2012, and the understanding that, despite existing policies, “significant gender disparities and biases nevertheless remain in educational and occupational choices; earning levels and working conditions; career progression; representation in decision-making positions; in public life; in the uptake of paid and unpaid work; in entrepreneurial activities; in access to finance for entrepreneurs; and in financial literacy and financial empowerment” (OECD, 2017^[18]).

The *Recommendation on Gender Equality in Education, Employment, and Entrepreneurship*, adopted in May 2013, sets out a number of measures that Adherents should consider implementing in order to address gender inequalities in education, employment and entrepreneurship (OECD, 2017^[18]). In particular, it recommends that Adherents should – through appropriate legislation, policies, monitoring, and campaigning – ensure equal access to education; better enable female labour force participation; promote family-friendly policies; foster greater male uptake of unpaid work; work toward better gender balance in positions of public and private sector leadership; and promote entrepreneurship among women.

The *Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life*, adopted by the OECD Council in 2015, is grounded upon the understanding that government actions have an enormous capacity to strengthen or weaken gender equality and diversity in OECD economies and societies (OECD, 2016^[19]). The Recommendation focuses on effective governance and the implementation of gender equality objectives and gender mainstreaming measures, including gender budgeting, inclusive public procurement and regulatory cycles. It recommends that Adherents strengthen accountability and oversight mechanisms for gender equality and mainstream initiatives across and within government bodies. It also recommends actionable guidelines to enhance women’s equal access to opportunities in service and judicial appointments. The 2018 “[Toolkit on Implementing and Mainstreaming Gender Equality](#)” presents a palette of policy options, tools, self-assessment questions and good practices as a practical road map to support countries in the implementation of the 2015 Gender Recommendation.

Important progress has been made following the OECD Gender Recommendations: two-thirds of adhering countries have implemented new equal pay policies, including transparency measures and wage gaps analyses. Nine Member countries have introduced compulsory gender quotas in board membership positions, and many countries have implemented quotas to increase women’s participation in politics. Some countries, such as Austria and France, have reinforced their anti-harassment laws, while others,

such as Greece and Korea, are increasing awareness-raising campaigns about sexual harassment, its prevention, and victims' rights. Initiatives to extend the length of paternity leave have been introduced in some countries, for instance in Spain (OECD, 2017^[20]).

Nevertheless, major gender gaps persist. In OECD countries, in 2018, women at the median still earned 13% less than men (OECD, 2020^[21]); the gender wage gap has not evolved much since 2010 (OECD, 2020^[14]). Women only hold 21.4% of land assets (OECD, 2019^[10]) and their pension payments are about 25% lower than men's (OECD, 2019^[22]). Women in OECD Member countries held 30% of seats in Parliament in 2019, showing a slow increase in representation since 2012 (OECD, 2019^[23]). Women represented 31.2% of ministers, 33% of Supreme Court judges (OECD, 2019^[23]), and on average 5% of mayors in nine OECD countries – ranging from 0% to 32%. Clearly, women's voices in designing national and local policies and ensuring equality in the judicial system is lacking (OECD, 2017^[24]).

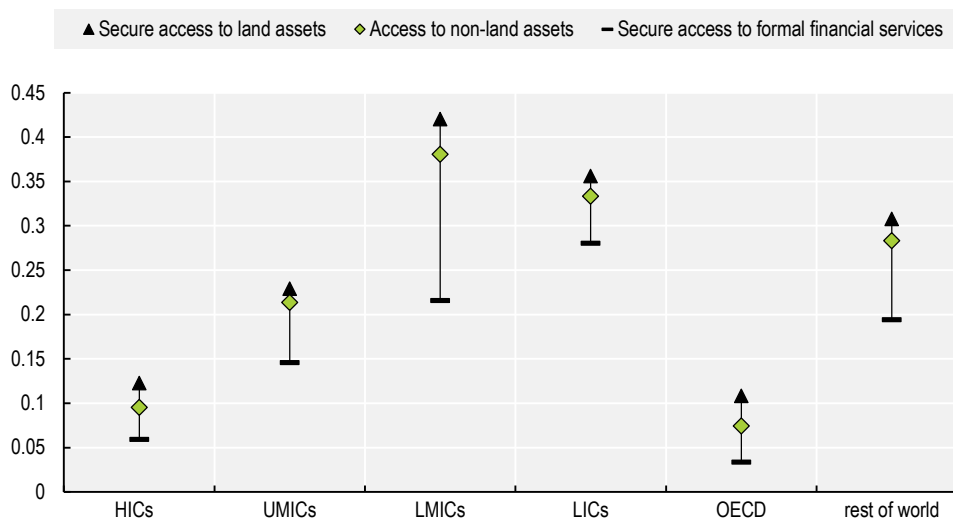
Following the G20/OECD Principles of Corporate Governance, OECD, G20 and Financial Stability Board member countries adopted measures to ensure more equal gender composition in corporate boards and senior management positions. Almost half of the 49 jurisdictions examined by the OECD 2019 Corporate Governance Factbook have introduced requirements or regulatory measures for disclosing gender composition of boards, yet only 22% require such disclosures for the gender composition of senior management. Jurisdictions that have introduced mandatory or voluntary quotas for more gender diversity remain the minority. Data from 2017 on the actual participation of women on boards show that in some cases quotas or targets are still not met. Women tend to be more present in senior management positions, occupying over 15% of managerial positions in 37 of the 49 jurisdictions covered, and over 15% of board positions in only 26 of the 49 jurisdictions covered (OECD, 2019^[25]).

Across OECD countries, women disproportionately bear the burden of unpaid domestic work and caregiving. They spend on average almost 18% of their time on such work, whereas the equivalent time spent by men is about 9% (OECD, 2020^[14]). With paid and unpaid work time combined, women work on average 25 minutes more per day than men (OECD, 2020^[14]). Despite a stable decrease in the average gender employment gap over the last decade, women still have lower employment rates than men in OECD countries (61% versus 76% in 2019, employment ratio for population aged 15 to 64), (OECD, 2017^[21]). The gap appears to be wider in developing countries (Ferrant and Thim, 2019^[26]).

Women are 1.5 times more likely to be denied financing to start a business in seven EU states (Halabisky, 2018^[27]). Women-led start-ups are systematically less likely to attract venture capital funding (Breschi, Lassébie and Menon, 2018^[28]). The 2018 OECD survey *Risks that Matter* found that women were more likely than men to believe that government does not incorporate their views when designing or reforming public benefits, and were less satisfied overall with access to public services and income support (OECD, 2019^[29]).

With few exceptions, women and girls in low and middle income countries are subject to a much higher degree of discrimination, more legal constraints and limited economic opportunities, compared to those in OECD countries. Discrimination against women is greater overall for access to land assets, when compared to access to non-land assets and formal financial services. Access to land and non-land assets is most limited in lower middle income countries (LMICs), followed by low income countries (LICs), upper middle income countries (UMICs) and high income countries (HICs). Discrimination against women accessing formal financial services is highest in LICs, followed by LMICs, UMICs and HICs (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1. Women face restricted access to land and non-land assets, and to formal financial services



Note: Restricted Access to Productive and Financial Resources sub-index information on three indicators: secure access to land assets, secure access to non-land assets and secure access to formal financial services. Ranking range from 0 for no discrimination to 1 for very high discrimination.

Source: (OECD, 2019_[10]), Gender, Institutions and Development Database, accessed 23 May 2020.

The OECD, together with UN Women and the World Bank, is a co-custodian of SDG indicator 5.1.1: whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex. As such, it manages a database of discriminatory social institutions affecting women's and girls' lives. The [Social Institutions Gender Index \(SIGI\)](#) describes such institutions as “restricting [women's and girls'] access to justice, rights and empowerment opportunities,” thus “undermining their agency and decision-making authority” (OECD, 2020_[30]). This affects women's status and perpetuates gender gaps in important areas such as education, employment, health, politics and access to credit.

Based on the latest SIGI Global Report, discrimination is higher where women's integration in the labour market is more limited (OECD, 2019_[31]). Although 164 countries acknowledge women's right to own, use and manage land, only 52 countries meet their legal requirements by putting such a right into practice. Strong customary laws and weak law enforcement and implementation perpetuate this gap, as women tend not to exercise their rights (OECD, 2019_[31]). In developing countries, women account for only 15% of agricultural landholders (OECD, 2019_[31]) but represent 43% of the agricultural labour force.

Trends are similar for non-land assets. In 42% of the 180 countries examined, women are guaranteed equal property rights, yet in 34 countries, men are the sole administrators of a couple's marital property. In 29% of countries, women face restricted legal rights to property and other non-land assets after a divorce or separation. Moreover, many women suffer from multiple forms of discrimination, including discrimination against women living with HIV/AIDS, women with disabilities, rural women, older women, female-headed households, indigenous women and women belonging to minority groups. The legal frameworks governing property and assets of 27 countries do not apply to all groups of women. For instance, in Latin America and the Caribbean, indigenous women are less likely to access legal documentation such as birth certificates, which are a prerequisite for purchasing property and other non-land assets (OECD, 2019_[32]).

Women's access to formal financial services is widely guaranteed by law. In 98% of countries, women have equal access to credit and opening a bank account. But in practice, varying levels of discrimination

persist in countries where customary laws prevent women from getting a financial education, accessing credit by themselves, and or making household financial decisions (OECD, 2019^[31]).

2.3. Women in the driver’s seat – leading the debate and decisions in the public and private spheres

Advancing women in leadership positions in the public and private spheres is paramount to ensuring that gender equality is mainstreamed in policy and decision making. And vice-versa: gender equality and diversity can provide additional benefits to public and private organisations, leading to improved performance and productivity levels (Offermann and Foley, 2020^[33]).

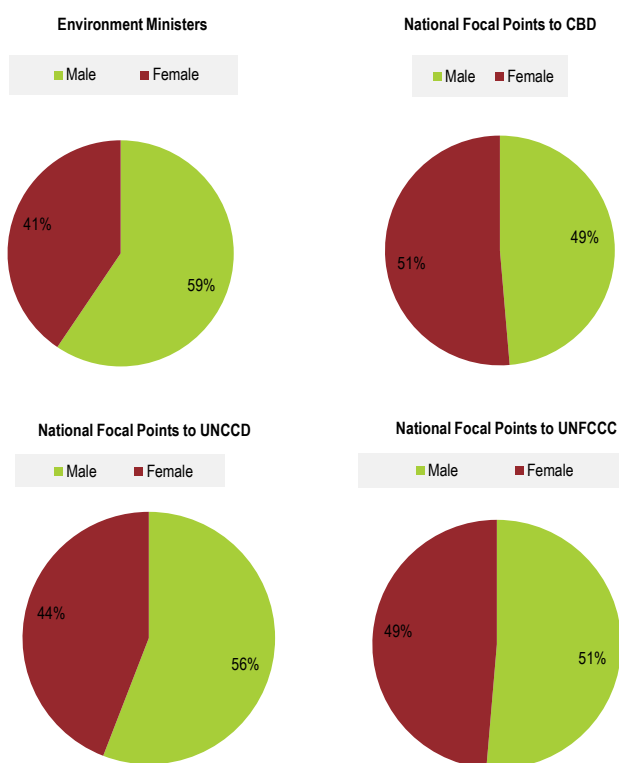
2.3.1. Gender equality in environmental public policy decision making

Public decision-making systems and mechanisms play a key role in ensuring that all voices are represented when discussing environmental and climate policies. More equal participation of women in public life and decision making around environment- and climate-related issues could result not only in more gender-sensitive and gender-responsive policies, but also in women’s greater economic empowerment and more effective solutions to climate change (Bonewit and Shreeves, 2015^[34]).

The 2014 OECD Report “Women’s Access to Public Life” shows that gender diversity in decision-making bodies enhances the promotion of women’s and children’s interests and generates more public trust. Gender diversity in the judicial system also improves the quality of decisions taken, and upholds the legitimacy of courts. Women jurists more typically advance gender-responsive decisions on actions directed against women (OECD/CAWTAR, 2014^[35]).

Women are increasingly represented in high-level public policy positions linked to environmental decision making in OECD countries. In May 2020, women occupied more than 40% of positions (OECD average) as Ministers of Environment, National Focal Points for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and National Focal Points for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (Figure 2.2). Women exceeded men as National Focal Points for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), supporting the argument that women are more active in issues relating to biodiversity, both on the ground and in decision making.

Figure 2.2. Environment-related high-level representation by gender in OECD countries, 2020



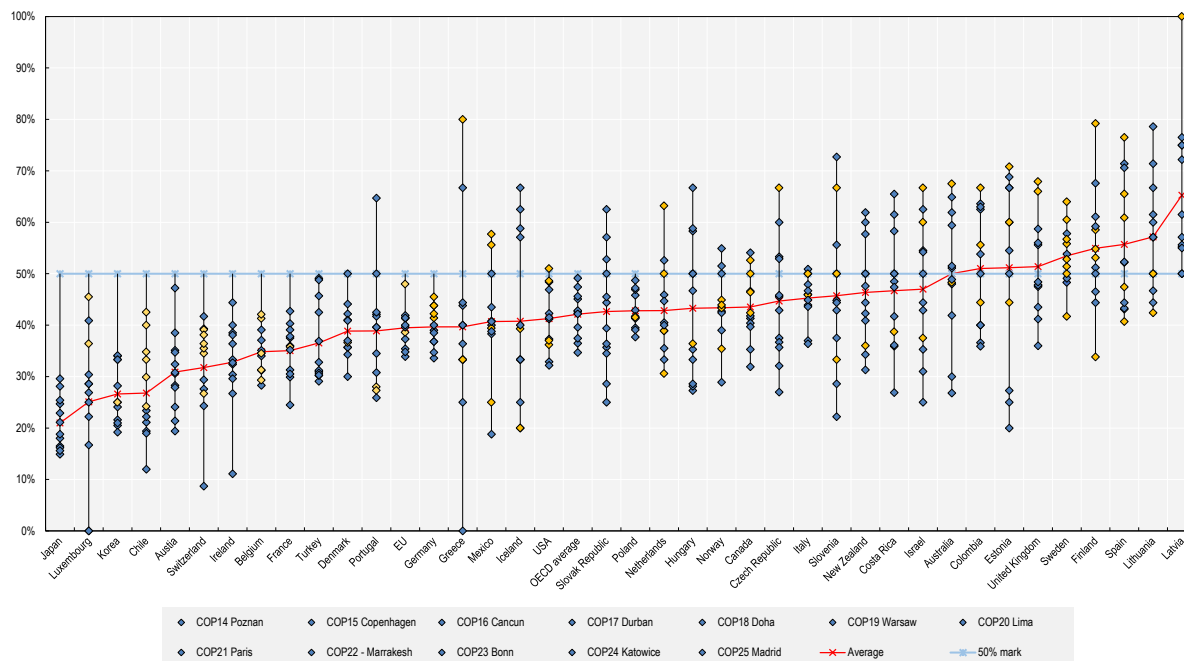
Note: Where more than one Focal Points are appointed per country, the gender of the most senior is taken into consideration. Information is not available for National Focal Points to UNCCD for Canada, Luxembourg and New Zealand.

Source: Authors research for Environment Ministers; for CBD: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/lists/nfp-cbd.pdf>; for UNCCD: <https://knowledge.unccd.int/home/country-information/overview-countries-unccd-annex>; for UNFCCC: <https://unfccc.int/process/parties-non-party-stakeholders/parties/national-focal-point> (accessed 24 May 2020).

Women's participation in national representations of OECD countries to Conferences of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP) meetings between 2008 and 2019 also showed an upward trend (Figure 2.3). Australia, Colombia, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom surpassed, on average, 50% representation of women over that period. Latvia, Lithuania and Spain maintained a female participation level of over 40%. Chile's delegation was led by a woman at nine COP meetings, followed by Sweden's eight times. In contrast, Austria, Ireland, Japan, Slovak Republic and Turkey did not appoint a woman to lead their COP delegation between 2008 and 2019.

Figure 2.3. Women's participation in COP as country representatives for OECD countries

Percentage of women per national delegation



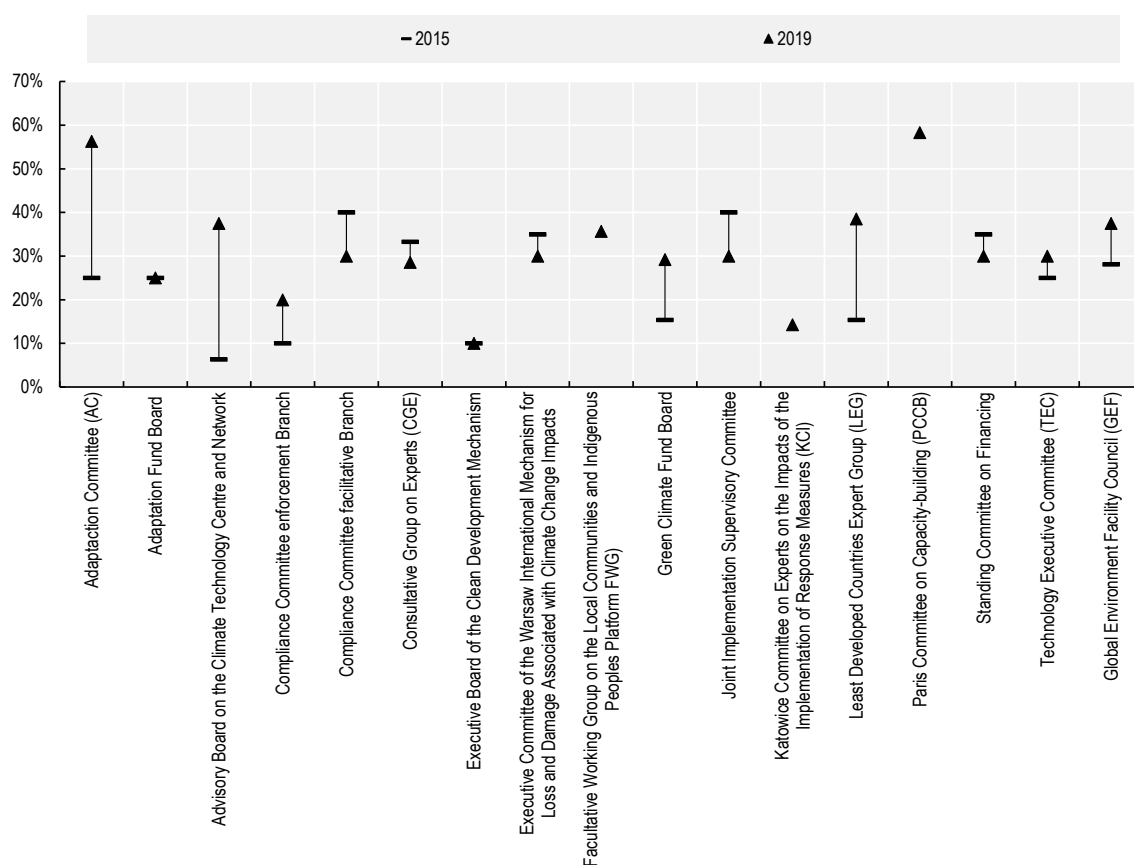
Note: Women's participation to the annual Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP) for the period 2008-2019. Yellow diamonds indicate a woman was heading the delegation. Red line projects average value per country. OECD average includes all OECD Members at the time of writing, for all years. Costa Rica and EU not included in OECD average calculations.

Source: Gender Climate Tracker, Women's Environment and Development Organization, accessed 5 June 2020.

Despite relatively good levels of women in environmental and environment-related positions, women are largely under-represented in high-level public positions of finance and infrastructure planning. In June 2020, only 4 out of 37 OECD Member countries had women heading their government's finance portfolio (less than 11%). As such, national agenda setting, finance and budget allocation, as well as land-use and construction prioritisation, still remain largely in the hands of men.

Gender-balanced representation is equally important for achieving parity in the decision-making bodies of climate mechanisms and funds. Guaranteeing women's equal representation in these bodies may lead to more gender-responsive selection and financing of projects. Despite the fact that women are the majority of the world's poor and are highly affected by climate change, parity has not yet been achieved in some of these mechanisms and funds (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4. Percentage of women's participation in climate mechanisms and funds



Source: Gender Climate Tracker, Women's Environment and Development Organization; GEF data analysed by authors (accessed 5 June 2020)

Women and men often have different policy priorities. In an attempt to capture gender differences on national budget issues addressed by parliamentary bodies, a 2018 study by 50:50 Parliament reviewed 1.2 million interventions in the UK House of Commons and 500 000 interventions in the US House of Representatives. The results demonstrated that women of all political parties spent more time than their male counterparts addressing environment-related topics (D'souza, 2018^[36]).

Studies show that countries with higher proportions of women in parliament are more likely to endorse environmental treaties and policies. Women were found to be more environmentally risk-averse than men, to have a more negative perception of nuclear power and waste, and to represent the vast majority (60% to 80%) of membership in mainstream environmental organisations (Norgaard and York, 2005^[37]).

2.3.2. Women as brokers of environmental sustainability in private sector leadership

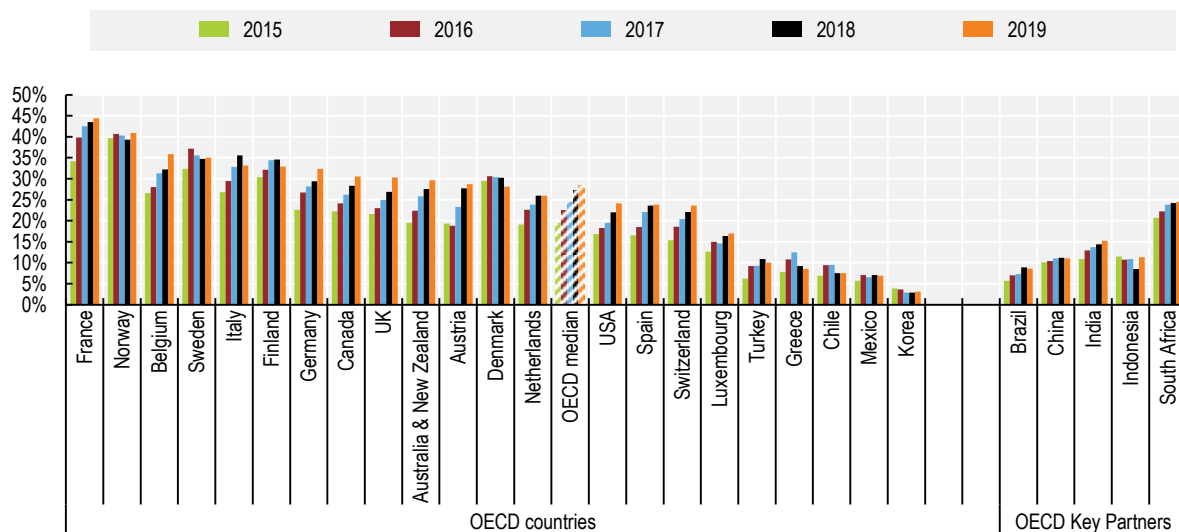
Promoting gender balance in corporate boards and senior management positions not only supports good corporate governance, but also helps business to grow, to perform better and to improve its environmental outcomes. Companies with at least one female director generate on average 3.5% higher returns on equity than those with no female directors (Kersley et al., 2019^[38]). Companies with more than 20% of woman senior managers perform better by 3.6% when compared to companies with less than 15% woman

managers (Kersley et al., 2019^[38]). Increasing women's participation in upper-level management positions results in better performance even when compared to women's participation in boards (supervisory roles) (Kersley et al., 2019^[38]).

Gender diversity can improve a company's reputation and employee retention. Improving a company's gender equality sends a positive message internally, to workforce, and externally, to investors and consumers (Kamalath, 2015^[39]). It also represents legitimacy and trustworthiness for stakeholders (Perrault, 2015^[40]), as the presence of women in leadership positions is positively correlated with ethical and social compliance (Isidro and Sobral, 2015^[41]). Gender balance also helps minimise governance-related controversies: in a study of 2 400 companies monitored between 2012 and 2015, those with at least three female board members experienced 24% fewer governance-related controversies than the average.

Increased participation of women on company boards can shift governance styles, enhancing the collective, collaborative decision making usually required from boards of directors (Kamalath, 2015^[39]). Yet, women's participation in boards remains below 30% in OECD countries (median) (Figure 2.5). According to the OECD Analytical Database on Individual Multinationals and their Affiliates (ADIMA), women make up only 16% of board members in the top 500 multinational companies (see also Chapter 9).

Figure 2.5. Women's participation in boards remains below 30% in OECD countries (median)



Note: Information available for 23 OECD member countries. OECD median calculated based on data available.

Source: Authors calculations based on data available at (Kersley et al., 2019^[42])

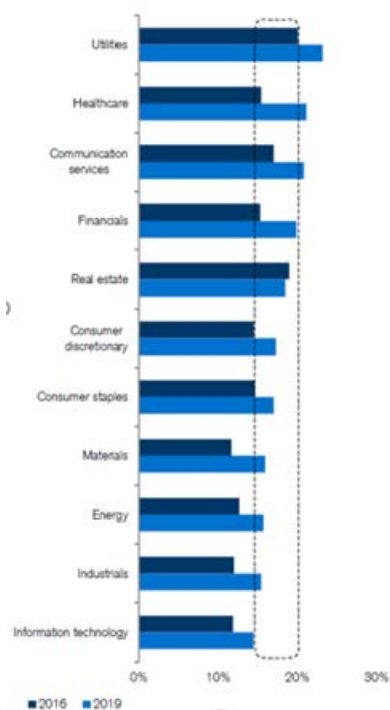
Achieving greater gender diversity on company boards and in senior management positions could bring about an acceleration towards the green transition, as it would allow for more effective integration of environmental and gender goals. Analysis shows that decision makers are highly influenced not only by their education and background, but also by their experiences and social considerations. Increasing the number of board members with experience in environmental sustainability would increase the probability that related issues will be introduced in the agenda (Walls and Hoffman, 2013^[43]).

Firms with three or more female members in their board of directors show more environmental corporate social responsibility in issues such as pollution prevention, emissions reduction, use of recycled materials in production, use of clean energy, commitment to energy efficiency measures, and environment-related reporting, as women are overall more attentive towards environment-related issues (Post, Rahman and

Rubow, 2011^[44]). There is evidence that the higher the number of female directors in a company's board, the more carbon-related information may be disclosed (Hossain et al., 2017^[45]).

According to the OECD's ADIMA database, the percentage of female board members in the energy sector is low (14%). 2019 data from Credit Suisse on 30 000 executive positions in 3 000 companies across 56 countries shows that only about 2% of companies in the energy sector have a female Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and just over 9% have a female Chief Financial Officer (CFO) (Figure 2.6). In 2010, in Germany, Spain and Sweden, 64% of energy companies had no women in their senior management or board of directors (Carlsson-Kanyama, Lindén and Thelander, 1999^[46]). Equal by 30, an initiative of the Clean Energy Ministerial, examined 68 energy companies in 2018 and found that on average only 18% of management positions were held by women. Equal by 30 member countries are introducing mentorship programmes where female senior managers can help newcomers in the clean energy sector advance in their careers (C3E International, 2019^[47]).

Figure 2.6. Women in management by economic sector



Source: (Kersley et al., 2019^[42])

The G20/OECD Principles on Corporate Governance, endorsed by G20 leaders in 2015, propose the introduction of targets to further increase gender diversity on boards and senior management, and many OECD countries have already introduced relevant provisions (OECD, 2019^[25]). The EU has also introduced new guidelines for disclosure of information on the presence of women in senior management and boards of directors. Considering the interlinkages between gender diversity and climate-related disclosure of information, it would be appropriate to consider an integrated gender-responsive policy framework that could support the private sector transition to lower-carbon economy practices. More research on environment-related sectors, and female participation in the workforce and senior management positions, as well as how this links to companies' transitions to lower-carbon solutions, would assist policy makers in better defining future possible initiatives and measures in integrating gender considerations in environmental policies.

2.4. Advances on environmental goals and the SDGs

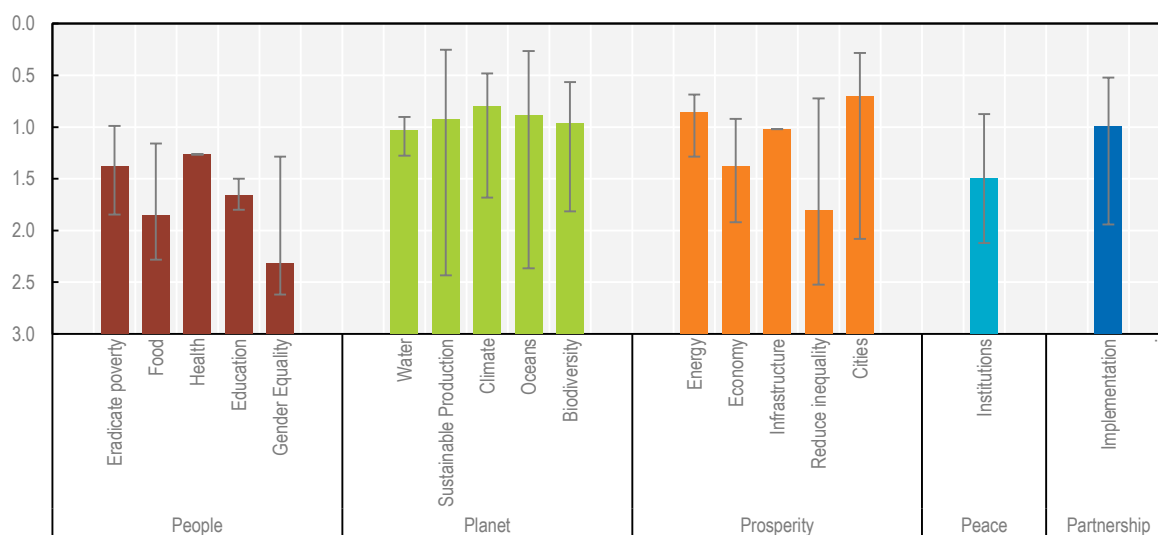
With less than ten years left before the 2030 deadline to achieve the SDGs, countries around the world are developing national frameworks based on the UN's global indicator framework, which measures progress on reaching the 169 targets (United Nations, n.d.^[48]). The framework currently comprises 247 indicators, 231 of which are unique (United Nations, n.d.^[49]).²

A recent UNEP report analysing 93 environment-related indicators across all SDGs found that progress has been made in only in 23% of them. For the majority of indicators examined (68%), there is insufficient data to evaluate progress on biodiversity, ecosystems, water efficiency, pollution reduction and waste management. For the remaining 9%, there appears to be negative trends in progress made on forest areas, sustainable fisheries, endangered species, sustainable consumption, and material footprint (UNEP, 2019^[50]).

Despite an improvement in access to electricity (indicator for Target 7.1), there are still 860 million people around the world without access, 80% of whom live in sub-Saharan Africa (IEA, 2020^[51]). Total global GHG emissions (indicator for Target 13.2) reached an all-time annual high in 2018 (UNEP, 2019^[52]). Based on the latest FAO data, the global proportion of fish stocks respecting biologically sustainable levels (indicator for Target 14.4) continues to diminish (FAO, 2020^[53]). In 2018, 16.1 million people were displaced due to storms, floods, droughts, wildfires, landslides and extreme temperatures (IDMC, 2019^[54]). The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services marks negative trends in biodiversity and ecosystems, which are expected to limit progress to 80% of the targets related to poverty, health, hunger, water, climate, oceans and land (IPBES, 2019^[55]). The COVID-19 pandemic and recent findings on the correlation between increasing air pollution exposure and vulnerability to infectious virus may further derail progress on air quality and environmental health (Chapter 3).

OECD analysis of Member countries' distance to achieving the SDGs shows that the gender equality targets under SDG 5 are the farthest from being reached. Distances are shorter for the targets of the nine environment-related goals, but lack of data for many indicators implies high uncertainty about countries' performance levels, especially on goals for sustainable production, oceans and cities (Figure 2.7) (OECD, 2019^[56]). Moreover, like the SDG targets and indicators themselves, the reporting exercise does not capture non-linearities in environmental damage timelines such as feedback loops in climate change. In other words, the indicators do not account for cascading impacts of climate change that can lead to additional effects, for example when extra water vapour in the air amplifies the initial warming (WRI, 2018^[57]). Therefore, though distances to targets may seem small, real achievement of environmental sustainability may be further away than calculated.

Figure 2.7. OECD countries' average distance to targets by SDG



Note: This figure shows the average distance OECD countries need to travel to reach each SDG. Distances are measured in standardised units, from 0 indicating that the 2030 level has already been attained, to 3 as most OECD countries have already reached this distance. Bars show OECD countries' average performance against all targets under the relevant Goal for which data are available. Whiskers show uncertainties due to missing data, based on the alternative assumptions that either missing indicators are 3 standardised distances away from the 2030 target or that they are all already at the target level. Longer whiskers indicate larger data gaps.

Source: (OECD, 2019^[56]).

2.5. The large data deficit on the gender-environment nexus

A basic challenge for addressing and leveraging the gender-environment nexus is gathering the necessary evidence for informed policy decisions. While there is a large body of evidence on the gender-environment nexus in developing countries from case studies and project reports by UN bodies, other international organisations and NGOs, systematic data collection is in short supply. With few exceptions, the nexus is largely absent from domestic policy debates on gender equality and environmental sustainability in OECD countries, and data collection initiatives are scant.

2.5.1. The gender-environment nexus is largely missing in the nine environment-related SDGs and current indicators framework

The gender dimension is largely missing from the nine environment-related SDGs and the existing indicators framework. While data availability is a major limitation, the framework itself does not adequately capture the interlinkages between environmental and gender goals. Hence, the agreed SDG indicators fall short in capturing the extent to which SDG targets are gender-responsive or could be linked to women's and girls' empowerment. A stronger focus on the gender-environment nexus in the SDG framework, and possible development of additional indicators that encapsulate it, would strengthen focus amongst policy makers and other stakeholders (Box 2.2).

Time frame may play a role in the gender-environment nexus being under-recognised. Some of the SDG indicators have no direct link to environmental policies or environment-related effects on women and men in the short term, though such links could emerge from a longer-term perspective. Further methodological work in this area could therefore include an indirect mapping approach and a gender-environment assessment of other indicators beyond those already identified under the gender-environment nexus.

Box 2.2. Gender-disaggregation for the SDGs under the United Nations system

The Global Gender Statistics Programme, supported by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS) of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), examines key gender issues that have arisen since 2006, and develops proposals to overcome related gender gaps. Gender-related topics covered by the IAEG-GS encompass statistics on (i) birth and death; (ii) migration; (iii) marriage and divorce; (iv) population registers; (v) population size and density; (vi) time use series; and (vii) violence against women. The IAEG-GS is developing guidance to support countries' statistics gathering on time-use, acknowledging the difficulties and peculiarities that may be faced by different countries.

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2016, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) has maintained a data hub, Women and Sustainable Development: Building a Better Future for All, supported by countries such as Ireland, UNDESA provides insights based on national and subnational data provided under three categories: (i) women's economic empowerment, focusing mainly on women's labour force participation and breaking poverty chains; (ii) women's voice, focusing on women's participation in government and public office positions; and (iii) women's safety and human rights, providing data on SDG indicators 5.2.1 (Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls subjected to physical and sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months), 5.3.1 (Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 18), and 5.3.2 (Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age). In fact, Ireland recognises all SDG indicator sets (UN, EU, OECD and ILO) and strives to keep up to date with all developments in this complex space.

Moreover, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the SDGs (IAEG-SDG) has developed a dedicated work stream striving for data disaggregation for all SDG indicators. Sex is defined as a disaggregation dimension for all SDGs, except for SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation), SDG 14 (Life below water) and SDG 15 (Life on land). It should be noted, however, that SDG Target 6.2 (By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations) already references the needs of women and girls. In total, the IAEG-SDG proposes a minimum set of gender-disaggregation even for several SDG indicators with no specific reference to gender, sex or women, and identifies future additional disaggregation countries should aim for. Still, only eight SDG environment-related indicators have been identified where data is expected to be produced; and five for possible future additional disaggregation.

Source: (UNDESA, n.d.^[58]); (UNSD, n.d.^[59]); (UNSD, n.d.^[60])

A UNEP analysis of the 2019 list of SDG indicators identified at least 93 environment-related indicators across all SDGs. It did not, however, include all indicators that may refer to environment-related sectors such as agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, innovation, and decent work (part of which could cover green jobs and a just transition) (UNEP, 2019^[50]).

UN Women identified 54 gender-related indicators in the 2018 list, defining them as those that specifically address women and girls, or where gender-disaggregated data is required. But this approach left out SDG indicators that could cover economic benefits for environment and gender, such as for access to electricity (SDG indicator 7.1.1), clean fuels and technology (SDG indicator 7.1.2), and adequate housing (SDG indicator 11.1.1) (UNWomen, 2018^[61]).

Of the 93 environment-related indicators identified by UNEP, only 7 overlap with UN Women's list, as shown in Table 2.2 below. In other words, under the (UNEP, 2019^[50]) and (UNWomen, 2018^[61]) indicator

groupings, the environment-related indicators which specifically address women and girls or require gender disaggregation represent only 3% of the 231 unique SDG indicators.

Table 2.2. SDG indicators identified under the gender-environment nexus (based on UNEP and UN Women)

Indicator	Indicator Label
1.4.2	Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure
4.7.1	Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment
5.a.1	(a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure
8.9.2	Number of jobs in tourism industries as a proportion of total jobs and growth rate of jobs, by sex
11.2.1	Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities;
11.7.1	Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
13.b.1	Number of least developed countries and small island developing States that are receiving specialized support, and amount of support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, for mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities

Note: The UNEP report and UN Women report on which this analysis is based do not cover the latest 2020 Comprehensive Review changes made by IAEG-SDG on the global indicator framework for the SDGs. Since these reports were issued, SDG indicator 8.9.2 has been deleted from the framework; and SDG indicator 13.b.1 has been revised.

Source: Authors computations based on (UNEP, 2019^[50]) and (UNWomen, 2018^[61]).

By applying a gender lens to the methodology used in *Measuring the Distance to SDG Targets* (OECD, 2019^[56]), the OECD assessed the distances to SDG targets for women and girls. The working paper “How far are OECD countries from achieving SDG targets for women and girls?” includes several approaches for identifying gender-related indicators, following the UN’s global SDG indicator framework as closely as possible and adding OECD data when relevant (Box 2.3). Based on preliminary analysis, 102 of the 247 indicators in the SDG indicator framework are identified as gender-relevant. That is equivalent to 41% and almost double the amount identified in the UN Women analysis (Cohen and Shinwell, 2020^[62]).

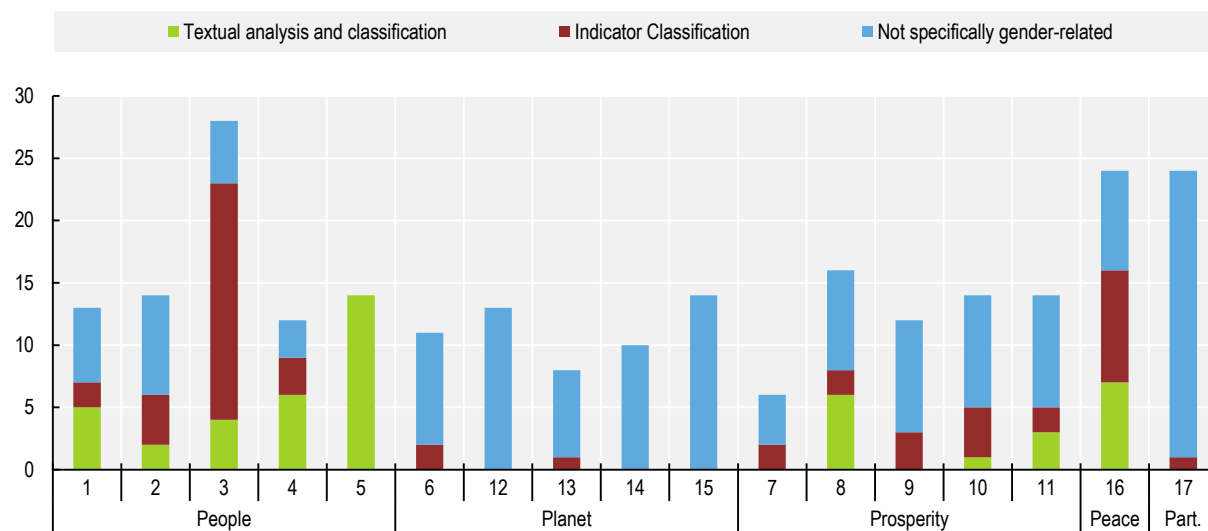
Box 2.3. Identifying gender-related indicators under the Measuring the Distance to SDG Targets methodology

The OECD working paper “How far are OECD countries from achieving SDG targets for women and girls?: Applying a gender lens to measuring distance to SDG targets” bases its analysis on a dual approach, using both a text analysis of the indicators, as well as an indicator classification. An indicator is deemed to be gender-related if the indicator’s name includes gender-related terms (e.g. men, women, boy, girl, gender, etc.). In addition, as some gender-relevant indicators do not refer explicitly to gender, the indicators were also classified manually according to individual-level disaggregation and gender-relevance. It should, however, be noted that there are inconsistencies between the indicator text and the disaggregation, most notably on Health (SDG 3), where most indicators are measured at the individual-level and could thus be measured for women and men (or for women only), but are not identified as gender-relevant according to the text analysis, i.e. do not have gender relevant wording. It should also be clarified that, even if the relevant SDG target is gender-relevant but the indicators are not, then these indicators are excluded from the analysis.

Source: (Cohen and Shinwell, 2020^[62])

Figure 2.8 shows that these gender-relevant indicators are unevenly spread across the 17 SDGs. Most gender-relevant indicators are identified for Goals on Eradicating Poverty, Health, Education, Gender Equality, Economy, and Institutions (SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 16). The share of gender-relevant indicators varies widely across Goals. Unsurprisingly, all indicators are gender-relevant within Gender Equality (SDG 5), 82% within Health (SDG 3), 75% within Education (SDG 4), a mere 4% within Partnerships (SDG 17), and none within 3 Planet Goals (SDGs 12, 14 and 15).

Figure 2.8. Number of gender-related indicators in the UN global SDG indicator framework by Goal



Note: The figure shows the indicators in the UN Global Indicator Framework which are identified as gender relevant in the analysis in (Cohen and Shinwell, 2020^[62]). Each bar represents one of the Goals in order from 1 to 16. Light green bars represent indicators identified by both indicator classification and textual analysis, dark red bars represent indicators identified by the indicator classification only. Light blue bars represent indicators identified as not specifically gender related.

Source: UN Global Indicator Framework for the SDGs as presented in (Cohen and Shinwell, 2020^[62])

The SDG framework's environment-related indicators go well beyond the Planet goals and other environment-related SDGs. To determine the environment-related indicators the following criteria were set: (i) indicator to include a textual reference to the environment, sustainability, nature, natural resources, biodiversity, conservation, ecosystems, disasters, pollution, water and sanitation, climate adaptation, waste and material management; (ii) indicator to be classified under sustainable resource management, climate change, circular economy, environmental health, natural disaster prevention, sustainable production and consumption, sustainable infrastructure, and green finance and investment. Following this strict methodology, 97 environment-related indicators were identified, much in line with the UNEP methodology.

Alternatively, when the methodology is broadened to include indicators: (i) which cover economic or other activities where sustainability could be envisaged (agriculture, energy, infrastructure, tourism, manufacturing); and (ii) for which data could be extracted, if available, for environment-related fields (such as eco-innovation) or the transition to a low carbon economy (green jobs), a total of 112 environment-related indicators were identified. That is 45% of the 247 indicators under the UN Global indicator framework for the SDGs, and 19 more than found using the UNEP methodology. The OECD methodology's broader categorisation of SDG indicators as gender- or environment-related has to do with the interconnectedness and spillover effects between the social, environmental and economic dimensions of the SDG Framework.

A cross-examination of the 102 gender-related and 112 environment-related indicators to identify the gender-environment intersections produces a shortlist of only 22 SDG indicators, which cover the gender-environment nexus (Table 2.3). That is just below 9% of the full set of 247 SDG indicators (more in Annex A). Differently phrased, only 20 of the 231 (8.7%) unique environment-related indicators in the SDG Framework can be disaggregated by gender or categorised as environmental indicators relevant to gender policies according to the SDG Framework (because their texts address gender).

Table 2.3. SDG indicators identified under the gender-environment nexus

Based on OECD analysis

1.4.2	Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure
1.5.1, 11.5.1, 13.1.1	Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population
2.3.2	Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status
3.9.1	Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution
3.9.2	Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene (exposure to unsafe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All (WASH) services)
3.9.3	Mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning
5.a.1	(a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure
5.a.2	Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control
6.1.1	Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services
6.2.1	Proportion of population using (a) safely managed sanitation services and (b) a hand-washing facility with soap and water
7.1.1	Proportion of population with access to electricity
7.1.2	Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology
8.3.1	Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex
9.1.1	Proportion of the rural population who live within 2 km of an all-season road
9.5.2	Researchers (in full-time equivalent) per million inhabitants
9.c.1	Proportion of population covered by a mobile network, by technology
11.1.1	Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing

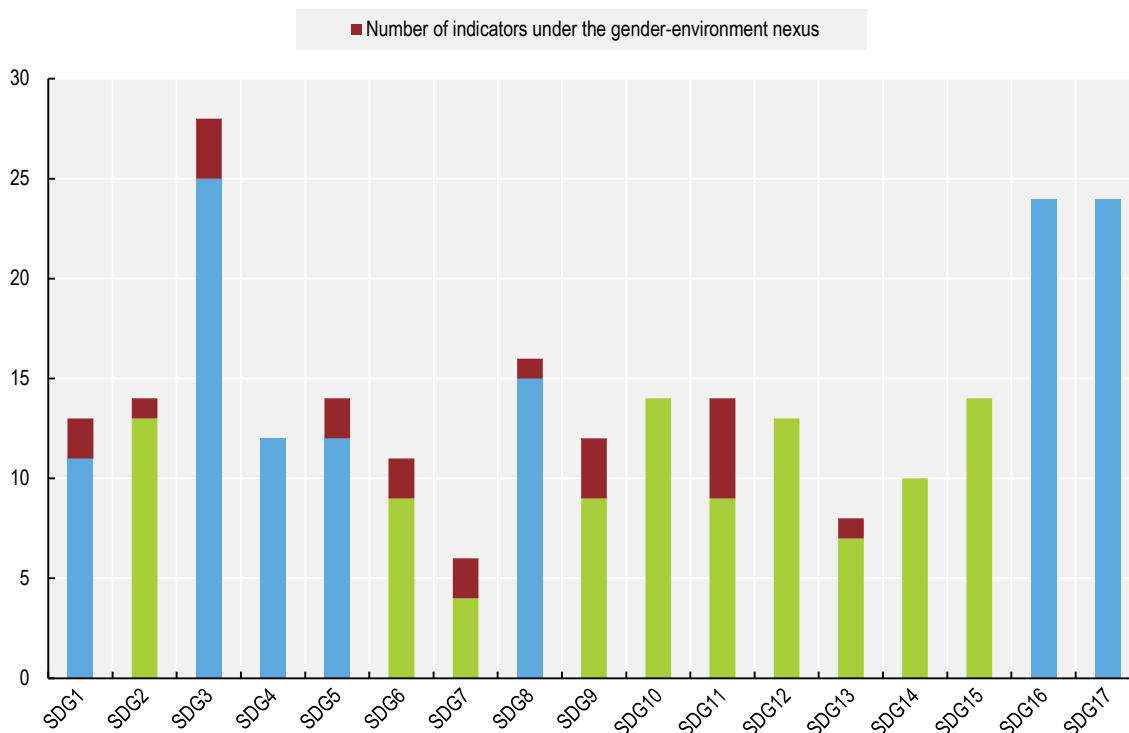
11.2.1	Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
11.7.1	Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
11.7.2	Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months

Note: In total, 22 indicators were identified under the gender-environment nexus. However, three indicators are identical (1.5.1, 11.5.1 and 13.1.1), so they appear together in the table. Analysis based on UN Global Indicator Framework for the SDGs as stands based on 2020 Comprehensive Review changes.

Source: Authors' own computations based on UN Global Indicator Framework for the SDGs for determining the environment-related indicators; (Cohen and Shinwell, 2020^[62]) analysis provided for gender-related indicators. More analytical information provided in Annex A.

Furthermore, 9 of the 22 SDG indicators on the gender-environment nexus are related to either environmental health and access to water and sanitation (SDGs 3 and 6) or natural disasters and land tenure (SDGs 1 and 5).

Figure 2.9. Only 14 gender-relevant indicators under the environment-related SDGs



Note: In red the SDG indicators identified under the gender-environment nexus. In green the indicators for the environment-related SDGs. In blue the remaining SDG indicators.

Source: Authors' own computations based on UN Global Indicator Framework for the SDGs for determining the environment-related indicators; (Cohen and Shinwell, 2020^[62]) analysis provided for gender-related indicators. More analytical information provided in Annex A.

Within the 9 environment-related goals (SDGs 2, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15) there are only 14 gender-relevant indicators (Figure 2.9). Within the Planet Goals (SDGs 6, 12, 13, 14, 15), only 3 indicators out of the total 56 are identified as gender relevant, that is over 5%. For the environment-related Prosperity Goals (SDGs 7, 9, 11) the equivalent is 10 indicators out of 32 (about 31%). For SDG 2, and only in relation to sustainable agriculture, 1 out of 14 indicators, just over 7%, is gender-relevant. No indicators from the gender-environment nexus are found in four “environmental” SDGs; three of the four fall under the Planet

category, namely SDG 12 on sustainable production and consumption, SDG 14 on oceans, and SDG 15 on biodiversity.

Many of the SDG indicators focusing on gender equality and empowering women and girls³ - such as ending discrimination, equal access to education and health, ensuring equal rights to property and voice and representation in decision-making - are key to allow women to engage in economic activities that protect the environment and promote sustainable development. They also serve to mitigate the negative impact of environmental damage on women. In this regard, the SDG Framework effectively addresses the causality between gender equality and environmental sustainability.

The SDG framework also effectively tackles environmental sustainability Goals. Environment-related targets are identified in all SDGs, with 112 indicators having an environmental angle. In short, the SDG Framework addresses stand-alone gender equality issues well and stand-alone environmental Goals well. But it clearly falls short in embedding a gender equality perspective in the nine key environment-related SDGs. Examples of such embedding could be to analyse i) the specific impact of climate change, environmental damage and biodiversity loss on women or ii) the role of women in sustainable production and consumption.

2.5.2. Data on SDG gender-environment nexus indicators is scant

In practice, there is little data on the very small set of gender-relevant environmental SDG indicators. Based on UNEP (2019) and UN Women (2018) analysis, data availability is scant for many developing countries (UNEP, 2019^[50]); (UNWomen, 2018^[61]). Even though commitments have been made and actions have been taken to mainstream the SDGs into national development strategies and priorities, in most cases data is not available to measure any progress made. Where data do exists, the changes in the indicators, even when positive, do not reflect the achievement of the relevant SDG target. Developing countries face data limitations, lack or regular credible surveys to measure changes, and often than not a question of credibility of statistical data generated. Further strengthening of their statistical systems is necessary. This would require, among other actions, technical and other support to generate much needed data, as, for example, geospatial data that provide a basis for analysis interlinkages of environment and human behaviour (UNEP, 2019^[50]).

PARIS 21 and UN Women collaborate since 2018 to assess the state of gender statistics in developing countries and to mainstream gender statistics in national statistical systems of developing countries (PARIS21, n.d.^[63]). This technical support provided to countries helps them identify data gaps and statistical capacity areas that are lagging behind. This relates to the production, dissemination and use of gender statistics in the country. In a forthcoming report by PARIS 21, it is observed that, while countries consider the gender dimension across sectoral statistical strategies, this often fails to be done in environmental statistics. The gender-environment nexus is a good distillation of issues affecting statistics in general: national statistical agencies do not cater to users' needs, there is a lack of gender (and environmental) -sensitivity when designing data collections, lack of basic data disaggregation, lack of prioritisation of such data collections and inability to communicate the findings to policymakers, among other concerns (PARIS21, n.d.^[64]).

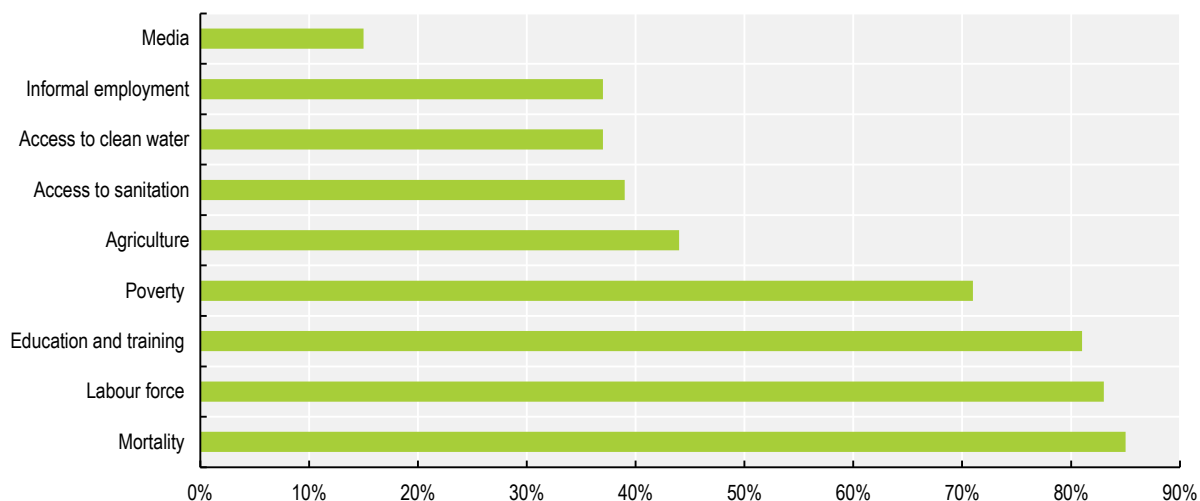
In OECD countries, data are systematically available⁴ for only 35 indicators (34%) of the 102 gender-related indicators (Cohen and Shinwell, 2020^[62]). Most gender data is available for Goals on Health, Education, Economy and Gender Equality (SDGs 3, 4, 8 and 5); but even in these cases significant data gaps exist, especially for Institutions, Health and Gender Equality (respectively, SDGs 16, 3 and 5). No gender data are available for the indicators under eight out of the nine environment-related SDGs; either because no indicator has been identified as gender-related – as in the case for sustainable production and consumption (SDG 12), oceans (SDG 14) and biodiversity (SDG 15) – or because there are no data available for at least 10 OECD Member countries - as for water, climate, energy and cities). When examining the 20 unique gender-environment nexus indicators identified in Table 2.3, only 2 sets of

gender-disaggregated data are available from OECD sources, both under SDG indicator 9.5.2, on the share of women inventors, and on researchers per million inhabitants (Cohen and Shinwell, 2020^[62]).

The OECD has identified environment-related indicators where the gender dimension could be further developed. These include: (i) exposure to environmental risks, differentiated by risk type (air pollutant and natural hazards), by sex, age and sociodemographic attributes, (ii) mortality rates from air pollution, differentiated by pollutant, sex, age, country and year; and (iii) development of ‘green’ technologies, based on patenting activity, differentiated by domain, country, year and sex of the inventor (OECD, 2020^[65]). These indicators are in alignment, or can provide additional information under SDG indicators 1.5.1, 3.9.1, 3.9.2 and 9.5.2, respectively. Alternatively, other data available under the OECD Statistical Database could complement data available under the UN Global Database, to support OECD Members in determining their actions under the gender-environment nexus.

At the country reporting level, it would appear that data are more available, mainly on other indicators not included in the SDG Framework. In 2013, a report of the Statistical Commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on the state of gender statistics collected by national governments around the world revealed that sex-disaggregated agriculture and water statistics are amongst the least available (Figure 2.10) (ECOSOC, 2013^[66]). Overall, more than half of countries do not produce any gender statistics related to these two environment-related sectors.

Figure 2.10. Percentage of countries “regularly” producing sex-disaggregated statistics on specific issues (%)



Source: (Seager, 2015^[67])

2.5.3. Ongoing efforts to collect gender-disaggregated environmental data

There are a number of international initiatives to further develop gender-disaggregation of environmental data, especially since the lack of gender-disaggregated data has been reflected under the UN (Box 2.2), as in the case of the Gender Action Plan adopted by UNFCCC COP 25 in 2019. UN Women and the UN Statistics Division, along with other organisations, have developed new gender-related indicators, but few are linked to the environment (UNSD, 2019^[68]). In March 2019, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) published a report “Gender and Environment Statistics: Unlocking information for action and measuring the SDGs”, which proposes 18 gender-environment indicators, across four priority areas: the right to land, natural resources and

biodiversity; access to food, energy, water and sanitation; climate change, sustainable production and consumption, and health; and women in environmental decision-making at all levels (UNEP and IUCN, 2019^[69]). Some of these indicators are more relevant for developing countries. There are also specific efforts under way to improve gender-disaggregated environmental data for specific SDGs, such as by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in relation to SDG 15, nevertheless, there is room for improvement.

A number of regional level UN initiatives have also been launched. For instance, UN ESCAP analysis led by (Serrao et al., 2019^[70]) takes stock of related data and capacity gaps in the Asia-Pacific region and puts forward a proposal for a Gender-Environment Indicator Set, which includes indicators from the UN Global Indicator Framework for the SDGs and beyond, capturing issues of particular relevance for the gender-environment nexus in the region. Specifically, (Serrao et al., 2019^[70]) identify 19 gender-environment indicators, 2 of which are directly from the 93 environment SDG indicator framework (identical to SDG indicators 1.4.2 and 5.a.1), 7 are modified by extending or merging SDG indicators (similar to SDG indicators) and 10 are from outside the SDG Framework (non-SDG indicators).

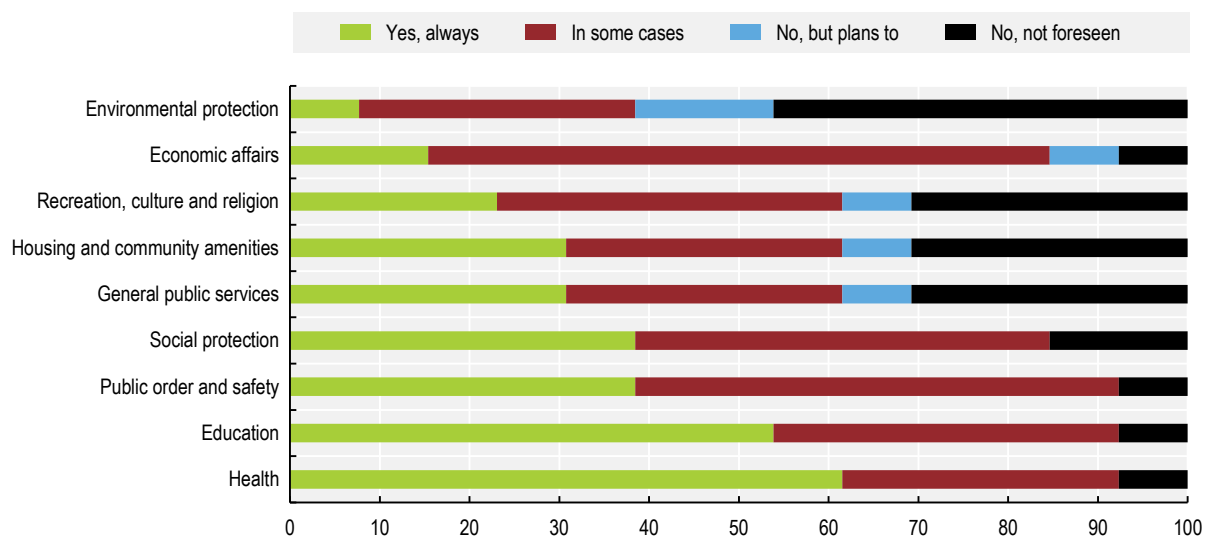
Even beyond the SDG Framework, data are available under the gender-environment nexus, such as national and regional administrative records, or population-based surveys; which can provide for rich information if collected in an effective manner. Administrative data collection is not, however, evident in developing countries, especially in Africa (UNWomen, 2019^[71]). The National Statistical Organisations can play a primary role in developing the instruments for collecting basic information under the gender-environment nexus. Increasing the use of Administrative Registers, with a systematic compilation, identifying and characterising them for their use could lead to more statistics that contribute to the updating, and creation of public policies, as well as evidence-based decision-making.

Given the horizontal nature of its work, the OECD could contribute to the recognition of the gender – environment nexus as a useful dimension for the development of high quality environmental data and statistics, in a manner that is internationally harmonised and applicable to all countries.

While the OECD and its Member countries have been active in strengthening data gathering on gender aspects of economic and social policies, this has not been the case for the environment and environmental policies. The OECD has done some work on the collection and comparability of data related to the gender-environment nexus among its Members. For example, the 2008 and 2011 Surveys on Environmental Policy and Individual Behaviour Change (EPIC), contained questions pertaining to the collection of some gender-disaggregated data on sociodemographic characteristics, waste, transport, energy, food and water consumption and preference patterns at the household level (OECD, 2011^[72]). Extensive work on the gendered effects of chemical exposure has been produced through the OECD Standardised Test Guidelines Evaluating Chemicals, especially on endocrine disruptors (OECD, 2013^[73]). However, more work is needed to fully integrate gender equality into environmental policies and to adequately measure the interlinkages of the two.

A 2017 Survey on gender-disaggregated data collection in OECD countries showed that about half of the respondents stated that they do not collect such data related to environmental policies, nor do they plan to do so. Less than 10% of the respondents stated that they collect such data on a regular basis (Figure 2.11).

Figure 2.11. Collection of Gender-Disaggregated data across sectors

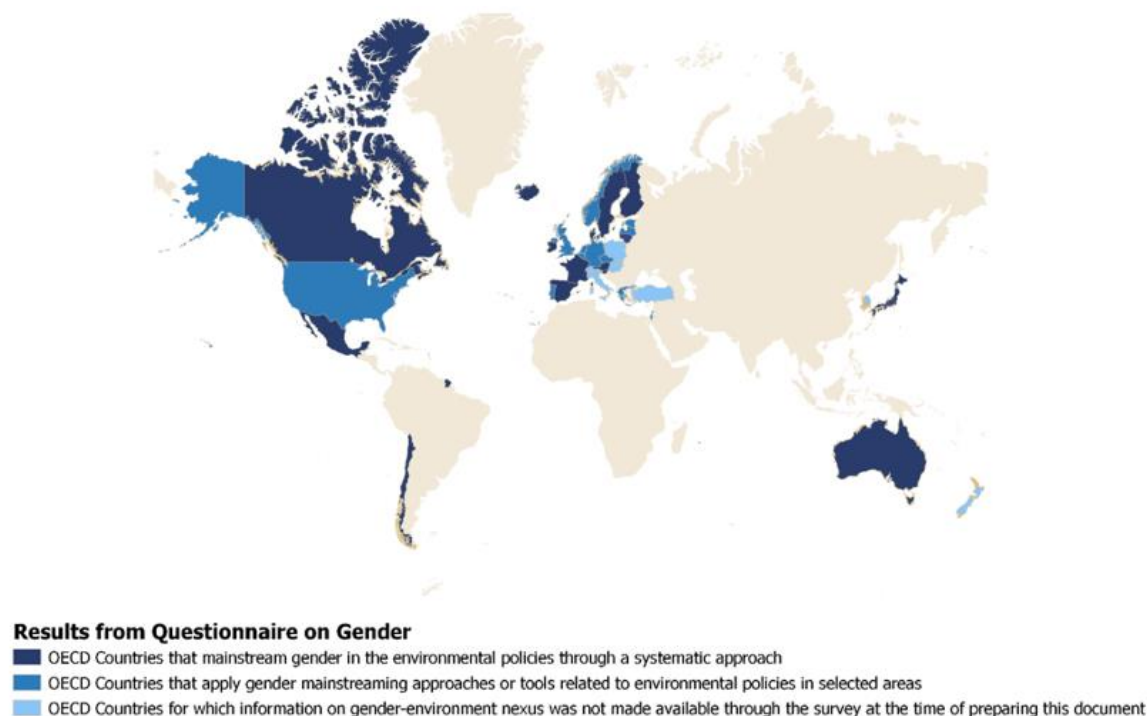


Source: (OECD, 2017^[74]), “OECD Survey on National Gender Equality Frameworks and Public Policies”.

In an effort to accelerate gender-responsive policies, the OECD launched a Gender Mainstreaming Policy Platform in 2019. Among other objectives, the Platform aims to advance evidence gathering on systemic inequalities issues beyond social aspects, and in particular related to the gender-environment nexus. A survey on “Integrating Gender in Environmental Policies” was circulated to its Member countries in 2019 to gather information on how countries consider gender in environment-related policy-making, budgeting, and governance. The survey addressed both national strategies, actions or mechanisms to mainstream gender into environmental policy and decision-making, as well as some thematic questions: labour implications of greener economies for men and women, gender and infrastructure, sustainable consumption patterns by gender, and different health impacts on men and women based on exposure to environmental toxins.

Thirty-one out of the 37 Member countries, as well as Costa Rica, responded to the questionnaire, and 2 Members provided information without replying to the questions. The results to the survey are mixed, and the scope and detail provided by countries varies. Several countries did not fully complete the questionnaire, which may indicate a lack of attention paid to the gender-environment nexus, and/or that gender-environment action is based on a more piecemeal approach, whereby policy or data centres around one or two chosen subjects.

Figure 2.12. OECD Member countries responses to the Survey on integrating gender equality in environment-related data collection and policy-making



Note: Map depicting OECD Member countries' responses to the survey on integrating gender in environmental policies. Costa Rica, an OECD accession country at the time the Survey was conducted, falls under category 1 "OECD Countries that mainstream gender in the environmental policies through a systematic approach".

Source (OECD, 2020^[75]): OECD Survey on integrating gender in environmental policies.

Figure 2.12 presents the OECD countries under three distinct groupings, based on the approach and level of mainstreaming gender in environmental policies. Seventeen OECD countries mainstream gender in their environmental policies through a systematic approach; this covers countries that have both gender equality and environmental national strategies (including action plans or principles), and have in place policy tools to integrate them (fully or partially) on a regular basis⁵. Examples range from Iceland's Deployment Plan on Gender Responsive Budgeting; to data evaluation practices such as Sweden's gender statistics on the environmental goods and services sector and on bio-economy; and to environment-related education as in the case of Chile. Twelve countries apply gender mainstreaming approaches or tools related to environmental policies in selected areas. Countries in this category stated that they do not apply a comprehensive, integrated approach. However, they provided information on sectorial approaches that they follow (regularly or occasionally). Examples include applying a gender lens in some environment-related sectors or collecting gender-disaggregated data through selected initiatives. Examples of policies in this group include Israel's gender considerations in household surveys.

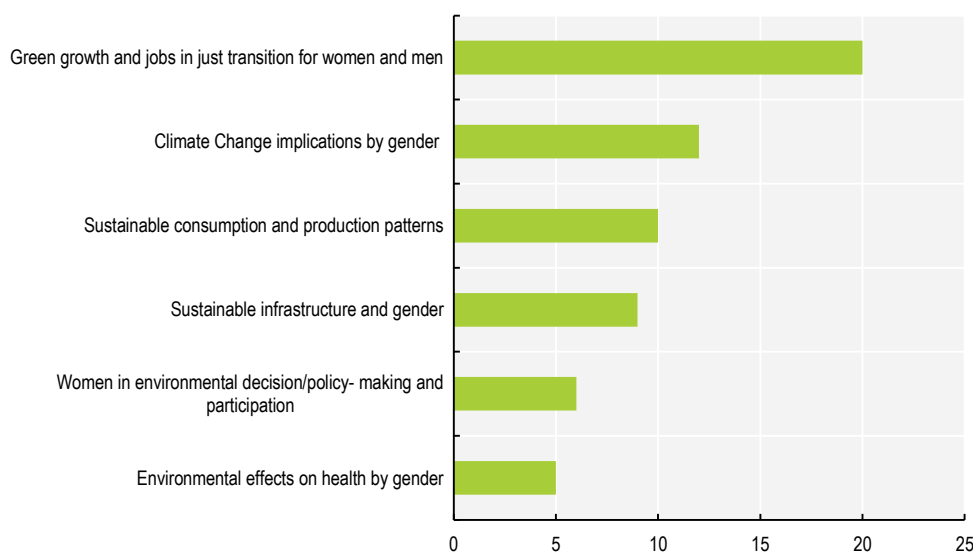
On data collection, only ten OECD Member countries and Costa Rica replied affirmatively to whether they collect gender-disaggregated data related to the environment and/or environmental policy-making. The United Kingdom, for example, has been collecting gender-disaggregated data through the "Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment" survey, which was recently replaced by the "People and Nature Survey" and the "Survey on Attitudes to the Environment". These surveys provide relevant findings by gender, including on people's use of the natural environment, and attitudinal and behavioural data. The Census in the United Kingdom asks about transport use, such as how many cars are available for use by members of the household – which could be relevant to accessing green space, and may be linked to

wider environmental attitudes and behaviours. Yet, from the individual replies and information provided by countries, it appears that more data are being collected, albeit in specific sectors or around specific policies that could be categorised under the gender-environment nexus. The data are also collected via different sources, including perception and attitude surveys, national statistics or research. From the 21 countries that replied they do consider gender aspects in environmental policy-making, only 8 affirmed the collection of relevant data, pointing towards the conclusion that integrating the gender equality and environmental agendas is far from complete in some countries. It is also less clear whether OECD Members are providing such gender-disaggregated data to other international organisations and databases, or whether they simply do not recognise doing so.

The survey also identified a number of countries that are launching data collection exercises on the nexus. For instance, Finland is introducing a module on gender-environment interlinkages for its annual Gender Equality in Finland report. The 2020 edition is to include a gender breakdown on issues such as recycling and transport modes (time use statistics). Chile is developing an Atlas of Information on Gender and Climate Change and sectoral gender indicators to identify gender gaps and climate change risks in climate-sensitive sectors (OECD, 2020^[75]).

Two thirds of the responding countries also identified areas of interest within the gender-environment nexus for the OECD Secretariat to explore further. These include the economic implications of the green transition for men and women, climate change implications particularly to women, sustainable consumption and production patterns by gender, greening infrastructure and its implications on men and women as well as environmental effects on health by gender (Figure 2.13).

Figure 2.13. OECD Members' indication of interest for future work on the gender-environment nexus



Note: Ranking according to the number of OECD countries that indicated an interest in each topic. Open-ended responses provided. No prioritisation or ranking of selection of options. No ceiling on possible listing of interest. Survey was initiated before the outbreak of COVID-19 and therefore any COVID-related issues were not raised

Source: (OECD, 2020^[75]), OECD Survey on integrating gender in environmental policies

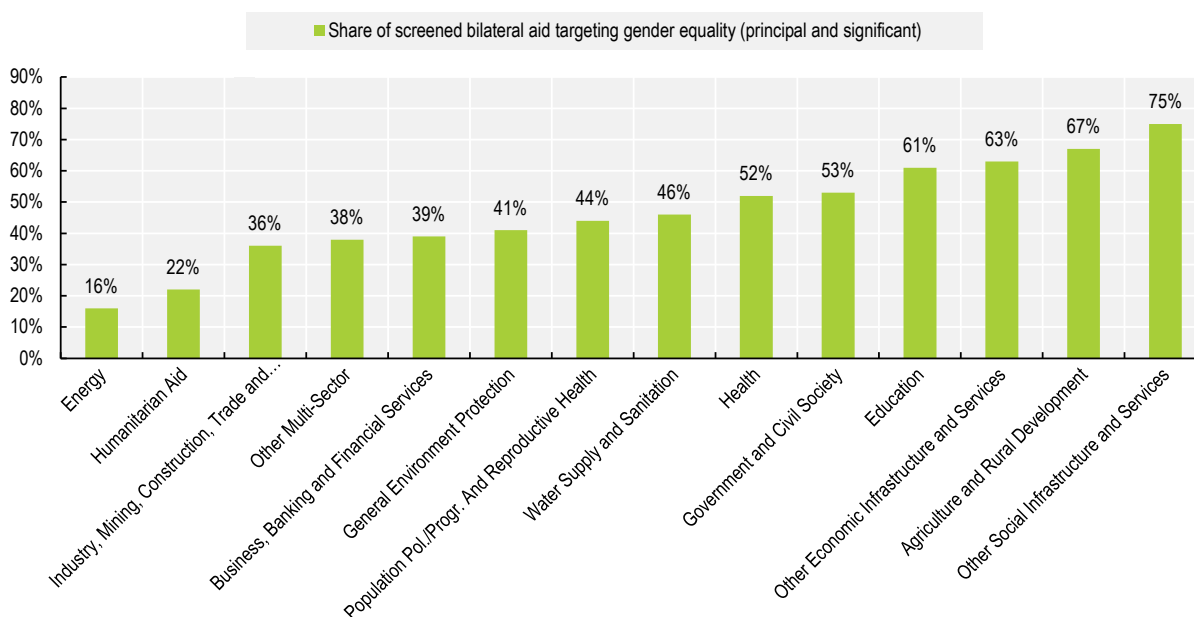
2.5.4. Supporting data collection efforts through development co-operation

Gender-disaggregated data is key to strengthening the gender-environment nexus in development co-operation. The OECD is able to track Official Development Assistance (ODA) for the environment and for climate change adaptation and mitigation, focused on gender equality and empowering women and girls. The most recently published analysis of ODA figures shows a continuing increase in bilateral allocable aid focusing on gender equality and women's empowerment, which reached 45% for 2018-19, the highest figure yet (GENDERNET, 2021^[76]). The figures, notwithstanding the increase, indicate more than half of bilateral allocable aid still remains broadly gender-blind.

When looking more closely into the sectoral distribution of total gender equality focused ODA, it is clear that some of the sectors identified have an environmental link, and could support or hamper environmental outcomes. For example, the agricultural sector, where women constitute the majority (East Asia and Southeast Asia) or a growing number of the agricultural workforce, is an evident case for introducing a gender- and environment-responsive perspective. This is also apparent by the focus towards water supply and sanitation, and general environmental protection; two areas which could be strongly linked with progress in achieving SDG 6 and SDG 15, respectively. Other areas, such as access to sustainable and affordable energy for all (SDG 7) would also require further support. Unfortunately, gender equality-focused bilateral ODA in these sectors remains limited (Figure 2.14).

Figure 2.14. Bilateral ODA for Gender Equality by Sector (share)

Average per year 2018-19



Source: (GENDERNET, 2021^[76])

Furthermore, in a 2019 report highlighted the need to align development co-operation support to the Paris Agreement objectives (OECD, 2019^[77]). The report noted that even though 75% of developing countries have been identifying sectors such as agriculture, forestry, biodiversity and ecosystems, health and water as priority for adaptation-related action, development financing had not necessarily followed the same track. Considering that some of these sectors have a strong gender component, it would be a good opportunity to work on an integrated approach.

2.5.5. Non-governmental data collection initiatives on the gender-environment nexus

Beyond the limited gender-disaggregated data available from governmental sources, data is being generated by other stakeholders. The universal nature of the SDGs has led not only international organisations and governments, but also the private sector and civil society into generating their own gender- or environment- related data (see below) or acknowledging the existing data gap in the gender-environment nexus [as for example in the case of Data2X, an NGO working on mobilising action for gender-sensitive data collection (Grantham, 2020_[78])]. Citizen-generated data (CGD) could play an important role in monitoring and driving progress on sustainable development, having the potential to fill in data gaps in official reporting, and flag topics that matter to citizens most [see case of CGD in Philippines (PARIS21, 2020_[79])]. Digitalisation and new technologies are facilitating such data collection. Even though such a plethora of information should be welcome, it also needs to be checked for quality and consistency across countries. The OECD, together with other international organisations, could play a valuable role in reviewing and filtering such ‘big data’, allowing policy-makers to use it in a systematic way for policy decisions.

Equal Measures 2030 uses a scoring system to mark countries’ advancement towards achieving gender equality (Equal Measures 2030, 2019_[80]). By examining different indicators set under the SDG Gender Index, covering 14 out of 17 SDGs, the Index compares countries’ performance to others for each indicator identified. It does not, however, mark each country’s progress towards achieving the SDGs. Some of the indicators cover also issues linked to environment, namely water and sanitation (SDG 6), and climate (SDG 13). It covers also environment-related SDGs on energy (SDG 7), infrastructure (SDG 9), and cities (SDG 11). Other tools, i.e. evidence gathering and case studies, which seem to support the analysis based on the scoring system, support the Index.

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), a non-governmental organisation, has developed Sustainability Reporting Standards, which are globally embraced by a large number of large corporations. Standards focus mainly on sustainability performance and disclosure of corporate information. Initiatives like the GRI go in the right direction, but set a relatively low minimum standard of disclosure on companies (GRI, 2020_[81]). For instance, there is no specific gender standard, nor any joint reporting on gender-sustainability impact. The main GRI standard relating women, GRI 405 on diversity and equal opportunity, calls for reporting on the share of female workers performing the organisation’s activities, their relative remuneration, and their participation at the highest governance level.

On climate-related disclosures, various organisations have been collecting and processing such data. CDP Global runs a global disclosure system, where companies, investors, as well as cities and regions, voluntarily disclose information relating to their activity and the effect on climate, water and forestry (CPD, 2020_[82]). The Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), an industry-led initiative established by the Financial Stability Board, has developed voluntary recommendations on how to better align existing disclosure regimes and enhance climate-related reporting. The level of engagement in the implementation of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) Recommendation and gender equality targets vary between companies, but they are becoming increasingly common practice (OECD, 2018_[83]). In the 2019 TCFD report on the implementation progress, the number of companies that are now implementing (partly) the Recommendations, is constantly increasing (Quarles, 2019_[84]). However, there is no specific link made to the gender-specific impact of climate change.

Some reporting initiatives (e.g. taking the GRI example again) seemingly encourage greater economic opportunities for women in the form of higher labour force participation. However, an economic empowerment-related approach that does not take into account the potential challenges that women may face when they lack the necessary physical and social infrastructure and support from their family, may actually be damaging to women’s well-being. For instance, working women are more often than men in charge of child and elderly care, and the household and they often have different mobility patterns from

working men. To give women and men an equal footing to participate in the labour force, for example, their specific needs regarding the frequency of public transport off-peak hours need to be addressed.

A better understanding of the factors that influence individual travel behaviour can reveal preferences and attitudes, provide insights to existing travel patterns, improve transport planning, prepare for future infrastructure needs and services, and help better design and implement sustainable and inclusive transport policies that will meet different environmental goals. Sex disaggregated data on the labour force in male dominated sectors would also need to be collected and better understood, in order to increase gender equality and to ensure adequate representation of women's needs.

2.6. Limited integration of the gender-environment nexus in policy decisions

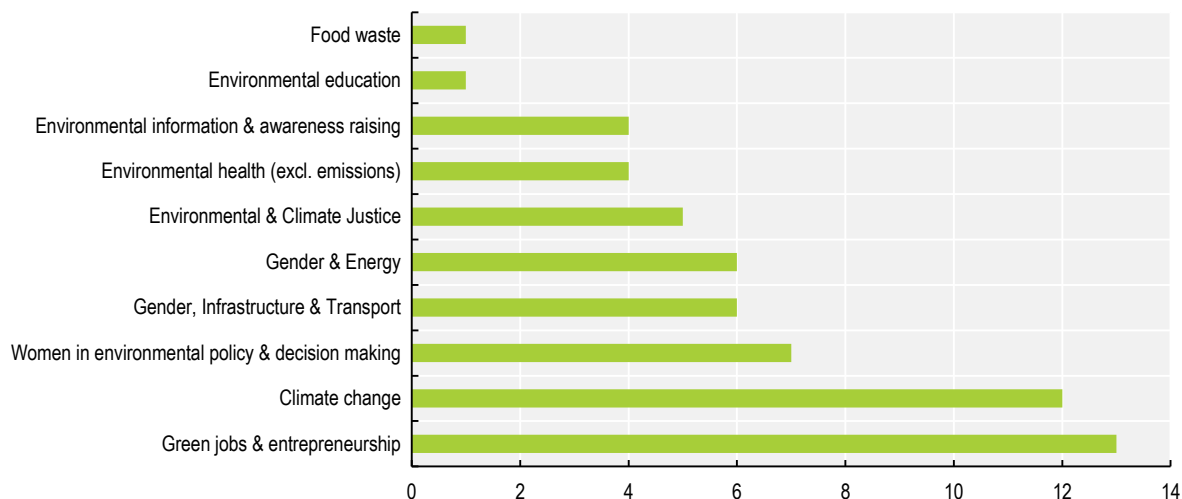
Before delving into each of the nine “environmental” SDGs (Chapters 6-14), this section reviews the extent to which current environmental policies and regulations, whole-of-government policies, including taxation and budgeting, and transboundary policies (development cooperation, trade and investment) integrate a gender equality dimension. The analysis focuses mainly on OECD countries and refers to existing literature on developing countries. It is worth noting that, beyond introducing gender-sensitive or gender-responsive policies, there is also a need to follow up on implementation and effectiveness. Considering the multi-faceted issues that would entail a gendered approach – including women's and girls' empowerment – measuring the effectiveness of the policy measures introduced is essential.

2.6.1. Environmental policies

Globally, efforts vary in the extent to which a gender equality dimension is integrated into environmental strategies and policies. Since the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, gender aspects have received more attention in international environmental fora. Gender issues are now firmly established in several platforms, such as the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Many national-level environmental strategies and climate action plans promote the integration of a gender equality dimension. UNEP highlights in particular the cases of Cambodia and Rwanda (UN Environment, 2016^[85]). One of the guiding principles of the Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan (2014-23) refers to “reducing [...] gender vulnerability”. In Rwanda, poverty, gender equality, environment and climate change issues were successfully integrated into the national economic development and poverty reduction strategy, aligning these objectives in its budgeting cycle. As a result of these efforts and external financial support, Rwanda's agricultural budget jumped by 26.3% from 2009 to 2011, while its average expenditure on environment and climate change rose from 0.4% of GDP in 2005-2008 to 2.8% in 2008-2012 (UN Environment, 2016^[85]).

The OECD survey on “Integrating Gender in Environmental Policies” from 2019 found that the majority of OECD countries have a national gender strategy, action plan or set of principles that apply horizontally and require for gender mainstreaming in all policies. In at least 18 OECD countries, the national environmental authority contributes to the gender strategy's implementation. This is usually done by engaging in disaggregated data collection, gender-based analysis, and participation in the governance structures for gender mainstreaming in the public administration. Nineteen OECD countries claim to consider gender aspects in environmental policy-making, either systematically or occasionally. Gender equality and women's empowerment considerations are mostly integrated into policies relating to climate change; green entrepreneurship and green jobs, including in agricultural and forestry sectors; as well as women's participation and leadership in environment-related decision-making (Figure 2.15) (OECD, 2020^[75]).

Figure 2.15. Mapping of OECD countries' environmental or environment-related policies with integrated gender equality considerations



Source: Authors own research based on replies to (OECD, 2020^[75]) Survey on integrating environmental policies

In Spain, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment considerations are taken into account in policies and measures adopted by the Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge. In particular, as part of the Strategic Framework on Energy and Climate, Spain is progressing with the implementation of a Just Transition Strategy, aiming at maximising employment opportunities within the transition to a low carbon and sustainable economy. Guaranteeing equal use of opportunities through gender equality measures in green jobs is part of the Strategy's strategic objectives (OECD, 2020^[75]). In Mexico, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) following the National Development Plan 2019-2024 promotes sustainability programmes within the framework of human rights and gender equality, both at the national and international levels. High priority is particularly given to women's leadership in community revitalisation and in natural resources management. In parallel, Mexico's "National Program for Equality between Women and Men" focuses on substantive actions to mainstream gender into public policy instruments on climate change, as well as to meet the needs of women and strengthen their leadership and negotiation capacity (OECD, 2020^[75]). Sweden's Environmental Protection Agency introduced a gender lens when supporting unemployed people as well as newcomers to Sweden (former refugees) to work in forestry in 2018 (OECD, 2020^[75]).

2.6.2. Regulatory impact assessments

A growing number of OECD countries integrate the impact of proposed policies on gender equality, when conducting regulatory impact assessments (Deighton-Smith, Erbacci and Kauffmann, 2016^[86]). In parallel, many more have already been integrating environmental considerations in their regulatory impact assessments, including impact assessments covering climate change concerns (Jacob et al., 2011^[87]). Different tools are being developed to guarantee non-market or subjective well-being valuation (OECD, 2018^[88]).

Environmental Impact Assessments are also already widespread in OECD countries, mainstreaming the environment in project decision-making. In some cases, their input may also be used as part of the regulatory impact assessments. The OECD adopted a 1979 *Recommendation on the Assessment of Projects with Significant Impact on the Environment*. The Recommendation was amended in November

2019, to also integrate environmental assessment into the drawing and development of plans and programmes [[OECD/LEGAL/0172](#)].

The 2012 *Recommendation on Regulatory Policy and Governance* highlights the need to “adopt ex ante impact assessment practices that are proportional to the significance of the regulation, and include benefit cost analyses that consider the welfare impacts of regulation taking into account economic, social and environmental impacts including the distributional effects over time, identifying who is likely to benefit and who is likely to bear costs” (OECD, 2012^[89]). An integrated impact assessment framework, encompassing both gender/youth, as well as indigenous or other groups, and environmental considerations in the different stages of policy development and implementation, as well as at the programme and project level, would help both overcome adverse socioeconomic and environmental effects at the implementation phase, and empower women and youth who would not be excluded from the process. Analysis on a sustainability impact assessment model was conducted in the past in the OECD, encompassing both gender and social, and environmental considerations (OECD, 2010^[90]). Such model could be complemented to guarantee a holistic and integrated approach.

In practice, few countries integrate the nexus into regulatory impact assessments. Belgium is using ex-ante regulatory impact assessments with a sustainability angle. Their assessments are composed of over 20 themes, with the 4 most prominent ones being gender, small and medium-sized enterprises, administrative burden and policy coherence for development. Since 2013, regulatory impact assessments provide screening through a sustainable development lens, which integrate gender equality, SME and policy coherence for sustainable development considerations. Regulatory impact assessments are obligatory for all legislation, including environmental.

2.6.3. Taxation and budgeting policies

To ensure that women’s and girls’ needs and interests are better addressed in future policies, the OECD has been arguing for gender-sensitive and gender-responsive resource allocation and budgeting (Downes and Nicol, 2020^[91]); (Downes, von Trapp and Nicol, 2017^[92]). Moreover, considering the government-wide nature of the budgetary process, introducing gender equality as part of the process would help influence policy-making horizontally (Downes and Nicol, 2020^[91]). The same could apply to “green budgeting”. The [Paris Collaborative on Green Budgeting](#), launched at the One Planet Summit in 2017, assesses the alignment of national expenditure and revenue processes with international environmental goals.

Negative environmental impact and gender inequalities of tax and public expenditure often go hand in hand. For instance, subsidies to fossil fuel-based energy and other industries with a heavy environmental impact, such as mining and chemical manufacturing, may deepen gender inequalities, because the majority of the workforce in those sectors is male (OECD.Stat, n.d.^[93]). Similarly, men are more exposed to the hazardous and toxic substances used in such sectors.

OECD governments transfer hundreds of billions in subsidies to different sectors, and much of this support is potentially environmentally harmful. Despite the downward trend from 2013, 2019 was the first year to mark an increase in support for fossil fuels among OECD and G20 economies, reaching USD 178 billion, while the combined estimate of government support for fossil fuels measured by the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the OECD was USD 478 billion (OECD, 2020^[94]). COVID-19 and fuel prices may lead to more state subsidies for fossil fuels and fossil-dependent industries (OECD, 2020^[94]). In addition, to better assess the effects of harmful subsidies on the environment (OECD, 2005^[95]), governments need to consider the distributional aspects, including the impact by gender (Section 11.6).

More recent OECD analysis shows that energy-use taxation has different distributional effects on households depending on their socio-demographic characteristics such as income, size, age, location etc. (Flues and Thomas, 2015^[96]). Energy affordability risk also depends on household income level and consumption, and varies according to the tax system implemented (Flues and van Dender, 2017^[97]). Such

considerations should be analysed on a more granular basis to include gender, then used to set up national redistribution mechanisms.

Gender budgeting is an increasingly common practice countries apply at both national and sub-national levels, to ensure that women's and girls' concerns are addressed in policy-making and resource allocation. About half of OECD countries report that they have introduced, plan to introduce, or are actively considering introducing gender budgeting (Downes, von Trapp and Nicol, 2017^[92]). Gender considerations are included mostly during budget preparation; through impact assessments, resource allocation and performance setting (OECD, 2018^[98]).

Governments are also applying environmentally responsive or “green budgeting” which is a way to record and communicate policy progress on environmental objectives through budgeting processes. This is a crucial step in achieving a common objective of several key international agreements – such as the Paris Agreement, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the SDGs – to align national policy frameworks and financial flows with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and environmentally sustainable development.

Gender budgeting and green budgeting could be brought together in a “SDG-budgeting” or “well-being budgeting” process. Such an approach could ensure the integration of the gender-environment nexus into the budgeting process. It would also pave the way for embedding all the SDGs into the budget process. New Zealand and some European countries are making major advances in this direction (Box 2.4). There has also been good progress on this in some African countries such as Uganda and Rwanda (Stotsky et al., 2016^[99]). The way governments choose to spend their money will be decisive to achieve these commitments. The opportunity for progress is enormous, especially given the existing misalignment between the SDGs and current public expenditure and taxation practices.

Box 2.4. Aligning Budgeting Practices with the SDGs

OECD countries are increasingly applying gender budgeting and green budgeting principles. As the name indicates, gender budgeting aims to promote gender equality and empowering women and girls throughout all categories of public expenditure, guided by a whole of government strategy or policy. More than half of OECD Members have introduced gender budgeting.

Green budgeting involves the integration of climate and broader environmental goals within the budget process. Like gender budgeting, it requires a whole of government approach, engaging the different ministries that oversee expenditure affecting the environment. While both gender and green budgeting are gaining popularity, few countries have aimed to integrate these two approaches effectively. The examples below show efforts being made to integrate the gender-environment nexus into budgeting practices.

New Zealand's Well-Being Budget

New Zealand is the first country worldwide to set a well-being budget. Since 2019, it uses well-being evidence, and has integrated well-being considerations into the Treasury's cost-benefit analysis tool, to help with setting budgetary priorities. National authorities are encouraged to submit quantifiable proposals for initiatives developed via a collaborative process. These initiatives are assessed by New Zealand's Living Standards Framework, and the LSF Dashboard, which provides a range of well-being indicators and analysis under three sections – country, people and future – and around enhance the country's natural, human, social, and financial and physical capital. The distribution of well-being is grouped under 12 well-being categories, examining for different population groups of citizens, with characteristics such as sex, age, ethnicity, family type, region, hours worked and neighbourhood deprivation). Gender-disaggregated data are collected where available. Moreover, the LSF is in line with the SDGs, even though the two frameworks serve different purposes. The LSF approach allows for better understanding the interactions between potential policy choices, and assessing well-being benefits the same way as assessing fiscal costs.

New Zealand's LSF Dashboard was recently updated and now includes more or revised environmental indicators. New Zealand's Well-being budget for 2020 is prioritising the transition to a low carbon emissions economy.

Ireland's Equality Budgeting

Ireland has been piloting since 2017 equality budgeting, building on the existing performance budgeting framework. Different departments are subscribing to an equality lens in their performance budgeting, setting specific targets and improving performance data collection. The equality budgeting covers issues beyond gender, spreading the focus too thinly, raising difficulties at the implementation and monitoring phase of the budget's performance. Ireland is also undergoing other budgeting reforms, and is moving towards green and SDG budgeting, by tagging and tracking expenditures for better environmental outcomes or for supporting SDGs implementation. A coherent and integrated approach between the equality, green and SDG budgeting should be considered, as it could advance better policy-making in Ireland.

Source: (OECD, 2019^[100]); (New Zealand. Treasury, 2019^[101]); (Pinar, n.d.^[102])

Canada is also in the process of integrating the gender-environment nexus into budgetary policies, by applying a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens to all government decisions relating to taxation, budgeting and expenditures, domestically and internationally, in all policy sectors, including infrastructure

(Government of Canada, 2020_[103]). Through this inclusive analytical tool, Canada is assessing how different groups (based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, disability etc.) can maximise positive benefits and address identified challenges. The GBA+ lens is being integrated into climate change policies, and Canada's International Climate Change Action Programme is considering gender in the design, decision-making, and implementation of projects (Government of Canada, 2019_[104]).

2.6.4. Development co-operation policies

Development co-operation Agencies in DAC Member countries have long been focusing on integrating environment and climate change, and gender considerations in development cooperation and programmes. Although the interlinkages between gender and environment are being recognised to some extent, such as the one between the effects of climate change on women and gender equality in the developing countries, only a few DAC Members, namely Sweden and Ireland, seem to have considered gender and environment holistically in their policies and programming.

SIDA, the Swedish Development Agency, has been following a gender analysis in all of its environmental programming and projects in developing countries. Areas covered are exposure to chemicals and pollution, participation in waste management, access and management of water and energy resources, participation in agriculture and fishing, and engaging in forestry management. Through applying SIDA's Gender Toolbox in environmental work, development experts map opportunities and challenges, and the gender-differentiated impact of their approach. They also collect the gender-disaggregated data, which enables them to measure policy impact. Finally, they engage locally with women and girls, financially supporting women entrepreneurs and workers in environment-related sectors (SIDA, 2016_[105]).

2.6.5. Trade and investment policies

International trade policies are slowly integrating gender equality considerations, not only from the perspective of women participating in Global Value Chains or consuming imported end-products, but also by embedding gender equality considerations in Trade Agreements (Monteiro, 2018_[106]); (Korinek, Moisé and Tange, 2021_[107]). Recent OECD analysis points out that gender considerations are being raised in Trade Agreements, either through aspirational provisions reaffirming parties' commitments to gender equality; or through gender-responsive provisions, such as positive discrimination measures despite restrictive effects on trade (Korinek, Moisé and Tange, 2021_[107]). Where safeguards exist, these tend to link to existing labour standards, or implementing gender-positive policies and practices, such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. Nevertheless, in all cases, such provisions have limited enforceability, as they are rarely subject to Dispute Settlement Mechanisms.

Environment-related clauses are being gradually integrated into Trade Agreements at a greater pace than gender clauses. In fact the upward trend of references to environmental provisions has been remarkable, with such references in Regional Trade Agreements increasing on average from 30% in 2007 to 70% in 2012 (George, 2014_[108]). Following a different typology on environmental provisions, (WTO, 2016_[109]) identifies an even larger percentage of RTAs with environmental provisions, which reach up to 97% in year 2015 (WTO, 2016_[109]). In both analyses, environmental co-operation scores high as a substantive environmental provision.

In only a few cases are gender considerations integrated into environmental agreements. As analysed by (Monteiro, 2018_[106]), 34 trade agreements covering the broad area of sustainable development (not limited to environmental issues) contain references to gender equality and women's empowerment. The number of environmental agreements with such references are even fewer (Monteiro, 2018_[106]).

International efforts to promote gender equality and environmental goals in investment policies – and more generally in private sector codes of conduct – also tend to apply the two criteria separately, without

systematically looking at possible interactions. Such is the case for the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, which do not specifically address the gender-environment nexus in their framework (Box 2.5).

Box 2.5. Promoting responsible business conduct along supply chains

The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (the Guidelines) call on companies to avoid causing or contributing to adverse impacts through their own activities and to seek to prevent and mitigate adverse impacts in their supply chains. The Guidelines have various Chapters, including one on human rights and another one on employment and industrial relations where issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment are considered. There is also a separate Chapter on the Environment. The Guidelines do not specifically consider the interactions between gender and environmental criteria.

As part of its work to promote the Guidelines, the OECD has developed guidance for supply chain due diligence across a number of sectors, including specific recommendations that promote the well-being of women. In particular, the guidance for the garment and footwear sector addresses sexual harassment and sexual and gender-based violence in the workplace and includes recommendations on mainstreaming gender equality into company due diligence approaches. The guidance on mineral supply chains addresses widespread sexual violence and child labour. In this regard, while men hold most jobs in the large mining companies, approximately 30% of the world's artisanal miners are women. Agriculture also has a large percentage of female labour; the guidance for agricultural supply chains calls on companies to end discrimination against women and enhance their participation in decision-making and access and control over natural resources.

Under the Guidelines, Adherents (48) are required to establish National Contact Points (NCPs) whose role is to promote the Guidelines and provide implementation (including for environmental, labour and human rights standards).

Some countries have also introduced legislation to ensure that companies control their supply chains more closely. The UK Modern Slavery Act, Section 3017 of the United States Tariff Act and the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act all include expectations related to supply chain transparency. France mandates supply chain due diligence in accordance with the OECD MNE Guidelines and requires large companies to publish due diligence plans for human rights and environmental and social risks. In 2014, the EU passed a directive on disclosure of non-financial and diversity information for listed companies over a certain size. None of these national and regional initiatives addresses directly the gender-environment nexus.

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Notes

¹ This issue has been recognised, among others, in UN HABITAT’s Policy and Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women for 2014-19.

² From the 247 indicators of the [UN Global Indicator Framework for the SDGs](#), 231 are unique, meaning they are only used once to measure one specific target. The remaining 12 indicators are used to measure 2 or 3 different targets under different SDGs. The following indicators are those repeated: (i) 7.b.1 and 12.a.1; (ii) 8.4.1 and 12.2.1; (iii) 8.4.2 and 12.2.2; (iv) 10.3.1 and 16.b.1; (v) 10.6.1 and 16.8.1; (vi) 13.2.1 and 13.b.1 (not identical); (vii) 15.7.1 and 15.c.1; (viii) 15.a.1 and 5.b.1; (ix) 1.5.1, 11.5.1 and 13.1.1; (x) 1.5.3, 11.b.1 and 13.1.2; (xi) 1.5.4, 11.b.2, and 13.1.3; and (xii) 4.7.1, 12.8.1 and 13.3.1.

³ These indicators fall mainly under the “People”, “Prosperity”, and “Peace” Goals: SDG 1, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 16 and SDG 17.

⁴ Data is considered to be available for a specific indicator when it is reported for a minimum of 10 OECD countries.

⁵ Countries included in this category responded yes to questions 1 and 2 AND Always, Often, Sometimes to Question 3a of the Gender-Environment Survey ENV/EPOC(2020)9. Austria is an outlier, as they do not acknowledge their principles as strategy. Costa Rica does not appear in the Map as it is still not included in the OECD database of Member countries.



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