**BACKGROUND**

The first accountability and monitoring mechanism of its kind, IUCN’s Environment and Gender Index (EGI) was launched in 2013, bringing together environment and gender variables in a composite index that scored and ranked 73 countries worldwide along 27 dimensions in six categories: Ecosystems; Gender Based Education and Assets; Governance; Country Reported Activities; Livelihoods; and Gender Based Rights and Participation.

With some of the best data to date on how countries are translating their commitments to environmental sustainability and women’s empowerment, the EGI found that countries which take seriously their commitments to advancing gender equality in environmental arenas are making strides toward long-term wellbeing for all their citizens.

In 2014, IUCN and UN Women joined in partnership to develop new data and analysis and to begin research toward the full second phase of the Index.

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**GENDER FOCAL POINTS AND POLICIES IN NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MINISTRIES**

In collaboration with UN Women, IUCN Global Gender Office’s (GGO) EGI team compiled a dataset assessing how gender considerations are being included in environmental sector ministries, agencies, or departments. The main research tool to develop this new dataset was an EGI survey, targeted toward ministry officials and other experts, which posed a series of questions:

1. **Topic 1: Gender focal points in environmental ministries**
   - Does each environmental ministry have a gender focal point?

2. **Topic 2: Gender policies and programmes in environmental ministries**
   - Does each environmental ministry have a formal gender policy?
   - Does each environmental ministry include gender considerations in policies and/or programmes?

3. **Topic 3: Environmental linkages in/with national women’s affairs mechanisms**
   - Does the national women’s affairs mechanism have an environmental focal point?
   - Does the national women’s affairs mechanism perform cross-ministerial work with environmental ministries?

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1 Each country’s ministerial system is set up differently; for the purposes of this dataset, ministries, agencies, and departments are all hereafter referred to as ministries.
RESULTS
Over a six-month study period, 91 surveys were received back from 65 different countries.²

Table I: Regional breakdown of countries from which surveys were received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>OECD</th>
<th>NON-OECD</th>
<th>EUROPE</th>
<th>LATIN AMERICA / CARIBBEAN</th>
<th>ASIA / PACIFIC</th>
<th>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</th>
<th>MENA</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Countries</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"The Egyptian Government is seeking to protect [the] environment, reduce the rates of pollution, and raise the level of public awareness on environmental [concerns]” across a range of policies and programmes, including via “integration of gender issues and activating the role[s] of women and youth in environmental plans.”

Respondent from Egypt

Topic 1: Gender focal points in environmental ministries

According to respondents:

35% of all environmental sector ministries have a gender focal point

Ministries of agriculture are the most common ministry to have a gender focal point

Ministries of water are the least common ministry to have a gender focal point

Table II: Gender focal points by ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MINISTRY</th>
<th>NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WITH GENDER FOCAL POINT</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF COUNTRIES WITH GENDER FOCAL POINT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisheries</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>65 countries</td>
<td>Average=35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"The Government recognizes the role[s] of women—as consumers, producers, managers, and caretakers of their families—in ensuring sustainable development. The Government has put in place legislative and policy measures to safeguard the environment and ensure women’s participation in environmental matters.”

Respondent from Kenya

Focal Point

A point-person responsible for coordinating compliance with policies and mandates.

² Only affirmative answers were considered. If other respondents from the same country answered “don’t know” or “no”, their answer(s) were not tabulated. Duplicate “yes” responses for a country were removed.
2 Topic 2: Gender policies and programmes in environmental ministries

According to respondents:

25% of environmental sector ministries have a formal gender policy.

38% of environmental sector ministries include gender considerations in their policies and/or programmes.

The most common ministries to have a formal gender policy are agriculture and environment; the least common ministries to have a formal gender policy are energy and fisheries.

The most common ministry to include gender considerations in policies and/or programmes is agriculture; the least common ministry to have gender considerations in policies and/or programmes is fisheries.

Table III: Gender policy and/or gender considerations in environmental programmes by ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MINISTRY</th>
<th>NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WITH FORMAL GENDER POLICY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF COUNTRIES WITH FORMAL GENDER POLICY</th>
<th>NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WITH GENDER CONSIDERATIONS IN POLICIES/PROGRAMMES</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF COUNTRIES WITH GENDER CONSIDERATIONS IN POLICIES/PROGRAMMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisheries</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample Size: 26 countries Average=25%

26 countries Average=38%

3 Topic 3: Environmental linkages in/with national women’s affairs mechanisms

According to respondents:

63% of countries perform cross-ministerial work between the women’s affairs mechanism and environmental ministries.

Women’s affairs mechanisms most commonly work with ministries of agriculture.

32% of countries have an environmental focal point within the women’s affairs mechanism.

“The implementation of the action plan on the Gender, Environment, and Climate Change Strategy has contributed to [conducting] cross-ministerial work with the Ministry of Women.”

Respondent from Mozambique

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3 The Climate Change Gender Action Plan (ccGAP) is the result of a national multi-stakeholder, multi-sector process facilitated by IUCN; ccGAPs can be found at http://genderandenvironment.org/knowledge-center/?filter=ccgap
“[Having an environmental focal point within the women’s affairs mechanism] is a priority because if you don’t include women in the environment and if you don’t consider environmental issues, the country cannot develop.”

Respondent from Sierra Leone

METHODOLOGY
As the main research tool in constructing this dataset, the survey was developed for and first disseminated during the 59th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2015—the key annual convening of women’s ministry and mechanism representatives. Integrating feedback from that round of survey distribution, the survey was lightly adapted to enhance clarity, translated into Spanish and French, and widely distributed to IUCN’s GGO’s network, including via IUCN regional offices and Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA) partners. With a target audience of those with expert-level knowledge of such programmes, the EGI team also reached out to academia in numerous countries. Survey respondents included officials from environmental sector ministries and ministries of gender or women’s affairs. Experts such as IUCN regional office staff, gender consultants, practitioners from other gender and/or environmental organizations, and academics also contributed survey responses to this dataset.

ANALYSIS
Institutional arrangements within and between environment ministries and women’s affairs mechanisms are necessary to make progress toward realizing gender equality and equitable, sustainable environmental governance. Survey responses illustrate how gender considerations are being integrated in environmental ministries; for example, the environmental sector ministries included in this dataset are more likely to include gender considerations in policies and/or programmes (38%) than to have formal gender policies (25%). The agricultural sector stands out as the leader in every aspect of this dataset: ministries of agriculture are most likely to have gender focal points and gender policies and include gender considerations in programmes and policies. They are also the ministries most frequently conducting cross-ministerial work with women’s affairs mechanisms.

Responses also show how women’s affairs mechanisms are involved with environmental issues—women’s affairs mechanisms are twice as likely to do cross-ministerial work with environmental ministries (63%) than to have an environmental focal point (32%).

NEXT STEPS
IUCN’s GGO is continuing to strengthen and expand the EGI. New datasets and indicators will be gathered to update and expand the EGI. As SDG Goal 5 on gender equality is implemented, for example, governments and stakeholders alike can use this data to measure progress toward gender equality, including across the environmental sector.