



# Women in Environmental Decision Making in the Philippines

An Environment and Gender Index (EGI) Country Case Study

## INTRODUCING THE EGI

The first accountability and monitoring mechanism of its kind, the **Environment and Gender Index (EGI)** was launched in 2013 by the IUCN Global Gender Office (GGO). The EGI pilot phase brought 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 + Assets; Governance; Country Reported Activities; Livelihoods; Gender Based Rights + Participation.

*With some of the best data to date on gender and environment at national level, the EGI found that countries taking seriously their commitments to advancing gender equality in environmental arenas are making strides well beyond survival toward long-term wellbeing for all their citizens.*

In partnership with Conservation International (CI), which supported the EGI pilot, this series of EGI country case studies—on Ecuador, Liberia, and the Philippines—complements the global dataset on women in environmental decision making, aiming to strengthen information and analysis of findings at national level.



## Why gender matters in environmental decision making

Every day, in their roles as farmers, marine harvesters, household providers and more, women use and manage natural resources. Women have unique experiences and knowledge with respect to their environments—and offer important perspectives in natural resource governance. Not only does

women's equitable participation and representation in environmental decision making uphold commitments to women's empowerment and gender equality, but it also makes for better development, sustainability and livelihood outcomes.



**Region:** Southeast Asia  
**Population:** 100 million (2014)  
**2013 EGI Ranking:** 26 out of 72 countries



*Women's engagement and leadership in decision making across the environmental sector in the Philippines shows commitment to and progress toward equality and sustainability alike. Implementation of key policies and frameworks appears to be slow and uneven, however, across levels of society.*

Comprised of over 7,100 islands in Southeast Asia, the Philippines has a strong institutional and political framework to protect its environment but still faces rapid depletion of natural resources—which is being exacerbated by a changing climate and the extreme effects of recent natural disasters.

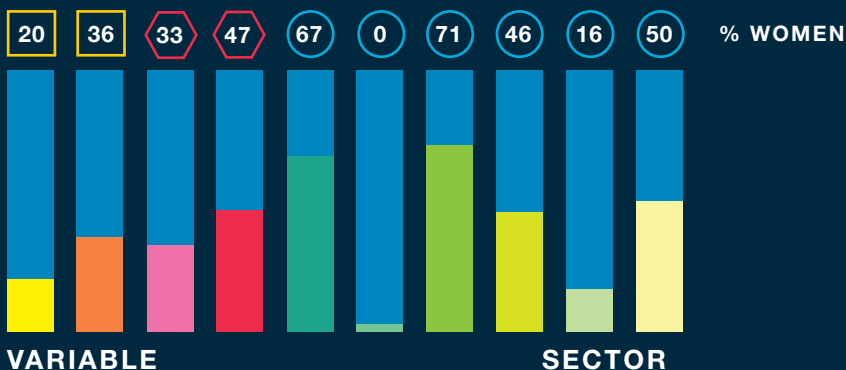
The country scores very well on various global gender equality indices and has enacted a multitude of gender-sensitive policies to ensure women's empowerment and participation in natural resource governance, including requiring that women's participation is, at minimum, 35%. But accountability for meeting this quota appears low, and implementation is inconsistent, especially at local level.

**Key findings of EGI research** show that currently the Philippines:

- Has **strong** gender-sensitive policies, and
- Demonstrates **high** participation of women in some key international processes; however, it
- Has **low** representation of women in the highest positions related to the environment.

## EGI FINDINGS:

The Philippines' performance for women's participation in government, civil society and international environmental delegations



VARIABLE	SECTOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministers of Environment-related Sectors</li> <li>Vice-Ministers of Environment-related Sectors</li> </ul>	<b>GOVERNMENT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental NGO Presidents/ Executive Directors</li> <li>Environmental NGO Board Membership</li> </ul>	<b>CIVIL SOCIETY</b> (major organizations selected on basis of size/influence)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government Delegates to UNFCCC COP19 (2014)</li> <li>Government Delegates to UNCCD COP11 (2013)</li> <li>Government Delegates to CBD COP11 (2013)</li> <li>Average representation to the 3 Rio Conventions</li> <li>National Focal Points to 3 Rio Conventions</li> <li>National Focal Points to the GEF</li> </ul>	<b>INTERNATIONAL</b> (national representation at major environmental decision-making spheres, on climate change, combating desertification and biodiversity, as well as the major finance mechanism)

## BUILDING ON PROGRESS AND BRIDGING GAPS

In general, the Philippines appears to far surpass the norm, demonstrating high participation of women in international processes and at professional levels, particularly in the environmental NGO sector. This suggests technical capacity of Filipina women to strongly influence both policymaking and implementation—which is unsurprising, as EGI research revealed women's very high levels of formal education, including on environmental issues. The limitations of the “glass ceiling” for these professional women, however, present an obstacle to equality, which was not only emphasized by interviews but demonstrated by the lower number of women in ministerial roles.

Policy and practice could pay special attention to:

- Ensuring women have equal access to training and education at all levels, especially in rural areas;
- Promoting the understanding of women as equal partners both inside the home and in the community, cultivating a long-term cultural shift to recognize and evolve women's and men's roles in decision making;
- Allocating resources to ensure that government agencies and civil society organizations at all levels have capacity to uphold national gender policies; and,
- At professional levels especially, making the business case for increasing women's leadership and supporting women's networks.

*“There is a very good participation of women in environmental work in the Philippines. In fact [for marine conservation], in all the committees I sit in, there are more women than men, even at the local level ... Our most successful mangrove conservation work on site is headed by a women's group.”*

Project Manager, Conservation International, Philippines

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For more information, visit  
[genderandenvironment.org/EGI](http://genderandenvironment.org/EGI)



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