

Women and Ecology

“Partners in Life” Global Assembly of Women and the Environment

By November 1991 a series of regional, sub-regional and national meetings will have taken place to lay the groundwork for the **Global Assembly of Women and Environment**. Four years ago the **Senior Women’s Advisory Group on Sustainable Development (SWAG)** of the **United Nations’ Environment Program** initiated a series of regional assemblies in Harare, Tunis, Bangkok and Quito, in preparation for the **Global Assembly**. The objective of these regional assemblies has been to initiate actions by women working on the environment which would lead to activities on sustainable development. These regional assemblies have set in motion regional and national networks of women on environmental issues. This networking process is crucial in identifying women who can act as leaders, experts and executors of actions and projects that merge environment and development goals.

Events in the African region subsequent to the Harare African Women’s Assembly

illustrate the positive effect these regional assemblies can have. The first regional workshop on “Women and the Environment at the Grassroots Level” met in Kampala, Uganda, July 16-20, 1990. Discussions and recommendations at this workshop focused on environment education and environmentally friendly approaches to development in the areas of water, energy, population and health. Workshop participants also urged the creation of a Pan African Committee on Women and Environment. The **Environment Liaison Center International (ELCI)** has established the **Women Environment and Development Network (WEDNET)** to conduct research on women and natural resource management in Africa. WEDNET is sponsored by the **International Development Research Institute (IDRC)** of Canada.

In addition, activities are also planned at the sub-regional and national levels. In April 1991, the **Southern Africa Sub-Regional Environment Group (SASREG)** will hold a special NGO assembly on the role of women in sustainable development in Gaborone, Botswana, with the support of **UNEP’s** Regional Office for Africa. The national Steering Committee for the **Senior Women’s Advisory Group** in Ghana (**SWAG-G**) is implementing an outreach program to identify women’s grassroots organizations through which to encourage women’s participation in environment management.

The 1991 **Global Assembly** will expand these networks and examine practical ways



in which women can contribute positively to environmental management in their communities. Participants will examine action-oriented approaches to environmental management from a practitioner's perspective. The SWAG has invited three representatives both from **WorldWIDE** and the **Women's Foreign Policy Council (WFPC)** to serve on the Policy and Program Planning Committee for the **Global Assembly**. The **WFPC** will convene its **World Women's Congress**, from November 8-12, 1991 and will consider women's role in policy making. This cooperation between the **SWAG**, **WorldWIDE** and the **WFPC** indicates an on-going collaborative process to integrate the action-oriented focus of the regional assemblies and the 1991 **Global Assembly** with the policy-oriented **World Women's Congress**.

PROGRESS SO FAR.....

Success Story Nominations have been received from Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, People's Republic of Congo, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, England, France, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, U.S.A. and Zimbabwe. The deadline has been removed to allow the fullest participation, so if you know of any initiatives please bring them to the attention of **World Women and Environment** (see address below).

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