



STATEMENT & RECOMMENDATIONS BY WOMEN DELEGATES TO THE PIM XXXII

November 20, 2007

Women in coastal communities often have a broad range of skills, provide reliable care for their family and community, and are more concerned about the long-term sustainable use of natural resources. However, their roles in productive activities and in the development of their communities, is not very visible; their concerns and voices in the decision-making processes remain restricted, and their knowledge and needs are often ignored. The successful education and empowerment of women, youth and entire communities depends upon the general health and socioeconomic status of the targeted populations, especially along coastal regions of developing countries.

With its Women, Youth and the Sea Programme, the IOI intended to align its own policies and projects along with the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of "Equality and Empowerment of Women." A number of IOI Operational Centers undertook studies or performed projects focussing on the role of women and their empowerment in coastal communities.

The PIM 32 Conference "Women, Youth and the Sea" was organised around three themes that targeted to cover the relevant aspects of the role of women and youth in coastal communities.

On the last conference day, about twenty female participants met during lunch-time to discuss the outcome of the conference and make recommendations for the future. The participants shared a number of common concerns and observations:

- Most of the presentations to the entire group of attendees at the conference did not address the major problems and the specific roles of women in coastal communities;
- A major part of presentations on gender issues dealt with this subject in a very general manner, covered the gender question as a side aspect, and were primarily presented by men;
- Time for in-depth discussion and creation of mutual understanding of the issues was not provided for in the conference format;
- Most of the conference conclusions that were made focussed on the issue of education rather than on empowerment, implying that the major specific problem of women is a lack of skills and knowledge, rather than a lack of political power and equal chances.

Recommendations made by participants of our women luncheon meeting:

1. A thematic Women's Steering Committee be established within IOI to focus on:
 - women empowerment, equity, governance and the sea
 - youth education and the sea
 - public awareness and the sea

First action: To identify problems and priorities of women and youth in coastal regions.

2. A higher representation of women be included in the IOI institutional structure.
3. The percentage of women speakers in IOI events, such as PIM, should be higher.
4. In future PIM activities/conferences focussing on Women and the Sea, the main theme should be on women in coastal communities, whose institutions and leaders should also take part.
5. Projects undertaken within the IOI Women, Youth and the Sea Programme need to be presented, discussed, and evaluated in IOI public events such as PIM.



6. The format of PIM should provide enough time and procedures for in-depth discussion and the creation of proposals.
7. The conclusions of the thematic groups should reflect the discussion effectively taken within the groups.
8. Support of Dr. Brown's suggestion made during the PIM32 summations that female role models should be used as examples for women and youth, and to raise women's profile.
First action: To create a multimedia presentation for the IOI website on the life and achievements of Elisabeth Mann-Borghese.
9. Create an IOI web-page of women, youth and the sea projects [as exemplars], and promote it to the IOI community and beyond.
10. IOI female-focused projects, especially those conceived and coordinated by women, should be encouraged, continued, funded, and given priority.
11. Reports regarding the health and social efforts already put forth by governmental and NGO agencies within targeted coastal communities, could assist the IOI Women's Steering Committee tailor their proposed educational, empowerment and governance strategies for women and youth in those communities.

This statement and recommendations were submitted by the women listed below [in alphabetical order]:

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