

52nd Session of the Human Right Council

**Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur
on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and
sustainable environment**

10 March 2023

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Franciscans International commends you, Mr Special Rapporteur, on your work, in particular the report on women and girls. We witness with our local partners that discrimination impair women and girls' enjoyment of the right to a healthy environment, and of a range of other human rights like life or water. In turn, this also deprives humanity of the potential and stewardship of half of the population.

In Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, women and girls play a key role in providing food for the households. However, the environmental degradation due to intensive logging affects their access to food. Among others, logging depletes sea and forest food resources; and introduces alien species that wreak havoc in crops.

In Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, women and girls are the most affected by the conflict since 2017. Adding to this crisis, huge gas extraction projects in one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, and the resulting forced evictions, disproportionately affect women and girls who face greater difficulties in accessing health and education and face gender-based violence.

Women and girls are powerful agents of change but they continue to be discriminated against, largely ignored, harassed or killed for the work they do. It is to better protect this work, as human rights work, that we celebrated so much the recognition of the right to a healthy environment as a human right. We think that this development must be acknowledged in the Council's annual resolution on the matter, as well as in all relevant UN resolutions in the future.

I thank you!