



WOMEN 4 OUR WATER

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From Portuguese speaking countries to the world

*Network and Declaration*

MARCH 2023

## FRAMEWORK

In the context of the United Nations Water Conference from 22 to 24 March 2023 in New York, Business as Nature is organizing and carrying out the side event "Women 4OUR WATER - from Portuguese Speaking Countries to the World", following other events already carried out in the scope of the "Women 4OUR CLIMATE Movement under the aegis of the United Nations, namely the Conference on Oceans (UNOC) in June 2022, in Lisbon and the Climate Conference - COP27, in Sharm-El-Sheik, in November 2022 and that involved women from different Portuguese speaking countries.

The Movement "WOMEN 4OUR CLIMATE from the Portuguese-speaking countries to the world" results from the need for greater commitment to the progress and well-being of communities and the sustainability of the planet and aims to highlight the urgency of a greater balance and rapprochement between human rights and climate action, focusing on the implementation of sustainable development models.

This Movement's mission is to promote the role of women, starting from Portuguese-speaking and Ibero-American countries as active agents of communities and companies in the protection of oceans and climate action and reveals an enormous potential for growth, intending to expand far beyond the universe of Portuguese and Spanish-speaking countries and mobilize women from different languages and countries towards the world.

In the pursuit of its mission, the Women 4OUR Climate Movement is committed to the fulfilment of the United Nations Agenda 2030, having as guidelines, of its Manifesto, the following axes:

- #1 -POLICY, DIPLOMACY AND CLIMATE ACTIVISM
- #2 EMPOWERMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING
- #3 SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- #4 SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND KNOWLEDGE
- #5 DISSEMINATION, COMMUNICATION, PARTICIPATION
- #6 COOPERATION/NETWORKING

Whereas:

- Water, sanitation and hygiene are essential for the fulfilment of women's rights, for their health and for their economic and social development;
- In many cultures, women are considered custodians of water and are responsible for its collection, maintenance and use for domestic and agricultural purposes;
- Women face many challenges, such as lack of access to safe drinking water sources and sanitation facilities, especially in rural and impoverished areas, or carrying heavy water in precarious containers which can have a significant impact on their health and well-being. In addition, women's relationship with water is also influenced by social and cultural factors, such as taboos around menstruation and childbirth and safety issues in the use of sanitation facilities. Thus, women are a key element in the development, design and implementation of solutions that address the existing socio-cultural needs.
- Ensuring safe and widespread access to Water and Sanitation for women and girls contributes to gender equality and their inclusion in society, which in turn will help promote other actions and goals of the SDG agenda, particularly poverty reduction, health, education and work;
- Despite the intrinsic connection between women and water, and their recognized capacity for problem-solving, disruptive innovation and adaptation to technological change (fundamental to the necessary transformation in water and sanitation of the future), women's participation is often absent in the design, planning and implementation of policies, solutions and improvements, as well as in decision-making and in the governance and public and corporate management of services;
- Fewer than 50 countries have laws or policies that specifically mention women's participation in rural sanitation or water resources management (UN-Water 2021);
- Water has strong interdependencies with other resources, and its access, in quantity and quality, depends, in many regions, on energy, particularly decentralized and renewable energy. On the other hand, water availability is key to the decarbonization of the energy sector and this decarbonization is key to water conservation;

Thus,

In the context of the United Nations Water Conference and as part of the "Women 4OUR Climate" Movement, the Network and Declaration "Women 4OUR WATER - from Portuguese speaking countries to the World" is born. The aim is to disseminate and highlight the role of Portuguese-speaking women in their relationship with water and the daily action and commitment they put

into its preservation, protection, access, management and efficient use and regeneration, actively contributing to each of the five interactive dialogues under discussion.

Through Business as Nature and its partners, the "Women 4 OUR WATER Declaration" triggers the structuring of a Portuguese-speaking Women's Network, either resident in their countries or in the diaspora, which aims to aggregate good practices and connect women with intervention in the field of water.

This network will contribute to the approach of practical perspectives on Gender Issues in the Water Sector and leverage the interconnections between "SDG6 - Drinking Water and Sanitation" and Goals for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in particular "SDG 5 Gender Equality", "SDG 13 Climate Action" and "SDG 17 - Partnerships for Goal Implementation".

### DECLARATION

Business as Nature and its partners and subscribers declare that they will make their best efforts to fulfil their commitment to:

- Highlight and disseminate initiatives promoted by women from the community of Portuguese-speaking countries, which demonstrate their role as "agents of change" and "influencers": in science, activism, entrepreneurship, in the field of Water and Sanitation, promoting its circularity and efficiency, combating scarcity and degradation of the quality of water environments.
- Contribute to the implementation of initiatives for equitable access to safe drinking water and decent sanitation, with the involvement and focus on women and girls, particularly those from rural communities in designing the solutions, promoting their health, safety and well-being, contributing to their education and dignity;
- Promote the participation and active involvement of young people, in particular girls, by carrying out training actions and raising their awareness on the importance of the protection and conservation of water resources and aquatic and riparian ecosystems and the efficient use of water;
- Facilitate the empowerment of women and girls, contributing to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6 and the accelerated implementation of the Decade of Action for Water by creating and actively participating in a mentoring network that helps women assume roles of greater responsibility and impact in their organizations and

countries, fundamental to bring the necessary change and connection between water, human rights and climate action;

- To contribute to the development and implementation of knowledge and solutions and the creation of water supply and sanitation infrastructures in urban and rural areas, actively involving women, in the Water – Energy Food - Climate Nexus, promoting the approach and discussion of the efficiency of water use and its inextricable link to the energy and food issue, climate change mitigation, territorial resilience, combating drought and desertification and adaptation to extreme climate phenomena, the reduction of surface and underground water pollution, to improve the quality of life of the populations and the preservation of the marine environment.
- Actively encourage and promote the increased participation of women in decision-making, governance and development of solutions on water, contributing to increase the efficiency and sustainability of water management processes and to female empowerment and capacity building;
- Promote, disseminate and support actions linked to Activism in the field of water, highlighting the pillar of culture in sustainable development and promoting social involvement;
- Contribute to the communication and dissemination of simple, accessible and accurate information on the SDGs related to water and to the creation of transnational cooperation networks, in joining forces, to access and share knowledge, experiences and good practices of women for water, promoting partnerships and catalyzing the implementation of concrete actions developed by women and for women, including synergies with other women’s cooperation networks and movements in the areas of sustainability, energy and climate action that exist in Portuguese-speaking countries, promoting the exchange of learning and strengthening their action.