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IPEN Women's Caucus Meeting and Policy Skillshare Held in Geneva

28 April 2019

Directly following IPEN's preparatory meeting for the Basel-Rotterdam-Stockholm (BRS) 2019 Conferences of the Parties (COP), IPEN convened a Women's Caucus Meeting and Policy Skillshare in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting was conducted as an informal round table conversation.

In 2017, an IPEN Women's Caucus was established to provide a forum for planning, discussion, and engagement around gender issues. One of the three focus areas identified was to work on gender issues within the IPEN network, including creating opportunities for training and for women to share experiences.

Engaging with policy makers on local, regional and international levels is a core element of IPEN's work. However, women sometimes face challenges in doing so simply because of their gender. Therefore, providing venues where women in IPEN can share experiences, discuss strategies and share skills is an important tool for empowering women to fully engage in policy making arenas at all levels.

The Women's Caucus meeting aimed to:



- Share experiences and skills among IPEN women active in the global, regional and/or local policy arena
- Strengthen IPEN women participating in the BRS COPs, and other policy meetings
- Provide a support structure for women NGO participants, both new and experienced
- Gather input for next steps of the Caucus and a potential strategy for engaging new women in IPEN's policy work

Twenty women attended the meeting, coming from Australia, Benin, Cook Islands, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, Uruguay, USA, and Vietnam. Participants brought experiences and perspectives from their roles as mothers and grandmothers, Indigenous leaders, Organizational Directors and Vice-Directors, marine biologists, chemists, pesticides and agro-ecology experts, former Parliamentarians, journalists, artisans, environmental engineers, human rights experts, professors and attorneys.

The multi-lingual group of women talked about experiences at international and regional policy meetings, overcoming challenges, and how best to support one another. Plans are currently being made for follow-up meetings and exchanges.



Women's Caucus meeting participants in Geneva

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IPEN Secretariat:

ipen@ipen.org

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