Historically, men have dominated the forestry sector in Asia and the Pacific (Wagle et al., 2017, p. 213). As a result, women have been excluded from forestry-related educational and professional opportunities in the field. However, this is problematic because the active inclusion of women is pivotal to addressing conservation goals related to climate change, and achieving gender equality (Agarwal, 2009, p. 2794-2795).

In attempts to address the disproportionally low representation of women in the forestry sector, forestry institutions have implemented quotas systems. However, these efforts target local communities. As a result, higher education and professional opportunities in the field. However, this is problematic because the active inclusion of women is pivotal to addressing conservation goals related to climate change, and achieving gender equality (Agarwal, 2009, p. 2794-2795). In efforts to target local communities. As a result, higher level forestry institutions that are responsible for national policy creation, mitigation, and implementation continue to be dominated by men.

As such, this study examines the current status of gender-equality in higher-level forest governance institutions in Asia and the Pacific. These institutions include FAO-Forestry, forestry-International NGOs (INGO) and NGOs; the Forest Department of various countries; and the International Forestry Student Association (IFSA). This study also investigates the overall impact women have in terms of conservation and advancing women’s rights when they are active members of forestry institutions.

**Objectives**

1. Address the gender data gap which currently exists in the forestry sector in Asia and the Pacific.
2. Identify the challenges and mechanisms women use to maneuver themselves in the forestry sector to effectively contribute to forestry-related projects.
3. Investigate the overall impact women make in the forestry sector in conservation and advancing women’s rights.

**Methodology & Data Analysis**

This research used a mixed-methods approach to data collection. Grounded Theory was used to analyze the research findings.

**Quantitative Data: Gender Composition**

- The data was collected using official organization and government websites.
- A total of 20 forest governance institutions were analyzed.

**Qualitative Data: Experiences of women**

- Interviews were conducted with women and men from high-level forestry institutions.
- A total of 15 interviews were conducted with representatives from the Philippines, Nepal, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Taiwan, Myanmar, and Australia.

**Results**

**Key Finding 1: Gender Composition**

Despite efforts to increase the representation of women in the forestry sector, men continue to dominate the sector. Of the 20 institutions in which data was collected, 16 institutions (80 percent) had more male members than female members (Figure 1). Moreover, when looking at the head of leadership in forestry institutions across Asia and the Pacific, 75% of the institutions were male-led, while 25% were female-led (see Figure 2).

**Key Finding 2:** Stereotyping, gendered divisions of labor, and the lack of safety in the sector limit women’s ability to fully engage and participate in their roles in their given forestry institution.

**Key Finding 3:** To help women overcome these challenges, forest governance institutions should implement gender sensitzation training, conduct capacity building with women, and strengthen HR policies.

**Key Finding 4:** In the face of discrimination, women continued to make numerous contributions to forest conservation (Figure 3) and advancing gender equality (Figure 4) in the forestry sector in Asia and the Pacific.

**Discussion and Conclusions**

Despite efforts to achieve gender equality in the forestry sector in Asia and the Pacific, women working in higher-level forestry institutions continue to face discrimination and harassment due to their gender. However, women in forest governance institutions do not view themselves as victims of the male-dominated culture that heavily shapes the forestry sector. Rather, women see themselves as change makers and revolutionaries in the fight for gender equality. As a result, forestry institutions should look to further empower women such that women continue to make significant contributions to forest conservation and advancing women’s rights in the forestry sector in Asia and the Pacific.