

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES

IAW website: <http://www.womenalliance.org>

Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities
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IAW NEWSFLASH – September 2011



IAW mourns the passing of Wangari Muta Maathai (1 April 1940 – 25 September 2011)

IAW president Lyda Verstegen writes: "IAW is very sad at the passing of Wangari Maathai who died on the 25th of September. She was a visionary leader, struggling for a sustainable planet. Her actions and courage will live on in our hearts."



Former IAW Secretary General Alison Brown writes: "I had the honor of personally meeting Wangari Maathai at the UN Human Rights Conference in 1993 in Vienna, when I was there as part of the IAW delegation. She was energetic and dynamic in the discussion group we both took part in. My awe of her grew, the more I learned about her activities and my joy was overwhelming when she won the Nobel Peace Prize. Her death is a great loss for the women of the world".

Winner of the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize for "her contributions to sustainable development, democracy and peace." She had previously won the "alternative Nobel Prize", the Right Livelihood Award in 1984 as well as some 22 other awards and honors. Wangari Maathai was the founder of the Green Belt Movement, a women-driven grassroots reforestation and sustainable development movement that has planted more than 40 million trees, its 3,000 tree nurseries managed by some 60,000 women and 1,500 men. Maathai was an elected member of Parliament and served as Assistant Minister for Environment and Natural Resources in the Government of President Mwai Kibaki from 2003 to 2005. A biologist, Wangari was the first Kenyan woman to earn a PhD, to teach and chair a department at the University of Nairobi; an environmental and sociopolitical activist, her numerous awards include the Goldman Environmental Prize, the Africa Prize for Leadership and the UNEP/Eyes on the Environment Award. Maathai is a co-founder of The Nobel Women's Initiative, whose goal is to support women's rights around the world. Her autobiography, *Unbowed: One Woman's Story*, was released in 2006.