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A final story that celebrates a woman's ideas and achievements

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Obituaries of scientists are much more often about men than women. At *Communications Earth & Environment*, we are initiating a series of articles highlighting the lives and work of women scientists, aiming to inspire the next generation with their stories and career paths.

Women have made and continue to make significant advances in Earth and environmental science. Some discoveries were acknowledged¹, but many are still invisible to the general public and the scientific community, mainly due to systemic gender bias and academic inequality². While some improvements have been made over the past decade, women scientists are still perceived differently from their male peers in ways that often make it more difficult for them to believe in themselves and pursue a career in science^{3,4}.

In response to continuous bias, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization released a call to action to close the gender gap in science. The report urges private and public organizations to break gender stereotypes in science, and one of the suggested actions is to increase the presence of women scientists and their interesting career paths in the media⁵. Reading and learning about women who succeeded in the past despite having to persist and fight can lend encouragement to an early career researcher in doubt of herself. Every woman scientist has an extraordinary story regardless of age, ethnicity, nationality, or affiliation. In our obituary series on remarkable women in the Earth & environmental sciences, we want to bring some of these stories out into the open.

One is laid out in an obituary of Evelyn Fox Keller⁶, one of only 14 of the past 100 obituaries published in *Nature* that honored notable women in science over the last five years. Evelyn Fox Keller was a physicist, a mathematical biologist, and a feminist philosopher who focused on gender in science. Her scientific training in



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different fields allowed her to cross boundaries between scientific disciplines and break the barriers to women's scientific achievements. Like many women today, she experienced discrimination during her early studies and later in her faculty career. She did not leave academia. Instead, she continuously analyzed her experiences, leading to her landmark book "Reflections on Gender and Science". Her idea of putting women's perspectives and experiences at the center of scientific analysis disrupted science as usual and broadened its scope. Kellers's work reflects her experiences in the United States, and little do we know about women's academic achievements, perceptions of gender bias, and coping strategies in different countries and cultures.

However, Keller's story and research on gender in science remind us that the fight for more confident and remarkable women in science must continue regardless of geography and culture. Increasing the visibility of women's extraordinary work is one venue to increase women's interest in science. Hence, we call for your suggestions of an exceptional colleague, mentor, and teacher whose scientific work has impacted the

community and whose story can impact the lives of others.

Our first obituary spotlights Cheryl Ann Palm, an ecologist with a unique ability to bring experts from different disciplines and countries together to find ways to reduce deforestation and increase food security. Through her work in Africa, she built the bridge for African and the US scientists to learn from each other and work together. The majority of them were women. Like Evelyn Fox Keller, she knew that women at all stages of their careers needed support; she helped acquire funding, authorship, and collaboration, facilitating a path toward faculty positions. Her work reminds us, again, that women's networks and connections matter. We hope the life stories of Cheryl Ann Palm and Evelyn Fox Keller and those we will publish in weeks to come will help you and your colleagues think about Earth and environmental science as a long, fulfilling career worth pursuing.

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