

Gender & Climate Change in the North: Issues, Entry Points and Strategies for the Post-2012 Process

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Abstract of the paper "Gender & Climate Change in the North: Issues, Entry Points and Strategies For the Post-Kyoto-Process and Beyond", by Minu Hemmati, March 2005.

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The present paper has been prepared for genanet – Focal Point Gender Justice and Sustainability, Germany. It is focusing on gender aspects of climate change relevant to the industrialised countries in the 'North'. The paper is meant to stimulate the strategic considerations of women's organisations in Germany, Europe, and the wider UN ECE region, as the international community begins to prepare for negotiations of a post-2012 global climate regime. This process has already started at national, regional and international levels, and will move into its next phase during the year 2005.

So far, women's organisations' participation in the international climate change policy processes has been rather sketchy and uncoordinated. It is essential that women's organisations, researchers and others working on climate change take note of the upcoming negotiation processes and develop their strategy towards ensuring a (more) comprehensive and effective recognition of gender aspects of climate change in a future regime.

The paper is looking at a range of international policy-making processes and bodies in the area of climate change, environment, sustainable development, women and gender – aiming to identify points of entry and collaboration. Given the complexity of the international policy system, I was not able to address all (potentially) relevant processes and bodies. Surely more will be identified through consultations with potential collaborators, research partners, and funders. A growing overview of opportunities and interests will also allow for much-needed prioritization of work.

The full version of the paper is dealing with the following issues:

1. Why Gender & Climate Change in the Post-2012 Process?
2. Issues: Gender Aspects of Climate Change in the North
3. Ongoing and Upcoming Policy-making Processes and Potential Entry-Points
4. Potential Partners: Relevant Organisations & Stakeholders and Potential Linkages
5. Broader Considerations in the Context of Women & Environment
6. Outlook: Goals, Strategies, Next Steps

Ad 2. Gender Aspects of Climate Change in the North (in keywords)

Health issues: Mortality, caring work, women's participation on planning of health systems.

Economic issues: Women are, including in the North, poorer than men and enjoy less financial security (horizontal and vertical gender segregation of the labour market; single mothers). Hence, all economic consequences of climate change and response measures need to be analysed by gender to identify and effectively counter disproportionate disadvantages for women. Issues to be addressed include: energy prices, transport prices, health costs (precaution, treatment), (healthy) nutrition, water.

Social issues: Conflicts over natural resources and their gender specific impacts, migration due to economic and environmental change and/or disasters.

Gender roles and gender-specific attitudes: risk perception, risk preparedness; preparedness for behavioural changes; economic and social impacts of natural disasters; power and decision-making.

Ad 3. Ongoing and upcoming policy-making processes and organisations, addressed in the full paper:

- Framework Convention on Climate Change
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); UNEP Regional Office for Europe
- The International Women Environment Ministers Network
- Beijing+10 / United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)
- United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development Process: main issues of CSD 14 und 15 (2006/7) will be energy, industrial development, air pollution / atmosphere, and climate change. Cross-cutting issues regarding these fields will be addressed, e.g. gender.
- World Health Organisation (WHO)
- European Union
- European Environment Agency
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE): Environment Activities
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- Other processes and organisations to consider regarding potential entry points: MDG+5 Review (Sept 2005); United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD; e.g. International Year of Desert and Desertification, 2006); International Labour Organisation (ILO); World Bank; Global Environment Facility (Adaptation Fund); International Conferences on Renewable Energy: Bonn 2004; China 2005/06; UN Habitat / International Urban Development Processes; Copenhagen+10 / UN Commission on Social Development Process.

Ad 4. Potential partners: relevant organisations & stakeholder

Relevant Women's Organisations and Networks: The capacity of women & environment networks regarding engagement in climate change relevant policy processes is rather limited.

At international level: Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO), New York. ENERGIA, a global network on gender & energy, main focus on the South.

At regional level: Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF); working group energy & climate change is coordinated by LIFE e.V.

We should not restrict our perspectives to women&environment networks, but think about how to (re)activate the women's anti-nuclear movement.

Environmental organisations: Climate Action Network (International, Europe, US); G9 (Brussels); IUCN – The World Conservation Union; Greenpeace, WWF, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International, the Sierra Club. Interests and capacities should be explored.

Other stakeholders: local authorities (Climate Alliance); trade unions (ICFTU); indigenous peoples; science & research; business (e.g. re-insurances; Climate Group).

Ad 6. Outlook (excerpts)

Goals

Research & data: We don't know enough about gender aspects of climate change, particularly in the North. In principle, all climate mitigation and adaptation measures must be subjected to a gender analysis. Gender-disaggregated data are particularly lacking for the developed world. We need a research agenda and financial funding for research.

Gender Mainstreaming: Gender must be universally integrated into climate protection negotiations and policy-making at national and international levels. Different needs, opportunities and goals of women and men need to be taken into account. The beginning post-2012 process offers an important opportunity.

Participation: Women must be involved in climate-protection negotiations at all levels and in all decisions on climate protection. Representation by numbers is not enough: Hence, we need women represented, and gender experts.

Information / Publications: There is a general information deficit on gender issues in climate protection and related policy. Information materials need to include gender aspects, and they need to be target group specific.

Monitoring/evaluation: Gender mainstreaming of climate change related research, policy-making and implementation needs to be monitored.

The above can be summarized in three main goals:

1. Closing knowledge gaps relating to gender aspects of climate change in the developed world (research; gender-disaggregated data).
2. Including more women and gender experts in climate-protection related negotiations and decision-making at all levels.
3. Integrating gender related knowledge into policy-making, implementation, monitoring, and communication strategies and materials.

All three goals should be pursued in parallel. They will develop further over time, as more research becomes available and more gender experts get engaged in climate related policy-making and implementation.

Suggested Strategies

Gender Mainstreaming in climate change negotiations would represent some much-needed innovation. In other words: it will be tough. Hence, we should consider a multi-pronged strategy – including the following components and aspects:

Networks & strategic alliances: Coalitions need to be built across governments, international organisations, women's organisations, and other stakeholders.

'Champions': specific individuals could "champion" the issue. This could be prominent women, like a (female) environmental minister, a prominent leader of a regional group, or others.

Visibility: In order to create awareness and attention, a visible network / campaign should be created, which would be active at international, regional and national levels, under the same name, visual branding, etc.

North & South: Coordination of women's positions from Southern and Northern perspectives; these do not necessarily coincide. Every attempt should be made to consult and complement each others work.

Broadening the discussion on climate change: climate related policy processes are very narrow, focussing on technological, but first and foremost on economic measures and mechanisms. For us, this seems not to be a 'sustainable development approach'. Rather, it needs to include issues like basic values, lifestyles and (over-)consumption, non-economic incentives, etc. This also needs to include a reflection of the psychological impacts of economic mechanisms such as emissions trading vis-à-vis a global common / public goods approach. Gender aspects could be entry points for some of those issues into the climate change debates.

Timing: The post-2012 discussions are about to begin. For new issues and aspects to be included in international negotiations, they need to be raised very early on in the process.

Resources: Any of the above components can only be realized if significant resources can be mobilized over a number of years - resources for research, networking, participation, and advocacy.

One rather **immediate goal** would be to achieve a decision about integrating gender aspects in climate related policy making. This could form the basis of future work, including research (including via IPCC) and policy on climate protection and adaptation to climate change.

Next steps

To build a powerful coalition, jointly developing the strategy by networks and possible partners would be preferable.

Hold a Strategy Workshop / Process on "Gender & Climate Change Strategy for 2005 and Beyond". Preparations would include:

- further research into the options: issues, research agenda, entry points, partners;
- outreach to women's organisations and networks, and to individual women in governments, UN agencies, environmental NGOs, development NGOs, trade unions, etc.
- estimation of necessary investments of components of potential strategies.

Build a research agenda, in consultation with women's organisations, climate researchers, gender experts.

Establish a women's caucus at UNFCCC (COPs, SB Meetings).

Build coalitions.

Next dates / entry points:

- **UNFCCC COP 11** December 2005, Montreal, Canada
- **CSD 14/15** (January 2006 (UNECE); March 2006 (CSD14); March 2007 (IPM CSD 15); April 2007 (CSD 15))