



## **Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General  
12 December 2021

Original: English

---

### **Commission on the Status of Women**

**Sixty-sixth session**

14–25 March 2022

**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”**

### **Statement submitted by Women in Europe for a Common Future, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council\***

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

---

\* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



## Statement

The fight against climate change and the fight for gender equality are intrinsically linked, yet too often are dealt with independently in international decision making. Women and girls in all their diversity bear the brunt of climate change, with additional factors such as ethnicity, sexuality, dis(ability), socioeconomic status and location playing a role. Women are powerful agents of change, and their unique knowledge, skills and experience are not being adequately utilised due to structural barriers in decision-making around climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies.

Launched in 2015 by the Women and Gender Constituency and WECF, our Gender Just Climate Solutions Award Programme honours the fundamental contribution of women in the fight against climate change and demonstrates the relevance of integrating gender equality in all climate policies. The programme has strengthened the capacities of projects that make real change for gender-justice within mitigation and adaptation practices. From this as well as our own work as an international ecofeminist organisation based in Europe, we make the following recommendations:

Climate change action and finance should reflect the needs of those most affected and valuing of women and girls work

Currently women and girls are not receiving the support they need to become agents of change in climate and environment related matters. Despite women (in particular indigenous women) often being custodians of knowledge about land management, biodiversity and sustainable practices in agriculture, this is not reflected in their access to land, capital and technology. Additionally, the work of women and girls is often invisible, as has been highlighted recently with women's care burden increasing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We therefore call for:

- Policies that redistribute land equitably, ensuring women have access to small holdings as well as institutional and financial assistance to manage them.
- Funding mechanisms for climate action and green technology should be gender transformative, and should be specifically allocated with this in mind, as well as follow up assessments to ensure that the funding reaches those who need it – using transparent and active monitoring of objectives by strict criteria.
- Recognition of the care economy in markers for measuring wealth e.g., GDP, as well as policy making that supports the care economy and aims to formalise it.
- Recognition of care as a green job and international commitments that centre caring for people and planet rather than 'green growth' or other extractive practices.
- Divestment from sectors that are harmful to the environment And disproportionately affect women in all their diversity's lives, e.g., fossil fuels and investment in sectors under the dual criteria of 1. Being committed to The Paris Agreement/UNFCCC and 2. A commitment to ending discrimination against women (CEDAW).
- Commitments to protect environmental and climate defenders who suffer from violence and harassment due to their gender.
- Implementation of CEDAW General Recommendation No. 37 on the Gender-related dimensions of disaster-risk reduction in the context of climate change (2018). States are, among other things, called upon to draw up gender-responsive national disaster risk reduction & climate legislation, policies,

programs and budgets (40a), to promote coordination between sectors and to integrate gender perspectives (42b) and to carry out gender impact assessments in climate and environmental policy. States should also conduct gender impact assessments of public-private partnerships in climate policy, while also ensuring that diverse groups of women are involved in design, implementation and reporting (51c).

Gender should be included at all stages of environmental and climate policymaking

As has been stated, siloed policymaking is ineffective in tackling either climate change or gender inequality. This is required not only for policies relating to de-carbonisation (i.e., in the energy, agriculture or transport sectors) but also decisions relating to all aspects of the environment; including inter alia; waste management, water sanitation, deforestation, biodiversity, toxic chemicals and pollution.

We therefore call for gender considerations incorporated at all stages of policymaking related to the environment and climate (for example in National Adaptation Plans):

- Risk analysis and research using a gender-based lens, intersectional and sex-disaggregated data collection on multiple lines of self-identification.
- Policymaking based on this disaggregated data, gender impact assessments before policymaking that ensure the impacts of the policy will reduce gender inequalities.
- Gender assessments made throughout policy implementation and follow up to ensure that funds and institutional support meet the right people and are having tangible positive effects on reducing inequalities.
- Stricter enforcement of gender criteria in funding and policy implementation so that they are not subservient to other criteria, e.g. economic.
- Stronger enforcement of the UNFCCC gender action plan, the binding commitments made by national governments, as well as the objectives of the gender action plan implemented in national policymaking (we welcome the National Gender Action plan of Nigeria which was created in consultation with key civil society actors).
- Working with civil society groups who are experts on the link between gender and climate and increasing funding and institutional support for such work, for example through regional civil society engagement mechanisms.

Representation and empowerment of women and girls in decision-making related to climate and environment, as well as in STEM fields.

Representation of women in the UNFCCC is low, with only 33 per cent of decision-making positions occupied by women. Similar underrepresentation can be seen in national decision-making bodies related to climate and environmental policies. Despite having essential knowledge and experience, women in all their diversity are also underrepresented within fields such as energy, transport, technologies which means that discussion of greening these sectors and in particular moving to green jobs overlooks the experience of these groups. We call for:

- Addressing women's occupational segregation, through educational diversification, professional training, and addressing stereotypes and other barriers, in the STEM sectors. For example, only 6 per cent of women complete a degree in engineering, compared to 25 per cent of men. Women must be encouraged to enter Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

(STEM) jobs, in which there will be more jobs in the future, and men should be encouraged to enter more jobs in the social and care sector. Materials need to be created and disseminated that promote more diversity and inclusion of all women and girls in STEM, starting as early as school age.

- Gender Quotas in decision making bodies related to the environment that follow an intersectional approach and represent the diversity of society (i.e., for indigenous persons, youth, older persons, LGBTQI+, people of colour).
  - Additional financial and institutional support for projects which promote women's leadership at the local level.
  - Recognise and upscale traditional knowledge systems, innovation and technologies at the local level that are developed by women (Gender Just Climate Solutions).
-