



**Women's Major Group on Sustainable Development  
#WhatWomenWant**

## **Climate Justice**

### **Introduction**

Sustainable development is not possible without substantively and comprehensively addressing climate change, biodiversity and healthy ecosystems, gender equality, human rights and poverty eradication. Given the urgency of the climate crisis and its differentiated and disproportionate impacts on women and girls of all ages, we want to see ambition in Post-2015 to better address climate change causes, impacts and solutions.

The WMG welcomes the stand-alone climate change goal. We underscore the importance of addressing climate through, for example, goals on oceans, sustainable consumption and production, cities, education, gender equality and agriculture.

Climate change is a cross-cutting development issue. Adaptation, for example, is as much about psychosocial adaptation as it is about infrastructure strategies, which also links to disaster risk reduction (DRR). It is also about addressing persistent inequalities between and within countries, unfair systems of aid, trade, finance and development. Climate references must equally address adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage, be human rights based, and have a social justice frame.

### **Specific text recommendations (in bold) from the WMG[i]:**

The 5Ps of the Preamble mask critical issues and do not adequately represent the scope and ambition of the Post-2015 agenda and SDGs. WMG calls to revert to the 9 elements, with the following revision on planet:

- **Protect the planet, combat the causes and impacts of climate change, use natural resources sustainably for the well-being of present and future generations, and safeguard our terrestrial and marine ecosystems.**

Because climate change is one of today's greatest global challenges, it should be included in Paragraph 3:

- **..."to address climate change, change development patterns and"** to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its resources;

Technology is crucial to address climate change, and should also take into account women's and girls' specific priorities. Paragraph 9 of Our Vision importantly addresses sustainable consumption and production and paragraph 32 addresses transfer of clean technologies. Specific recommendations include:

- (Para 9) ...in which development and application of technology are "climate-sensitive, **gender-responsive**, respect biodiversity, **are socially and environmentally safe**, and are resilient."
- (Para 32) "transfer of **environmentally safe, socially sound and gender-responsive** renewable technologies"

We welcome paragraph 27 on climate change while calling for significant strengthening, and we also underscore that issues in paragraph 28 on ecosystems, biodiversity, land degradation and disaster risk reduction are inextricably linked to climate change, as well as to gender equality and sustainable development. Following are edits:

- add specific mention of "**ocean acidification**"
- accelerate **phase-out** of global greenhouse gas emissions (in place of 'reduction')
- refer to remaining **below 1.5 degree temperature rise over pre-industrial levels**, to reflect best available science<sup>[ii]</sup>
- recognize that the nature of climate change "**also requires building resilience and adaptive capacity, especially for women and girls, that responds to the most vulnerable countries, communities and populations**"

- add reference that a meaningful climate agreement “**requires fair, equitable and ambitious mitigation commitments in line with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.**” CBDR is the way to ensure universality and differentiation, and is a long-agreed and well-established principle of sustainable development. To put it simply: those that took the lead in the degradation of our planet and its climate should take the lead in cleaning up their act.

Regarding proposed target revisions, forest destruction and greenhouse gas emissions are linked, thus we recommend to:

- Maintain the 2020 timeframe for target 15.2, in order to halt forest loss and avoid devastating impacts on forest-dependent communities, including on women (see WMG Forest and Environment brief, 21 July 2015)

#### **Background on gender and climate change**

- Climate change exacerbates existing gender inequalities.
- Entrenched structural and systemic inequalities have exacerbated gender inequality, and have undermined sustainable development, contributed to environmental degradation and climate change, and threatened the wellbeing of people and the planet.
- Women of all ages are more affected by climate change, as they are more often dependent on natural resources, land and ecosystems for their livelihoods. Women comprise the majority of farmers and fishers. Yet, their roles are not recognized, and they are underrepresented in governance mechanisms. Women still have little or no rights to access and own land and resources, and have limited mobility compared to men.
- In spite of these challenges (and as a result of them), women have been at the forefront of actions on adaptation, mitigation and addressing loss and damage, and women’s leadership has been instrumental in developing and implementing strategies to address climate change.
- It is therefore important to identify and implement gender-responsive policies and strategies to respond to the social, economic, environmental and humanitarian crises caused and/or exacerbated by climate change, extreme weather and disasters.
- Public subsidies should be shifted away from polluting fossil fuels towards renewable energy, energy efficiency and capacity building to support transformation to sustainable energy systems that benefit, with leadership and participation by women and local communities. Additionally, state incentives should be in place for those who shift to environmentally safe, socially sound and gender-responsive renewable energy sources, in particular for small, community-based or women-run enterprises.
- Mainstreaming gender into all public investment in low-carbon development pathways through adequate and appropriate public financing is crucial. This requires adequate gender and age-disaggregated data and also explicit accountability mechanisms.

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[i] For detailed language recommendations of the Women’s Major Group on these and many other issues, please refer to the document “Comments of the Women’s Major Group on the Outcome Document” which can be obtained from WMG members (you can spot them from their colorful scarves)

<sup>(ii)</sup> [IPCC, Report 5, and Petra Tschakert, Lead Author, IPCC, in Climate Change Response Journal]  
<http://www.climatechangeresponses.com/content/2/1/3>