

An International Policy Framework on Climate Change

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Human rights, sustainable development and environment policy and agreements (1992 – 2008)

Agenda 21 (*United Nations Conference on Environment and Development or UNCED, 1992*) aims to secure equity in all aspects of society, including the involvement of women in decision making and environmental management. Chapter 24 “Global Action for Women towards Sustainable Development” calls upon governments to eliminate all obstacles to women’s full involvement in sustainable development and public life.

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (*UNCED, 1992*) was promoted as the centerpiece for combating global warming. The Kyoto Protocol was approved by a number of nations as an addition to the treaty (1995). Up to now, however, neither documents include a gender perspective, though women NGOs have advocated for its inclusion at most of the Conferences of the Parties on Climate Protection (COP) that have been organized annually, starting with the first COP in 1995.

The **Millennium Declaration** (*Millennium Summit, 2000*) promotes sexual equality and the empowering of women as a means to fight against poverty, hunger, and diseases and to promote a truly sustainable environment. The threefold **Millennium Development Goals** of poverty eradication (MDG1), gender equality and women’s empowerment (MDG3) and environmental sustainability (MDG 7) reaffirm gender equality in both environmental and human security.

The **Johannesburg Plan of Action** (*World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002*) calls for incorporating gender perspectives into all policies and strategies and for improving the health, economic welfare of women and girls through full and equal access to land, economic opportunities, credit education and health care services.

Hyogo Framework for Action (*World Conference on Disaster Reduction, 2005*) mandates that a gender perspective be integrated into all disaster risk management policies, plans and decision-making processes, including climate-induced disasters.

Resolution on human rights and climate change (*Human Rights Council 3/2008*) was adopted by consensus recognizing that CC poses an immediate and far-reaching threat to people and communities around the world, with implications for the full realization of human rights. The Office of the High Commissioner was encouraged to execute an analytical study of the relationship between climate change and human rights.

Gender equality policies and agreements (1979 – 2008)

In a provision with relevance to climate change, the **CEDAW** (1979) calls for integrating a gender perspective into environmental policies, obliging parties to take “all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development” and, “participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels”, and “in all community activities”.

Strategic Objective K of the **Beijing platform for action** (*4TH World Conference on Women* 1995) commits to securing the active involvement of women in environmental decision-making; integrating gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programs for sustainable development; and strengthening or establishing mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

CSW 49 (2005) called on Member States to enhance rural women’s income-generating potential and the importance of greater security of land tenure and property ownership for resource mobilization and environmental management.

International Women Leaders Global Security Summit (New York, 2007) recognized that climate change poses serious security risks, especially for women, and that they must be included in decision-making at all levels.

CSW 52 (2008) identified gender perspectives on climate change as its key emerging issue. In the agreed **Resolution 21(jj) on Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (E/CN.6/2008/L.8)**, governments are urged to: “Integrate a gender perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and reporting of national environmental policies, strengthen mechanisms and provide adequate resources to ensure women’s full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, in particular on strategies related to climate change and the lives of women and girls.”

The **Manila Declaration for Global Action on Gender, Climate Change and Disaster** (*3rd Global Congress of Women in Politics & Governance, 2008*) argues for a gender sensitive approach to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction .

Information Sources

-*Gender, CC & Human Security* prepared by WEDO, ABANTU, Actionaid, & ENDA.
-www.capwip.org/3rdglobalcongress.htm Presentation by Rebecca Pearl.