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*Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality*

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# **DRAFT REPORT**

on women and climate change  
(2011/2197(INI))

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

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**CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION .....	3
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT.....	8

## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

### on women and climate change (2011/2197(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Articles 2 and 3(3), second subparagraph, of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and Article 157 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 8 March 2011 entitled ‘A Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050’ (COM(2011)0112),
- having regard to the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in September 1995, the Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted in Beijing and the subsequent outcome documents adopted at the United Nations Beijing +5, +10 and +15 Special Sessions on further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted respectively on 9 June 2000, 11 March 2005 and 2 March 2010,
- having regard to Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to the UNFCCC Decision 36/CP.7 on Improving the participation of women in the representation of Parties in bodies established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol of 9 November 2001,
- having regard to the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 18 September 2000,
- having regard to the United Nations Convention of 18 December 1979 on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),
- having regard to its resolution of 17 November 2011 on gender mainstreaming in the work of the European Parliament<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 16 November 2011 on the climate change conference in Durban (COP 17)<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 29 September 2011 on developing a common EU position ahead of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 4 February 2009 on ‘2050: The future begins today – Recommendations for the EU’s future integrated policy on climate change’<sup>4</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2011)0515.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2011)0504.

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2011)0430.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 67E, 18.3.2010, p. 44.

- having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2008 on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Development Cooperation<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality and the opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (A7-0000/2011),
- A. whereas climate change is not gender-neutral and does have gender-differentiated effects;
  - B. whereas due to gendered roles, women’s impact on the environment is not the same as men’s, and their access to resources and ways to cope and adapt is severely affected by discrimination in terms of income, access to resources, political power, education and household responsibility;
  - C. whereas climate change will amplify inequalities and there is a risk that climate change policies will also have a negative impact on gender balance and women’s rights if they do not take gender discrimination into account from the very start;
  - D. whereas sources of discrimination and vulnerability other than gender (such as poverty, geography, traditional and institutional discrimination, race, etc.) all combine to obstruct access to resources and to means to cope with dramatic changes such as climate change;
  - E. whereas in some regions, women provide 70% of agricultural labour, produce more than 90% of the food<sup>2</sup>, and yet are nowhere represented in budget deliberations, including in climate change activities;
  - F. whereas, while 70% of poor people living on less than USD 1 per day are women, women own less than 1% of the world’s property<sup>3</sup>;
  - G. whereas family planning can significantly improve maternity health and control over family size and ultimately increase the independence and reduce the workload of women who are the primary carers for children, increasing the resilience of women and their families to climate change impacts;
  - H. whereas between 75 and 80% of the world’s 27 million refugees are women and children<sup>4</sup>; whereas migrations induced by climate change will affect men and women differently and women often more severely; whereas special provisions regarding health, security and independence are necessary to reduce the vulnerability of women in these cases of forced or voluntary migration;
  - I. whereas the proportion of women in climate change negotiations is still unsatisfying and little to no progress has been made; whereas women account for only 12 to 15% of heads

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 66E, 20.3.2009, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> World Economic Forum, ‘Women’s Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap’, 2005, [https://members.weforum.org/pdf/Global\\_Competitiveness\\_Reports/Reports/gender\\_gap.pdf](https://members.weforum.org/pdf/Global_Competitiveness_Reports/Reports/gender_gap.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF, ‘Gender Equality – The Big Picture’, 2007, [http://www.unicef.org/gender/index\\_bigpicture.html](http://www.unicef.org/gender/index_bigpicture.html)

<sup>4</sup> UN, Ecosoc, Women at a glance, <http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/women/women96.htm>

of delegations and around 30% of the delegates;

- J. whereas two thirds of the world's illiterate persons are women<sup>1</sup> and access to information and training via appropriate communication channels is therefore critical to ensuring their independence and inclusion, in particular in cases of emergency such as natural disasters;
- K. whereas women are also powerful agents of change, and their full participation in every aspect of the fight against climate change would ensure fairer and more comprehensive policies to tackle climate change, with regard to both adaptation and mitigation aspects;

### **General provisions**

1. Recognising that climate change exacerbates gender discrimination in addition to its other catastrophic effects, emphasises that averting dangerous climate change must be the highest priority of the EU both in domestic and external policy;
2. Calls on the Commission and the Council, in order to ensure that climate action does not increase gender inequalities but results in co-benefits to the situation of women, to mainstream and integrate gender in every step of climate policies, from conception to financing, implementation and evaluation;
3. Welcomes the growing awareness of the gender aspect of climate change in the high-level climate talks, and interventions by high-level actors; stresses however the need to see concrete steps to include women, such as introducing 40%+ quotas in the delegations;
4. Reminds the Commission and the Member States of the European Parliament resolution on the climate change conference in Durban (COP 17) and its commitment to 'strive for female representation of at least 40% in all relevant bodies' for climate financing;
5. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to collect gender-disaggregated data when planning, implementing and evaluating climate change policies, programmes and projects;

### **Adaptation**

6. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to set up easy-to-use tools for gender impact assessments of projects throughout project life-cycles, such as the tools used for development projects;
7. Calls for inclusive local solutions and projects, including built-in awareness of existing vulnerabilities and capacities to cope, such as the traditional experiences and knowledge of indigenous people, and in particular women;
8. Calls for the integration of gender-aware capacity-building and training into adaptation solutions, which must be compatible with the special needs of women and take into account the specific obstacles, but also capabilities and experiences of women;
9. Highlights the importance of relying on the knowledge of women and encouraging local

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, Progress for children, 2005, <http://www.unicef.org/progressforchildren/2005n2/PFC05n2en.pdf>

solutions that have very concrete influence on people's daily lives, such as the project 'Girls in Risk Reduction Leadership' in South Africa, or several projects to help women's groups install drinking water facilities and toilets in Indian slums;

10. Calls for an increase in transparency and inclusiveness of existing mechanisms and planning processes, such as National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) and future National Adaptation Plans, and for these principles to be promoted in future climate-related treaties, mechanisms and bilateral cooperation efforts;

## **Mitigation**

11. Calls on the Commission and the upcoming Presidencies of the Council of the European Union to launch a study focusing specifically on the gender dimension of mitigation policies;
12. Emphasises that targeted policies are needed to avoid gender-segregation and discrimination in the green economy, where new technology and science jobs are already almost exclusively male-dominated;
13. Calls on the Commission to support a reform of existing mechanisms and funds to make them more transparent, inclusive and reflective of the contributions to emissions reductions by local communities and particularly women and to promote these principles in future climate-related treaties, mechanisms and bilateral cooperation efforts;
14. Calls on the Commission to set up a toolkit to encourage inclusive decision-making, as was done in the transport and energy sectors in Malmö (Sweden) and Vollsmose area (Denmark)<sup>1</sup>;
15. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop indicators to evaluate the gender impact of projects and programmes and to promote gender budgeting in climate-related policies, whether these policies are conducted at international, national, regional or local levels;
16. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop tools and guidance for the gender analysis of mitigation policies and programmes, and related research programmes and activities;

## **Financing**

17. Calls on the EU delegations to respect the principle set out in the aforementioned European Parliament resolution on the climate change conference in Durban (COP 17), to ensure that gender balance in all climate finance decision-making bodies is guaranteed, including the Green Climate Fund Board and possible sub-boards for individual funding windows;

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<sup>1</sup> Gender mainstreaming in the public transportation policy in Malmö: [http://www.nikk.no/A+gender+equal+and+sustainable+public+transport+system.b7C\\_wljSYQ.ips](http://www.nikk.no/A+gender+equal+and+sustainable+public+transport+system.b7C_wljSYQ.ips) ; and the project to train ethnic minority women to be environmental ambassadors in Vollsmose: [http://www.nikk.no/Women+are+everyday+climate+experts.b7C\\_wljQ1e.ips](http://www.nikk.no/Women+are+everyday+climate+experts.b7C_wljQ1e.ips)

18. Calls for the integration of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in all climate funds and instruments; stresses that this integration should extend to the mission, governance and operational modalities of such financing mechanisms, and that operational modalities and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should ensure that women and local communities benefit from adequate funding;
19. Calls on the Commission and the EU delegations to support scaled-up, new and additional funding particularly for adaptation actions which directly benefit women, who are often disproportionately vulnerable to climate change impacts; calls for the provision of such adaptation funding to be exclusively in the form of grants;
20. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Awareness of the links between gender and climate change has only recently developed and gender issues have yet to be fully integrated into climate change policies.

The international context is by no means propitious: the uncertainties hanging over the post-Kyoto world and the danger that no legally binding international agreement may be reached are felt everywhere. In the face of the legitimate fear that existing and already inadequate climate change commitments may be reneged on, issues of climate justice and addressing vulnerability tend to be overlooked.

The spotlight is on the countries meeting in Durban in 2011 and again in Rio in 2012, with the outcome of the negotiations hinging on their ability to set aside their differences and their own egocentric concerns in order to reach an agreement which is both binding and far-reaching enough to be credible.

Our report supports this process. Since the effects of climate change will have a disproportionate impact on women, we wish to emphasise that climate change needs to be an absolute priority for the European Union, in terms of both foreign and domestic policy.

In these negotiations, as in most national policies and programmes such as the NAPAs, the inclusion of a gender perspective is a recent and fragile development. Although it is seen as legitimate in some sectors (particularly agriculture in developing countries and management of forest resources), it is still far from being seen as a cross-cutting issue or as a priority, when measured against the urgency of climate action and the dangers posed to human survival.

The rapporteur seeks not only to show that climate justice is a demand which cannot be ignored, but above all that it is by expanding our vision to take in such issues that more effective, less costly and, in the final analysis, more just solutions can be found. Since gender-based discrimination is found everywhere in our societies, we believe it essential that it be taken into consideration in climate policies in order to avoid worsening the situation and, above all, in order to tap into a whole reservoir of ideas, actions and leverage mechanisms with which to tackle the urgency of the fight against climate change.

Your rapporteur wishes to make three main points:

- **The inclusion of gender issues provides an opportunity** to make the fight against climate change stronger, fairer and more effective.
- in order to be effective, **mainstreaming must be equally and simultaneously based on two principles: addressing the effects of inequality and tackling its causes**, principally by increasing women's financial independence and their means of emancipation within their communities;

- We can only **improve our understanding of the links between women and climate change** through a willingness to do so and the collection of gender-disaggregated data. Better understanding will enable us to adapt our decision making, as has happened over the last 20 years with development policies.

### **Greater vulnerability**

If the link between women and climate change appears is not immediately obvious, this is because women are not a homogenous group around the globe. The differences which exist in terms of standard of living, opportunities and education could give rise to the idea that gender is not a sufficiently universal factor to be decisive in combating climate change.

Nevertheless, throughout the world women suffer discrimination because they are women, and their needs, aspirations and opportunities are more limited and given less consideration than those of men. Gender-disaggregated statistics show that this holds true for all areas of life and in all societies.

- Women have less access to financial resources and property rights (women own less than 1 % of the world's resources and comprise 70 % of those living on less than one dollar a day);
- Women are systematically under-represented in political and economic decision making (17 % of the world's parliamentarians and 8 % of government ministers are women);
- Women carry out a very large part of the world's unpaid work, mainly involving caring for others (children, the elderly), and household management (two-thirds of the hours worked worldwide are worked by women, for only 10 % of the world's income);
- Women are the main victims of sexual violence, make up 80 % of the world's refugees and displaced people, and the excess mortality rate for women in situations arising from natural disasters is up to five times higher than that for men.

It can be added that women also have specific health needs, mainly linked to reproduction and associated factors: menstruation, health and hygiene conditions during pregnancy, childbirth, and management of reproductive rights in order to plan pregnancies.

These figures are a result of cultural, traditional and social limitations on equal rights and responsibilities for men and women. The discrimination which women have historically faced is the source of their vulnerability. Owing to their subordinate position in all areas of life - economic, political, social, etc. - women's are less able to respond and readapt in the face of major changes such as global warming and its side-effects.

### **Women as agents of change**

Some progress has nevertheless been made towards including consideration of these vulnerabilities in international treaties. The 2005 Hyogo Framework on natural disasters specifically mentions the importance of gender-awareness at all levels. Agenda 21 and the 1992 Rio Declaration also include numerous measures to mitigate gender-related discrimination and actively encourage the inclusion of women in all aspects of climate policy.

Gender awareness goes beyond the issue of women's overall vulnerability. Awareness of the unequal situation of men and women involves two inextricably linked aspects: the need to focus specifically on women in order to alleviate their vulnerability and the need for measures designed to create a more equal relationship between men and women.

These two aspects - assistance and empowerment - should be jointly included in policies. For example, in the aftermath of a natural disaster it is important to make adequate provision for women's hygiene and safety, but it is equally important to include women in reconstruction training and work teams. This dual approach should be applied to all projects and programmes in order both to alleviate immediate suffering and encourage longer-term change.

It is only by linking these two aspects that mainstreaming can achieve its objective, which is to alleviate the effects the discrimination suffered by women and increase their independence and emancipation.

Women already act as agents of change on climate issues, both individually and collectively. With the inclusion of a gender dimension, the opportunities for action are multiplied, whether we are looking at immigrant women becoming 'environmental ambassadors' in Denmark or Indian women setting up traditional agricultural cooperatives.

Our report stresses that measures to protect women in already critical situations should complement each other and that it is important to use climate policies to change current mindsets by including groups which defend women's rights in negotiation processes and funding mechanisms, improving women's education and consulting them more, and encouraging projects which liberate and empower women within their own communities, both in developing countries and in the EU.

### **An area which is still largely unexplored in developing countries**

Although greater awareness now exists, gender considerations are only partially included in European climate-related projects and programmes: development funding mechanisms and policies aimed at developing countries do increasingly make the link, but gender is noticeably absent from all intra-European climate policies.

Roadmap 2050, which sets out the Union's priorities for moving towards a green economy and reducing emissions and proposes a sectoral approach to the goals set, fails to take account of the different situations of men and women.

But links do exist between gender and climate, even within the EU and in policies concerning energy, transport and agriculture. For example, the key sectors of the future green economy are overwhelmingly male-dominated, which not only affects equal opportunities in education and training but also encourages enterprise cultures which do little to foster male-female equality.

Gender awareness extends beyond visible inequalities such as wage differences or the segregation of scientific and service sector jobs. The indirect causes of these inequalities – male enterprise culture, discrimination in the time spent on domestic work, etc. – are rooted in

androcentrism. If gender is not incorporated into political discussions from the outset, the resulting projects and proposals are in danger of being biased by default, through use of an implicitly white, able-bodied, heterosexual male in permanent employment as their reference model.

We must broaden our outlook not just as a matter of justice but in order to make our actions more effective. Women form half the population and have significant potential for action and impact.

Your rapporteur has sought to highlight the opportunities presented by including women: at the moment we are failing to tap a vast reservoir of ideas, actions and leverage mechanisms by unconsciously excluding half the world's citizens from our climate policies.

### **Gender and climate change: the missing link?**

Although the European Union has made efforts to include environmental considerations as a cross-cutting policy and the links between gender and development policy are well established, the link between gender and mitigation policy, especially within the EU, has been neither explored nor used. And yet Parliament's report on gender mainstreaming stresses the importance of promoting male-female equality in all EU policies.

It is to be hoped that it will not be necessary to justify the importance of gender mainstreaming field by field and that awareness will not be confined to matters of women's representation in politics and the economy. The implementation of a comprehensive policy to promote male-female equality calls for close study of the less explicit causes of inequality. When policies are drawn up without a conscious effort to include gender mainstreaming, they run the risk of obstructing efforts to achieve equality between women and men.

Progress towards better understanding and increased awareness of gender issues is hampered by the lack of research, and of gender-disaggregated data with which to carry it out, in fields such as transport, energy and agricultural policy.

To avoid generating unreasonable administrative overheads, we propose that this type of data collection should only be systematically used when launching new projects or for the periodic evaluation of existing ones. Access to this new data will enable researchers to carry out analyses and draw up new proposals for the years to come.