



WOMEN  GENDER  
CONSTITUENCY

# KEY DEMANDS

COP24, Katowice, Poland  
[www.womengenderclimate.org](http://www.womengenderclimate.org)

## At COP24, the WGC demands UNFCCC outcomes:

### 1. **Ensure human rights-based and gender-just implementation guidelines for the Paris Agreement**

These Paris Agreement implementation guidelines must reflect the full vision of the Paris Agreement — that of rights-based, participative, and gender-responsive climate action that contributes to promoting a just transition and food security while respecting indigenous rights and traditional knowledge. When finalising the guidelines related to the communication of future NDCs, the scope of national reporting, or the modalities of the Article 6 mechanisms, the Parties should ensure that this vision is adequately reflected so as to provide an incentive for the integration of human rights in domestic climate action. A full set of recommendations for ensuring human rights and gender equality in the APA [can be found here](#).

### 2. **Deliver on ambition, including finance**

Enhanced ambition must urgently address the current gap in pledges and the dire predictions of the latest IPCC report as to where the world is headed. The Talanoa process must result in a definitive decision under the Convention that outlines a ratcheting up of ambition from Parties, reflective of the promises to aim towards keeping warming under 1.5 degrees. As the NDCs contain conditional components for most developing countries, the Talanoa process must address the means of implementation (MOI) required to unlock the additional ambition.

### 3. **Operationalize a robust and rights-based platform for indigenous peoples and local communities**

We call for a strong outcome at COP24 in the operationalization of the formal platform for indigenous peoples and local communities. The WGC fully supports the proposals by the International Indigenous Forum on Climate Change on the objectives of the platform and demands respect and implementation of indigenous peoples right to free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) in every intervention, document, and policy, in their territories and lands as outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of

Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The platform should serve to incorporate the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and urban poor, rural and remote communities in all responses, taking into account their human rights, gendered needs and responsibilities, and ensuring a fair and just share of conservation benefits.

#### **4. Effectively address loss and damage**

The world cannot expect poor people and poor countries to pay insurance premiums for a problem they did not create. Action to address loss and damage from climate change is an independent pillar of the Paris Agreement (Article 8). Roughly a quarter of NDCs include loss and damage, and 44% of small island developing states (SIDS) refer to loss and damage in their NDCs. COP24 must accelerate and enhance the work on loss and damage, taking into account the needs of the most affected, including climate migrants. L&D finance needs to be scaled up according to common but differentiated responsibilities, historical responsibilities and respective capabilities and be channeled to the communities most affected, including women. This includes via innovative sources of finance to build a fund to specifically address loss and damage (e.g.: fossil fuel extraction levy, bunkers levy, financial transaction tax, aviation levy) that can generate significant finance independent of government budgets. Disaster risk insurance has a role to play in loss and damage and can offer benefits for dealing with extreme events, but it is limited due to the prevailing system in which SIDS, LDCs and other climate frontline states will have to pay the premiums. Insurance is also of limited value when it comes to slow onset impacts, and when disasters become so frequent that they are uninsurable.

#### **5. Place communities over markets**

Previous market-based mechanisms developed under the UNFCCC have failed to reduce GHG emissions and have often caused human, indigenous and women's human rights violations as well as other environmental harms. The Sustainable Development Mechanism (SDM) under Article 6 must adopt a transformative approach that moves away from the offsetting logic and be designed in a way that truly ensures GHG reduction, which enables public participation from the planning phase and empowers disadvantaged groups. Moreover, it must include binding obligations to respect human rights, gender equality, the rights of indigenous peoples, local community led strategies, and environmental integrity and establish a grievance mechanism

#### **6. Ensure a rights-based road map for Koronivia Joint Work**

The joint work of Koronivia road map should foster rights-based, transformative and gender-responsive approach, acknowledging that large-scale ecosystem restoration and balanced diets are an essential element of effective 1.5C pathways. Agriculture should be excluded from multilateral and bilateral free-trade and investment agreements which tend to favour large scale producers and marginalize or even destroy small-scale producers. Involvement of corporate actors with clearly conflicting commercial interest in the work of SBSTA & SBI will fatally undermine the integrity, effectiveness and legitimacy of UNFCCC's work in the field of agriculture. Parties should ensure that the implementation process will improve productivity, ensure food sovereignty and food security (SDG2 – zero hunger) and adapt to adverse effects and address emissions.

## 7. Create a just and equitable transition for all

Transition to a regenerative energy economy based on 100% safe and renewable sources by 2035, and decentralize and democratize ownership of this new energy economy. Develop a just transition plan that protects people whose livelihoods are affected by the economic shift, including coal communities and gas and oil workers, as well as create educational programs for the transition of these workers into new, renewable energy job opportunities. A Feminist Fossil Fuel Free Future requires a just transition that implies a shift from jobs in carbon polluting industries to green and decent jobs in sustainable, clean and renewable industries. Yet, to be fair and equitable, this transition must also challenge the gendered-division of labour, which places women in often low waged, insecure and informal subsistence and service industries. This just and equitable transition should re-interrogate the very notion of labour so that unpaid care and domestic work, mostly assumed by women, is valued and redistributed. Increasing non-work time, growth of community, expansion of the commons and enhanced democratic engagement should all be objectives of this just and equitable transition. We need energy and resource democracy, where local people, particularly women, are allowed to make decisions over the use of local resources and the best way to fulfil their needs.

**In the context of climate action overall, the WGC demands:**

### **Break free from fossil fuels and unsafe energy systems**

Developed countries must commit to immediately halt all new investments in fossil fuels and nuclear energy, with a clear and urgent phase out/ shift from a fossil fuel based economy to an economy based on energy democracy, efficiency and genuine sustainable and gender-responsive use of renewable energies, alongside phase out strategies and plans from developing countries based on their developmental needs. This must include national commitments to halt development of any new coal mines and close old ones as quickly as possible, as the single biggest source of carbon dioxide emissions from human activity.

### **Move the money**

While Parties have committed just over 10 billion USD to the Green Climate Fund (of which USD 2 billion from an initial USD 3 billion US pledge will not be forthcoming following the announced withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement), in 2015 alone, global military spending was calculated at \$1.6 trillion (SIPRI). To meet climate finance gaps and fully implement the Paris Agreement and SDGs, countries should reallocate funds away from militarization to invest in gender equality, environment, social, economic and climate justice policies and programs.

### **Listen to people, not profit**

UN processes and agencies must maintain both a coherent understanding and enforcement of the concepts of duty bearers and rights holders. There is a trend in multilateral processes to concentrate efforts towards private sector 'solutions' and public-private partnerships, through attendance and presence within UN negotiations that are responsible for addressing and regulating, inter alia, global problems created by private interests. States, as

representatives of the people and especially the youth of the world, are the primary duty bearers and have a duty to regulate corporations and other actors that cause human rights violations, deplete our natural resources or contribute to climate change. In the climate arena, various corporations have irreconcilable contradicting interests: the UNFCCC aims to stabilize GHG concentrations, whereas fossil fuel companies have strong interests in retaining fossil fuel infrastructure in which they have invested and yield large profits. The UNFCCC requires robust policy and procedures to deal with conflict of interest.

## **Ensure climate ‘solutions’ are gender-just**

Climate ‘solutions’ must strive to be gender-just and intersectional and should promote the following: a) ensure equal access to benefits/equal benefits to women and girls in all areas of the energy value chain; b) are designed to alleviate rather than add to women and girls paid and unpaid workload; c) empower women and girls via enhanced accessibility to basic services, livelihood security, food sovereignty, health including sexual and reproductive health and rights, ending all forms of violence against women and girls; d) enhance safety and human security including for women human rights defenders and women climate and environmental defenders especially in conflict areas; e) ensure involvement of women and men from local communities, groups and cooperatives in all levels of decision-making; and f) enhance and promote women’s human rights. We equally demand women and girls access, use and control of productive resources and secure land tenure rights, which is critical to their livelihoods, food security and survival in a changing climate pattern. Gender-responsive, ecosystem-based, community-driven and holistic approaches to climate change mitigation and resilience are essential for women’s livelihoods and for the planet. Governments should provide appropriate forms of legal, policy and financial support for such approaches.

Girls, in particular, are often excluded from participation in policy making, decision-making and political processes due to entrenched gender norms and stereotypes dictating behaviour, mobility and receptivity of such actors to girls’ participation. Gender related discriminatory norms are exacerbated by other gender-related realities of girls’ lives such as time spent in unpaid domestic labour and care work, and discriminatory laws and policies, including women’s political participation and participation in public life more generally, requirements related to male guardianship that affect mobility, and often the lack of a distinct legal identity as a rights holder in the state. Notably, the lack of the ability of girls and young women to control their reproductive health and choices also serve as significant barriers to their rights, including participatory rights.

## **Promote energy democracy**

Climate actions must also promote gender responsive energy democracy and move us away from top-down, market-based approaches for energy production, distribution and control over natural resources. Communities, including women, should have control over their own energy systems as well as over other natural resources. End-of-pipe technologies such as carbon capture and storage, nuclear energy, biofuels and other unsafe energy proposals should be rejected as they still pose high risks and uncertainties over biodiversity, food security and livelihoods.

## **Protect ecological food systems**

Promote a shift away from industrial food systems and agribusiness, including industrial livestock farming, to promote localised and indigenous crop-based food systems and agroecology. Traditional crops, seed sharing and heritage variety help deliver resilience to climate change and food sovereignty for smallholders and

women. At the same time, such practices would allow for multiple benefits, including increased agricultural diversity promoting ecological diversity with indigenous varieties and improved resilience of communities. We equally demand women's access to productive resources and secure tenure rights to land, including within communities, which is critical to their livelihoods, food security and survival in a changing climate pattern.

## **Be led by ecosystem-based approaches**

Gender-responsive, ecosystem-based, community-driven and holistic approaches to climate change adaptation and resilience are essential for women's livelihoods and for the planet. Governments should provide appropriate forms of legal, policy and financial support for such approaches. Large-scale tree monocultures and other forms of large-scale bio sequestration for mitigation form a significant threat to the lives and livelihoods of women, men, and children on the ground, and to biodiversity, also because they are far more prone to droughts, wildfires, landslides and other climate change-related extremes. All forms of public support to monoculture tree plantations should be immediately withdrawn and governments should actively convert existing tree plantations into more biologically diverse ecosystems.

## **Declare Geo-engineering and BECCS as 'No-Go'**

Geoengineering, consisting of large-scale manipulation of the Earth's system using a wide range of technologies, is an unreliable and untested technofix that would create more problems than what it would solve. These types of false solutions serve to uphold business as usual rather than challenge and dismantle the root causes of climate chaos. The side-effects of geoengineering could be disastrous, globally and intergenerationally unjust, and potentially irreversible. BECCS (Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage) for example, would require vast amounts of land, likely leading to the displacement of communities and conflicts, jeopardizing communities and women's rights. Other UN Conventions, like the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) have shown concern about the global negative impacts that geoengineering could have by reaffirming a moratorium. We would urge parties to ban all types of geoengineering and focus on real solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

## **Preserve the ocean**

Develop effective adaptation and mitigation measures to address sea level rise, ocean warming, ocean acidification and address harmful impacts of climate change and environmental pollution on oceans and coastal ecosystems such as river deltas, estuaries, sand dunes, mangroves and coral reefs, which are in grave danger. This includes action to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris, nutrient pollution, wastewater, solid waste discharges, plastics and microplastics into waterways and the oceans.

## **Make fisheries and aquaculture sustainable**

Recognize the importance of small-scale fisheries and associated coastal communities in integrated management and securing food sovereignty, and protect access rights for women-led, small-scale and artisanal fisheries in a climate-changing world. 90% of reefs around the world are under threat and fisheries remain the most urgent priority for food security in SIDs. End illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and destructive fishing practices, addressing their root causes and holding actors accountable to remove the

benefits of such activities, and effectively implement flag State and port State obligations, as part of global measures to address loss and damage impacts to climate frontline communities, and for effective climate adaptation. This shift must reckon with the over-consumption of fish in developed countries.

## **Know that water is life**

Ensure water security for women and girls, and protecting the human right to water. This is an urgent issue in climate frontline States, where severe lack of potable water access due to climate change is an issue of right to life, water, food, health, education - with severe consequences for women and girls and their communities. In implementation, countries should undertake extensive environmental impact assessment and social assessment with a gender lens before approving any transboundary / inter-country water management projects, including hydropower projects.

## **Promote health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights**

In fulfilling the right to health articulated in the Paris Agreement, gender norms, roles and relations should be considered as an essential marker in determining the climate change risks and vulnerability indices because these differences reflect a combined effect of physiological, behavioral and socially constructed influences including on health. All policies, strategies, and plans that focus on issues of climate change and health need to be integrated and coherent with, but not limited to, the Sustainable Development Goals. These must include responses to safeguard and provide for the people's health, including, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), as well as strategies to end child/ early and/or forced marriage. On this point, we urge Governments to recognize sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as a crucial means to gender equality and as a climate change adaptation strategy. Parties should incorporate SRHR, including safeguards to end child, early/forced marriage, increasing in the light of climate breakdowns, into the UNFCCC framework for national adaptation plans, programs and budgeting. When women, girls and LGBTQIA persons experience bodily autonomy and lead lives free from marginalization, stigma, violence and coercion - including sexual and gender based violence and early/forced marriage- and have the ability to decide if, when and how often they have children, as well as access to implementation of their decision, including availability of SRHR information and services, they and their families and communities become empowered and more resilient to the impacts of climate change.