

Submission by the Mary Robison Foundation – Climate Justice

Enhancing gender balance under the UNFCCC

FCCC/SBI/2016/L.16

The SBI, recalling decision 18/CP.20, paragraph 15, invited Parties and observer organizations to provide information on progress made in meeting the goals of achieving gender balance and gender-responsive climate policy.

This submission focuses on enhancing gender balance under the UNFCCC. It builds upon the prior submission by the Mary Robison Foundation – Climate Justice (the Foundation), dated August 29th 2016, on possible elements and guiding principles for continuing and enhancing the Lima Work Programme and should be view in the context of the wider programme of work required to advance comprehensive, gender-responsive climate policy making and the mainstreaming of gender equality under the UNFCCC. The Foundation’s submission on possible elements and guiding principles for continuing and enhancing the Lima Work Programme can be found here:

http://unfccc.int/files/parties_observers/submissions_from_observers/application/pdf/672.pdf

The Principles of Climate Justice¹ which guide the work of the Mary-Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice recognise that women’s voices must be heard and their priorities supported as part of climate action. Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), this principle is operationalised through Decisions 23/CP.18 adopted in Doha and Decision 18/CP.20 adopted in Lima. Decision 23/CP.18 invited Parties to strive for gender balance in their delegations and established the goal of gender balance in bodies pursuant to the Convention. This decision was taken in order to improve women’s participation in decision-making processes under the UNFCCC and inform more effective climate change policy that addresses the needs of men and women equally. Decision 18/CP.20 established the Lima Work Programme on Gender which addresses gender balance in the context of a broader agenda to achieve gender responsive climate policy.

Since the adoption of Decision 23/CP.18 progress towards the goal of gender balance under the UNFCCC has been negligible. Some progress has been made in terms of increasing the number of women sitting on boards and bodies established by the Convention but they remain predominantly imbalanced, as evidenced by the bar graph in Figure 2. Party delegations made progress towards the goal of gender balance following the decision in Doha but this trend was reversed at COP 21 in Paris.

¹ See Mary Robison Foundation – Climate Justice website. (<http://www.mrfcj.org/principles-of-climate-justice>) [Accessed 7th November 2016]

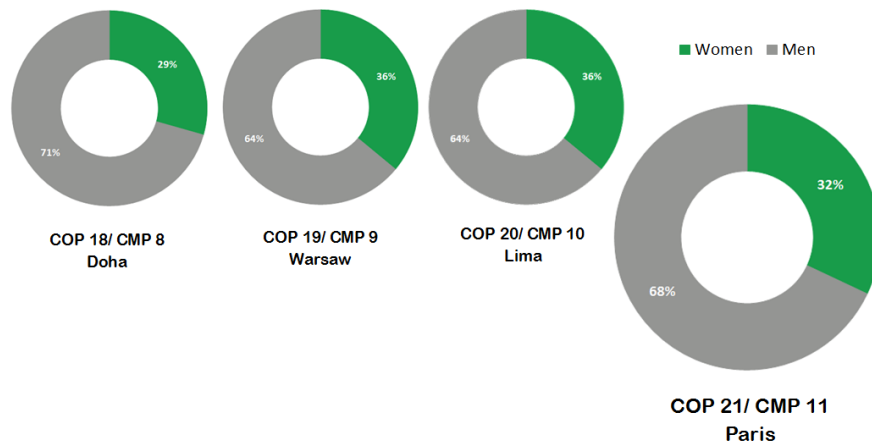


Figure 1: Participation of women delegates at COP since the adoption of Decision 20/CP.18²

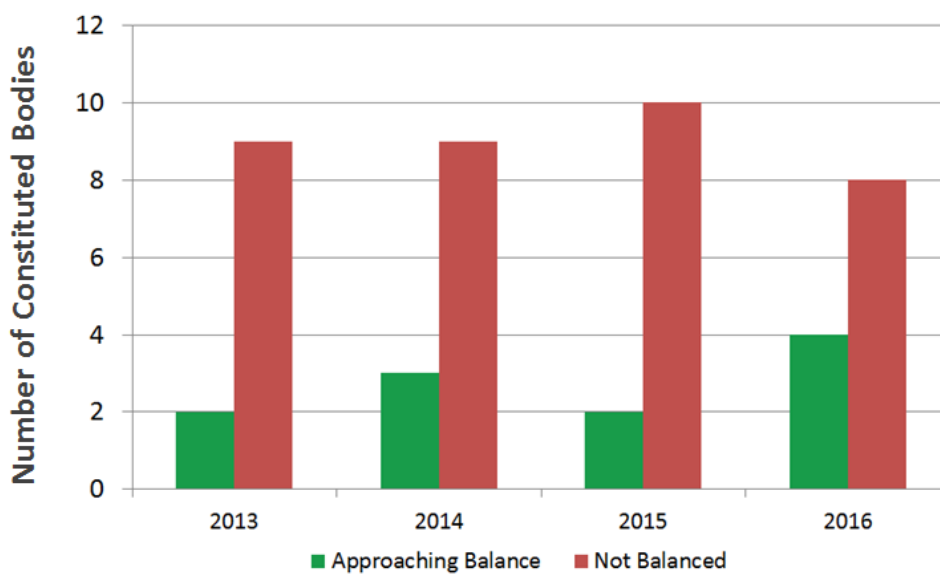


Figure 2: Since Decision 23/CP.18 in Doha adopted the goal of gender balance on constituted bodies, little progress has been made towards realising the goal. In 2016, only 4 of the constituted bodies could be categorised as close to or at gender balance. (Bodies classed as “approaching gender balance” have passed a threshold of 40% of women members)³

Following Decision 23/CP.18, the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice and UN Women worked together to produce a report called *The Full View: Advancing the goal of gender balance in multilateral and intergovernmental processes* as a resource for Parties and the UNFCCC secretariat tasked with implementing the decision. Published in 2013, the report described normative frameworks, experiences and practices at the global, regional, national and sub-national levels to promote women’s equal participation and representation in decision making.

In 2016, a Second Edition of the report, *The Full View: Ensuring a comprehensive approach to achieve the goal of gender balance in the UNFCCC process* takes stock of progress towards gender balance since the adoption of Decision 23/CP.18. It focuses on new opportunities to enhance

² Figures taken from the UNFCCC secretariat’s reports on gender composition for the years 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

³ Ibid.

women's participation in the decision-making processes of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The report calls on Parties to adopt comprehensive strategies to overcome the structural barriers women face and enhance the participation of women in the composition of national delegations and in the membership of the bureaux and constituted bodies established under the UNFCCC.

Research for the report reviewed policies and practices of intergovernmental bodies, national governments, regional mechanisms and other related initiatives, to draw lessons for the UNFCCC Parties, secretariat and other stakeholders in advancing the goal of gender balance and as a contribution to gender-responsive climate policy. The key recommendations drawn from the research are presented below.

- To realise the goal of gender balance, Parties to the UNFCCC should consider the following actions:
 - Include incremental targets with specific timeframes for the participation of women in any decision mandating the establishment of bodies to support the work of the Convention and the Paris Agreement aiming for starting point of 30 per cent of women at their initial establishment and a gradual increase to 40 per cent at the sixth year of a body's establishment
 - Institute temporary special measures—including the use of quotas—for existing bodies with less than 30 per cent women, particularly for those bodies with no or few women
 - Expand opportunities for leadership positions through co-leadership of one woman and one man or through rotating leadership to ensure that there are no consecutive terms held by the same gender
 - Commit to gender balance among speakers when constituting panels and integrate gender issues in panel agendas
 - Mandate the preparation of a technical report on structural impediments to women's participation in the UNFCCC and mandate the organisation of a workshop under the UNFCCC to discuss the findings and analysis of the technical report
 - Allocate a certain percentage from the UNFCCC Trust Fund for Participation to fund participation of women delegates, with a priority to create a separate, targeted trust fund for women delegates from least developed countries and small-island developing states.

- To accelerate the realisation of gender balance in the composition of national delegations and improve participation of women in the UNFCCC process, Parties at the national level should:
 - Set an initial quota of 30 per cent women in Party delegations to UNFCCC meetings. The quota should be increased progressively to 40 per cent and then to 50 per cent at the end of a six-year period following the institution of the quota
 - Allocate dedicated travel and capacity-building funding for women delegates to ensure their full and equal participation in the UNFCCC process
 - Include representatives of civil society and grassroots organisations on Party delegations and encourage the inclusion of grassroots women on the NGO delegations

- Promote regular awareness-raising trainings for all delegates on gender balance and its contribution to gender-responsive climate action
 - Develop a national gender-responsive climate change action plan to ensure effective implementation of gender-specific mandates from UNFCCC decisions and the Paris agreement
 - Provide adequate resources, strengthen partnerships and create formal platforms such as workshops and dialogues for women's organisations to build their capacity for their meaningful participation in regional or global processes
 - Identify and strengthen leadership by women's organisations at local level to encourage a participatory and consultative approach for informing climate-related policy-making.
- To contribute to advancing the goal of gender balance and improve women's participation in the UNFCCC process, the UNFCCC secretariat, with the support of Parties, civil society and other stakeholders, where appropriate, is requested to:
 - Maintain and regularly update its online platform for sharing information on work relating to:
 - women's participation and gender-responsive climate policy, including the engagement of civil society, women's organisations and grassroots women
 - needs and/or opportunities for increasing the participation of civil society and women's organisations and the integration of a gender perspective in the drafting of NDCs, NAPs, National Communications and in accessing funds from the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility
 - Collect and analyse data on women's participation in the UNFCCC process including on the membership and chairing of informal bodies and groups; disaggregate data on the composition of bodies by sex and regional representation and regularly report such data to UNFCCC bodies
 - Provide information to Parties when they are constituting bodies and informal contact groups, or when they are appointing facilitators and chairs, on available measures to promote gender balance
 - Formalise a dedicated gender equality networking platform to allow women delegates to discuss strategies, network and collaborate with civil society representatives.
- To reinforce the above measures and as part of a comprehensive set of actions to achieve gender equality and ensure the systematic integration of a gender perspective in all thematic areas of work of the UNFCCC, the following complementary measures are strongly recommended:
 - Parties should mandate the extension and enhancement of the Lima Work Programme on Gender that lays down the principles and the over-all framework to implement the gender-related mandates of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement and the achievement of gender equality
 - The work programme should include a work stream to elaborate a Gender Action Plan (GAP) which would include priority result areas, key activities, indicators of

success for each identified result area, as well as specific timelines and responsible actors, and resource requirements for each area. Result or action areas should include:

- Key entry points for the integration of a gender perspective in all relevant areas of work of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement;
 - Research and analysis on gender-responsive climate policy and actions;
 - Capacity-building on gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive climate policy for women and men participating at COPs;
 - Identification of partnerships and resources to support the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the areas of work of the UNFCCC;
 - Mechanisms for monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the GAP and realising the goal of gender balance.
- A consultative process and the participation of gender experts, women's organisations, grassroots and indigenous women should be built into all stages of the development, implementation and monitoring of the gender policy, the GAP and the work programme;
 - In developing the GAP and the work programme, the experience of the UN-SWAP within the UN system could provide some important lessons, including on setting benchmarks, targets and indicators and regular reporting.