

SUBMISSION BY LITHUANIA AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS MEMBER STATES

This submission is supported by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Vilnius, 12 September 2013

Subject: Advancing the goal of gender balance in bodies (COP)

Promoting gender equality and improving the participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and in the representation of Parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol

General:

The EU welcomes strongly the invitation to submit views on options and ways to advance the goal outlined in the paragraph 2 in decision 23/CP.18. We underline the importance of a balanced representation of women and men that will facilitate a stronger focus on the different dimensions of climate change, noting that climate change and related policies can affect women and men in different ways, and thereby enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Convention. .

For the last ten years, efforts to improve the participation of women in decision making under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol has been guided by a decision taken at COP7 in Marrakech (decision 36/CP.7). This decision invited Parties to the Convention *'to give active consideration to the nomination of women for elective posts in any body established under the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol'*.

There has been demonstrable progress on this issue and in the involvement of women in the UNFCCC over the last five years - notably, the three female Presidents of COP 15, COP 16, COP 17 and Ms. Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC since 2010, have all provided leadership on gender issues within the UNFCCC; and evidence shows a modest increase in the number of women participating in the negotiation process. However, a very obvious gender imbalance exists in various bodies of the UNFCCC, with women's representation as low as 10% in some instances.

Brief description of the EU gender equality policy in the field of combating climate change

The European Union's achievements in fostering equality between women and men have helped to change the lives of many European citizens for the better and provide the foundation on which we now can build a genuinely gender-equal society. Inequalities between women and men violate fundamental rights. They also impose a heavy toll on the economy and result in underutilization of talent and experience.

Equality is one of five values on which the Union is founded. It is bound to strive for equality between women and men in all its activities. The Charter of Fundamental Rights provides for such equality and prohibits sex discrimination. In March 2010, to mark the 15th anniversary of the declaration and platform for action adopted at the Beijing UN World Conference on Women and the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the European Commission adopted the Women's Charter, renewing its commitment to gender equality and to strengthening the gender perspective in all its policies. Furthermore, in 2010 the Commission adopted a five-year strategy - the EU Plan of Action 2010-2015 for promoting equality between women and men in Europe. It provides the overall policy framework for the coherent integration of gender equality in all areas of EU policies, including external policies (development cooperation, trade, agriculture, migration, etc.) and encourages the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide.

The EU Environment Council and General Affairs Councils have since 2009 included gender references in their climate related conclusions, and in June 2012, the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) adopted conclusions¹ calling "on the Member States and the European Commission, in accordance with their respective competences, to take active and specific measures aimed at achieving a balanced representation of women and men in decision-making in the field of climate change mitigation at all levels, including the EU level".

EU Member States are key players in the advancing the issue of integrating gender issues into climate change law and policy. Member States continue to step up activities in promoting gender equality through a variety policy and legislative measures. The EU and its Member States acknowledge that Gender Equality is essential for tackling climate change and reducing poverty.

EU and Member State activities promoting gender equality in climate policies in particular within the UNFCCC

The EU has actively presented and supported decisions on integrating gender considerations in the activities of the UNFCCC. The EU and its Member States have taken the lead in strengthening gender sensitive climate policies and strongly promoted the COP 18 decision on gender balance and improving the participation of women in UNFCCC activities.

The EU and its Member States have actively co-operated with the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA) and other interested partners. The GGCA has grown since 2008 from a four founding members into a wide alliance of more than 70 international member organizations. EU Member States in particular Finland and Denmark have been the main supporters of the GGCA. The main aim of the activities of the GGCA has been making climate policies gender sensitive and integrating the gender approach in all relevant decisions of the COP and Subsidiary Bodies.

¹ Gender equality and the environment: enhanced decision-making, qualifications and competitiveness in the field of climate change mitigation policy in the EU; 11638/12

In its work the GGCA has supported and trained women delegates from developing countries to participate in climate change negotiations and conducted capacity development sessions for national delegates, both female and male, on the gender dimensions of climate change. It has produced several publications including a Training Manual and more than 11 country-level gender climate strategies have been prepared.

One of its flagship projects is the Women Delegates Fund (WDF), which provides support to women delegates from developing countries and specifically least developed countries to participate in global climate change negotiations at the UNFCCC. It has successfully built capacity among these women and continues to create supporting networks for them. Since 2008 more than 100 delegate trips have been funded. These women delegates have also made valuable contributions to the integration of gender aspects under various decisions made in the UNFCCC negotiations.

This cooperation has produced excellent results. The COP decisions covering nine new bodies include gender references (inter alia Adaptation Committee, Technology Center and Network, Technology Executive Committee and Advisory Body, Green Climate Fund and Response Measures Forum) on their modalities and composition. Older established bodies including the GEF have adopted gender policies which also impact on the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund. Furthermore, the COP decisions on eight work programmes also include gender references (including the LDC programme, guidelines for NAMAS, Article Six Programme, REDD+ Programme including the safeguards, Capacity Building under the Convention and Kyoto Protocol). The decisions on the Shared Vision remain valid and gender related issues have also been raised in the Durban Forum including i.a. changing consumption and production, which will have a strong gender dimension.

This extensive work during the latest six years paved also the way for the adoption of the decision 23/CP 18 on gender balance.

In addition the EU and Member States have been supporting various activities in their development cooperation in order to strengthen the participation of women in climate related activities and poverty eradication.

Gender equality is also a horizontal goal in EU and Member states activities. For example, Finland's most recent Development policy programme has both climate proofing and gender equality as horizontal goal transcending all activities. In addition combating climate change is a specific goal.

Specific examples from some Member States are given below:

Austria

The Austrian Development Agency is supporting several mitigation and adaptation projects in East and Southeast Africa. Given the different needs and responsibilities of women and men in the Climate Change process the projects seek to find effective solutions under the condition of women and men being equal. Two examples:

- **Livelihood Improvement through Sustainable Resource Management in North Gondar:** The overall objective is the improvement of livelihood opportunities and resilience of selected rural communities in North Gondar through sustainable resource management.
- **Projet de consolidation de la gouvernance environnementale locale au Burkina Faso (COGEL):** The project seeks to strengthen the capacities of public and private stakeholders at the decentralized level to better manage the risks and opportunities linked to the impact of climate change.

Sweden

- Sweden provides core support, of the budget, for the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) - a member based organisation focusing on women's rights and gender equality. Under their Climate Justice programme they have, for example, conducted research projects documenting climate related impacts on rural women's rights and livelihoods. The results were presented at the COP17 with rural and indigenous women from Asia Pacific taking part as official delegates of the gender constituency. In 2012 the APWLD was active, along with many others, in promoting the COP18 decision which recognised the need for gender balance to improve the participation of women.
- In Cambodia, Sweden supports an NGO-program where women have taken an active role in many of the locally implemented adaptation projects. Women have been involved at the grass root level as leaders in supporting and advocating to the local authorities to improve their natural resources management as a key adaptation measure, e.g. through facilitating the formulation of relevant policies and through providing capacity building and raising awareness on climate change impacts related to the agriculture sector and water resources management.
- Sweden has supported the creation of the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF), which will be instrumental in implementing the country's climate strategy and action plan. Both the strategy and the plan have a strong focus on people living in poverty, women and children will be prioritized in all activities.

Challenges met and ideas for future activities

Lack of information on and awareness of, gender and climate policies might be the biggest challenge in promoting more effective gender integration. The Secretariat needs to be ever conscious of how its actions impact on gender integration. At a minimum the Secretariat needs information, awareness raising and coordinated plans of action for implementing the mandates given by the COPs. Gender expertise of female and male climate experts and staff in UNFCCC institutions should be strengthened. Gender training will be the base of understanding the reasons of gender equality and how to change the situation.

A specific work shop on gender balance, gender sensitive climate policies and capacity building will be organised during COP19. The EU considers that this workshop will be a good opportunity to discuss a range of themes to identify concrete steps for further action. The themes will include: gender balance; gender sensitive climate policies; capacity building. Gender awareness and related training should be part of the capacity building.

Firstly, gender balance could be promoted either by trying to find positive incentives for gender participation or by quota. Further options to promote gender balance could include a strengthened commitment by Parties to set a target for an appropriate gender balance in their delegations and in their nominations of candidates to various bodies.

Further option for consideration might be to recommending the nomination of both genders for funding if the Trust Fund for Participation is funding more than one delegate. Another way could be to earmark some funds in the Trust Fund for female participation for Parties willing to do so.

Keeping in mind paragraphs 2 and 3 of the decision, extra effort should be made in relation to finding female co-chairs/facilitators. The secretariat also has an important role in promoting the balance by proposing to the chairs of the permanent bodies both female and male candidates for chairs or facilitators of the informal bodies.

Secondly, gender sensitive climate policies should be promoted in accordance with the COP decision. Further consideration might be given to the possibility of organising **in-session workshops** during upcoming COPs and Subsidiary Body meetings on specific themes to understand better the relationship between gender and climate change and to develop concrete recommendations. For example, workshops on mitigation and adaptation could be organised in 2014 and workshops on technology and funding in 2015. If the workshops take place in connection with the COP and Subsidiary Body meetings and use available expertise they would result in minimal, if any, extra costs. Other, relevant workshops should also include gender perspectives in an integrated way. In this respect, the EU welcomes the SBSTA 38 conclusions on the Nairobi Work Programme and its expert meeting.

Research on how climate policies and instruments impact, differently on men and women and their ability to cope with climate change, would also be of benefit, including examining how best men and women are able to shift from short term coping mechanisms to resilience.

Thirdly, capacity building of women delegates is an important issue. The secretariat should consider options for arranging some capacity building sessions during group coordination meetings prior to the intercessional and COP meetings. The above mentioned project implemented by the GGCA could share its experiences with the Secretariat.

Fourthly, strengthening of the gender expertise of female and male climate change experts and staff in UNFCCC institutions should be envisaged by offering **gender training**. Gender training is the base of understanding what we are talking about, including the reasons for gender inequality. Gender training should also aim for an overall re-thinking of participants' gendered attitudes and structures.