



GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE:

Considerations for Developing a Gender Action Plan

A submission from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to the UNFCCC

The COP22 Gender and Climate Change decision¹ calls specifically, in paragraph 27, for “*the Subsidiary Body for Implementation to develop a gender action plan in order to support the implementation of gender-related decisions and mandates under the UNFCCC process, which may include priority areas, key activities and indicators, timelines for implementation, the responsible and key actors and indicative resource requirements for each activity, and further elaborate its process of review and monitoring*”. As the decision goes on to request (para 29) the Secretariat to convene, in cooperation with Parties and interested observers and other stakeholders, an in-session workshop during SB 46 (May 2017) to develop possible elements of this gender action plan (GAP), and invites submissions in this regard (para 30), this submission is made in direct response to that invitation.

To prepare this submission and envisage a GAP suitable to enhance the implementation of the Convention and of the Parties’ 60+ decisions² to date on gender considerations, IUCN draws upon years of experience related to gender and climate change knowledge generation, capacity building and technical support, plus several decades of experience developing GAPs at different levels, both for specific sectors and institutions, and for cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder initiatives. Lessons gathered from these processes can be distilled and applied, such as the following:

- Participatory processes that seek the most diverse inputs deliver the most innovative results. To that end, ensuring women’s and men’s perspectives from across regions, especially ensuring engagement from Least Developed Countries and from those countries most impacted by climate change, including grassroots and local-level perspectives, is both in line with previous UNFCCC decisions and important to identifying the most compelling approaches;
- Cross-sectoral dialogue and identification of promising practices is essential. The existing decisions across the UNFCCC spectrum are diverse, from decisions specifically to enhance women’s participation in leadership in climate change decision-making spheres and build capacity on gender-responsive approaches, to identifying needs and calling for action on, *inter alia*, adaptation, agriculture, REDD+, finance, mitigation and technology;
- Action plans should amplify existing mandates/policies/platforms, taking care to avoid “re-inventing the wheel” as well as to avoid the perception of the GAP being an added burden. While specific resources will be needed for full, consistent and meaningful GAP implementation, ensuring synergy with other existing initiatives is also essential to realizing its potential impact; and
- Action plans should, as the decision itself indicates, reflect the increasing recognition by Parties and stakeholders of the need for gender-responsive approaches to climate change adaptation, mitigation, technology, finance and capacity building; the increasing demand for resources and tools; and the increasing reality that these are required for adequately responding to the climate crisis. In that light, the GAP should be practical but ambitious, embraced as an opportunity to propel

¹http://unfccc.int/files/gender_and_climate_change/application/pdf/auv_cop22_i15_gender_and_climate_change_rev.pdf

² For example as available (as of 2015) in the “Draft compilation of decisions, subsidiary body reports and adopted conclusions on gender and climate change by the secretariat” (GCC/DRC/2015/1; 21 May 2015)

the resilience of women and men all over the world.

The following are elements for consideration in the development of a UNFCCC GAP and in preparing for the associated in-session workshop in May 2017.

Structure for GAP

Sister Rio Conventions, along with the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, and other key environmental bodies and implementing agencies, such as UNEP, have gender plans of actions in place and offer compelling structures for consideration. For example CBD's Gender Plan of Action 2015-2025³ proposes actions for Parties and a framework for integrating a gender perspective within the work of the Secretariat to enhance implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; strategic objectives and associated actions are effectively organized by four spheres of influence: *policy, organizational, delivery and constituency*. Roles for civil society and other partners/stakeholders are woven throughout. However, the COP22 gender decision suggests a wider scope and with more specific detail, including indicators, timelines, level of responsibility and indicative resources required. Taking into account the various programmes, platforms and mechanisms established under the auspices of the UNFCCC framework that are currently functioning, the GAP should complement and enhance the work of all of them.

An analysis of existing decisions suggests that key areas of focus could be organized by *action area*, and the structure for the GAP could be developed using the following features:

Priority action areas	Activities	Expected results	Responsible and key actors	Timeline
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Suggested action areas

- Augment the competencies necessary of Parties and all stakeholders on gender-responsiveness and mainstreaming of a gender perspective, as well as to identify and address gender gaps in the relevant thematic areas under the Convention, Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.
- Enhance and share data, evidence-based promising practices, knowledge, tools and methodologies for the development and implementation of gender-responsive climate policy and programming.
- Accomplish institutional coherence on the integration of a gender perspective in efforts across all constituted bodies under the UNFCCC process.
- Ensure full and equal participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and in the representation of Parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention, including to advance the goal of gender balance
- Develop mechanisms to monitor and track coherence related to the implementation of mandates under UNFCCC boards, mechanisms, operating entities and bodies, operation of the UNFCCC Secretariat and Parties reporting under the UNFCCC process (e.g., national communications; preparation and implementation of NDCs, technology development and needs assessments; and National Adaptation Plans).

³ <https://www.cbd.int/gender/action-plan/>

- Enhance implementation through increased financial resources and strengthened institutional mechanisms as well as partnerships and coordination to carry out the Work Programme on Gender.

In addition, it is fundamental to define a governance structure for the implementation of the Gender Action Plan under the Lima Work Programme on Gender. An example is the establishment of an Executive Committee such as the one under the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts. The Executive Committee, which consists of representatives from various bodies under the Convention, ensuring that there is a balanced representation between developed and developing country Parties, might be a model to consider.

Organization of in-session workshop

As this is a Party-driven process, IUCN suggests that the in-session workshop reflects the priority areas of interests, needs, capacities and expertise reflected in submissions made by a wide range of Parties, as well as observer organizations, toward this endeavor. Again based on existing experience of developing GAPs, and considering other modalities in place under the UNFCCC, organizing discussions around action areas and elaborating specific activities and expected results could be an effective approach for developing the workshop agenda and in shaping key objectives for the meeting. As a host of relevant institutions/processes do have GAPs in place, lessons and impacts from related processes would be useful inputs to any workshop discussions. Finally, as various expert groups have been invited to discuss content of the GAP through meetings (e.g., para 28), content from these consultations should inform workshop development and facilitation.

IUCN looks forward to continuing to collaborate with Parties, the Secretariat and all stakeholders in developing and supporting an impactful GAP.

For additional information, please contact:

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