



TEXTS ADOPTED

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Women, gender equality and climate justice

European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2018 on women, gender equality and climate justice (2017/2086(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted on 10 December 1948 and to the UN human rights conventions and optional protocols thereto,
- 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 the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference, in particular its critical area of concern K (Women and the Environment),
- having regard to the Demographic Exploration for Climate Adaptation (DECA) developed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which combines population data with the geography of climate hazards, providing a policy tool for reducing disaster risks,
- having regard to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), which came into force in December 1996, and in particular Article 5 of its General Provisions,
- having regard to the 18th Conference of the Parties (COP 18) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Doha, Qatar, from 26 November to 8 December 2012 (decision 23/CP.18),
- having regard to the 20th Conference of the Parties (COP 20) to the UNFCCC held in Lima, Peru, from 1 to 12 December 2014, and in particular to the Lima Work Programme on Gender (decision 18/CP.20),
- having regard to the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP 21) to the UNFCCC held in Paris, France, from 30 November to 11 December 2015,
- having regard to Article 8 of the Paris Agreement,
- having regard to the 22nd Conference of the Parties (COP 22) to the UNFCCC held in

Marrakech, Morocco, from 7 to 18 November 2016, and its decision on gender and climate change extending the 2014 Lima Work Programme on Gender (decision 21/CP.22),

- having regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in September 2015 and in force as from 1 January 2016, and in particular to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1, 4, 5 and 13,
 - having regard to the United Nations Human Rights Council resolution 35/20 of 22 June 2017 on human rights and climate change,
 - having regard to Articles 2, 3(2) and 3(5) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU),
 - having regard to Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 25 June 2012 on ‘Gender Equality and the environment: enhanced decision-making, qualifications and competitiveness in the field of climate change mitigation policy in the EU’,
 - having regard to the EU Gender Action Plan 2016-2020, adopted by the Council on 26 October 2015,
 - having regard to its resolution of 26 November 2014 on the 2014 UN Climate Change Conference – COP 20 in Lima, Peru¹,
 - having regard to its resolution of 14 October 2015 on ‘Towards a new international climate agreement in Paris’²,
 - having regard to its resolution of 20 April 2012 on women and climate change³,
 - having regard to the ‘Position Paper on the 2015 New Climate Agreement’ published on 1 June 2015 by the organisation Women and Gender Constituency⁴,
 - having regard to the report published by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) on 26 January 2017 entitled ‘Gender in environment and climate change’⁵,
 - having regard to the Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action,
 - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality and the opinions of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and of the Committee on Development (A8-0403/2017),
- A. whereas climate change occurs globally, but has a greater destructive impact on the countries and communities least responsible for global warming; whereas the impacts

¹ OJ C 289, 9.8.2016, p. 27.

² OJ C 349, 17.10.2017, p. 67.

³ OJ C 258 E, 7.9.2013, p. 91.

⁴ http://womensgenderclimate.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/WGC_FINAL_1June.pdf

⁵ <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/gender-environment-and-climate-change>

are greater on those populations most reliant on natural resources for their livelihoods and/or which have the least capacity to respond to natural hazards, such as droughts, landslides, floods and hurricanes; whereas those with fewer financial resources to adapt will be hardest hit and suffer the impacts of climate change the most;

- B. whereas the impacts of climate change are experienced differently by women and men; whereas women are more vulnerable and face higher risks and burdens for various reasons, ranging from unequal access to resources, education, job opportunities and land rights, to social and cultural norms and their diverse intersectional experiences;
- C. whereas women are particularly vulnerable to climate change and experience its effects disproportionately because of their social roles, such as providing water, food and combustible materials to the family and caring for others; whereas women are responsible for more than 70 % of water chores and management worldwide; whereas in regions most affected by climate change, 70 % of all women work in the agricultural sector, yet seldom participate in developing climate policies;
- D. whereas the UN estimates that 781 million people aged 15 and over, nearly two thirds of them women, remain illiterate¹ while access to information and education through appropriate communication channels is vital for ensuring women's autonomy, especially during disasters;
- E. whereas in the agricultural sector in Africa, women produce over 90 % of basic foods and at the same time own only about 1 % of the arable land;
- F. whereas disasters have a major impact on education, health, structural poverty and population displacement;
- G. whereas the UN estimates that 70 % of the 1,3 billion people living in poverty worldwide are women; whereas the poor more frequently live in marginal areas vulnerable to floods, rising sea levels and storms; whereas women and children are 14 times more likely than men to die during natural disasters;
- H. whereas climate change impacts exacerbate gender inequalities in relation to discrimination, threats to health, loss of livelihood, displacement, migration, poverty, human trafficking, violence, sexual exploitation, food insecurity, and access to infrastructure and essential services; whereas there is a need for a gender-responsive approach that links the analysis of climate impacts to a critical reflection on consumption patterns and their impact on climate change;
- I. whereas women's unequal participation in decision-making processes and labour markets compounds inequalities and often prevents women from fully contributing to and participating in climate policy-making, planning and implementation; whereas women are not only victims but effective agents of change in developing mitigation and adaptation strategies within their communities and in decision-making positions and must be empowered to do so;
- J. whereas the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) clearly defined the link between gender, the environment and sustainable development, and asserted that women have an

¹ United Nations, 'The World's Women 2015',
<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/chapter3/chapter3.html>.

strategic role to play in the development of sustainable and ecologically sound consumption and production patterns, including the need for women to participate on an equal basis in making decisions about the environment at all levels;

- K. whereas Article 5 of the General Provisions of the UNCCD recognises the role of women in rural communities and in the regions most affected by desertification and drought, encouraging equal participation by both men and women in combating desertification and the effects of drought;
- L. whereas achieving gender balance and the meaningful participation of women in any process ultimately depends on correcting the structural foundations of gender-based inequality;
- M. whereas the Parties to the UNFCCC decided at COP 18 (decision 23/CP.18) to adopt the goal of achieving gender balance in the bodies established pursuant to the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol in order to improve women's participation, ensure a more effective climate change policy that addresses the needs of women and men equitably, and keep track of progress made towards the goal of gender balance in advancing gender-responsive climate policy;
- N. whereas women are still under-represented in climate change decision-making bodies at the national level in EU Member States, but not in the relevant Commission DGs, such as DG Climate Action and DG Energy, in both of which 40 % of positions are held by women;
- O. whereas the Lima Work Programme on Gender, adopted at COP 20 (decision 18/CP.20), calls on Parties to advance gender balance in their representation and promote gender sensitivity in developing and implementing climate change policy; whereas Parties are encouraged to support training and awareness-raising for female and male delegates on issues related to gender balance and climate change;
- P. whereas the Paris Agreement (COP 21) establishes that Parties should consider their respective obligations with regard to, among other issues, human rights and gender equality when taking action to address climate change in their implementation of the Agreement;
- Q. whereas mechanisms for funding adaptation and mitigation measures to address loss and damage or climate-induced displacement will be more effective if they incorporate women's full participation in design processes, decision-making and implementation, including the participation of grassroots women; whereas taking women's knowledge, including local and indigenous knowledge, into account can lead to advances in disaster management, boost biodiversity, improve water management, enhance food security, prevent desertification, protect forests, ensure a swift transition to renewable energy technologies and support public health;
- R. whereas the Parties to the Paris Agreement have acknowledged that climate change is a common concern of humankind; whereas the Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations regarding human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations, and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of

women and intergenerational equity;

- S. whereas climate justice links human rights and development, safeguarding the rights of the most vulnerable and ensuring equitable sharing of the burdens and benefits of climate change and its impacts;
- T. whereas the SDGs acknowledge the link between achieving gender equality and the achievement of all SDGs, including goal 13 on climate change, providing for the possibility of tackling the root causes of the weaker socio-economic position of women and thus strengthening their resilience to climate change;
- U. whereas the impacts of climate change in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia could force more than 100 million people into extreme poverty by 2030, fuelling conflicts and driving displacement; whereas the UNCCD estimates that 135 million people could be displaced by 2045 as a result of desertification; whereas the UN's International Organisation for Migration notes in its assessment of evidence that by 2050 the number of climate-displaced people could vary between 25 million to 1 billion, with 200 million being the most widely cited estimate;
- V. whereas gender equality, social justice and the right to development are inherent in the concept of climate justice; whereas, although the brunt of climate change is borne by society as a whole, it is women in particular who are the most severely affected by climate-induced displacement;
- W. whereas climate change increases the magnitude and frequency of natural disasters, which can result in loss of property, loss of economic income-generating activities, loss of access to vital health services, and a heightened risk of gender-based violence; whereas women's capacity to cope with the effects of natural disasters is often impaired by prevailing inequalities; whereas climate change is likely to exacerbate such inequalities, creating further vulnerabilities and displacement;
- X. whereas many of these impacts can still be prevented by implementing a rapid, inclusive and gender-responsive development agenda focused on mitigation and adapting to changing climate conditions;
- Y. whereas the impacts of climate change are projected to give rise to an increased displacement of people that does not fit within the parameters of current international frameworks; whereas responding to climate-induced displacement will be a challenge of paramount importance requiring a complex and comprehensive global strategy grounded in respect for human rights;
- Z. whereas the adoption in 2017 by the UN Human Rights Council of the document 'Key Messages on Human Rights and Climate Change' is a significant step forward in addressing the adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights; whereas the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement give global leaders a cross-cutting normative foundation for developing a framework which can address climate displacement effectively by building on existing UN instruments;
- AA. whereas the EU has a clear legal framework that requires it to respect and promote gender equality and human rights in its internal and external policies; whereas EU climate policy can have a significant impact on the protection of human rights and the

promotion of gender-responsive climate policies globally;

- AB. whereas the EU, in line with the powers accorded under the Treaties, can effectively improve legal and policy settings to support climate justice and actively participate in the development of an international framework safeguarding the human rights of climate-induced displaced persons; notes that the EU and Member States have committed to mainstreaming a gender perspective in the future Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration;
- AC. whereas the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees does not include the category of ‘climate refugees’;
1. Recognises that gender equality is a prerequisite for sustainable development and the efficient management of climate challenges; stresses that women are not only victims, but also powerful agents of change who, on the basis of full participation, can formulate and execute efficient climate strategies and/or solutions in relation to adaptation and mitigation and can build climate resilience as a product of their diverse areas of experience and practical knowledge across sectors ranging from agriculture, forestry and fisheries to energy infrastructures and sustainable cities;
 2. Notes that women’s participation in the labour market in rural areas includes a wide spectrum of jobs that goes beyond conventional agriculture, and stresses in this regard that women in rural areas can be agents of change in moving towards sustainable and ecologically sound agriculture and can play an important role in the creation of green jobs;
 3. Calls on the Commission to implement programmes through which the transfer of modern technologies and know-how can help developing communities and regions to adapt to climate change while working with women, who represent 70 % of the agricultural workforce in disaster-prone countries;
 4. Is convinced that the empowerment of women in rural areas is critical as regards access to land, credits and sustainable farming methods for building climate resilience, including the protection of ecosystems, water resources and soil fertility; calls on the Commission and the Member States to safeguard these aspects in their development policies, including through public investment plans and by endorsing responsible private investments using frameworks such as the UN Global Compact's Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights and UNCTAD's Action Plan for Investing in the SDGs;
 5. Recognises that women and girls are the best sources of knowledge of their own circumstances and needs and therefore should be consulted in all issues related to them; recognises that according to the EIGE, statistically women are more concerned about climate change); recognises that women as innovators, leaders, organisers, educators and caregivers have throughout centuries found ways in difficult situations to provide and meet the needs of their families, and have huge potential to be innovators for the future as well;
 6. Calls on the Commission to consider the social and environmental impacts of its trade and foreign development policies, including the impact of its actions regarding women; further calls on the Commission to insist on binding status for the social and

environmental norms in the chapters on sustainable development in the trade agreements that it is negotiating;

7. Recognises that development policies in the areas of health, education and empowerment, in addition to environmental policy, are fundamental to sustainable development and to ultimately solving climate change; recognises that the ways in which these policies are incorporated in addressing growing trends such as urbanisation will greatly impact climate change;
8. Points out that SDG 13 ('Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts') addresses women's participation in climate actions with a target (13b) that states: 'Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change related planning and management in least developed countries, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalised communities';
9. Regrets that all the contributions to gender work by the Parties to the UNFCCC are voluntary; urges the Commission, together with the Member States, to reiterate support for the development, adoption and financing of the UNFCCC's Gender Action Plan (GAP), to be complemented by a comprehensive and multiannual work programme that includes financing, priority action areas, timelines, key indicators of achievements, a definition of the responsible actors, and monitoring and review mechanisms;
10. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to lead by example and adopt targets and timelines for achieving the goal of gender balance in delegations to the UNFCCC;
11. Underlines the need to take temporary special measures in order to advance the goal of gender balance in formal and informal bodies established pursuant to the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol;
12. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure, in line with the EU's commitments to gender equality and human rights, that subsequent EU Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) include consistent reporting on the gender equality and human rights dimensions;
13. Calls on the Member States to adhere to decision 21/CP.22 on gender and climate change, which 'invites Parties to appoint and provide support for a national gender focal point for climate negotiations, implementation and monitoring' and to provide support for gender focal points in third countries and/or partner countries;
14. Recognises that women not only perform the bulk of unpaid household and care work but also make the majority of everyday consumer decisions, and therefore, if provided with accurate information and options, can impact on sustainability through their choices; notes that, for example, research has shown that by choosing local food products consumers could reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by up to 5 %;
15. Recalls its resolution of 16 November 2011 on the climate change conference in Durban (COP 17)¹ and the commitment made therein to 'strive for female representation of at least 40 % in all relevant bodies' for climate financing;
16. Calls on the Commission and the Member States, to adopt a gender-responsive, human-

¹ OJ C 153 E, 31.5.2013, p. 83.

rights-based approach in the work of the Warsaw Task Force on Displacement, mandated by UNFCCC (COP 22) to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimise and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change, which acknowledges that women and girls belong to the most vulnerable groups displaced by climate change and are therefore particularly vulnerable to trafficking and gender-based violence;

17. Calls on the Commission to integrate climate change into all development programmes at all levels; further calls for the increased participation of rural and indigenous women in decision-making processes, planning and implementation, and in the formulation of policies and development programmes concerning climate change;
18. Calls on the Commission, together with the Member States, to secure a gender-sensitive approach within its work on the Platform on Disaster Displacement (the Nansen Initiative) and its 'Agenda for the protection of cross-border displaced persons in the context of disaster and climate change';
19. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop indicators and collect gender-disaggregated data when planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating climate change policies, programmes and projects, using tools such as gender analysis, gender impact assessments, gender budgeting and the Environment and Gender Index (EGI), including through a strengthened EIGE;
20. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to contribute to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, with a view to safeguarding climate justice by acknowledging climate change as a driver of migration, providing human rights-based input, and mainstreaming gender equality throughout the compact, consistently with the needs of climate-displaced people;
21. Recalls Core Commitment 4 of the EU's commitments for the World Humanitarian Summit, namely to ensure that humanitarian programming is gender-responsive; calls on the Commission to ensure that this commitment is reflected in the implementation of the Disaster Preparedness ECHO programme (DIPECHO) and of the Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries (2013-2020) and the Resilience Marker;
22. Strongly condemns the use of sexual violence against displaced and migrant women; considers that special attention should be given to migrant women and girls who have been victims of violence throughout their journey, ensuring that they have access to psychological and medical services;
23. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to target the relevant programmes on the areas affected by disasters, to step up their efforts to deliver aid to those regions, and to act to resolve the problems induced by disasters there, paying particular attention to the situation of women and children, who suffer the most from the consequences of disasters;
24. Calls on all stakeholders to encourage women's empowerment and awareness by improving their knowledge concerning protection before, during and after climate-related disasters, along with actively involving them in disaster anticipation, early warning systems and risk prevention, since this is an important part of their role in resilience-building in the event of a disaster;

25. Calls on the Commission and the Member States, working together with civil society organisations on the ground, to support, strengthen and implement monitoring mechanisms in reception centres for the displaced and migrants which do not have the necessary minimum conditions to prevent gender-based violence, with a view to stopping all types of harassment of women and girls;
26. Calls on the Commission to work together with civil society and human rights organisations to ensure that the human rights of refugees and displaced persons in reception centres are upheld, particularly in respect of vulnerable women and girls;
27. Recognises the possibilities for integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation and women's economic empowerment goals, particularly in developing countries; calls on the Commission and the Member States to explore in relevant projects and mechanisms, such as the UN's Reducing Emissions from Deforestation (UN-REDD) programme, how women could be offered paid employment opportunities to carry out the environmental services that they currently provide on a voluntary basis, for example reforestation, afforestation of cleared land and the conservation of natural resources;
28. Calls for the EU and the Member States, with a view to further advancing the representation of women in the UNFCCC negotiations, to provide funding for women delegates' training and participation; calls on the Commission to facilitate and support the networking of women's organisations and civil society activities as regards the development and implementation of climate change policies; calls on the Commission to ensure that women are equal participants in, and beneficiaries of, all climate change consultations, programmes and funding organised with EU support at national and local levels;
29. Calls on the Commission and the DGs responsible for gender equality, development and energy and climate respectively to include gender equality in a structured and systematic manner in their climate change and energy policies for the EU, and not to focus exclusively on the external dimension; urges, in particular, the DG for Justice and Consumers and the DG for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) to step up their awareness of and work on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) as it relates to climate justice; stresses the need for the DG for Climate Action (CLIMA) to allocate resources to staff the position for a gender focal point (GFP); calls for the EU and its Member States to develop the principle of climate justice; insists that the greatest injustice of our failure to tackle climate change effectively would be the detrimental effects on poor countries and populations, and on women in particular;
30. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to report on gender and human rights impacts and climate action in their Universal Periodic Review reports to the UN Human Rights Council;
31. Notes that the EU's financial commitments to GEWE have increased, but the human resources capacity to manage the increasing volume of work has not; stresses that the EU has to show a strong institutional commitment to GEWE in relation to climate change, notably as set out in the overarching policies governing development cooperation, namely the SDGs and the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP);
32. Regrets that gender equality and climate change is not a priority area in the EU GAP II on gender equality and women's empowerment; notes that the gender-sensitive

indicators have not been adequately developed or integrated into results reporting and that internal accountability and funding for GEWE results remain weak; notes that the least progress has been made on objective 20 of EU GAP II, on equal rights enjoyed by women to participate in and influence decision-making processes on climate and environmental issues, and calls on the Commission to increase efforts to implement this objective; recalls that the EU GAP II has put forward an EU foreign policy agenda with four thematic pillars, including the horizontal pillar on shifting the Commission services and the EEAS institutional culture to more effective delivery of EU commitments, in full respect of the principle of equality between men and women;

33. Recognises that improvements to technical guidance will not be sufficient on their own to transform the EU's effectiveness on GEWE;
34. Calls on the Commission to take the initiative to produce a comprehensive communication with the title 'Gender equality and climate change – building resilience and promoting climate justice in mitigation and adaptation strategies', with a view to addressing its strong institutional commitment to GEWE and the current weaknesses in institutional coordination;
35. Calls on its parliamentary committees to enhance gender mainstreaming when working within their areas of competence on the cross-cutting issues of climate change, sustainable development and human rights;
36. Stresses the need to make the financing of both adaptation to climate change and mitigation of its effects gender-responsive; welcomes the recent progress made with regard to gender policy in the field of multilateral finance mechanisms; welcomes, in addition, private-sector initiatives that aim to enhance corporate social responsibility by introducing a premium for projects that fulfil sustainability criteria, including promoting livelihoods and educational opportunities for women; notes, however, that according to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), only 0,01 % of all funding worldwide supports projects that address both climate change and women's rights; calls for the EU and its Member States to ensure that their climate change programmes comply with the highest international standards on human rights and do not undermine gender equality;
37. Considers that the three financial mechanisms under the UNFCCC – the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Adaptation Fund (AF) – should unlock additional finance for more gender-responsive climate investment policy;
38. Urges the EU, in particular, to make development aid conditional on the inclusion of human rights-based criteria, and to establish new gender-sensitive climate change policy criteria;
39. Calls for gender-sensitive action to ensure that women are seen not only as beneficiaries of climate action, but also as clean energy technology entrepreneurs; welcomes the Commission's call for proposals on women and sustainable energy, making EUR 20 million available for the implementation of activities promoting women's entrepreneurship in the sustainable energy sector in developing countries, and encourages the Commission to increase this amount in future;
40. Calls for gender equality-focused training for EU officials, especially for those dealing with development and climate policies;

41. Requests that climate-induced displacement be taken seriously; is open to a debate on establishing a provision on 'climate migration'; calls for the establishment of a panel of experts to explore this matter at international level, and urges that the issue of climate migration be placed on the international agenda; calls for strengthened international cooperation in order to ensure climate resilience;
42. Welcomes the UN Women's Flagship Programming Initiatives and the Global Climate Change Alliance's projects and programmes, which create a cross-cutting link between gender and climate change;
43. Welcomes the work of the UN Special Representative on Human Rights and the Environment and of the UN Human Rights Council in this area, and calls on the Commission and the Member States to support these efforts, including through financial assistance;
44. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.