

Report of the Wave – High Level
Ministerial Side Event

„Financing Climate Change from a Gender and Rights Perspective“



Thursday February 21, 2008
10th special Session of the UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL
Monaco, 20-22 February 2008



INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF) organised a side event on “*Financing climate change from a gender and rights perspective*”, on Thursday February 21, 2008 during the UNEP Governing Council Special Session that was held in Monaco from 20-22 February 2008.

Eleven (11) Ministers of Environment and Development Cooperation took part in the side event, from Benin, Cape Verde, Guinea, Iceland, Iraq, Netherlands, Tanzania, South Africa, Sudan, Surinam, and Swaziland. High-level representatives of the Governments of Brazil, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, and Trinidad & Tobago, the African Union (AU), UNISDR and the UNFPA also joined in the discussions. In addition, civil society representatives attended the meeting and participated in the two-hour session.

The Ministers discussed with civil society representatives the gender aspects of three specific policy issues:

- Should nuclear energy be kept out of climate change programmes?
- How can climate funds empower women and the poor?
- Do we need criteria for bio-fuels to avoid negative social and gender effects?

Janet Macharia, Senior Gender Advisor of UNEP, and **Sascha Gabizon**, Executive Director of the NGO network of women and environment organisations “Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF) co-organising the event, welcomed all Ministers and other participants to the side event. Ms Gabizon was the overall facilitator and introduced the programme and the panellists.

KEY NOTE PRESENTATION: *Missing links in financing climate change adaptation and mitigation*: ULRIKE ROEHR

Gender and Climate change expert **Ulrike Roehr**, coordinator of the international network *Gendercc – women for climate justice* opened the session by presenting how market based mechanisms are failing in addressing the needs of women, landless farmers, and indigenous peoples. For example, many CDM projects depend on substantial land use change, which compounds the problems of local people, and may affect women more than men. Looking at the EU emissions trading scheme, it results in its first phase in huge profits for the biggest electricity companies: although the carbon emission allowances were given for free they passed the ‘virtual costs’ of these credits on to the consumers as if they had bought them. In the second phase it is allowed to auction 10% of the allowances, 90% are free and will increase the profits. Women and environmental organisations are demanding for auctioning of 100% of the allowances, which could raise about 75 billion US\$ annually. Money, which is urgently needed for adaptation and mitigation. She also asked for the implementation of criteria to ensure that measures and projects funded by these funds comply with sustainability and, in particular, are considering women’s needs and livelihoods. Roehr demanded the mandatory application of gender budgeting and gender audits in all funds, and called for addressing the root causes of climate change, like unsustainable lifestyles or injustice and inequalities in the world. She proposed that 20% of all climate change funds should be explicitly addressing women and designed and implemented by women / gender experts. In addition, she questioned why huge parts of research funding is going to the nuclear sector instead of looking for real innovations in renewable energy.

PANEL ONE: Keep nuclear energy out of climate change policies?

Tórunn Sveinbjarnardóttir, Minister of Environment, Iceland, started by sharing a dream, that through the cooperation of all women environment ministers, we succeed in completing the Bali road map, via a dialogue to bring a consensus for the Copenhagen COP where women's voices will be heard. It is important that the outcome of the dialogue is incorporated in the negotiations and decision-making. The Minister pointed out that side events were not enough for the Ministers to share experiences and therefore proposed to hold one-day meetings in the future.

“The Network of Women and Environment Ministers session should no longer be a side-event, but a full-day main part of the UNEP governing council sessions”

She moved to the topic of the first panel discussion, by explaining why the Government of Iceland is concerned about nuclear energy. Nuclear waste is piling up and there are nagging concerns for the safety of nuclear weapons. Radio nuclides from the UK nuclear power plant Sellafield enter into the northern seas, as accidents continue to occur and the UK Government is unable to stop this. For Iceland this is a matter of great economic concern, as their economy is based on fishing, and it would be disastrous if the safety of their main export product would be threatened. However, many governments in industrialized nations are promoting nuclear energy as a solution to climate change. But this is a quick fix only, as the problems of nuclear energy remain. Instead, she insisted we need to spend our money on truly sustainable energy options and called upon all countries, to solve their nuclear waste and security problems and not to invest in nuclear energy.

“As long as the big problems of nuclear energy have not been solved, we call on you not to invest”

Andjelka Mihajlov, President of the UNEP-accredited NGO Environmental Ambassadors, Serbia, pointed out that governments should, before taking a decision to invest in nuclear energy, take into account “the true price” for nuclear, including assuring technical safety (few countries have solved their radioactive waste management problem), as well as stability (political, governing, economic) in the country. She expressed her concern of the prevailing instability observed in many countries in the world, in which Environmental Ambassadors are operating, including the Balkan countries and Kenya, where social strife can easily flare up. In such a situation nuclear energy is a threat to the safety of the people. She underlined that from an NGO perspective sustainable energy has to assure environmental security, safety, stability and peace.

“In an instable world, nuclear energy is a threat to the safety of people”

The Minister of Environment of Iraq, **Narmin Othman Hassan Barzingy**, supported the previous statement, and voiced her concern of attacks on nuclear facilities in times of war, citing the example of Iraq, which is still suffering from the effects of attacks on nuclear plants during the 1981 and 1991 wars. The attacks have resulted in the pollution of rivers and have affected the health of the population, living near the plants and depending on the rivers for their water supply.

“Iraqies are still suffering the health effects of the destroyed nuclear plants”

Tamara Malkova, from GREEN Dossier/ANPED in Ukraine recalled her experience of living in Kiev at the time of the nuclear accident in Chernobyl and fleeing with her little daughter to South Ukraine, too late to escape the detrimental effects of the accident. She continued, telling that her son, who was born after the Chernobyl disaster, has experienced adverse health problems throughout his life. She concluded stating her concerns about the Ukrainian Government's plans to build an additional 10 nuclear power plants.

Sabine Bock, Energy and Climate Change Coordinator of WECF, said that the women of the WECF network in 30 countries were very concerned about the renewed promotion of nuclear energy as it is a threat to our health, our environment and violates our human rights. She stated WECF'S Russian partners have been defending victims of nuclear waste and of uranium mining activities in court – in particular children of pregnant liquidators after the Mayak nuclear accident – but that after many years only a few have received minimal payments, whereas the number of victims continues to increase.

“Breaching rights of nuclear victims”

PANEL TWO: Financing climate change whilst empowering women and the poor

The speakers on the second panel discussed how to assure that funding for climate change would help to empower women and the poor.

Rejoice Mabudafhasi Deputy-Minister of Environment and Tourism of South-Africa, introduced the topic by reiterating that women can change the climate for climate change. Women remain vulnerable due to inequalities and lack of opportunities to access the necessary resources. Poverty continues to draw women deeper into a poverty trap. She stressed that we have to address the current injustice of our economic systems, and that it no longer should be the sufferer who pays, but the polluter who pays. These funds should go to those who are most affected by climate change and least able to survive, the poor, and especially women, who are the poorest of the poor. It is therefore important that we address the funding rules for climate change financing and we look into ways in which gender budgeting principles can be applied in this regard. In addition any financing for climate change must observe environmental sustainability principles which in turn address gender concerns. The Minister proposed the Least Developed Country Fund should also address gender issues as this is not the case. Prioritization of the Adpatation Funds should include gender and there should be more participation by women at the decision making levels.

“We should apply gender criteria to climate change funds”

The Tanzania Minister for Environment **Batilda Burian**, pointed out that effects of climate change should be well addressed particularly the effects of floods, reduction of crop yields, which affect agriculture and animal husbandry in different ways. When promoting the use of bio fuels, we have to look at the crops that are traditionally grown by women e.g. maize, cassava or palm all of which are being promoted for development of bio fuels. Will women be involved in the growing of these crops? What will be the effect of this on food crops? Women have to be involved and should be enabled to own large tracts of land to grow these crops without compromising food crop production. She stated that Tanzania has one CDM project for solid waste recycling that is run by a private company yet women have for a long time been involved in waste recycling. Women in this case need to be empowered so that they too can be partners in such a project. She stated that we need to document the indigenous knowledge of women particularly as relates to adaptation. The biggest financing need however is in small-scale rural energy systems for households and communities.

“Women’s indigenous knowledge regarding adaptation should be treasured”

Minister for Development **Bert Koenders** from the Netherlands, stated that he promotes gender equity, and that this is maybe because he is a Minister for Development Cooperation, where he sees how important the role of women is. He agreed fully with the Minister of South Africa that the polluter pays principle should be applied, and that these funds should reach women, for example in mitigation projects. He sees that women are the “agents of change”, if we can empower women we can overcome poverty. He gave the example of a large biogas project, which the Netherlands ministry supports in Nepal, which is targeted at women, who

have already built thousands of household biogas installations. They no longer need to spend most of their time looking for firewood, freeing their time for economic added value activities, and it protects the environment. In addressing gender aspects of financing for climate change we should look at other global financing instruments developed through the women's world banking, mama cash or even tap into the UNEP/UNDP poverty and environment initiative to raise funds. The minister stated that gender perspectives should be integrated into all funding principles and having a separate fund of women would defeat the purpose of gender mainstreaming.

“Gender criteria should be mainstreamed in all funding programmes, rather than in a separate fund”

Ms. Tiina Jortikka-Laitinen, Director, International environmental policy Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland, stated she is glad to come from a country where gender issues are well recognized, and where women voices are heard. Further, she announced that the President of Finland and the President of Liberia are actively engaged in organising a high-level colloquium on women and leadership, which will take place in Liberia in March 2009, and one of the themes that will be addressed is that of gender and climate change. The ministry is also looking for ways in which to get concrete proposals on gender and climate change and how these should be integrated into the negotiation processes. Finland will also look into proposals to have gender criteria obtain a greater priority in international climate change funds.

Discussions:

Minister Hon. **Tereza Siricio** of Sudan, stated that she sees that women are at the bottom of economic development. In her country, women differently affected by climate change, how can provide funding? We also need to remember that half of the country has been in war for over twenty years which has had an effect on gender relations. In the Sudan there is no CDM project and she is interested in seeing how this can be developed.

Minister of Labour and Environment **Hon. Joyce Amarello Williams** of Suriname, stated that she sees a great need to allow more women to take part in the labour market. Women and girls should have access to training to work in the sustainable energy sector. Too often women are not afforded these opportunities. She would like to see that 20% of the Climate Change funding goes to support this. She also stated that women and girls need to be involved in projects that are already running and this should be at all levels including decision making.

“Women and girls should have access to training to work in the sustainable energy sector”

The facilitator asked the ministers what they think of this proposal, would 20% be too much or too little, should it not be 50%, as women make more than 50% of the population?

Minister of Tourism and Environment of Swaziland Honourable **Thandie Shongwe** stated that she supports a set allocation of funds so that we can be sure that money has been set aside and can be programmed. Can we do this with CDM projects? Though Honourable **Minister Bert Koenders** pointed out again that this would lead to marginalisation of gender issues in the utilisation of the remaining amounts. He reiterated that gender concerns should be mainstreamed into all climate change programmes and interventions.

Yana Dordina, of NGO RAIPON, representing the indigenous people of the Arctic region, said that the arctic people are already very much affected by climate change, both more extreme colds as more extreme heat, which has killed many of their reindeer and has disseminated fish populations, the basis of their economy. She sees little scope for

adaptation, and calls on all to reduce their CO₂ emissions as fast and as much as possible, as she fears that this will be the end of the Arctic people.

Mildred Mkandla of the NGO Earth Care Africa, presented the case of her neighbour in Zimbabwe, a woman rural farmer, single mother, and ill with HIV/Aids. She lost most of her maize crop when torrential rains came at the unusual time after the planting season. She has no more income, and cannot pay her HIV/medicines any longer. She stated that this is one example of millions, and that funds are badly needed, foremost for adaptation, for those who have no buffer to survive. There is a need for Adaptation Funds to address the needs of those who have no buffer and do not survive due to illnesses. Even where funds are available, women are not able to access these or have no information about the funds and therefore cannot lobby for what they do not have.

PANEL THREE: Which role can bio-fuels play to tackle climate change and what are the social and gender impacts?

In the third panel, the ministers debated with civil society representatives on gender impacts of **biofuels**, and the need for criteria.

Honourable Minister of Environment, **Jacqueline Cramer**, of the Netherlands, presented the proposal for bio-fuel criteria, which she has developed and presented at the UNFCCC conference in Bali. She has insisted that social criteria are included if we are to get a green house gas balance. In particular, the dependence on bio fuels will lead to food prices increases, which will inevitably harm poor women living in the third world. Again, this would reduce food crop production and increase production of bio-fuels as cash crops.

“Sustainability criteria for bio-fuels are necessary”

Ms **Neth Dano** the representative of the NGO Third World Network, Philippines, gave the example of peat forest being burned down for palm oil plantations producing bio-fuels. And that this was causing great damage to the climate. Such deforestation had to be taken into account when evaluating the impacts of bio-fuels. Many of the small farmers who are displaced by coconut plantations are women. She stated that she believes that Cramer criteria developed entirely by scientist, without the involvement of the affected populations, can never address fully the social and gender consequences. She emphasised that sustainability criteria has to ensure that the affected communities are fully involved at all stages. Again, the emphasis of bio-fuels is on crops that women traditionally grow hence the need to ensure that they too are part of the bio-fuel production process as well as being beneficiaries.

“Affected communities in developing countries should be involved in developing criteria”

Mr. **Marcelo Furtado**, of the NGO Greenpeace Brazil, stated that biofuels have positive and negative effects. The transition from a fossil fuel dependent planet to a sustainable planet is not without problem. He gave the example of corn not being as efficient as sugar cane. On the remark of the facilitator that given the labour conditions in Brazilian sugar cane plantations, this could hardly be a solution, except with strong criteria in place. He continued that criteria are all right, but not enough, and legally binding instruments are needed, also to support a just transition in the labour market. The market also does not address social issues, which have to be addressed. Look at the amount of corn required (about 1 hectare) to ensure the production of ethanol to run a car for one kilometre. This is not sustainable and other alternatives will need to be addressed.

If now, under pressure of the Netherlands criteria catalogue, the sugar cane industry was going to mechanize, then lots of poor agricultural labourers would lose their livelihoods, and he is sure there would be a social uproar against these criteria from the Netherlands. Whatever alternatives are identified, we should always address the impact of these on the livelihoods of poor people.

“Bio-fuels criteria can lead to loss of livelihoods”

The representative of the Government of Brazil, **Ms Bianca Abreu** stated that the Government of Brazil, is working on a program for sustainable production of bio-fuels, which takes gender issues into account.

Honourable Minister **Maria Madelana Brito Neves** of Cape Verde, explained that she is concerned, as prices for food products, which her country needs to import, have tripled in price, probably because of the increased demand for bio-fuels. There should not be competition between food crops and bio-fuel crops. She stated that local production and use of bio-fuels would be an interesting alternative for her country.

“Concerns about increasing food prices because of demand for biofuels”

Minister **Jacqueline Cramer** of the Netherlands responded that, she has hope in new generation biofuels, which do not compete with food, and would like to see regional production and use of biofuels, but cannot understand some NGOs who are asking for a moratorium on all BioFuel imports from Developing Countries, including Greenpeace international.

Marcelo Furtado of Greenpeace protested against this, stating that Greenpeace worldwide has the same position on Bio-Fuels, but that it is a very complex issue. He requested for more time to explain the issue, which unfortunately was not available.

The facilitator suggested that criteria is probably a first step, but that legally binding measures should be taken by all countries, especially the bio fuel producing countries, to assure that not great injustice comes from the global rising demand for biofuels.

CONCLUSIONS

“Changing the climate for combating climate change” would therefore require a multi-dimensional approach, including:

- Actively taking part in the negotiation processes of MEAs;
- Actively taking part in the discussions defining the criteria for financing mechanisms;
- Looking at reality from various points i.e. address consumption patterns and resource utilisation, rewards (in terms of those using sustainable means and those not doing so);
- Understanding the roles of the various actors/stakeholders i.e. who is doing what? What is being done? What is being promoted and by whom? Who is affected?
- Analysing capacity and ownership issues (especially when it comes to land use for bio fuel production) when looking at gender
- Understanding and addressing market influences and demands and how these can be shaped through criteria that will not only ensure sustainability but will also address the concerns of poor people and, in particular, women.

In terms of climate change financing the debate is whether to request the establishment of a special fund (20%) for women and adaptation (and mitigation) or whether to insist on the integration of gender considerations in all funding mechanisms. The latter option would require that mandatory and precise gender criteria for the allocation of all climate funds are being developed. Knowledge of gender budgeting processes would be very useful here and we should look at how we can develop gender responsive criteria for all funds and financing mechanisms.

The meeting recommended the following:

1. The Network of Women Environment Ministers and Environmental Leaders in collaboration with the civil society should develop concrete proposals for a gender sensitive Kyoto regime. The process should begin now and should include the development of a road map of activities for the Copenhagen COP.
2. At the next UNFCCC and UNEP meetings the Network of Women Environment Ministers and Environmental Leaders aim at setting aside a full day for a meeting to address gender issues and to develop recommendations for consideration in the plenary sessions

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Photos of the session



Welcome by Janet Macharia, UNEP senior gender advisor



Introduction by Ulrike Roehr, Gendercc – women for climate justice



Honourable Torunn Sveinbjarnadottir, Minister of Environment of Iceland, (right) and Honourable Rejoice Mabudafhasi, Deputy Minister of Environment of South Africa (left), co-chairs of the Network of Women Environmental Ministers



Honourable Narmin Othman Hassan Barziny Minister of Environment of Iraq



Honourable Thandie Shongwe Minister of Tourism and Environment of Swaziland



Honourable Tereza Sirico, Minister for Environment and Physical Education, Sudan



Honourable Minister of Development Cooperation of the Netherlands, Bert Koenders



Neth Dano of Third World Network, and Marcello Furtado, of Greenpeace International



Bianca Abreu Ministry of Environment, Brazil



From the left: Sabine Bock, WECF Coordinator Energy and Climate Change, Ulrike Röhr, gendercc- women for climate justice, Janet Kabeberi-Macharia, UNEP Senior Gender Advisor, honourable Rejoice Mabudafhasi, deputy, minister of environment and tourism South Africa, honourable Torunn Sveinbjarnardottir, minister of environment Iceland, Sascha Gabizon, WECF executive director, Andjelka Mihajlov, president of NGO Environmental Ambassadors, Serbia



Honourable Maria Madelana Brito Neves, Cape Verde



Honourable Thandie Shongwe, Minister of Tourism and Environment Swaziland and honourable Joyce Amarello Williams, Minister of Labour and Environment Suriname



Honourable Jacqueline Cramer, Minister for Environment Netherlands



Honourable Batilda Burian, Minister for Environment Tanzania



Ms. Tiina Jortikka-Laitinen, Direktor, International environmental policy , Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland (in the middle)



Members of the Network of Women Environmental Ministers and co-organisers of the WAVE meeting

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MINUTES

NETWORK OF WOMEN MINISTERS AND LEADERS FOR ENVIRONMENT MEETING

Thursday, 21 February 2008
2.15 -3.00 pm
Green Room, Grimaldi Forum, Monaco

In attendance:

1. Honorable Rejoice Thizwilondi Mabudafhasi, Deputy Minister of Environment (South Africa) – Co-Chair
2. Honorable Tórunn Sveinbjarnardóttir, Minister of Environment (Iceland) – Co-chair
3. Honorable Maria Madelana Brito Neves, Minister for Environment and Agriculture (Cape Verde)
4. Honorable Narmin Othman Hassan Barzingy, Minister of Environment (Iraq)
5. Honorable Tereza Siricio, Minister for Environment and Physical education (Sudan)
6. Honorable Thandie Shongwe, Minister of Tourism and Environment (Swaziland)
7. Janet Kabeberi-Macharia, Senior Gender Adviser, UNEP;
8. Sascha Gabzion – Coordinator WECF
9. Ulrike Roehr – Gender CC Coordinator
10. Sabine Bock – WECF

Facilitators: Tórunn Sveinbjarnardóttir, Minister of Environment (Iceland), Rejoice Thizwilondi Mabudafhasi, Deputy Minister of Environment (South Africa); Janet Kabeberi-Macharia, Senior Gender Adviser, UNEP; Sascha Gabzion – Coordinator WECF

Minutes:

1. Recap of Bali recommendations and Action Plan

- ◆ Hon Rejoice Mabudafhasi (South Africa) gave a brief re-cap on the recommendation made at the Bali meeting held in December 2007. Copies of these recommendations had earlier been circulated to all Ministers attending the GC and GMEF.
- ◆ Discussions centered on how the network can best influence the Bali road map so that gender issues are fully recommended during the next COPs and particularly in the discussions leading to the Copenhagen COP in 2009.

2. Way forward and operationalising the Action Plan

Discussion on how to operationalise the Action plan agreed upon in Bali could not effectively take place due to time limitations. However there was agreement that the Network need to be more effective in influencing discussions and decisions that are made at global and regional meetings e.g. the GC/GMEFs, the COPs and Regional inter-ministerial meetings.

3. Suggestions and comments

- ◆ **Propose occasions to convene:** there was unanimous agreement (which was also aired during the side event) that the NWMLE should not have one hour events but rather one day events (as is the case of the Civil society forums) particularly during the GC and GMEF meetings.
- ◆ **Appoint focal points in Ministries for NWMLE follow up activities:** there was not sufficient time for discussion on this but the Ministers did require that they continue to be contacted. However a request should be made to them to identify a person within the

Ministry that will undertake the follow-up and be the contact person for NWMLE activities. This will ensure continuity within the Ministry particularly if the Minister's portfolio changes.

- ◆ **Provide feedback on proposed activities:** Once a group email list is established, the Ministers (or contact persons in ministries) should provide feedback or information on activities going on in their countries, lessons learnt, challenge etc.
- ◆ **A query was made on whether to include men and NGOs in the network.** Is this a viable point or should the NWMLE continue to meet on its own and build its strength before including others?

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following recommendations were put forward:

1. **Information sharing should be improved.** A group mailing list of all Ministers (members of the NWMLE) should be developed. This will be used as the vehicle through which information of not only the network is shared, but also what is being done on gender and environment. It will also be a platform for sharing lessons learnt and good practices.
2. **Create a webpage for the network** which can be linked to all other networks and websites of partners.
3. **Recognition of regional and country level disparities and challenges** when making decisions and resolutions regarding the network.
4. **A full one day Gender and Environment forum should be held during the GC and GMEF, preferably one day before the main meetings begin.**
This event should be put in the calendars of the GC/GMEF meetings.
The co-chairs were mandated to send a request to the executive director for UNEP requesting this event to begin at the next GC/GMEF meeting scheduled for 2009. This one day event can serve as the annual meeting of the NWMLE and time for this meeting should be included in the forum agenda.
5. The Co-chairs are to send a request to the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC requesting that the Network be recognized **as a constituency** for purposes of being engaged in the COP processes and discussions and bringing the gender voice to the discussions.
6. **Planning in advance for next GC/GMEF:** Planning for the one day forum during the 2009 GC/GMEF should begin as soon as possible. In order to be effective the discussions on the forum should centre on the issues that will be under discussion during the GC/GMEF. UNEP to send more information on this to the network. The One Day forum will co-organized with partners such as IUCN, UNDP, WEDO, GCCA, WECF and others.
7. **More Women Ministers presenting in GC/GMEF panel discussions:** It was recognized that having the network members being invited as panelists in the discussions during the GC/GMEF is an effective way in which they too can bring forth emerging gender concerns. UNEP to send more information on how the Network can be more engaged in the GC Panel discussions.
8. **For effective visible the network should consider rallying behind one issue and rope in women scientists to push ahead the issue.** An example was given of the Forum for African Women Educationists (FAWE) that rallied around the Girl child. Through national chapters, FAWE has over the past 20 years ensured an increase in girls' enrollment rates and completion rate in many African countries. Discussions on which area that the NWMLE could rally behind were not fully undertaken and this was left to the Regional meetings to address this point.

The meeting ended at 2.50 pm