

Concept Note

Meeting of the Troika+ of Women Leaders on Gender and Climate Change

In the margins of the 71st UN General Assembly

7:00am – 8:30am, Thursday, September 22nd 2016

Offices of the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations
19th Floor, 885 Second Avenue, New York

1. Objectives of the meeting

The Troika+ of Women Leaders on Gender and Climate Change (Troika+) will convene in New York just seven weeks before COP22 in Marrakech. In Marrakech, Parties will review progress towards gender balance and gender-responsive climate policy and, it is anticipated, a new decision will be taken that will shape future work on gender under the UNFCCC for the coming years. This meeting of the Troika+ provides an opportunity to develop a strategy of near term steps to mobilise support for a robust new decision that speeds up progress towards the goal of gender balance and ensures that the new work programme on gender creates spaces for grassroots women to engage with, and inform, the development of climate action.

2. Background

At the last meeting of the Troika+ in April, 2016, the 18 members present agreed that the two gender decisions to be reviewed at COP22 – Decisions 23/CP.18 and 18/CP.20¹ – should result in a decision to continue and enhance existing work on gender and climate change under the UNFCCC. It was also agreed that the new decision should include measures to improve both gender-balance and gender responsive climate policy, recognising that positive outcomes in climate action require both. Finally, Troika+ members emphasised that the new decision should create spaces for the meaningful participation of grassroots women in work on gender and climate change.

2.1 Gender balance

At COP18 in Doha, Troika+ members played a pivotal role in securing Decision 23/CP.18. Dubbed the Doha Miracle, this decision aims to promote gender balance and increase women's participation in decision making under the UNFCCC. Through the decision, Parties adopted the goal of gender balance in national delegations and in bodies established pursuant to the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. However progress towards this goal has been extremely slow, with some bodies showing no progress whatsoever and others seeing a decrease in women members since Doha. Party

¹ Decision 23/CP.18 adopted a goal of gender balance under the UNFCCC and calls on Parties to improve women's participation and representation in climate negotiations. Decision 18/CP.20 established the Lima Work Programme on gender.

delegations did see a jump in female delegates following COP18 but initial reports indicate that the number of women participating at COP21 declined significantly².

Figure 1 below offers a year on year comparison of the gender composition of bodies and delegations between COP18 and COP20. Only 6 of the 15 boards and bodies monitored have seen an improvement in the participation of women. 6 others have seen the proportion of women decrease over the same period.

Figure 1

	% of which are women			
	Average	23	26	25
Gender composition of constituted bodies		27-Jun-13	02-Oct-14	11-Sep-15
Executive Board of the clean development mechanism		20	20	10
Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee		40	40	40
Compliance Committee facilitative branch		11	40	40
Compliance Committee enforcement branch		20	10	10
Least Developed Countries Expert Group		15	15	15
Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention		52	43	33
Adaptation Fund Board		31	31	28
Technology Executive Committee		11	15	25
Adaptation Committee		20	25	25
Standing Committee on Finance		25	35	35
Advisory Board of the Climate Technology Centre and Network		13	13	6
Interim members of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage	NA		30	35
Gender composition of the bureaux*		27-Jun-13	02-Oct-14	11-Sep-15
Bureau of the COP and the CMP		36	27	27
Bureaux of the SBI and the SBSTA		33	33	33
Bureau of the ADP		33	33	33
* Does not explicitly fall under 23/CP.18				
Gender composition of COPS		COP 18	COP 19	COP 20
Delegations		29	36	36
Gender composition at intersessional Subsidiary Body meetings		SB38	SB40	SB 42
Delegations		37	38	40

Key

% of women



0%

50%

Gender balance - What can be done?

Addressing these shortcomings requires a better understanding of the barriers to women’s participation in the UNFCCC. To tackle these shortcomings, Parties should include a work stream on achieving the goal of gender balance in the gender decision to be adopted at COP22. This would give Parties the opportunity to: i) identify obstacles to effective participation by women in delegations and bodies under the Convention; and ii) to propose measures to overcome these obstacles and accelerate progress towards the goal of gender balance.

² The official gender composition report, produced by the UNFCCC Secretariat, is not yet available for COP 21.

2.2 Grassroots women

COP22 can set in train a process to create spaces for grassroots women and their knowledge to inform climate policy at local, national and international level. If given a seat at the table, grassroots women with the lived experience of climate change impacts and solutions can help to shape policies that are locally appropriate and gender responsive. The gender decision adopted at COP22 should recognise the value of local and grassroots women's knowledge and facilitate their engagement in the work of the UNFCCC.

The report of the second Lima Work Programme In-Session Workshop³ held in June 2016 recognises that "giving a voice to grass-roots community leaders in the planning and implementation of climate change policies and programmes helps to ensure that local needs and knowledge are incorporated, thereby increasing the effectiveness of these policies and programmes".

This reality is evident in the experiences of women around the world dealing with the day to day realities of climate change. Women like Celia Reyes from La Aguada in Chile. As a member of the local neighbourhood organisation Junta de Vecinos La Aguada, Celia has become involved in decision-making processes and the design and implementation of climate action in her community.

Since 2008, the O'Higgins region of Chile has experienced recurrent drought which has rendered many rural livelihoods impossible. This has caused several families from Cecilia's small community to migrate to towns and villages. Celia is unwilling to leave the land where she was born and wishes to ensure a better quality of life for her two young daughters.

Through her participation in her neighbourhood organisation, she was able to build on her existing skills and knowledge by participating in training on solar energy and rainwater harvesting. This has enabled her to maximise benefits for her family. The project was developed by the community of La Aguada in consultation with municipal authorities, a local institute for agricultural research and the United Nations Development Programme. Having lived with the realities of the injustices caused by climate change, Celia Reyes has worked with other members of her community to develop solutions that not only increase resilience but also enable access to the benefits of low carbon development⁴.

Sustainable, people centred responses to climate change are most effective when they take into account the experiences and capabilities of grassroots people living with, and finding solutions, to climate change. The new decision on gender and climate change at COP22 should include a commitment to enable the participation of civil society, indigenous people, local communities and grassroots women in discussions under the convention to allow them to share experiences and inform the development of gender-sensitive climate policy.

Grassroots women - What can be done?

The gender decision adopted at COP 22 should include, as a principle, a commitment to enable the participation of civil society, indigenous people, local communities and grassroots women in discussions under the Convention to allow them to share experiences

³ UNFCCC (2016) In-session workshop on gender-responsive climate policy with a focus on adaptation, capacity-building and training for delegates on gender issues – Report by the secretariat. Available at: <http://bit.ly/2aikkbz> [Accessed: 17th August 2016]

⁴ Read more about Celia Reyes's story in *Women's Participation: An Enabler of Climate Justice* (Mary Robinson Foundation-Climate Justice, 2015) Available at: <http://bit.ly/1PaPTFO> [Accessed: 17th August 2016]

and inform the development of gender-sensitive climate policy. Parties should create the space for a broad range of actors to directly engage with in the development of gender-responsive climate policy.

3. Discussion Questions

COP22 has been termed the “Action COP” where it is expected Parties will roll up their sleeves and get to work delivering on the commitments made in Paris. This meeting of the Troika+ will focus on identifying concrete near terms steps to ensure that the implementation of the Paris Agreement is underpinned by gender equality and climate justice. The discussion questions to guide this conversation are:

- I. Progress towards gender balance has been concerning slow since the Doha. What can the Troika+ do to ensure that a COP22 decision speeds up progress to achieve the goal of gender balance?
- II. How can Troika+ members work together to ensure that the knowledge and experience of grassroots women informs policy making at all levels, including the international level?

4. Format of the meeting

The format of the meeting will be a round table breakfast meeting (light refreshments will be served). The meeting will be informal and participants are asked to contribute to the round table discussion based on their expertise and experience.

5. Agenda

Item	Time
Arrival of Participants (Buffet breakfast available)	7.00 – 7.15 am
Welcome remarks by H.E. Mr. David Donoghue, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations	7.15 – 7.20 am
Introduction and objectives of the meeting - Mary Robinson	7.20 – 7.23 am
Discussion moderated by Mary Robinson	7.23 – 8.20 am
Summary of outcomes and follow up actions	8.20 – 8.30 am
Meeting Closes	8.30am

6. Inputs

- Preliminary brief from the initial findings of the Full View II – an update of a research report on women’s participation in multilateral and intergovernmental processes produced by UN Women and the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice⁵

7. Outputs of the meeting

- Meeting report

⁵ The original Full View publication is available at: <http://bit.ly/2bihgQL> [Accessed: 24/08/2016]