

If you would like to sign the position  
as an individual or on behalf of an organization or network,  
please send an email to:  
[mujeresporjusticiaclimatica@gmail.com](mailto:mujeresporjusticiaclimatica@gmail.com)

## **Position on Women and REDD Cancun, December 9, 2010**

Women and organizations at the 16th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, taking place in Cancun, Mexico from Nov 29 – Dec 10, 2010, in order to promote and advocate for the recognition and protection of the rights of women and girls within climate change policies, and particularly those women and girls in vulnerable situations and impacted communities, would like to express the following joint concerns regarding proposed policies and incentives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhance carbon stocks (REDD+).

As women from diverse parts of the world, living in diverse conditions and circumstances, we affirm that it is of utmost importance to safeguard the rights of women, including those enshrined in the UN Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). We fully acknowledge the rights of indigenous peoples as referred to in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIPs).

In solidarity with affected communities and peoples, we, women and organizations at COP 16 UNFCCC meeting in Cancún, Mexico find:

- 1. REDD+ as currently designed will contribute to a global land grab from communities and Indigenous Peoples, which will particularly affect women.** Industrialized-country governments and corporations will only pay for the preservation of forests if they get rights over the carbon in those forests in return. This will have a particular impact on women as their property rights are less secure.
- 2. REDD+ initiatives, as they are currently designed, create perverse incentives and inequities.** Women play a differentiated and key role in forest conservation and restoration. The current REDD+ design is that actors will receive carbon credits for reducing their deforestation. Women are, overall, less responsible for deforestation and forest degradation and therefore, according to this set-up, they would be less eligible for forest carbon credits.
- 3. REDD+ as an offset mechanism will not address climate change as it takes away the responsibility for mitigation from the North and shifts it to the South.** Contracts to provide pollution licenses for fossil fuel-dependent corporations will potentially harm communities elsewhere who are suffering from the fossil fuel extraction or pollution for which those corporations are responsible. Women and girls in these communities carry a disproportionately higher amount of this burden. For that reason, forest carbon offsets do not only impact indigenous communities in the South.

**4. The commercialization of life and carbon markets are incompatible with traditional and indigenous cosmologies and a violation of the sacred.**<sup>1</sup> Women, as holders of at least half of all traditional knowledge, are integral to the preservation and living practice of this knowledge. Many indigenous tribal traditions in their historic responsibility protect the sacredness of Mother Earth and are defenders of the Circle of Life which includes biodiversity, forests, flora, fauna and all living species.

### **What Is Needed**

What is needed is the implementation of projects that are women's rights-based, strengthen gender justice, and are people centered. These projects should bring environmental and social benefits to all women and men. We want gender sensitive, equitable and just mechanisms that do not repeat the mistakes of the past by promoting monoculture tree plantations.

We recognise the need for industrialised countries to focus on new economies governed by climate justice, the absolute limits and boundaries of ecological sustainability and the carrying capacities of the earth. Such economies should strengthen and promote gender equality and the equitable sharing of global and local resources, and promote the encouragement and support of self sustaining communities..

Real alternatives to REDD+ already exist and should be promoted:

- To recognize and guarantee women's rights to land and territories, which includes collectively demarcating and titling Indigenous Peoples' territories, where most of the world's forests are found. This has proven to be one of the most effective measures for reducing deforestation and supporting the livelihood and rights of forest-dependent women, girls and communities;
- To ensure compliance with CEDAW and other human rights instruments, including UNDRIPs;
- To halt deforestation and forest degradation, which is key to secure women's livelihoods. Efforts to stop forest loss must address the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation and climate change, including:
  - fossil fuel extraction, mining and large-scale hydro-electric dam construction
  - demand-side drivers like the demand for beef, pulp, lumber, palm oil and industrial bioenergy; and
  - the need to abandon all forms of support to large-scale monoculture tree plantations and logging concessions, which jeopardize the ecosystems women depend on.

Funds should be invested in programmes that directly support alternative rights-based forms of forest conservation and restoration that are already known to work. These include Indigenous territories and community conserved areas that incorporate and ensure gender justice

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<sup>1</sup> See also the political position of the International Forum of Indigenous Peoples on Climate Change for the first week of negotiations of the 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

## **Organizations and Individuals up to March 4, 2011**

Academy of the Medical Sciences/ International Women's Forum, Russia  
Advocates for Environmental Human Rights, USA  
Amigos de la Tierra, Argentina  
Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), Thailand  
Asian Pacific Environmental Network  
Black Sea Women's Club, Ukraine  
Bus riders Union, USA  
Carbon Trade Watch, UK  
Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy  
Centre for 21st Century Issues (C21st), Nigeria  
Center for Women Policy Studies, USA  
Coastal Women for Change, USA  
Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, USA  
Ecological Society, The Phillippines  
FASE, Brasil  
Forum de Mujeres/Espirito Santo, Brasil  
Fundaeexpresión, Colombia  
Gender and Disaster Network, UK  
GenderCC – Women for Climate Justice / Mujeres por Justicia Climática, International  
Gender, Environment and Climate Action Network, Nigeria  
GenderFocus, Sweden  
General Counsel / International Indian Treaty Council, USA  
Global Forest Coalition, International  
Global Justice Ecology Project, USA  
Grassroots Global Justice Alliance, USA  
Indigenous Environmental Network, USA  
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
IRDANA, Netherlands  
K.U.L.U.-Women and Development, Denmark  
Kemitraan, Indonesia  
Labor/Community Strategy Center, USA  
LIFE - Education, Environment, Equality, Germany  
Movimento das Mulheres Camponesas, Brazil  
Movimento das Mulheres Camponesas Espirito Santo, Brazil  
MUGEDE-Mulher, Genero e Desenvolvimento, Mozambique  
Otros Mundos, Mexico  
Red Latinoamericana contra los Monocultivos de árboles (RECOMA)  
REDES Amigos de la Tierra, Uruguay  
Redmanglar International  
Rural Women's Movement, South Africa  
Savia - Escuela de Pensamiento Ecologista, Guatemala  
Sebastian Heilmann (Student of Environmental Sciences, Member of the German Green Party), Germany  
The Gertown Revival Initiative, USA  
The Human Impacts Institute, USA  
Vice President of the Thuringian state parliament, Germany  
World Rainforest Movement, Uruguay

World March of Women, International  
Youth for Climate Justice, USA

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