

MINUTES

MEETING ON GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Held at 11.00 on 5 December in the Parma Room, CoP9

This was an informal meeting organised by LIFE and ENERGIA with a view to taking stock of the interest of participants at CoP9 in gender as an issue in climate change and to plan for increasing the visibility of gender issues in the climate change debate.

The meeting opened with short introductions of all 30 or so participants. The names and contacts will be available through a list serve which is being prepared by ETC. A large number of interest groups were present, from the NGO world, from Indigenous People's Groups, and from bi-lateral parties. All these participants are in agreement that gender has been a missing factor in the climate change negotiations and that action needs to be taken to make gender issues much more visible. Climate change is not a neutral process; first of all, women are in general more vulnerable to the effects of climate change, not least because they represent the majority of the world's poor and because they are more than proportionally dependent on natural resources that are threatened. The technological changes and instruments that are being proposed to mitigate carbon emissions, which are implicitly presented as gender-neutral, are in fact quite gender biased and may negatively affect women or bypass them. An example of this is the fact the Marrakech Accords on LULUCF exclude the questions of avoided deforestation and forest management and thus exclude all interventions designed to improve traditional biomass fuel supply and use, despite the fact that 2 billion women are dependent on this. The process tends to be driven by a masculine view of the problem and its solutions. Participation of women in the whole process, at international, national and local levels is very low, both in the South and in the North; probably skills need to be developed to overcome this. Gender, like poverty, is a cross cutting issue in climate change and needs to be recognised as such. There is a need to be strident to overcome the uninformed view of many involved in climate change that climate change is neutral, and real life examples are needed to make the alternative case clear and convincing.

A suggestion was made by Phil O'Keefe of ETC that a full day event should be organised during CoP10 to make gender issues more visible to the climate change community, and to relate these to ongoing discussions on poverty and vulnerability. ETC offered their services, in connection with an on-going Dutch financed Climate Studies Programme on vulnerability, to organise this event. Suitable partners (bi-lateral and NGO) would be sought to assist financially. It was agreed that a list serve would be set up starting with the names of all those present, to circulate information and to strategize for this meeting.

Five main issues were identified as themes which should be addressed in the CoP10 event:

1. Lack of gender specificity in the criteria related to the climate change instruments
2. Lack of gender specificity in relation to the vulnerability/adaptation discourse
3. The need for case studies which illustrate both how climate change itself, and how projects (both mitigation and adaptation) affect men and women differently
4. The underlying gender connections between climate change agreements and other international processes such as the CBD, and health related treaties on pesticides etc
5. The lack of participation of women in the whole process.

A number of cross cutting issues were also identified including how to tackle the lack of awareness of these problems at the national and local levels.

Subgroups were set up to deal with each of the 5 these listed above, with the following convenors:

Instruments: Ulrike Roehr roehr@life-online.de

Vulnerability and adaptation Anne Pinto core_ne@coremainour.org or anastasiapinto@coremanipur.org

Case studies: Leanne Wilson and Roselyne van der Heul leanne@etcuk.org and r.vanderheul@etcnl.nl

Interconnections/synergy between different international processes: Olga Speranskaya speransk@ntserver.cis.lead.org

Participation in the process: Stella Lamang reachstella@yahoo.com

These subgroups would meet during the remaining days of CoP9 to discuss how to proceed. Information on these meetings will be posted on the wall near the NGO offices (ground floor).

Esteve Corbera agreed to coordinate funding for travel and subsistence costs for participants in this event at CoP10.

Fatima Denton and Ulrike Roehr were elected as the co-chairs for this event and will liaise with the five convenors. It is hoped that materials will be produced by the different groups well in advance of the event so that a publication/folder can be distributed.

Margaret Skutsch and Ulrike Roehr agreed to prepare a press release both for ECO and for general circulation.