

High-Level Panel: *Gender equality, women's autonomy and policies related to climate change*
During the Special Session of Regional Consultation prior to the sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66)

Wednesday 26 January, 14:30 – 17:00 (Chile) / 18:30 – 21:00 (CET)

Fleur Newman

- *What have been the main lessons learned and challenges in the implementation of the Second Gender Action Plan of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)?*

Opening

- I'd start with a point made in the paper shared for this session regarding the fact that the second gender action plan under the UNFCCC was a necessary step from a negotiation focus to action.
- The gender action plan was developed through a negotiated process, which involves balancing different country priorities and ultimately, compromise.
- So as also noted in the paper, many of the activities are restricted to the sharing of experience, expert group meetings and the like. Yet, in my view, despite the limitations or constraints of a negotiated outcome, the LWPG and GAP have been instrumental in driving change and enhancing gender integration in climate policy and action at the national level.

Progress

- The five priority areas under the GAP were identified as key enablers to drive the achievement of the objectives. This includes activities that support countries in:
 - building capacity in different aspects of integrating gender in climate policy and action;
 - in generating the evidence base for gender integration in climate policy and action, and
 - strengthening women and girls' participation and leadership in developing, implementing and updating climate policies, plans, strategies and action at all levels,

to name a few. One measure of impact or result that I consider to be directly linked to the evolution of the LWPG and GAP is reflected in the new and updated NDCs that were submitted in 2020 and 2021.

- It was evident that Parties are increasingly recognizing gender integration as a means to enhance the ambition and effectiveness of their climate action. Many Parties provided information related to gender in their NDCs and many affirmed that they will take gender into account in implementing them. Moreover, of the Parties that referenced gender in their previous NDCs, most elaborated more on the topic in their new or updated NDCs.
- Importantly, gender has its own section in the NDC synthesis report, which was prepared by the secretariat to enable Parties (and the world) to assess the progress

of climate action ahead of COP26. As a result of decisions at COP 26 this report is likely to be prepared on a regular basis. The mainstreaming of the gender topic in this important report is a significant step forward in transparency of information on gender integration and normalising its direct link to enhanced ambition and effectiveness of climate policy and action.

- While data in the synthesis report is aggregated and does not provide an analysis of the quality of gender-responsive climate policy being proposed and implemented by countries, merely the fact that many more countries are taking gender into consideration in their updated and new NDCs, compared with the previous, can be a source of motivation and inspiration for other countries looking for options to enhance climate ambition.
- We have also seen the change within some areas of the UNFCCC process with the majority of the 15 policy and technical bodies, known as constated b – which cover all thematic areas from LDC Expert Group to Executive Committee of the WIM to the Standing Committee on Finance. With few exceptions, the constituted bodies have undergone a tailored capacity-building session on how to integrate gender into their respective workstreams, which, in turn has led to most constituted bodies then developing more gender-responsive work plans.
- This is important because through their work they are clearly demonstrating why and how gender is so relevant to every aspect of the UNFCCC and it has deepened and strengthened the outputs of these bodies.

Challenges

- Challenges do remain. In many cases, those who are advocating for gender integration in their national policies, including National Gender and Climate Change Focal Points, do not have sufficient influence or access to secure funding for their own gender action plans or for implementing activities under the UNFCCC gender action plan.
- This has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has also had a negative impact on movement building and even in the organisation of effective meetings and workshops. Nevertheless, work has continued despite the difficult circumstances.
- *How can the machineries for the advancement of women and women's and feminist organizations of the region participate in the process of elaborating the Third Gender Action Plan in the next two years?*

Submissions

- Critical that we receive inputs via our submissions process on information on
 - the progress of implementation of the activities contained in the gender action plan,
 - areas for improvement and further work to be undertaken, including, as appropriate, information on the multidimensional impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic on progress, and
 - consideration of other diverse challenges that may impact future implementation of the gender action plan at all levels

- Submissions are requested by 31 March to enable the secretariat to prepare a synthesis report based on this information for consideration by Parties at the June climate change meeting this year.

Mapping

- All stakeholders, in accordance with their respective mandates and priorities, to take stock of and map progress in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in line with the priority areas of the gender action plan
- You can always share that information with the secretariat, including via the submission portal but also gender-team@unfccc.int

Closing

- Understanding of the importance of the contributions by machineries for the advancement of women and women's and feminist organizations to the development of just and effective climate policy and action is only going to grow from here, so it is **equally important** that the machineries and organisations understand how their expertise can contribute to addressing the climate emergency and continue to build their capacity on relevant aspects of climate change.