



## INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Alliance Internationale des Femmes

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[www.womenalliance.org](http://www.womenalliance.org)

**Environment and Sustainable Development**  
**IAW Convenor: Ida Kurth**

*Talking Point*  
No. 1

*Talking Point - a new IAW e-publication that will present articles on specific subjects*

### **All eyes on Bali ..**

Alarmed by the devastation from man-made climate change, many conferences have been held to prepare for the Climate Change Conference of the United Nations from 3-14 Dec. 2007 in Bali, Indonesia.

I would like to mention a few of these conferences: The UNFCCC in May 2007 Bonn, Germany; the UNDP/NGO Conference in September 2007 where 500 NGOs met at the UN Headquarters, New York and agreed upon a 12 month "Framework for Action" proposing grass-root solutions to the threats of climate change.



*Ida Kurth, Convenor IAW Commission*

### **Lack of Gender**

The Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO) noted the lack of gender aspects in all these conferences.

They brought out a paper in participation with the Council of World Women Leaders (CWWL) and Heinrich Böll Foundation, North America which made the following points:

- The UN Secretary-General and governments should send a strong message to this year's UNFCCC COP-13 in Bali that gender equality is to be integrated as a cross-cutting issue in the negotiations and debates and that women's equal participation must be ensured.
- Governments should draw on the innumerable global agreements that relate directly or indirectly to gender equality and climate change, as well as gender expertise within the UN system and at the national level.
- Given that women's knowledge and participation has been critical to the survival of entire communities in disaster situations, governments should take advantage of women's specialized skills in various aspects of livelihood and natural resource management strategies that lend themselves to mitigation and adaptation.
- Since climate change disproportionately affects poor women, governments should analyze and identify gender-specific impacts and protection measures related to floods, droughts, heat waves, diseases, and other environmental changes and disasters. The global community should prioritize the high levels of female mortality rates resulting from climate-induced disasters and livelihood changes.
- Given the vulnerability of the poor, and particularly women, to climate change, adequate funds must be allocated by Annex I countries to help these groups adapt to the impacts.
- Practical tools should be developed that allow governments and institutions to incorporate gender equality in climate change initiatives.
- Governments at national and local levels should develop strategies to enhance women's access to and control over natural resources, in order to reduce poverty, protect environmental resources, and ensure that women and poor communities can better cope with climate change.
- Governments and institutions should enhance opportunities for education and training in climate change mitigation and adaptation. Capacity building and technology transfer measures should draw on priorities put forward by women and poor communities.

- Women's participation in climate change related debates and planning must be enhanced by tools and procedures that augment their capacity and sensitize decision-makers to the advantages of equal participation.
- The UNFCCC should develop a gender strategy, invest in gender-specific climate change research, and establish a system for the use of gender-sensitive indicators and criteria for governments to use in national reporting to the UNFCCC Secretariat, adaptation planning, or projects under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).
- Market-based approaches to curbing climate change, such as the Clean Development Mechanism, should be made accessible to both women and men and ensure equitable benefits, considering that women and men do not have equal access to natural resources such as water and energy, land titles, credit, or information. In particular, the CDM should fund projects that make renewable energy technologies more available to women and meet their household needs.
- The gendered impacts of biofuels and nuclear energy as a solution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions should be assessed, in cooperation with gender experts and women's organizations.

*WEDO sought endorsement from other NGOs and President Rosy Weiss gave IAW's endorsement.*

### **Gender, Environment, Conflict**

August 2007: for two days over 300 international participants discussed the results of the annual report of the German Advisory Council on Global Change. Climate change may create new, or exacerbate existing, security threats.

### **Erosion of social order**

Climate change could exacerbate existing environmental crises such as drought, water scarcity and soil degradation, intensify land-use conflicts and trigger further environmentally-induced migration.

Particularly in weak and fragile states with poorly performing institutions and systems of government, climate change is also likely to overwhelm local capacities to adapt to changing environmental conditions and will thus reinforce the trend towards general instability that already exists in many societies and regions.

This could result in the erosion of social order and state failure impossible to manage with traditional security policy.

### **Triggering Numerous Conflicts**

Climate change will draw ever-deeper lines of division and conflict in international relations, triggering numerous conflicts between and within countries over the distribution of resources, especially water and land, over the management of migration, or over compensation payments between the countries mainly responsible for climate change and those countries most affected by its destructive effects.

These dynamics threaten to overstretch the established global governance system, and to aggravate existing problems in international security.

### **Fifteen years left**

Participants agreed that the report's projected 15 years for avoiding the most severe consequences of climate change, is a rather short time frame.

The urgency to act is additionally speeded up by the fact that global warming of 1°C compared to pre-industrial time has already been reached.

### **United Nations**

The United Nations General Assembly wrapped up its wide-ranging high level debate, characterized by calls for action to address climate change and other pressing international concerns, on 3 October 2007.

The Bali meeting, from 3 to 14 December, will convene the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

[http://www.wbgu.de/wbgu\\_jg2007\\_engl.html](http://www.wbgu.de/wbgu_jg2007_engl.html)

### **World in Transition**

Climate Change as a Security Risk and the summary for policy-makers can be downloaded at

[http://www.wbgu.de/wbgu\\_jg2007\\_engl.html](http://www.wbgu.de/wbgu_jg2007_engl.html)

*Quotes from:* The August 2007 newsletter 'Gender, Environment, Conflict', part-financed by the German Federal Environmental Agency and the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety.

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