

INVITATION

Upholding Human Rights - bridging the gender-environmental divide

UNFCCC Cop22 Marrakech



Thursday 10 November

15.00-16.30 | Mediterranean Room

Women's voices and knowledge are essential in climate debate to uphold Human Rights

In this side event:

- Experts present cases from different countries showing how women are disproportionately affected by the activities of the mining industry and large scale development projects that lead to environmental destruction, including water, soil and air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Experts give hands-on experiences from women in communities.
- A link between climate policy and the Human Rights framework will be made.
- Key messages and recommendations will be developed with the audience on how to incorporate gender in national policies on adaptation and mitigation and its implementation.

The workshop aims to improve the visibility of the gender and environment issue and the link with Human Rights during COP22 through coordinated action by different stakeholders.

SPEAKERS:

Agnes Leina IPACC, Kenya

Tafadzwa Dhlakama

ZELA, Zimbabwe

Sada Albachir IPACC,
Niger

CHAIR:

Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim IPACC, Chad

ORGANISED AND SUPPORTED BY:

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Indigenous Peoples
of Africa Co-ordinating
Committee

Upholding Human Rights - bridging the gender-environmental divide

The UNFCCC Paris Agreement and the Lima Work Programme on Gender call for gender equality and the empowerment of women to be incorporated in actions on climate change.

The ambitions from the UNFCCC instruments have yet to make a meaningful difference for those who feel the environmental impacts of climate change on a daily basis, posing a threat to human rights across the world, including the rights to health, water, food and an adequate standards of living. Women, who often bear the role of caregivers and who assume the responsibility of securing water and food for the family, suffer disproportionately from the infringements of these human rights.

On international and national level very few policies on climate change do reflect the women's voices and needs, and even less gender policies focus enough on environmental issues. This is the gender-environmental divide.

Mining activities for instance, will first imperil women's lives due to the risks posed on their living environment and the access to and quality of water. Then, the emissions of greenhouse gases generated by the extractive operations may contribute to the loss of land. The same women that have to walk extra-long distances to fetch clean water for their families could also see their collecting and gathering sites flooded.

Special attention should be drawn to indigenous women, who very often live in sensitive ecosystems, using natural resources either for pastoralism or hunting and foraging wild foods. The degradation of the ecosystems and instability of the global climate pose serious risks to them and society. Indigenous women are often the primary knowledge holders when it comes to biodiversity, including medicinal plants and food. This valuable knowledge may be lost as habitats are threatened by climate change.

The gender-environmental divide can be bridged with a Human Rights approach.



Agnes Leina IPACC, Kenya



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