

3.12.2021

## RECOMMENDATION

on climate change and gender policy

Committee on Women's Rights in the Euro-Mediterranean Countries

Rapporteur: Yana Chiara Ehm (Parliament Italy)

**CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION .....	3
PROCEDURE .....	6

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

### *on climate change and gender policy*

*The Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean,*

- Having regard to the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, in particular, Goal 5, which seeks to achieve gender equality and improve living conditions for women by 2030**, the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) of 2016; the **enhanced** Lima Work Programme on Gender Issues and its **Gender** Action Plan of December 2019; CEDAW Recommendation no. 37 of **February** 2018 on "Gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change"; the European Parliament's resolution of 16 January 2018 on women, equal opportunities and climate justice; **Council conclusions of 10 December 2018 on women, peace and security**; the European Parliament's resolution of 21 January 2021 on the EU strategy for gender equality (2019/2169(INI)); **the Declaration of the 2nd Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Environment and Climate Action in Cairo on 4 October 2021**, the Conclusions of the Council of the European Union adopted on 6 October 2021 recognising the need to promote gender equality and women's empowerment for effective climate action, and in anticipation of the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), scheduled to take place from 31 October to 12 November 2021 in Glasgow; **the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, which opened for signature in Istanbul on 11 May 2011**;
  - A. **Underlining that equality between women and men is a core and horizontal value of the European Union and its external policy; believing that gender equality and women's empowerment,**, which is a *sine qua non precondition* for **democracy, for combating poverty, hunger and disease, is an inescapable crucial goal on the path to achieving sustainable development and effective climate action. Empowering women as drivers of economic growth strengthens societal resilience**;
  - B. **Considering that climate change is not gender-neutral with implications on gender equality, empowerment of women and noting that extreme weather conditions, climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, desertification and drought have a particular impact on women and girls worldwide gender impact**indeed, many studies show that women **and girls** are more vulnerable than men to the consequences **impact** of climate change **due to women's and girls' social roles, such as providing water, food and combustible materials to the family and caring for others. Women are responsible for more than 70 % of water chores and management worldwide. In regions most affected by climate change, 70 % of all women work in the agricultural sector, yet seldom participate in developing climate policies. However, they in several cases** are not given the same access to resources, such as **job opportunities**, education, information, land **rights** and credit **as well as leadership positions in decision-making processes of adaptive and mitigation strategies** that would help them mitigate and adapt to such impacts;
  - C. Considering that climate change also has a multiplier effect on inequalities, as it

increases gender-based violence and the exploitation of women and girls, particularly the most marginalised **and the ones in temporary shelters**; and considering, furthermore, that some 12 million more girls **will** be forced into marriage as a result of the increased frequency of natural disasters;

- D. **Considering that women and girls are then more likely to suffer from food shortages and poor hygiene, in the aftermath of disasters, which can affect also sexual and reproductive health, by restricted access to services, contributing to maternal morbidity and mortality and other adverse health outcomes increase.** Noting, moreover, that there is a clear link between the occurrence of environmental disasters and the reduction in the schooling rate, which particularly affects girls, since after natural disasters, they are often the first to drop out of school to help their families, resulting, in the longer term, in a further significant widening of the gender gap in education (women accounting for 75% of the illiterate population worldwide);
- E. **Noting that agriculture sector is the largest employer of women in the Middle East and North Africa region, which is a particularly negatively affected by the climate change that** endangers food security by making farming extremely difficult due to floods, droughts or significant changes in seasonal temperatures, and also by reducing agricultural biodiversity, which directly affects women who depend on crop diversity to meet family food requirements (which in many **developing** countries is still the preserve of women); **whereas women in many parts of the world face higher burdens due to family roles, including responsibility for food production and water collection; according to WHO and UNICEF women and girls are responsible for water collection in 8 out of 10 households with water off premises worldwide;**
- F. Believing that women and girls are crucial **as actors and decision makers** in the fight against the climate crisis and that gender **sensitivity and** equality and the inclusion of women in decision-making processes are prerequisites for sustainable development and the efficient management of climate challenges in order to achieve a fair and just transition that leaves no one behind;
1. The PA UfM Committee on Women's Rights urges the UfM member countries to implement the Paris Agreement principles which state that all climate actions must respect human rights, including the promotion of gender equality, and calls for the rapid implementation of the Action Plan on Gender Equality linked to the UNFCCC Lima Work Programme **and calls for the implementation of the Glasgow work programme on Action for Climate Empowerment;**
  2. Urges the UfM member countries to include a **gender-responsive** perspective in all their **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and** environmental policies and in their projects relating to climate change, biodiversity, and the circular economy, including the setting of environmental standards that take into account the different impacts of adverse natural events on men and women, **boys and girls;**
  3. Calls on governments to recognise women as agents of change in the 'green transition' **with a meaningful and equal participation of women in climate action,** and to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through policies that

strengthen women's rights and ensure equal access to **work opportunities**, education and health, as well as **ensuring** gender equality in climate decision-making bodies; and to support gender empowerment in climate finance and ensure women's access to credit, **microfinance** and other financial instruments in order to foster green and resilient entrepreneurship, with a particular focus on promoting women-led small and medium-sized enterprises, also through appropriate microcredit instruments, **in order to ensure climate finance that is truly genderresponsive**;

4. ***Urges UfM Member States to encourage women's employment and female entrepreneurship, using opportunities linked to agro-tourism, green and blue economy and the development of digital villages, to improve female farmers' access to land, credit and financial instruments, skills and performance through education, training and advisory services;***
5. ***Calls on parliamentarians of the Member States to exchange best practices on professional status for assisting spouses in the agricultural sector, thereby addressing women's social security rights, including maternity leave or pension entitlements; calls for women's rights to own and use of land to be guaranteed;***
6. Calls on the parliamentarians of the member countries to promote a wide-ranging debate, in the most appropriate parliamentary fora, on the reasons that determine the greater vulnerability of women to the negative impacts of climate change, ***to establish task forces to face these challenges*** and to raise the awareness that in many Mediterranean countries women are still the weak parties in the economic change driven by climate change;
7. ***Encourages the UfM Member States to establish measures to combat and prevent girls' school dropouts as a result of climate change effects and climate disasters, noting that education is one of the most effective ways of preventing early and forced marriages;***
8. Calls on parliaments to consider innovative ways of involving women in issues that affect them in the climate crisis, including the possibility of introducing a gender quota system in climate decision-making processes starting with the annual Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, where women delegates account for only 30% of participants, ***in order to ensure fair representation of women on international and regional levels;***
9. Urges parliaments to support strengthening the *Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)* process, designed to empower vulnerable groups through education, training, awareness-building, information access, participation and international cooperation, with a special emphasis on women's capacity-building.

## PROCEDURE

<b>Subject</b>	the draft recommendation of the Committee on Women's rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean
<b>Body responsible</b>	Committee on Women's Rights in the Euro-Mediterranean Countries
<b>Co-rapporteurs</b>	Yana Chiara Ehm (Parliament Italy)
<b>Consideration in committee</b>	3.12.2021
<b>Date adopted</b>	3.12.2021
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	xxx
<b>Consideration in plenary</b>	4.12.2021