

## ANNEX

to the Women Major Group Submission for the UN Zero-draft Document

# Women's Global Rio+20 Compilation Position Statement UN Conference on Sustainable Development

Working Document  
Version 1. November 2011

This is a compilation of the Women's Major Group Rio+20 position statements based on input from the March 2011 Women's Major Group Position Paper, women's statements presented at the Bonn UNDP conference, the UNEP global Rio+20 consultation in Bonn and the Regional Rio+20 preparatory meetings in Santiago de Chile, Seoul, Cairo and Addis Ababa. This is a working document in continued progress. A globally developed summary of this document has been submitted as the Women's Major Group submission for the zero-draft document for Rio+20. This compilation document is an annex.

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Women's and Nature's invisible contribution – Bedrock of our Economies

- Women and the Environment are the bedrock of our economies and modern societies
- Both women and the environment make an invisible contribution which is currently not valued and not measured
- Women's livelihoods depend on a healthy planet and access to natural resources
- The dominant monetary economy is linked to and depends on a healthy planet, and on both women's visible and women's invisible economic contributions
- Most governments state that their objectives are progress and development, but at the same time use the wrong economic tools, which at best focus on GDP growth and at worst on making a minority rich.
- It is time not just to state again the right objectives, but also to choose the right tools
- In a sustainable development framework, the economy has to fulfil social progress taking into account environmental limits.
- **To reach Sustainable Development, it is time to move from the current economic system to one that embraces the 'Care Economy' – and from there, ultimately to sustainable and equitable economies based on gender equality.**

### 1.2. Women are key actors in the transition to a more equitable and sustainable world

Throughout the world, women are providing basic necessities for their families - food, water, fuel, homes and health care - and also caring for others, building communities and running businesses. They are forest stewards, farmers, land managers, community leaders, researchers, political leaders, technology designers, and entrepreneurs.

- On the positive side, all but 6 countries in the World have ratified the Convention on Elimination of all Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the last country not to allow women to vote has decided to do so in a few years time. Much progress has been achieved throughout the world , as many countries have developed policies and laws in place that reduce discrimination against women. But great challenge remain in the implementation of these policies and in the behavioural changes required within households, communities and institutions to promote gender equality. Thus, in many countries women's knowledge, skills and contributions remain largely unrecognized and undervalued. All studies show that eliminating gender inequalities are good for countries
- World Bank: investing in women is best investment in development of their communities<sup>1</sup> and World gender inequality brings economic costs
- FAO: by eliminating gender discrimination in agriculture, food production would raise by 20% worldwide<sup>2</sup>

### 1.3. Recalling key outcomes of Rio 1992 on Women's role and Gender equality

We recall Rio Declaration Principle 20 which says: *'Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development.'*

We recall Agenda 21 Chapter 24 "Global Action for Women towards Sustainable Development" which underlines the role that women play in sustainable development, and distinguished 11

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank - World Development Report 2012, Gender Equality and Development  
<http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTRESEARCH/EXTWDRS/EXTWDR2012/0,,contentMDK:22851055~menuPK:7778074~pagePK:7778278~piPK:7778320~theSitePK:7778063,00.html>

<sup>2</sup> add reference Food and Agriculture Organisation

commitments with specific recommendations to strengthen the role of women in sustainable and beneficial development. The chapter contains specific recommendations to strengthen the role of women in sustainable development and to eliminate all obstacles to their equal and beneficial participation, particularly in decision making activities relating to promoting environmentally sound management and sustainable development.

As well as 145 other references throughout the Agenda 21 text, in 33 of its 40 chapters, which underline the importance of women in sustainable development.

#### **1.4. Recalling the Women's Action Agenda 21**

The Women's Action Agenda 21, an outline for a healthy and peaceful planet, aimed to influence the outcomes of UNCED. It formed an important basis for introducing gender equality in the official UNCED outcomes, including Agenda 21, the Rio Conventions and the Rio Declaration.

*The Women's Action Agenda for a Healthy Planet, WAA21, was a critical reflection of women's collaboration on environment and sustainable development.*

The WAA21 starts with a common vision on the interaction between the life-giving capacity of the Earth and women's shared concerns about the health of the planet, social inequalities and the systems and values that cause such problems. Strong impetus is put on human rights, and the need for recognition of women as powerful forces of change, as catalysts and initiators of environmental action.

***"We, women of many nations, cultures and creeds, of different colours and classes, have come together to voice our concern for the health of our living planet and all its interdependent life forms. As long as Nature and women are abused by a so-called "free market" ideology and wrong concepts of "economic growth," there can be no environmental security"*<sup>3</sup>.**

WAA21 identified eleven urgent Action Areas, and specific recommendations were presented for each of these areas: Democratic Rights, Diversity and Solidarity; Code of Environmental Ethics and Accountability; Women, Militarism and Environment; Foreign Debt and Trade; Women, Poverty, Land Rights, Food Security and Credit; Women's Rights, Population Policies and Health; Biodiversity and Biotechnology; Nuclear Power and Alternative Energy; Science and Technology Transfer; Women's Consumer Power; and: Information and Education.

WAA21 criticized ongoing economic thinking and the official UNCED positions on sustainable development. It reflected a strong criticism of the existing models and practices of development that were deemed unjust, inequitable and unsustainable. The WAA21 text formed the basis for women's mobilization and efforts to influence the UNCED negotiations.

## **2. Women's Vision for Rio+20: an Equitable and Sustainable World**

### **Key elements of women's common vision**

Twenty years after the first Rio conference, great inequities remain. Social and economic inequities are especially hard on women and children as they form the majority of the world's poor.

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<sup>3</sup> From: Preamble, WAA21 (Source: <http://www.iisd.org/women/action21.htm>)

We agree to prioritize measures to assure equity, equality, social and environmental justice as they are cornerstones for achieving sustainable development globally.

**2.1. Gender equality in all spheres of societies:** education, employment, ownership and control over resources, access to justice, political representation, institutional decision-making, care giving and household management

- World where women can fully deploy their potential in all spheres of our societies
- World without gender-based violence - at home, in the workplace, in society
- World where women no longer own less than 1% of land and wealth, but share in land ownership and equally access financial resources
- World where women and girls are equally represented (50%) in education, job markets and political office
- World in which women sexual and reproductive rights are assured
- World where no economic activity is connected to violence, including rape

**2.2. Human rights and Social justice;** societies based on respect for human rights of all people and equitable management, ensuring livelihoods through safe and decent food, fuel, shelter, and health care, and a fair distribution of the earth's natural resources.

- A world where the human rights of all women and men are fully respected, including the human rights of Indigenous Peoples and other ethnic groups.
- A world where economic, social and environmental rights of women and men are fully respected
- World where poverty of women and men is eradicated.
- A world where all women and men share equally the limited environmental resources.
- World where women and men enjoy social protection.
- A world where men and women are equally taking care of their families, communities and environment
- A world where different systems of knowledge and experience are respected and can cooperate on equal footing
- World where products we consume no longer are based on exploitation and contamination of workers, including women and children, and consumers are informed about the social and environmental impacts of products
- World in which public and private enterprises are held liable for current and future damage and redress is assured for communities, including women
- World where products are produced in a fair manner, assuring decent pay and social security
- A world where the reproductive and sexual rights of women and men are fully respected
- A world where women have equal rights and implementable opportunities for information, participation, and access to justice

**2.3. Environmental conservation and protection of human health;** societies which function within the earth's ability to support life and human livelihoods, preventing disruptive climate change and pollution and contamination of ecosystems.

- World where women's livelihoods are not irreversibly destroyed by environmentally destructive<sup>4</sup> economic activities
- World where basic needs and services are fulfilled, a world more focused in providing services (such as transport) and less in producing goods (as producing cars)
- World in which women do longer need to fear from exposing their children to long-term health damage from harmful substances in their bodies during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- World in which free and prior informed consent of indigenous women and peoples over their natural resources is enforced

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<sup>4</sup> unsustainable economic activities, which surpass the earth's carrying capacity and cause long term contamination (toxic, radioactive) and disruption (ecosystems, climate)

- World in which prices include all externalities for damage and full insurance for risks
- World that provides incentives for zero-waste, life cycle approach, low-carbon and resource efficient, production that enhance and restore the natural environment, while also providing livelihoods, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for women as well as men

### **3. Caring, Green and Inclusive Sustainable Economies**

#### **Views on the Rio+20 theme of a ‘green’ economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication’**

Based on the lessons from the financial and food crisis there is a need to clarify the hierarchy of the 3 components of sustainable development – environmental, social and economic. The "economic development" pillar - and its instruments of private and public regulation of finance - must serve human development, based on fiscal mechanisms and equitable redistribution of wealth including the goal of equality between women and men.

The backbone of all policies and strategies for sustainable development must be formed by the human rights approach. Policy decision should be preceded by an analysis of possible negative consequences on human rights and in terms of gender equality in relation to environmental rights. This analysis should include values for domestic work, the caring for others and the planet and informal labor provided mostly by women.

#### **3.1. Current damage to women and environment of our economic systems**

While the wealthy consume more and more natural resources and are responsible for increasing levels of environmental damage, people living in poverty are suffering from degradation of their agricultural land, forests, water supplies and biodiversity, and alteration of natural weather cycles due to climate change.

##### **3.1.1. Current economy system: inequitable and unsustainable**

While the wealthy consume more and more natural resources and are responsible for increasing levels of environmental damage, the poor are suffering from degradation of their agricultural land, forests, water supplies and biodiversity, and alteration of natural weather cycles due to climate change. Social and economic inequities are especially hard on women and children as they form the majority of the world’s poor.

- too much funding goes to perverse subsidies for unsustainable and speculative activities<sup>5</sup>
- almost all countries (with a few exceptions) are growing more unequal, inequality is growing in the North and the South.
- too little funding goes to human capital development and social equity, too little reaches women
- in times of GDP reduction, austerity measures are often a greater burden on women than on men<sup>6</sup>
- current prices do not include externalities and future costs
- current economic decision making is too short term, long term benefits are not valued
- Military budgets and tax spending for bailing out banks take away necessary funding for social development and environmental protection.

##### **3.1.2. Gender Blind – current economic indicators**

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<sup>5</sup> an estimated 700 – 900 billion USD of subsidies go to support fossil and nuclear energy annually, see UNEP report towards green economy 2011, some 1 billion USD per day (!) goes to subsidies for unsustainable agriculture (bad for public health, bees, ecosystems, soil, biodiversity).

<sup>6</sup> a 2011 study by the UK trade unions show that 70% of the austerity measures are a greater burden on women than men

- Our economies are currently managed so as to achieve growth of the GDP – Gross Domestic Product.
- We have seen growth which lead to increasing inequity, growth which depleted the natural resource base of the economy itself, growth which did not benefit women, even jobless growth.
- We do not want growth without equity, not even 'green' growth.

### **3.1.3. Poverty Eradication that benefits women**

- The majority of the poor are women.<sup>7</sup>
- The agenda for the Rio+20 UNCS D will address the Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and **poverty eradication**.
- Poverty eradication depends more on fairer distribution of resources and rights for the poor, then on GDP growth.
- Poverty reduction also happens without GDP growth, through improving the environment, as most poor depend on natural resources for livelihoods – forests and fisheries are an example.
- Women from low income communities are unable to participate in a "greener" economy if they have to spent most of their time for the "care economy"<sup>8</sup>
- Basic livelihoods for women need to be assured, including access to basic services so as to allow their participation in society including in the economy

### **3.1.4. Preventing toxic and radioactive harm on women's and children's health**

- Women and their families are suffering health damage from contamination by harmful substances and radiation, even at very low doses. This damage also has a significant negative impact on sustainable and social development and poverty eradication.
- During pregnancy women unknowingly pass radioactive and persistent harmful chemicals on towards their children, and these to their children, with a risk of long-term, irreversible damage to the body and the brain
- Halting irreversible damage should be a priority area for Rio+20, in particular irreversible long term damage by radiation and by persistent, bio-accumulative, carcinogenic, mutagenic, repro-toxic and hormone disruption chemicals

### **3.1.5. Agriculture, women and rural development**

- Women own only 1 % of the land, but 59%-80% of women are employed in the agricultural sector.
- Women in agriculture earn much less then men due to gender discrimination, changing this would increase food production by 20% according to FAO
- Increasing control by large corporations of the food chain is leading to the spread of industrial monocultures of crops such as soybean, oil-palm and eucalyptus, the proliferation of genetically modified products, privatization and patenting of life as well as commercial contracts for the sale of carbon dioxide and other so-called "environmental services"
- Food versus Fuel: the agro-fuel plantations cause land grabbing and other violations of the rights of indigenous peoples and communities and are one of the root causes of the current food crisis and effect in a dramatic way the lives of women and their families.
- Agro-toxics used in intensive agriculture, including agrofuels or monocultures of trees, pollute the earth and the health of women
- Agricultural biodiversity is being lost, and with it we are loosing women's traditional knowledge of seeds and productive skills, leading to a dramatic degradation of women's social and environmental resilience.

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<sup>7</sup> The UN estimates that approximately 70% of the 1.3 billion people living on less than one dollar a day are women, and these figures are rising with current food, fuel and financial crises.

<sup>8</sup> e.g. gathering fuel, water, assuring food, and caring for children, ill and disabled



### 3.1.6. Energy - lack of access for women to safe sources

- Close to 2.4 billion people in developing countries still depend entirely on traditional biomass fuels which are detrimental for the environment and health
- Over 2 million people, mostly women and children as they spend most time indoors, suffer from respiratory diseases caused by biomass burning
- It is often women who are tasked with collecting and managing biomass fuel supplies such as firewood, dung and agricultural residues, leaving less time for productive activities.
- In many countries, energy prices are subsidized; eliminating subsidies on fossil fuel would harm the poor most if not replaced by social security systems

### 3.1.7. Nuclear energy – women and children at greatest risk

- Women and children are at significantly greater risk of suffering and dying from radiation-induced cancer than a man exposed to the same dose of ionizing radiation (National Academy Press, USA)<sup>9</sup>.
- „Radiation kills men--but it kills significantly **more** women. Both cancer incidence and death are 50% higher for women“<sup>10</sup>
- Regulation of radiation and nuclear activity ignores the disproportionately greater harm to both women and children<sup>11</sup>.
- Radiation harm includes not only cancer and leukemia, but reduced immunity and also reduced fertility, increases in other diseases including heart disease, birth defects including heart defects, other mutations
- Radioactive contamination of pregnant women in Chelyabinsk, Russia, have shown mutations of chromosomes, being transmitted into the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> generation of children<sup>12</sup>.
- Victims of nuclear energy will never be compensated for, as the nuclear industry pays artificially low insurance costs<sup>13</sup>, which means the tax-payer and future generations pay both economically as with their health.
- Nuclear energy is highly subsidised, the price of nuclear energy does not include the irreversible and long term damage caused throughout the nuclear fuel cycle<sup>14</sup>

### 3.1.8 Climate Change, natural disaster preparedness and women

- Slow-onset and sudden climatic changes already cause major problems in many regions of the world.
- Due to gender inequalities, discrimination and the feminization of poverty, women and girls are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which destroy women's and girls' livelihoods and increase women's and girls' work burdens.
- Natural disasters reinforce, perpetuate and increase gender inequality, making bad situations worse for women.
- Women and men experience different vulnerabilities and cope with natural disasters differently;

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<sup>9</sup> Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation (BEIR) VII, Phase 2 report, “Health Risks from Exposure to Low Levels of Ionizing Radiation,” published by the National Academy Press in 2006, Washington, DC.

<sup>10</sup> Mary Olson, NIRS Briefing Paper October 2011 - [www.nirs.org/radiation/radhealth/radiationwomen.pdf](http://www.nirs.org/radiation/radhealth/radiationwomen.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> The background for some recommendations include calculations of the different radiation effects on women and children but the final, “allowable” doses to the public do not incorporate this information.

<sup>12</sup> Tomsk research quoted in WECF factsheet on nuclear industry and health: [www.wecf.eu/english/publications/index.php](http://www.wecf.eu/english/publications/index.php)

<sup>13</sup> For nuclear power plants in New York state, the insurance would amount to some 6 billion USD each year, which is higher than the cost of construction of the plant (Professor Bell).

<sup>14</sup> Communities in countries with uranium mines, risk irreversible pollution of groundwater aquifers with radio-nuclides, and long term health damage. Developing countries and countries in transition do not have the funds to properly clean-up uranium mining tailing, nor decommission nuclear powerplants

therefore, an increase in the magnitude and frequency of natural disasters will have different implications for men and women.

- On the other hand, women have valuable experiences, knowledge and ideas about climate change adaptation, resilience and disaster risk management, and are important actors in the promotion of sustainable consumption.
- However, women's decision-making power and participation in development and implementation of climate change policies, mechanisms and funding are very limited.

### **3.1.9. Women lack access to safe water and sanitation**

- Up to 2,2 billion people live without access to clean water (1 billion) or basic sanitation (2,2 billion).
- In many developing countries, it is women and girls who are often most affected by lack of water, as they are primarily responsible for obtaining and transporting water for daily use.
- Women and girls may travel many miles and spend much of their time securing essential water supplies
- Their task becomes more difficult as rivers and lakes become polluted and ecosystems degraded, and as their access routes are sometimes cut off (via fencing or threats) by large-scale land acquisition for industry or other private developments.
- Lack of safe water and sanitation limits women's development possibilities. This starts with girls' school attendance, which decreases when there is no access to safe sanitation, thus limiting their ability to get an education.
- Increasing access to safe water and sanitation for children is the most effective manner to reduce mortality of girls (World Bank)

### **3.1.10. Biodiversity decline negatively impact on women**

- The degradation and destruction of forests, grasslands, coastal areas and other ecosystems is having a particularly strong negative impact on women, as they often depend on the wood, medicinal plants, wild fruits, seafood and other food and energy sources these ecosystems provide.
- Women and their traditional knowledge systems play a very important role in the management of Indigenous territories and community conserved areas and other community-based initiatives to conserve and restore ecosystems. This role, and these initiatives, should be recognized, protected against outside economic interference, and strengthened.

### **3.1.11 Oceans fisheries and women's health and food security**

- Ocean acidification threatens marine resources with unknown consequences for fisheries that are critical sources for household nutrition for poor women in coastal zones.
- Unsustainable fisheries practices can lead to declines of global fish stocks including those used by indigenous people in coastal areas.
- Harmful man-made pollution such as Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and mercury in oceans have spread due to increasing water temperatures, and enter into the fish and seafood, and eventually humans<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> The 2010 UNEP Report on "Climate Change and POPs" found that increasing water temperatures make POPs and other hazardous substances, such as methylmercury, more volatile and more mobile. Other recent studies have shown that these are being taken up by fish and seafood, and eventually humans through their diet. A WHO report to the negotiation to create a global instrument on mercury, with the objective of protecting human health and the environment by reducing mercury releases noted that in subsistence fishing populations, between 1.5/1000 and 17/1000 children showed cognitive impacts because of their exposure to methylmercury, an organic compound of mercury. A further impact on revenue from oceanic fisheries is that hazardous toxic substances reduce the reproductivity of fish, and so future food security as well as significant revenue for fishing nations is at risk. These are significant impacts on communities which have few choices for dietary protein and they indicate that greater global effort is needed to stop releases of harmful toxic substances into the

- Sustainable aquaculture can be a source of protein and household income. The role of women in these industries is limited despite their potential for food security.

### **3.2. Rio+20 Recommendations for “Sustainable and Equitable Economies” Referring to Rio+20 Agenda point “Green Economies in the framework of poverty eradication and sustainable development**

Social equity and environmental justice must remain at the heart of sustainable development, and the outcomes of the Rio+20 UN conference in 2012.

We support the transformation from the current economic system to a sustainable and equitable economic system which ensures gender equality, human rights and environmental justice and supports sustainable livelihoods and poverty eradication.

#### **3.2.1. Principles of Sustainable and Equitable Economies**

##### **3.2.1.1. Sustainable and equitable economies promote social equity, gender equality and intergenerational equity**

- should
  - Be based on a human rights approach
  - Function within the limits of the planet
  - Ensure a fair distribution of limited resources between men and women
  - Ensure a fair distribution of limited resources among all countries and social groups
  - Ensure equity within one generation and with future generations
  - Ensure a fair transition for those effected by the change to sustainable and equitable economies

##### **3.2.1.2. Sustainable and equitable economies must be based on the precautionary principle**

- If there is indication of potential harm to the health of humans and the planet, binding measures must be taken, before harm is done
- Independent technology assessment before widespread use
- Polluters should be held liable for historic, current and future damage and costs
- Policy indicators must change, to well reflect the value of our environment and wellbeing the future
- Global funds can assure investments in protecting the environment for future generations
- Children, women and indigenous peoples in particular, should have to right to obtain redress for current and future damage

##### **3.2.1.3. Sustainable and equitable economies must be based on democracy, transparency and justice**

- Assure
  - timely access to information
  - effective public participation
  - democratic decision making
  - affordable access to justice
- All private and public companies report on their social and economic impact, – including gender impact – if not voluntary, then through legally binding regulations

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environment.

- Legally binding regulations for Corporate Social Responsibility reporting should ensure that “green-washing” is eliminated.

#### **3.2.1.4. Sustainable and equitable economies must be based on ethical values and global responsibility**

- Values for respect for nature, spirituality, culture, harmony, solidarity, community, caring and sharing
- Value of the global common goods
- Sharing worldwide whilst aiming for individual and societal wellbeing within the context of ‘buen vivir<sup>16</sup>’ (good living)
- Sharing means a more equitable distribution: eradicating poverty and changing and reducing excessive consumption patterns, in two directions, contraction and convergence policies. The need for eliminating not only not only extreme poverty, but also extreme wealth, in order to remain within the caring capacity of the planet
- Due value to and responsibility for common goods as an ongoing ethical, social and legal challenge for the local, national and international communities in charge of guarding these commons

#### **3.2.2. Measuring and operationalizing sustainable and equitable development**

##### **3.2.2.1. Policies should recognize and promote women’s economic contributions**

Profound policy and legislative changes are needed, that:

- secure women’s property rights, land tenure, and control over natural resources, taking into account the need to prevent the further privatization of the commons;
- protect women’s access to common lands
- promote women’s access to services and technologies needed for water, energy, agricultural production, family care, household management and business enterprises;
- provide safe health care facilities, including for sexual and reproductive health;
- enable women - and men - to have access to childcare facilities at their places of employment? combine their jobs with childcare;
- support investments in women’s economic empowerment; and
- promote women’s participation in government and business leadership.

##### **3.2.2.2. Beyond GDP**

- Although “green GDP” and “green Dow Jones indexes” exist, and are a step in the right direction, they are not widely used
- Gender equality, environmental impact and social indicators should be added to GDP as a basis for economic policy decisions (good examples include Gini coefficient, Gross National Happiness and “Buen Vivir” a.o.)
- Indicators to show gender impacts should be added: countries should commit to using them and reporting on them as part of Rio+20 implementation

##### **3.2.2.3. Financial sector reform – encouraging long term perspectives**

- The financial sector needs further re-regulating, to assure that its supports moving towards sustainable and equitable development,
- Private financial institutions should not be allowed to speculate against sovereign states
- Long-term benefits should be worth more than short term benefits
- Financial institutions should support local sustainable development, and the “solidarity economy” (Ecuador)

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<sup>16</sup> Term comes from the constitution of Ecuador, and used in the Regional Rio+20 Statement from Latin America and Caribbean

- Countries should agree in Rio+20 to implement tested measures such as the financial transaction tax (India, Brazil) to increase long term perspective in financial investments and generate revenue for sustainable and equitable development
- Funds for sustainable and equitable development should ensure specific funds for access by women, in particular women in indigenous peoples and local communities
- Countries should agree in Rio+20 to allocate 50% of GEF funds to local level funding, and to increase GEF micro-finance activities

### **3.2.2.3. Fiscal sector reform – redistribution of wealth**

- Redistribution of wealth is the only way to poverty eradication and improving women's global situation
- New taxation is needed to fairly distribute economic and environmental wealth in our societies. Last decades taxation has become centered in the "efficient allocation" of capital and less progressive and less likely to address increasing inequality.
- Efforts should be made to fight tax havens and tax evasion.
- Making more funds available for poverty reduction, countries should agree in Rio+20 to start phasing out perverse subsidies, whilst continuing support for the poor
- Available funds should be reallocated, in particular to a "basic global women's income", to bring the poor out of deprivation<sup>17</sup>
- Best practices by countries which are taxing non-renewable and unsustainable resource exploitation to invest clean up and future sustainable activities should be agreed on as a model by countries in Rio+20
- in an economy where externalities are not included in the price of products, responsible consumption and production is more costly, hence consumers and producers which take responsible decisions should be given incentives included fiscal
- Proven flanking measures including mandatory substitution of harmful substances and practices, feed-in tariffs a.o. should be adopted by countries in Rio+20

### **3.2.2.4. Investing in women's education, skills and entrepreneurship**

For women to be catalysts for sustainable development, women need to be freed from economic, legal and political constraints that limit their ability to own land, control rights to natural resources, obtain necessary training, access information, raise financing and acquire relevant technology.

- Support spread of women-friendly technologies - ones that can free up women's time, reduce their drudgery, and expand their economic, social and political opportunities.
- Support women's education and training in technical and entrepreneurial skills
- Support anti-discrimination labour laws, equal pay, family friendly mandates, women right to organize and targeted schemes for accessing "non- traditional" jobs for women
- Support specific funding windows for women to invest in productive assets and communication means
- Set policy targets for women's access to technology, funding, resources, information

### **3.2.2.5. Investing in the health care, child-care, and social security nets**

- Social Protection is a fundamental human right, one of the best instruments for poverty reduction and a motor of development, it is a useful mechanism to ensure that countries grow with equity and social cohesion and it is a key component of gender equality. Establishing a social protection floor is key for sustainable development. A Social Protection Floor must include as a minimum child benefits, health care, income security for the elderly and the disabled, parental leave protection, benefits for the unemployed, and affordable, quality essential public services

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➤ <sup>17</sup> effective examples include a.o. Brazilian Bolsa Familia, where social funds were geared at the women in the households, bringing almost 50 million people out of deprivation

- Women must have access to reproductive health care and family planning resources in order to be able to participate in productive activities.
- Countries should agree in Rio+20 on policies that guarantee child care, health care and social support programs specifically for female household members. Gender equitable childcare solutions are needed.

### **3.2.2.6. Ending violence against women**

Women are still living in gruesome conditions— facing violence both inside and outside their homes, dealing with the same inadequate services and critical economic disparities. Most of these women are dependent on their male counterparts as providers. More than 510 million women are abused by their partners during their lifetime<sup>18</sup>. Witnesses of violence have poorer health, and are more likely to perpetrate or suffer violence. In all countries, women who change their matrimonial statuses (divorce, widowhood) lose out economically. Eliminating violence against women is fundamental for sustainable development, allowing women to fully participate in societies. Policies to eliminate violence against women need to:

- Expanding support services for women victims of violence
- Strengthening and enforcing legislation to protect women from violence and prosecute the perpetrator
- Strengthening legislation which protects women from economic regression after divorce
- Making access to justice affordable and accessible for women, also in rural and remote areas
- Inform women and girls on their rights in school and via media
- Raise awareness with men and women on the inacceptability of violence against women to shift norms

### **3.2.2.7 Peace, women and sustainable development**

- Peace is an important precondition for sustainable and equitable development. The absence of peace – reflected in internal and international conflicts – puts an enormous burden on local communities, human and natural resources.
- During times of conflict violence against women increases and there are many competing claims on natural resources that often become scarcer or polluted, adversely affecting women's productive and reproductive roles.
- Military expenditures have increased from \$ 1,204 billion in 2006, to \$ 1,630 billion or 2.6% of global GDP in 2010 (SIPRI Yearbook, 2010). Militarization is absorbing financial and human resources, as well as natural resources.

We recommend to:

- Include peace promotion and conflict prevention on the Rio+20 agenda.
- Strengthen adherence to international law, in particular the agreed provisions of treaties on arms control, on human rights and on humanitarian law.
- Reallocate funds from military budgets to human needs and sustainable development.
- Implement Security Council Resolution 1325, which assures women's equal participation in conflict prevention and resolution, peace-keeping and peace-building, and promote women's contributions to fostering a culture of peace.

## **3.2.3. Sector Specific Recommendations**

### **3.2.3.1. Energy access for women**

- Policies and actions to enlist women as active agents in development based on cleaner and more efficient energy systems and technologies
- Investments in women as energy managers and entrepreneurs to simultaneously address the multiple challenges of poverty eradication, gender equality, environmental conservation,

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<sup>18</sup> World Bank World Development Report 2012 Gender Equality and Development

and climate change threats.

- Removal of constraints limiting the ability of women to take advantage of business opportunities offered by new energy options, including legal barriers that limit their property rights, land tenure, and access to credit.

#### **3.2.3.2. Nuclear phase-out – women’s priority**

- The increased harm from ionizing radiation to women is not fully understood, therefore the Principle of Precaution dictates that protective action must be taken once a potential harm is identified.
- Women’s right to know about the health risk from ionizing radiation which they are exposed to and how to protect themselves from this harm, should be implemented
- Women should have equal protection under the law, and regulation should be strengthened to protect those most at risk from ionizing radiation: women and children
- There is no “safe” dose of radiation to anyone of either gender, or any age; a global phase-out of nuclear energy is the only acceptable path to take.

#### **3.2.3.4. Climate mitigation – gender equitable**

- Ensure that gender is mainstreamed in UNFCCC and national climate change policy processes and institutions.
- Guarantee women's full and equal participation in climate change decision-making at global, national and local level.
- Secure women's environmental rights (including their land entitlement) under REDD and other climate change mechanisms.
- Ensure that all climate change funding mechanisms are gender-responsive, including the Global Climate Fund
- Guarantee women's access to climate change funding, training/education and sustainable technologies.

#### **3.2.3.4. Climate adaptation and natural disaster preparedness**

- Implement a gender analysis and gender mainstreaming in coordination with all Ministries responsible for disaster risk reduction, climate change, poverty reduction and women/gender machineries;
- Ensure women and men’s equal access to natural hazard early warning systems;
- Develop and produce statistics desegregated by sex on impact of disasters, carry out gender-sensitive vulnerability, risk and capacity assessments and develop gender-sensitive indicators to monitor and measure progress;
- Increase awareness of the public and media on the gender sensitive vulnerabilities and capacities in disasters and gender specific needs and concerns in disaster risk reduction and management;
- Support gender-sensitive financial risk-sharing mechanisms, including risk insurance and reinsurance;
- Increase women’s participation in disaster relief coordination and secure equal access to disaster relief assistance between men and women;
- Guarantee trainings with gender perspective for preparedness and readiness with respect to risk management, mitigation and adaptation, including planning and resource management for programs and projects to this effect.
- Take steps to guarantee early and timely alert processes for the prevention and mitigation of risks.

#### **3.2.3.5. Safe waste reduction, reuse and recycling**

- Create legally binding measures to exclude harmful waste from the waste stream
- Promote reduction of waste, reuse of waste and finally recycling – phase out dumping, landfilling

and incineration

- Provide incentives and build capacity for women leadership and decision making in safe waste management

### **3.2.3.6. Measures against land grabbing – protecting women access to land**

Women farmers and indigenous peoples are currently losing their territories, resources and livelihoods in the grabbing of land by governments, local and foreign investors, including for large scale bioenergy production. This results in increased poverty and lack of food security and food sovereignty. The increasing influence of corporations and other economic actors over environmental policies is also leading to privatization of common lands. Women are among the main victims of this trend, as they are deprived of access to resources that are of essential importance to their livelihoods and communities.<sup>19</sup>

### **3.2.3.7. Assuring women's access to safe water and sanitation**

A number of countries have introduced legislation that prohibits privatization of water sources, provides incentives for efficient water use, and supports public investments in water supply and sanitation services. Some countries have also introduced targets (including quotas) for women in water management and control organizations, which has had a beneficial impact on quality of services and cost recovery. In 2010, the UN General Assembly recognized a human right to water and sanitation and proposed criteria for its implementation.

- Environmental protection policies and enforcement of water protection measures are needed, and women and other stakeholders should participate in their development and implementation.
- Sustainable and affordable technologies and management of water and sanitation need to be accessible to women.
- Integrated water management is needed that democratizes control over basic water supplies and sanitation services. Privatization of water resources - in particular of water sources, rivers and lakes - can have a disproportionately damaging impact on women who have less economic power and access to income from formal employment.
- Dedicated funding programs are needed to ensure that women and girls obtain safe water and sanitation at homes, schools and other public places, as well as the adoption of legislation which protects water sources as public goods.

## **3.3. Regional perspectives**

In addition to the common positions presented, specific regional perspectives and priorities on this theme are presented below.

### **3.3.1. Latin American Caribbean (LAC)**

- Women of Latin America and the Caribbean are concerned about the use of the concept of "green economy". They believe that the use of this terminology carries the risk that economic actors, even internationally, dominate and determine the policies of sustainable development.
- Indigenous Peoples women are also concerned about the use of the concept of green economy and the institutional framework endorsed. Developing countries are being forced to follow a proposal that has not been clearly defined, and no one knows how it will work. On governance issues, they consider that spaces for a broad and inclusive participation are still lacking.
- The economic element of sustainable development should embrace the elements and values that underpin the recognition of the rights of Mother Earth and good living. These along with the theme of human rights should guide the way with optimism to the next meeting in Rio plus 20.

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<sup>19</sup> For instance in Tanzania, Agrisol Energy and Pharos Global Agriculture are seeking a land deal which when successful will cause the displacement of 162,000 refugees most of whom are women. This will lead to a turnover of 800,000 acres of land to the American Company.



- The women in the LAC region are clear that a vision focused on sustainable development cannot focus solely on an economic agenda, but it must deepen agendas addressing the social, cultural, and environmental policies that have been implemented since the last meeting in Rio in 1992.
- They raise a clear front against ‘dollarization’ of life, and assure their willingness to work to make the real change that leads to address issues that we are urgent to change the paradigm of development on our planet including a priority gender considerations.

In the LAC region, women believe that to achieve sustainable development the world must necessarily pass through the elimination of all gaps of gender discrimination still facing Latin America and the Caribbean, and it is urgent to think about a comprehensive approach to development where the contribution of women in the region, is recognized, valued and positioned in the proper place.

### **3.3.2. West-Asia**

#### **On Rio+20 agenda point “Green Economy and poverty eradication”**

- Implementation of the CEDAW convention as the basis for a Green Economy any Sustainable Development
- Integration of Gender issues in the Monitoring & Evaluation indicators to assure social justice of fair distribution of wealth.

#### **On agriculture and rural development**

- There is a strong need to establish social associations, networks, co-operatives and syndicate as an institutional way of protection and creating pressure groups to help rural and farming communities stand for their own rights identity and to improve farmers’
- The right to access data and information to help rural and farming communities to take better decisions, in particular affordable access to spatial data as well as crop, climatic and other types of data which are currently often only available to corporations.
- Appropriate technology (economical, social, culture and environmental) should be available and capacity building should be supported, to assure the sector contributes to Green Economy and Sustainable Development.

### **3.3.3. Asia**

We, the Women’s Major Group representatives at the Asia Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for Rio+20 call on governments to reaffirm their commitments to Agenda 21 and the Beijing Platform for Action, and fulfill their obligations to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

We also call on governments to respect recent international agreements including the 2009 UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development where the causes and effects of the global economic, food and ecological crises were discussed and urgent measures adopted to achieve a less volatile macroeconomic environment for sustainable development, including making economic policies compatible with human rights obligations.

On the road to Rio+20, we invoke the principles enshrined in these instruments – especially non-discrimination and substantive equality and their linkages to gender, economic and ecological justice. We assert the need for a radical change in mind-set necessary to steer humanity off the course of repeated crises and self-destruction.

Governments in the Asia Pacific region must recognize that gender is cross cutting in development processes and that gender equality is vital to the achievement of sustainable development.

#### **On Rio+20 agenda point “Green Economy and poverty eradication”**

We wish to reframe the “green economy” as “sustainable economies”. We reject current economic models pursued in the name of efficiency and economic growth, but are in fact driven by profit and

greed, and have resulted in unprecedented levels of poverty, inequality and food insecurity that disproportionately affect women. Instead we are working to realize “sustainable economies” that are gender just and enable long-term social and well-being outcomes for present and future generations, especially marginalized groups such as indigenous, ethnic and sexual minority groups.

As women comprise half the world’s population and also count among the poorest, a “sustainable economy” must recognize women’s paid and un(der)paid contributions to economic production, must generate sustainable livelihoods by which women can realize the full enjoyment of their human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights, and prevent all forms of discrimination and violence in women’s exercise of their economic rights and co-stewardship of the earth’s resources. Central to this is women’s unmediated right to access, own, control and benefit from productive resources and assets, which includes land, water, seeds, energy sources, livestock, financial resources, public subsidies and appropriate technologies

### **Women, agriculture and rural sustainable development**

Women farmers must be recognized as co-managers of community resource bases and co-decision-makers in determining the use of natural resources and the distribution of benefits arising from them. They must be assured of capacity development in bio-diverse ecological agriculture including humane sustainable livestock and fisheries production, necessary rural infrastructure, appropriate technologies and marketing skills for their economic autonomy. We further seek from our governments a commitment to the rapid reduction and elimination of toxic substances and highly hazardous pesticides and fertilizers, while steadily phasing-in non-chemical approaches.

There is much to learn from gender-responsive good practices on agro-ecology and sustainable natural resource use and management that strive for balance and synergy between humans and nature. It must also be recognized that woman can capacitate “sustainable economies”, with their indigenous and traditional knowledge systems which should be protected from appropriation and exploitation by big business.

### **Women and distressed migration**

Distressed migration is a phenomenon across many countries in our region, with women comprising the bulk of those who migrate from rural to urban areas and from developing to developed countries. Governments must address the huge social costs resulting from distressed migration by addressing women’s economic deprivation and environmental degradation.

### **Women, corporate-driven technologies and climate change**

As marginalized and excluded groups, women bear the harshest impacts of the current climate crisis, including increased ecological and economic displacement. States must address the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change while ensuring greater and more meaningful participation of women in the climate deliberations and outcomes, and in adaptation and mitigation strategies.

Women are greatly concerned by corporate driven technological solutions to climate change that are harmful to the planet and people. Such technologies must be subject to rigorous, transparent and participatory assessments including the implications on women’s and children’s health and well being.

### **Energy and nuclear industry**

We take a firm position against nuclear energy as one of the ‘solutions’ to the energy crisis. It is neither clean nor sustainable, as many nuclear disasters have already so painfully pointed out. States must immediately phase out nuclear energy and seek fresh and up-scaled financial resources to shift the world to green (renewable) energy, which will benefit all of humankind.

### 3.3.4.Africa

On behalf of the Women Major Group we wish to state that the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) 2002, reaffirmed sustainable development's central role in the international agenda. The Johannesburg plan of implementation (JPOI) adopted at the WSSD contains commitments and targets that member states agreed to pursue in order to foster sustainable development at all levels.

A truly sustainable 'green economy' would involve economic development that takes place within the limits of nature, and ensures a fair distribution of resources among all countries and social groups - as well as between women and men. Social equity and environmental justice must remain at the heart of sustainable development, and the outcomes of the Rio+20 UN conference in 2012. Environmental conservation is critical for maintaining the earth's ability to continue to support life, and human livelihoods. As countries confront the challenges of providing food, energy, shelter, health care and employment for growing populations, governments must find ways to preserve vital ecosystems and limit the disruptions of climate change, and to manage the world's natural resources in an equitable manner, with an emphasis on human rights, gender equality, and environmental justice.

We the WMG in Africa call on governments to reaffirm their commitment on the following:

#### 1. GREEN ECONOMY

##### a) Access to water and sanitation

**Water and sanitation are essential for women's economic development.** A large number of the world's people live without access to clean water or basic sanitation. Due to gender roles, it is women and girls who are often most affected by lack of water, as in many countries they are primarily responsible for obtaining and transporting water for daily use. Women and girls travel many kilometres and spend much of their time securing essential water supplies, and their task becomes more difficult as rivers and lakes become polluted and ecosystems degraded. Lack of safe water and sanitation limits women's development possibilities. Privatization of water resources - in particular of water sources, rivers and lakes - can have a disproportionately damaging impact on women who have less economic power and access to income from formal employment.-

**We call for environmental protection policies and enforcement of water protection measures, and women should participate in their development and implementation. We also call for dedicated funding programs to ensure that women and girls obtain safe water and sanitation at homes, schools and other public places.**

##### b) Transportation

Access to affordable transport is limited for women in Africa. Changing demographic and land-use patterns have made the distance to fields, water and fuel wood sources greater, increasing travel times to these sources. Transport planning tends to underestimate the economic and social value of women's time, as well as the economic benefits.

**We call on governments to accelerate investment in affordable means of transport and involve women in transport planning and implementation.**

##### c) Land – Agriculture, food security and food sovereignty

Property rights for women are still not recognised and respected. Women need secure land, property and resource rights. In many countries, women produce close to 80% of the food, but own only 1% of the land. The significance of the livestock sector and its socio-economic importance to African women cannot be over emphasized.

**We call upon governments to expedite implementation of the Land Policy Initiative of the AU, specifically women's access and ownership to land.**

**d) Access to Energy**

**Green energy policies must incorporate a gender perspective.** According to the African Development Bank, most of the 2.5 billion people using traditional biomass for household energy live in Africa. African women play a major role in the collection and management of biomass fuel such as fuelwood, dung and agricultural residues for household use. Access to modern energy in rural and poor urban areas leads to improved health services, clean water and sanitation, better education, efficient transportation and a more profitable informal sector. All of these directly benefit women. Gender-equitable energy policies, legislation and investments could effectively boost women's opportunities for economic and social empowerment and their ability to contribute to the green economy.

**We call upon Africa Governments to implement programmes that directly support women's access to affordable off-grid energy technologies as well as connection to grid.**

**e) Access to health services Institutional Framework**

AIDS/HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases have a devastating effect on women in Africa. There is lack of access to proper medical facilities for women in rural and poor urban areas. This is compounded by conflicting social, economic, cultural and political factors.

**We call on governments to invest in more functional health facilities in rural and poor urban communities, educate and train women on health issues that affect them, especially maternal mortality.**

**f) Governance, Peace and Security**

Violent conflict in Africa over natural resources and political power has had adverse effects on women's health and sustainable livelihoods.

**We call upon Africa Governments to guarantee and uphold good governance and democratic processes that ensure peace and security.**

**POVERTY REDUCTION**

The UN estimates that approximately 70% of the 1.3 billion people living on less than one dollar a day are women. The situation is worsening due to the current environmental and climatic changes resulting in food crisis, flooding, famine etc, in Africa.

**We call on governments to provide incentives for low-carbon economies that enhance and restore the natural environment, thus providing new green livelihoods, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for women in the context of sustainable development and poverty reduction.**

**We also call on governments and development partners to ensure that policy formulations and foreign investment are based on the bottom – up approach involving all critical**

### **stakeholders, especially women.**

In the development of the 10YFP the Women Major Group on behalf of the Major Groups will want to offer the following:

Incorporate a gender perspective in SCP projects and policies

- Address differing women's SCP needs and priorities in the North and South
- Analyse obstacles to, and opportunities for, scaling up SCP initiatives to benefit women especially grassroots women,
- Provide education for girls, vocational and technological training for women, and adult literacy programmes, as part of every intervention
- Acknowledge and incorporate women's traditional knowledge and their contribution to green economies.

### **Poverty, MDGs and sustainable development (proposed by Alice Odingo)**

In Africa, the attainment of the MDGs is still a challenge. A majority of the population are still poor, with the majority being women. The continent is far from sustainability, as droughts, famine and climate change take precedence, leaving very little in the welfare of the majority of the people of Africa, while the little resources that exists are affected by conflict and are still held in the hands of a few individuals. The African continent is further ravaged by conflict, which create insecurity for not only women and girls, but all the victims.

- Green Economy would require gender disaggregated data on the achievement of the MDGs and sustainable development in Africa, with measurable indices for the success and proposals to deal with the challenges.
- Green economy would require special efforts to redistribute resources to the poor, particularly, the women and girls to remove inequity, while also encouraging sustainable consumption and production.
- Green economy would call for improvement in governance, to promote peace and security for women in Africa, while also ensuring gender balance in conflict resolution teams.

### **3.3.5. Europe UNECE (to come after 2 of December, regional premeeting in Geneva)**

## **4. Governance of Sustainable Development**

### **Women's views on the Rio+20 theme of an institutional framework for sustainable development**

To assure global sustainable and equitable development, fundamental reform of International Environmental Governance and a new framework for governance of sustainable development are needed.

Our existing institutional and governance structures have proved inadequate to meet our rising sustainable development challenges. Our core policy formulation, economic thinking and motivations remain firmly detached from our broader sustainability concerns. Monitoring and enforcement of agreed sustainable development strategies at all governance levels are weak and many central sectors and policies operate entirely without a broader sustainability overview.

Since our electoral cycles and business models of reporting increasingly define our decision-making, short term gains take precedence over future and long term interests. Meanwhile, women appear disconnected from the core of policy-making. Without true representation of their needs, women are left without a voice, or a legitimate means in which to question or present their concerns.

Governments lack the mechanisms to facilitate accountability, access and monitoring of all sustainability policy decisions and their effective implementation.

#### **4.1. Stronger Institutional framework for Sustainable Development at Global Level**

##### 4.1.1. Shifting the priorities from the Economic to the Social and Environmental areas

- Reform international finance, economic and trade organisations, to assure priority for equitable social development and environmental protection, and preventing a commodification of natural resources.

##### 4.1.2. International Environmental Governance needs to be strengthened

- Strengthened international environmental governance, including adequate public and predictable resources for a reformed United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Capacity building programmes for national level should be increased
- Contribution to increased coherence of MEAs should be extended

##### 4.1.3. Governance of Sustainable Development should be placed at the highest level of the UN

- Governance of Sustainable Development should report directly to the UN General Assembly
- Including accountability mechanisms, that include specific gender indicators.

##### 4.1.4. Gender mainstreaming of the Sustainable development structure

- organizational assessment to gauge current levels of awareness, knowledge and skills in gender and gender analysis methods within implementing agencies and local partners
- Use of gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data to better understand women's roles, perceptions, needs and gender issues related to SD
- hire full time gender staff to lead gender activities, develop action plans for gender integration, etc.
- provide training in gender and organizational change, gender analysis to staff at senior and other levels
- engage with existing Gender Working Groups and Gender Focal Points within local partner organizations and governments (these exist in many government departments but are usually have weak capacities and are not linked to women's empowerment or gender advocates)
- build links to networks of gender experts
- build capacities and support women and men champions and Gender Focal Points within partner organizations to:
  - lead processes of change within their organizations
  - communicate with women's groups and mixed groups about gender issues within sustainable development initiatives
  - provide technical assistance and backstopping for Sustainable Development activities
- New Key Gender Institutional Structures should be agreed upon to ensure sustainable development:
  - Localize already existing institutions by partnering with women's organisations working on the grass-root level
  - Involve in dialogues with women of every level to contribute in developing new institutional structures that will be available and accessible
  - Have user-friendly involvement mechanism that will enable grass-root women to participate in global, national and local platforms
  - New Institutional Structures should adopt a tailor-made approach to serve and address the unique needs and challenges of women

#### 4.1.5. Create global instruments to protect rights of Future Generations

Additional global instruments to protect rights of Future Generations can include

- Legal institutions to protect the rights of future generations, e.g. an ombudsperson for Future generations<sup>20</sup> as independent institutions with legal powers<sup>21</sup>
- Funds to pay for future costs, e.g. ‘Redemption Fund’<sup>22</sup>

#### 4.1.6. UN Women should be strengthened and adequately financed

UN Women should be strengthened and adequately financed to provide guidance and implement flagship programmes on strengthening women’s role in Sustainable Development and coordination between all UN agencies on gender programs related to Sustainable Development

#### 4.1.7. Strengthening of effective and balanced civil society participation

- Financing effective and balanced civil society participation
- Capacity building for effective public participation of women
- Rotation and democratic principles should be applied
- Strengthen collaboration between major groups for example through Vienna+ model<sup>23</sup>

### **4.2. Pillars of Governance of Sustainable Development (global, national, local)**

4.2.1. Rio Principle 10: Right to public participation, Right to information, Right to justice, for example through

- Global or regional convention on Rio Principle 10

4.2.2. Rio Principle 20: full participation of women, for example through

- Quota for women in all levels of governance
- Changing governance cultures

4.2.3. Implementation of the Convention to End All Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to assure gender equality<sup>24</sup>

4.2.4. Safeguard environmental social conditions for the benefit of present and future generations

- Establish national Ombudspersons, Commissioners or Guardians for Future Generations, as independent institutions with legal powers and duties *to ensure long term goals are taken into account, to challenge existing governance structures and participatory processes and to better deal with concerns from all citizens.*

4.2.5. Valuing the unrecognized contributions of women and the environment to sustainable development

- Gender indicators for “real” cost and contributions

4.2.6. Criteria for financing of sustainable development

- Funding mechanisms that respects the right of free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples, and the rights of communities which are impacted by the financial flows

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<sup>20</sup> Hungary has such an institution

<sup>21</sup> As supported by the Major Groups: Workers and Trade Unions, and Youth

<sup>22</sup> The concept for the ‘redemption fund’ was presented at the G20 in France, national funds already exist, e.g. in Norway

<sup>23</sup> Used in the Convention for Biological Diversity, CBD

<sup>24</sup> The majority of nations affiliated with the UN have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This Convention entered into force on September 3, 1981 and has been ratified by 186 countries. CEDAW compels state parties to take positive action to prevent discrimination towards women across all sectors including in sustainable development. CEDAW ensures the full and effective participation of women in decision making processes in an equal manner to men. The principles of CEDAW are increasingly finding their way into national constitutions, laws, and other policy frameworks. The Convention has been also called upon to help resolve cases involving discrimination against women in courts around the world. CEDAW focuses on elimination of discrimination against women (Articles 2), visibility of women in national statistics (Article 2), equality between men and women before laws and in courts (Article 15), promoting participation of women in political and public life and decision making (Article 7 and 8), equal rights between men and women, also in employment and pay (Article 11), gender equality in access and rights to bank loans, mortgages, and other forms of financial credit (Article 13), and ensuring equality of men and women in education and training (Article 10). Furthermore, CEDAW strengthens provisions for rural women, recognizing their rights to participate in government programs, employment, training, and financing (Article 14).

- timely information, effective participation, and redress mechanisms
- 4.2.5. Gender considerations of financial mechanisms for Sustainable Development
- Assure that global funding reaches women at the local level, in particular countries should commit that 50% of Global Environment Funding should be earmarked for local level implementation, assuring access for community and women's organisations
  - Recognition that women can capacitate "sustainable economies" with their knowledge systems and hitherto unvalued "care economy" economy contributions
  - Protection of women's indigenous and traditional knowledge systems from appropriation and exploitation by big business.
  - Accelerate progress towards gender equality in all areas of governance, the judiciary and the economy

### 4.3. Regional perspectives

#### 4.3.1. Latin America and the Caribbean

The women of Latin America and the Caribbean, are clear that the road to Rio 20 is just beginning, it requires enormous work and effort to make participation of women a fundamental element which permits to practice full and effective participation of women in all processes and areas of development and conservation.

They want to integrate a region that is diverse, more equal and equitable. They are clear of the enormous challenge as a region to achieve respect for the human rights of women: sexual and reproductive rights, rights to live a life free from violence and femicide, rights to sustainable development means among others: the right to water, land and natural resources, the right to health and food sovereignty, right to education, science and technology, and finally, the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples and their traditional knowledge.

LAC Women consider the following statements important for action:

Consider sustainable development as a holistic concept that values equally the social, economic and environmental as well as equity and equal opportunities, access to justice, information and participation of people.

Understand that sustainable development is a central objective the good life of human beings and as such States need to recognize that to achieve this goal they should eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.

They specifically propose:

1.-An evaluation of the implementation of the Rio Principles, Agenda XXI, this time using clear indicators that show evidence of gender differentiation and fairness in general. This assessment should be the basis for discussion in Rio ... what has been accomplished?, What has not been met and why? What is the role of financial institutions and private banks? Why has it been so difficult to finance and implement sustainable development where the woman is a party?

2.-Ensure access to land, sea and control over natural resources, education, information and access to environmental justice principles and provide social security, reproductive health care and food sovereignty of life of women. Aiming for healthy integration of women in a world in balance with nature, which requires adequate funding.



3.- The commitment to recognize, respect, value and position the knowledge of women and especially the traditional knowledge of indigenous women. Rate urgently, traditional knowledge on the issues of adaptation, mitigation and biodiversity conservation of indigenous women have always been implemented and to promote and strengthen their role as change agents, promoting the good life of indigenous peoples.

#### 4.3.2. Arab region

- A striking observation is that the “Arab Spring” has resulted in a withdrawal of women activities from the public life. Therefore, institutional tools are needed to support women participation on all levels, up to the highest decision making levels, including on emerging issues such as Green Economy and Sustainable Development.
- Developed countries should take their environmental commitments seriously if we want to have peace on Earth

#### 4.3.3. Asia and Pacific region

We expect nothing less from Rio+20 than a commitment to promoting sustainable development and gender equality in ways that go beyond the limited “add women and stir” approach, and which genuinely recognize women’s co-leadership and co-stewardship. Toward this end we call for sex disaggregated data and gender budgets to assure equitable resource allocation.

We further insist on the full realization of the Rio Principles including the precautionary principle, common but differentiated responsibilities, polluter pays, and Principle 10 on access to information and justice. We, the Women’s Major Group call on all our governments to take action now.

#### 4.3.4. African region

### INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The global environmental governance has not effectively implemented the Rio principles for sustainable development, and the Johannesburg Plan of Action.

**We call on governments to put in place a coordinating mechanism and parallel institutions at the regional and national level for sustainable development which defend women’s rights and interests.**

#### 4.3.5. European/UNECE region (after Dec 1)

## 5. Women’s priorities for Rio+20 agenda point “Emerging Issues”

The Rio+20 agenda includes setting priorities for work on “Emerging Issues”. Women’s priority issues, including some identified among the UNEP Foresight 21 Challenges for the 21th Century List include:

### 5.1.1. Women and Children’s greater harm from radiation – need for phasing out of nuclear

- The entire nuclear cycle is threat to our generation and to that of our children, is that of nuclear industry.
- We take a firm position against nuclear energy as one of the solutions to the energy crisis. It is neither clean nor sustainable, as many nuclear disasters have already so painfully pointed out.
- Based on the UNEP foresight report, we call on governments to start developing legally binding mechanisms to address the cost of decommissioning and clean up of nuclear power-plants, nuclear waste and uranium mines.
- We are calling UN to develop a global strategy to address the risks that nuclear energy and the whole uranium cycle, such as mining and waste disposal, pose to global environment and human lives and health, and decide on an effective and quick global government response.

- We need to establish the institutional framework and the financial means to document, monitor and assess the environmental damages and risks of Nuclear and Uranium Technologies. Such an institution shall make comprehensive use of all parties concerned and their diverse types of knowledge and experience.
- A legally binding mechanism to address the cost of decommissioning and clean up of nuclear power-plants, nuclear waste and uranium mines should be committed to at Rio+20.
- Redress and clean-up should be financed according to the polluter-pays-principle, amongst others by mining industry.
- A UN rapporteur on uranium and nuclear risks should be agreed on<sup>25</sup>.

### **5.1.2. Women and children at risk - need for new approaches to minimizing risks of novel technologies and chemicals**

- Women are greatly concerned by the technological solutions offered to climate change, including geo-engineering, many of which are clearly motivated by profit.
- The health of women and their families may be threatened by the current regulatory incapacity of government entities to prevent the release of new technologies and chemicals before safety is adequately assessed. Without full safety review, based on health standards, of technologies and chemicals, women and children's health may be compromised.
- Previous history of premature use of many toxic chemicals, specifically POPs chemicals, has led to both compromised health and difficult remediation problems. Learning from this history of regulatory failure, only recently addressed by the Stockholm Convention, governments must implement precautionary measures regarding new technologies and chemicals.
- Women are also very concerned by the rising volume of chemical production of many toxic chemicals and chemicals yet to be adequately tested for safety, and the wide-scale deployment of new technologies such as nano-technology in consumer products without necessary health information.
- Women and children are at specific risk from diseases associated with toxic chemicals - including many cancers, infertility, metabolic disorders, and learning and developmental disabilities – which are likely to increase in incidence and severity.
- The rising volume of chemical production of many toxic chemicals and chemicals yet to be adequately tested for safety may require some form of adaptation, requiring enhancement of health facilities necessary for those diseases associated with toxic chemicals and therefore likely to increase in incidence and severity.
- Such diseases include many cancers, infertility, metabolic disorders, and learning and developmental disabilities. Given a potential increase in learning disabilities and cognitive decline associated with toxic chemicals, adaptation may require a greater number of special education schools, special job training and care centers. Surely prevention is preferable.
- We seek from our governments a commitment to the rapid reduction and elimination of toxic substances and highly hazardous pesticides and fertilizers, while steadily phasing-in non-chemical pesticide management approaches. Rio+20 outcomes should include participatory and transparent mechanisms for assessing these technologies, using the precautionary principle and a gender perspective to examine, among others, dangers to women's reproductive health, multiplication of their already many burdens and other impacts.

### **5.1.3. Food security needs food sovereignty**

- Women produce much of the world's food. They need secure land, property and resource rights to ensure their productivity. Their traditional knowledge about seeds, farming skills, and livestock management needs to be recognized.

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<sup>25</sup> [1] Proposal of the women major group, UNEP regional statement 2011/2012, see [http://www.unep.org/civil-society/Portals/59/Documents/Bonn\\_Consultations\\_2011/bonn\\_outcomes/Sept\\_2\\_2011/11\\_9\\_30\\_UNEP\\_Regional\\_MGS\\_Statement\\_Europe\\_2\\_Sept.pdf](http://www.unep.org/civil-society/Portals/59/Documents/Bonn_Consultations_2011/bonn_outcomes/Sept_2_2011/11_9_30_UNEP_Regional_MGS_Statement_Europe_2_Sept.pdf)

- Given that women constitute more than 50% of those who “go to bed hungry every night” (World Disasters Report on Hunger), food security systems need to address issues of equitable distribution of food, and need to address reasons behind crop failures, collapsing fish stocks and food price increases, including large-scale industrial bio-energy production.
- A review of the unfair legal framework for intellectual property in this field is needed to defend food security and food sovereignty, especially for women.
- Effective measures should be adopted at the global level to prevent speculation in the food market and maintain sustainable fishing practices both near shore and on the high seas.
- To increase the social and environmental resilience of communities and prevent loss of agricultural biodiversity, women’s production needs to be supported, including through improved access to education, resources and markets.
- To defend food security and food sovereignty, their rights to choose what to plant, eat and sell, must also be ensured.
- Subsidies and other support measures for agro-fuels have significantly added to the recent food price hikes and have already been responsible for the death of thousands of people due to hunger and malnutrition. All subsidies and other support measures to large-scale industrial bio-energy production should be immediately withdrawn.
- Patents in the field of food and agriculture have contributed to the control of these sectors by large corporations. A review of the unfair legal framework for intellectual property in this field is needed to defend food security and food sovereignty, especially of women.

#### **5.1.4. Rush for Land: women’s land rights and ownership tenure, and prevention of land grabbing**

- Women’s land rights need to be ensured. Women farmers and indigenous peoples are currently losing their territories, resources and livelihoods in the grabbing of land by governments, local and foreign investors, including for large scale bioenergy production. This results in increased in poverty and lack of food security and food sovereignty.
- The increasing influence of corporations and other economic actors over environmental policies is also leading to privatization of common lands.
- Given that investors concerned with food and resource shortages likely to emerge due to climate change, arable land is being purchased in developing countries by foreign investors and by local elites<sup>26</sup>. Women farmers and Indigenous Peoples, including in particular mobile Indigenous peoples, are currently losing their territories, resources and livelihoods in this rush for land, resulting in poverty increase and lack of food security and food sovereignty.
- Women are among the main victims of this trend, as they are deprived of access to resources that are of essential importance to their livelihoods and communities. These practices should be halted and community and indigenous rights should be respected, protected and strengthened.
- In consultation with women’s groups plans need to be put in place at all levels, to ensure that land purchases do not threaten and compromise the livelihood of rural women.

#### **5.1.5. Women and Migration**

- Due to unsustainable activities and climate change, many regions are experiencing land degradation, desertification, water insecurity and scarcity, sea level rise, droughts/floods, land grabs, changing disease vectors and deforestation.
- Economic and ecological displacement and migration are expected to increase as a result of this resource instability, both rural to urban and cross-border.
- In Asia, the women make up the majority affected. A sustainable development agenda must address the social costs of this migration by addressing conditions of women’s economic deprivation and environmental degradation, as well as by establishing policies to assist the migrants, particularly women and children, and improve their legal status.

#### **5.1.6. New challenges to water availability – burden for women**

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<sup>26</sup> Borras et al. 2011.

- Approximately one billion people live without access to clean water, and over 2 billion lack basic sanitation. In many developing countries, it is women and girls who are often most affected by lack of water, as they are primarily responsible for obtaining and transporting water for daily use.
- Water scarcity is further compounded by the pollution of existing sources by environmental chemicals dumping and by "fracking" techniques used to extract gas and oil from the earth. Chemical pollution of water is a serious threat to the health of women and their families, who often have no means to purify chemically polluted water.
- Accepted science indicates that low levels of exposure to toxic chemicals during pregnancy can harm the developing fetus, in ways that compromise health later in life. Cancers, diabetes, learning disabilities, immune system dysfunction, and birth defects are among the health outcomes associated with gestational exposures in laboratory and human studies.
- Given the importance of protecting the health of future generations and the health of women who are often more vulnerable to toxic chemicals during pregnancy, access to clean water for women and their families must be ensured and chemical pollution of water halted at every level.
- In line with the UN resolution of 2010, we consider water as a basic human right and as such it must be treated as a common good. Its treatment, distribution and management must be under public control, including mechanism of social control and community administration. Due to their major role in water provision and administration, women must be the leadership of water management decisions.

#### **5.1.7 Privatization and commodification of the commons**

- The increasing influence of corporations and other strong economic actors over environmental policies is leading to tendency to privatize and commodify the commons<sup>27</sup>, - formerly ruled by community rules and accessible to them, - including water, genetic resources, the climate, and Indigenous territories and community conserved areas. Women are amongst the main victims of this trend, as they are deprived of access to resources that are of essential importance to their families. The privatization of the commons should be halted and Indigenous and community rights should be respected, protected and strengthened.

#### **5.1.8. Promotion of clean renewable energy technologies and phasing out of unsustainable energy**

- Close to 2.4 billion people in developing countries still depend almost entirely on traditional biomass fuels (wood, charcoal, dung and agricultural residues. It is mostly women who are tasked with collecting and managing these fuels, which limits their time and opportunities for education and income-generating activities.
- Investments in access to modern energy are needed for improved livelihoods, education, health services, water and sanitation, education, and transportation. Women need increased access to cleaner, more efficient energy sources and technologies for household use and productive activities, as well as training and education for business development - including designing, producing, marketing and managing new energy products and services.
- Unsustainable energy sources such as nuclear, shale gas, tar sands and coal continue to be expanded and subsidised. Governments should agree in Rio to eliminate direct and indirect subsidies to unsustainable energy supply – currently estimated at 7-9 billion Euro annually – and instead to create incentives and a fair legal environment for renewable energy and women's access to these resources.

#### **5.1.9. Strengthen gender priority in Climate Change policies**

- Climatic changes are already causing major problems in many regions of the world, and women bear the harshest impacts of the current climate crisis. Due to gender roles and inequalities, climate changes have particularly adverse impacts on women's livelihoods and work burdens, and also reinforce gender discrimination and the feminization of poverty.

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<sup>27</sup> Rules, Games, and Common-Pool Resources; Ostrom, Elinor et al. Editors, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1994

- Women have valuable experience, knowledge and ideas about climate change mitigation, adaptation, resilience and disaster risk management, and are important actors in the promotion of sustainable consumption.
- Women's decision-making power and participation in the development and implementation of climate change policies, mechanisms and funding must be increased to ensure they are gender-responsive. Women also need access to environmental rights, climate change funding, and sustainable technologies.

## **6. Recommendations for Rio+20 Outcome document**

We call on governments to recognize that sustainable development is built on a healthy environment as the foundation of all human well-being and that economic development must serve human and cultural development and take place within the carrying capacity of the planet. Economic instruments should aim at incorporation of externalities, equitable redistribution of wealth and equality between women and men.

**We call on governments to:**

### **6.1. Sustainable and equitable economies: Commit to gender-sensitive development of binding international and national measures**, in particular

- Agree to develop binding policies which assure healthy and sustainable livelihoods for women, in particular through halting use of unsustainable, radioactive and harmful substances and technologies
- Agree to assure a Social Protection Floor for all women as a fundamental human right, thus effectively reducing poverty and allowing women to fully participate in sustainable development
- Agree to end violence against women through legislation, support services for women, affordable access to justice for women, and information about rights and norms
- Agree to assure access to clean, efficient and safe energy, water and sanitation for all, especially for women.
- Agree to assure women's access to natural resources, measures against land grabbing, access to and protection of commons, and respect of women's environmental rights.

### **6.2. Governance of sustainable development: Commit to gender-sensitive development of binding international and national measures**, in particular

- Agreement to strengthen international governance of environment and to bring global sustainable development governance to the highest level of the UN, whilst assuring gender targets and policies for the new structures.
- Agree on binding measures for the protection of women's indigenous and traditional knowledge systems from appropriation and exploitation by corporations (strong regulation of corporate power which effectively protects the most vulnerable in times of globalization)
- Agree on the development of international agreements, which guarantee global access to timely information, relevant public participation, affordable access to justice, liability and redress mechanisms.
- Agree on creating specific windows and incentives to increase women's role and access to assets and finance in the area of sustainable development.
- Agreement for the creation of an independent technology assessment organisation with the mandate to assess, control and where necessary limit use of technologies before widespread use, based on the precautionary principle
- Agreement to create global mechanisms for the protection of the global commons, including clean up of harmful pollution such as from uranium mining, and a mechanism for its implementation

- Global and national institutions to protect the rights of future generations<sup>28</sup>

### **6.3. Commit to targets and indicators for women's engagement**

The Outcome Document should include specific targets and indicators to support and promote women's engagement as key actors in sustainable development and to measure government progress on recommended actions. These could be incorporated into Sustainable Development Goals or could stand alone.

### **6.4. Proposal to include gender equality goals in Sustainable Development Goals**

A proposal has been presented by member states for **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)**, which governments in Rio can agree to develop up to 2015, to follow up the Millennium Development Goals.

The Women major group supports the idea of SDGs, however, regrets that the proposal does not include as yet any specific gender related goals, unlike the MDGs which contain several.

A set of Sustainable Development Goals should be adopted that includes specific crosscutting goals on gender equality in all spheres of society, in particular these could aim to:

- Secure women's greater access and control over assets, land tenure, inputs and natural resources including traditional common lands;
- Promote women's access to services and technologies needed for water, energy, agricultural production, family care, household management and business enterprises;
- Provide comprehensive social protection measures, especially for women;
- Provide safe health care facilities, including for sexual and reproductive health;
- Enable women and men to combine their jobs with childcare;
- Support investments in women's economic, social and political empowerment, including through new financing and credit facilities accessible to women;
- Support for traditional knowledge systems and management practices;
- Determine specific targets for women with regard to technology training, business management skills and extension services;
- Promote women's participation in government and business leadership, with targets of at least 40% women;
- Strengthen women's organizations/self help groups, entrepreneurs and networks to enable them to negotiate the terms of their engagement with sustainable development projects and;
- Develop in-house capacities for gender mainstreaming within implementing agencies and local partners.
- Address organizational strengthening needs within organisations engaged in sustainable development: develop in-house capacities for gender mainstreaming within implementing agencies and local partners.

**The world stands at a cross-roads**, and the future of our planet Earth and its human communities lays in (y)our hands. United in our diversity we, women from all regions in the world, call on our governments and other stakeholders to re-new the commitments on equitable and sustainable development made at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. We commit ourselves to contribute to a peaceful and healthy planet, in which human rights are well respected and women's voices are well-represented. We request that you act in the spirit of global solidarity, trust, environmental and social care, and take our recommendations well to heart.

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<sup>28</sup> As supported by the Major Groups: Workers and Trade Unions, and Youth

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