

Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 19th, 2008

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No Climate Justice without Gender Justice

Women in Europe for a Common Future (WEKF) ask for clear Gender Perspective on Climate Change

Utrecht, The Netherlands/Monaco

Women's participation and experience are central when it comes to human rights and climate change. That's why the United Nations Environment Program – UNEP – and Women in Europe for a Common Future – WEKF – organize a high level Women as the Voice for the Environment (WAVE) side event during the UNEP Governing Council Meeting in Monaco.

The event will bring together a Network of Women Ministers of the Environment and civil society representatives, to discuss key policy issues including bio-fuels, nuclear, mitigation and adaptation programs and their impact on women and the poor. The debate "HUMAN RIGHTS and CLIMATE CHANGE – THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE" will take place at the United Nations Environment Program's Governing Council meeting in Monaco, on Thursday 21, 2008. WEKF will be present with a delegation including members from the network from Central Asia and the Balkans.

No Climate Justice without Gender Justice

"We are here at the United Nations Environment Program's Conference in Monaco, called "Mobilizing Finance to meet the Climate Change" but, we can put as much money in Climate Change as we want, it can still increase poverty and injustice" says Sascha Gabizon, Executive Director of WEKF. "We see this happening in the area of CDM funding for Climate Change, which is not reaching the poorest. We see it happening with EU funds for climate change going to nuclear industry, which is an industry that creates great injustice when we look at the lack of human rights for people living near uranium mines. And in all countries, as UN statistics show us, women are the majority of the poor, and often doubly affected by injustice and poverty, as they are mostly the care-takers of the ill and disabled". Therefore WEKF and its members say that "There cannot be climate justice without gender justice".

The Right to Safe Energy

According to WEKF everybody has the right to Safe Energy. Sabine Bock, WEKF's Energy and Climate Change coordinator states: "Poverty forces people to burn waste (e.g. plastics, tar, oil, kerosene, and traditional biomass) indoors for heating and cooking purposes, emitting toxic fumes and causing major health problems. We therefore demand Governments to invest in safe and affordable energy devices,

Women in Europe for a Common Future (WEKF) is a network of 80 organisations in Western and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, working on sustainable development, health and environment, and poverty reduction.

energy efficiency technologies and sustainable energy sources, and demand access to affordable, efficient, renewable and clean energy for all and call for education on energy efficiency, renewable energy and conservation at all social levels". Therefore WECF calls for the participation of the public, especially women, in decision making on energy sources and management.

Gender-sensitive

WECF is concerned about the effects of climate change and the burdens that climate-related changes and disasters put on women, men and children, including health, environmental, and economic impacts in our region and globally. Gabizon adds: "We therefore demand a strong political commitment from every Government in the world to work for a far-reaching post-Kyoto protocol. This regime can only be successful if the perspectives of women are fully taken into account. Surveys show that women give greater priority to safe, renewable energy".

This event is a follow up to the Women for Climate Justice during the UNFCC Climate Conference in Bali in December and the WAVE events that took place in Belgrade, last October, during the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference.

Interesting dates and times for the press:

The United Nations Environment Program - UNEP and Women in Europe for a Common Future - WECF High-Level Ministerial and Women as the Voice for the Environment (WAVE) side event will be held during the UNEP Governing Council and Global Ministerial Forum in Monaco from 20 to 21 February 2008. The High-Level side event will be held on Thursday 21 February, from 12:00 – 15:00 hours, in the Green Room, UNEP Governing Council Conference Center in Monaco.

An invitation and program can be found here: www.wecf.eu

Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF)

WECF is a network of 80 organizations in Western and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia working on sustainable development, health and environment and poverty reduction. WECF strives for a Healthy Environment for All.

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