

Women Participation in the Fight for Climate Justice: India's Future

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Abstract

UN's SDG No. 5 provides for achieving women's equality and empowers them. However, achieving this goal has been a dream. This is primarily because discrimination against females in India has been practiced since birth and continues at every level. Hence, the present study focuses on the international obligation laid down for each nation to ensure gender justice at every level of environmental governance. The article analyzes various provisions enunciated in various international and national instruments. The author concludes that women's participation in environmental governance should not be merely something that is only mentioned in the policy documents but should also be achieved. This is being done with the help of participatory environmental governance and the inclusion of women at every decision-making level.



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Introduction

Women have been crucial in the fight against climate change's harmful effects. Their reliance on natural resources management does not necessarily make them vulnerable but on the contrary, gives them an upper hand to sustainably utilize it due to the local knowledge they hold as regards the sustainable use of such natural resources. In spite of this, a lot is yet to be done to ensure their active participation in all levels of environmental governance. The better the integration and involvement of women in the same policy making and project implementation, the better the outcome of any climate-based policy or project.


The UNFCCC has recognized the significance of gender equality in the creation and implementation of climate policy. As a result, a specific action plan and work program have been created. This paper intends to portray these emerging workstreams on gender and Climate Change which aims to leverage gender equality in climate-related policymaking, planning, and its effective implementation.

Climate Change does not discriminate based on caste, creed or religion. However, its impact is different from each of these delimitations. Gender has been added to the global climate policy

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discussion because of the important role played by women in mitigating climate change's effects. Many investigations are being done into gender and sex. English Poet Denise Riley stated "the arrangement between people under the banners men and women is so intertwined [with] particular cultural conceptualizations and the body of nature, soul, and the social world that the arrangement is always specific."¹ Over many centuries, several studies and interpretations have been done on the gender constructions of women. These investigations touch upon many facets of the social world.

Methodology

The present article adopts a doctrinal approach to understanding the problem of women's less contribution to environmental decisions. For this, the author attempts to make an analysis of existing policies, both international and Indian and tries to find the problems for the non-participation of women in these policies. Finally, the author provides suggestions for making the environmental policy more inclusive for women.

Problems of Non-Participation of Women

The main cause of the increased vulnerability is the fact that women do not participate equally in the policy-making processes. For decades, they have been excluded from actively contributing to any environment-related planning, policy making and even in its effective implementation. However, with the rising inclusion of women in every level of environmental-related policymaking, a positive outcome of several climate-related activities has been witnessed. However, this representation is not uniform across nations due to the actuality of existing patriarchal notions in several societies. Most of the time, cultural and religious fundamentalism propagates and upholds patriarchal attitudes because it rigidly defines what is acceptable and unacceptable in society regarding gender views and roles.² These beliefs still exist in several liberal democratic societies as they often lack egalitarian ideals that these societies openly espouse. These liberal democracies manipulate their political systems through tactics of impositions diversions and congruence. These societies give hypocritical praises and assume exaggerated belief in gender equality. But, while normative ideals are only in their heads, they never lead them to productive dialogue that leads to equal representation.

The pursuit of climate-based gender justice is necessary to weed out these firmly rooted cultural and societal philosophies because women's role in the sustainable management of natural resources cannot be undermined anymore. The world has to strive to get over its actions-old pre-conceived and obstinate views on gender-related perceptions. The true and core value of a liberal democracy is based on mutual and equal respect for one another, even on the basis of sex. The mere recognition of women's basic rights is not enough if it fails to eliminate gender-based discrimination and historical injustice.

International Measures

The discourse of gender justice in climate decisions has been extensively discussed at UNFCCC, since the last two decades. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was established in 1988 by the UNEP and WMO. This helped to achieve the goal of a global climate policy. The Rio Summit saw the formal recognition by the world of several climate-related legal instruments. The Summit brought together three important international legal instruments: the UN CBD, UNCCD, and UNFCCC. With time, these Conventions have evolved substantially. Amongst them, the ambit of UNFCCC has widened enormously. Several elements of UNFCCC have been deliberated during international negotiations, such as adaptation, mitigation, climate finance, technology transfer, forestry, land utilization, loss and damage and even gender.

The State Parties to UNFCCC have duly recognized the significance of women involvement in climate policy-making due to their immense familiarity with sustainable resource management. They are bearers of traditional knowledge of several natural and biological resources. They have borne the brunt of challenges and vulnerabilities associated with Climate Change. To ensure a gender-responsive climate policy at the national level, their active participation has been recognized by including them in the Paris Agreement.

Climate-related vulnerabilities spread across several fronts. The geophysical and socio-economic factors are subjected to such adverse effects of Climate Change, making it difficult for people to respond to such adversaries. The rate of their exposure and the degree of their sensitivity and

adaptability determine women's particular climate vulnerabilities. The nexus of Climate Change and women is apparent and warranted. Furthermore, the broadened framework of feminism to counter the historic injustice and oppression has also touched upon environmental-based gender justice. This has resulted in their emancipation, triggered by environmental movements in several countries (for example, Chipko Movement of India) leading to an in-depth assessment and refined understanding of the socio-economic relations of women in and across several segments of society.

The socio-political movements and ideologies have influenced the promotion of women's rights, and the gradual and steady development of gender-based environmental rights has greatly aided the paradigm of law. The dynamics of law in this regard have been under consistent judicial scrutiny and interpretations because a rigid law will act as a barrier to any adaptive move. Climate Change and its relationship with adversative human activities are dynamic and proportional to each other a law that allows adaptation can only ensure a long-term stable ecosystem with the checks and balances between these two elements (Human and Climate). The inclusion of women in all UNFCCC processes, delegations, and bodies has significantly increased. The role of women in environmental governance has consistently been portrayed as a sign of equity and equality, and with the development of the International Legal Framework on Climate Change. The result of two decades of negotiations and diplomacy is this improvement.

The 1995 Beijing Declaration (Platform for Action) emphasised how crucial it is to incorporate women's rights into efforts to combat climate change and advance sustainable growth. The Preamble of the Declaration acknowledges all viewpoints and notes the numerous barriers that prevent women from being empowered and advanced globally. It agrees to act swiftly in a cooperative, determined, solidaristic, hopeful, and cooperative manner. Clause 249 of the Declaration notes that women are underrepresented in decision-making and policy formulation regarding the management, conservation, rehabilitation, and protection of natural resources.³ It adopts a strategic plan of action to involve women in environmental decision-making by ensuring their active participation and leadership by.

- Equal opportunities for women (including indigenous women) to participate in decision-making at all levels.
- Making education and information more accessible to women (in the areas of science, technology, and economics).
- Women are protected from environmental hazards through appropriate measures, such as the use of clean technologies and the application of a precautionary approach. Women are included in the design and implementation of an environmentally sound and sustainable management of natural resources in urban and rural areas.
- Make the necessary preparations to empower women as consumers and producers in their homes, communities, and workplaces.

The Commission on the Status of Women's mandate was expanded by the ESC to include monitoring and reviewing problems with the Declaration's implementation the following year.

Beijing +5 was adopted in 2000. A political declaration titled "Further Actions and Initiatives to Implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action" was adopted following the special session of the 23rd UN General Assembly on the theme "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development, and Peace for the 21st Century."⁴ This was done with consideration for the historical, religious, and cultural backgrounds to fully realize all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women. The platform also acknowledged that eradicating poverty is necessary to stop environmental degradation trends in their tracks. Indigenous women's traditional ecological knowledge has contributed to a greater acceptance of Sustainable Development (SD) and biological preservation.⁴ However, women's lack of access to technical knowledge, resources, and knowledge of the environmental risks they face has increased the demand for intentional strategies and institutional mechanisms to reduce the environmental risks they face.

A report on gender-responsive climate policy with a particular focus on mitigation and technology transfer development was released by the SBI in 2015. It emphasised the advantages and importance of integrating gender equality into

technology transfer and mitigation action. Two years later during Bonn Climate meet, the Conference of Parties established a Gender Action Plan prepared on the basis of the 2016 Gender Composition Report (adopted by Conference of Parties 23 in Marrakesh). Five priority areas were established to advance the understanding and knowledge of a gender-sensitive and gender-responsive climate action at COP25, where the state parties adopted a five-year enhanced work programme on gender and its gender action plan.

According to the Enhanced Lima Work Program on Gender

- The ongoing need to incorporate gender equality into all pertinent and important climate change goals in order to ensure the framework convention's fairness, viability, and effectiveness,
- The different ways that gender inequality—both historical and current—affects each gender, as well as a number of multidimensional factors. Local communities and indigenous populations of developing countries are much more affected by these disparities,
- That parties to the framework convention and its subsequent instruments are required to uphold the rights to health, migration, people with disabilities, local communities, children, people in need, women's empowerment, intergenerational equity, and gender equality, and that climate change is an issue that affects all of humanity,

The knowledge management, capacity building and sharing of information and experiences for effective implementation and scaling up the measures to ensure a gender-responsive climate action, The Sustainable Development Agenda of 2030 and relevant United Nations aims to have an effective and efficient integration of gender considerations in climate action. These aspects require the continuing support of the UNFCCC Secretariat. Therefore, the Lima Work Program further requests the Secretariat to render continuing support for the following.

- Maintenance of senior gender focal points to support and monitor the implementation of the said Work Program,
- Preparation of an annual gender composition

report and a biennial synthesis report to tap the progress of gender integrated climate actions plans and programs,

- Facilitating coordination with several other UN bodies, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs for a harmonized support to the said work program,
- Providing capacity building support to all bodies, formed to meet the goals of the said work program,
- Facilitating skill building of national focal points on gender and Climate Change,
- Enhancement of information sharing and communication via pre-existing UNFCCC activities,

The UNFCCC Secretariat published a synthesis report on the status of incorporating a gender perspective in constituted body processes in December 2019. The said report highlighted all gender-based climate-related processes of 2017-18. The said report compiled the submissions of several constituted bodies of UNFCCC such as Adaptation Committee, Adaptation Fund Board, LDC Expert Group, Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee, Standing Committee on Finance, etc.

All of the aforementioned organisations have started a number of processes to include women in climate-related policy interventions. There are still a number of difficulties, though. Only six of the constituted bodies have made an effort to align their respective operations with the demands of the Lima Work Program on Gender and GAP. In the coming days, the other bodies might do the same. The incorporation of gender in these organizations is not uniform, some are focused and committed to reporting on gender-relevant issues, while others have not yet gained that momentum. Clarity is also required in some of these bodies' reporting about the references and explanations of the measures they have planned and want to incorporate.

Measures in India

Although environmental movements in India are not new, they have been gaining momentum over the past few decades. This has raised many questions. Pavan Sukhdev, renowned Indian economist has classified India's environmental problems into five categories.

- Forest-based (in the case of forest policy, forest resource use, etc.);
- Land-based (due to industrialization, loss of agriculture, increased chemical discharges in public water bodies and degradation of the quality of land);
- Displacement-based (due to the construction of dams that cause large displacements of tribals and others, and destruction of forest land);
- Pollution-based (due to an increased release of pollutants into the environment) and
- Exploitation-based (due to over-exploitation marine resources).

In 1917, women took part in a protest against indigo plantations in the Champaran District of present Bihar. The Salt *Satyagraha* was another major event in which women participated in which Sarojini Naidu and Usha Mehta were joined by Mahatma Gandhi.

All these movements had women playing supportive and participative role. These women were mostly from the cities. Traditional subsistence and survival in rural India have been the responsibility of women. The patriarchal social system governs women's place in society. Because of taboos prohibiting women from operating the plough, it is common for men to prepare the land for cultivation. Women cannot start the cultivation process by themselves, they must rely on men. The land is also owned by men, which is generally passed down paternally. Women provide almost all of the labour needed to grow crops. Women are the ones who do the planting, harvesting, and weeding. They also keep the biodiversity. Women care more about the micro-levels of daily life, and are therefore more sensitive to the effects of a degraded environment.

Here are Some Examples of Environmental Movements in Which Women Have Participated Chipko Movement

Perhaps the year 1972, when the Chipko movement was founded, is the year that the modern Indian environmental movement emerged. The timber merchants were attracted to the dense forests in Uttarakhand's Terai region, Himalayan foothills. Commercial forestry saw large-scale deforestation of the hills, resulting in topsoil erosion and landslides or floods. These areas were home to many peasant women, who found their lives becoming more

difficult as they had to gather fuelwood, fodder, and water. These women eventually learned to link the destruction of forests to the changes in their lives. Chipko was thus born, with Bachni Devi leading the protests.

Beginning in Chamoli, the movement eventually spread to the other Himalayan regions of Uttarakhand. Rural women banded together to save the forests when contractors arrived to cut down trees. The voluntary participation of every female villager made Chipko stand out from the crowd. Since women were the foundation of Uttarakhand's agrarian economy, environmental degradation and deforestation had a direct impact on them. They found it simple to get involved in conservation-related issues as a result. Women who live in hilly areas are more likely to be environmentally conscious. They were joined by Sunderlal Bahuguna, Chandi Prasad Bhatt, and the Chipko women to give the movement direction and national exposure.

Chipko Movement did not seek to save forests. It was, rather, a movement that sought to maintain the fragile Terai's natural ecological balance, where hill people have a positive relationship with the environment. Women who mobilized to save forests raised questions about the current model for development that encourages commercial forest-growing in hill regions. The Chipko movement had an impact on many other areas, not just the Himalayan area in Uttarakhand. It had an impact on other movements within the country to preserve forests. In 1980, Appiko (a movement similar to the *Chipko* movement) was founded to save forests in Uttara Kannada. Appiko *Andolan* helped raise awareness about conserving the environment in southern India. Participation was high among rural women. Uttara Kannada district forests covered over 81% of the area in 1950. This area was home to major industries like a pulp and paper mill, a plywood factory, and several hydroelectric dams. These industries surpassed forest resources and submerged large-forests and agricultural areas. By 1980, 25% of the forest had been reduced. Appiko Movement was to rescue the Western Ghats in the wake of this crisis.

Most movements acknowledged the crucial role that women play in preserving the environment after the Chipko movement. Telangana's Deccan

Development Society, established in 1983, focuses on sustainable agriculture. More than two million Indian women who work in small-scale clean technology, such as solar lanterns and clean cook stoves, are part of SEWA. *Navadanya* (i.e. "Nine Seeds") emphasises using conventional seed banks and biodiversity. Thus, all these movements are led by women to preserve the environment, human livelihoods, and biological and cultural diversity.

Gujarat's SEWA educates and engages women in water harvesting while developing their skills in managing and maintaining water systems. By forming women's groups at the local level, SEWA can assist communities in gaining access to already-existing government programmes. 500 villages in the semi-arid region of Gujarat are home to 200,000 rural women. They are crucial to campaigns promoting water. These initiatives include the restoration of conventional water sources (village or farm ponds), rainwater collection in homes and communities, developing watersheds, and the upkeep of state-owned hand pumps. Vandana Shiva established *Navadanya* in 1982 to advance conventional farming practices. *Navadanya* encourages organic farming and the preservation of biodiversity. This group has supported the development of markets for farmers and promoted premium organic food for consumers.

Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA)

One of India's oldest environmental movements, NBA was founded in 1985 and is still active today in Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh. It opposes the construction of large Narmada River dams because it would require relocating over 2,50,000 people. It questions whether modern development is sacrificing indigenous livelihoods and protests using Gandhian tactics. Women are found to be the community most negatively impacted by displacement, highlighting their lack of ownership over their land or possessions. All compensation goes to men because they are always the family's primary head of household and sole provider of income.

A Gender Responsive Global Climate Policy

According to the Paris Agreement of 2015, "Parties should respect, promote, and take into account their respective obligations regarding human rights, including the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children,

people with disabilities, and people in vulnerable situations, as well as the right to development, which is a shared right by all people, when taking action to address climate change"⁵

Understanding the different capacities, needs, and priorities of men and women, the parties have agreed to two goals for gender and climate change.

- Increased representation of women in all stages of the UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol, and Paris Agreement climate change negotiations,
- Raising awareness and support for responsive and effective implementation of a genderclimate policy in all levels of governance, ranging from international, national to municipal.

Implementing short-term and long-term adaptation measures under UNFCC processes will be easier if women are included in climate change negotiations. Such integration will also ensure that the adaptation efforts align with the egalitarian principle and address women's particular needs and vulnerabilities in relation to climate change. Around the world, a number of such initiatives are already underway. For instance, CARE International has adopted an adaptation learning programme in Africa with the goal of enhancing the vulnerability of sub-Saharan African households' capacity to adapt to climate change.⁶

FAO has also initiated several measures in similar direction, through collaborations. For example, in Uganda FAO collaborated with Gayaza High School to create opportunities for students to acquire agricultural skills and make healthier lives. This adaptation measure takes due consideration of equal participation and skill building for women.⁷ Furthermore, FAO has launched an e-learning platform to provide guidance for land governance, fisheries and forestry in the context of food security in a gender-equitable manner.⁸

Several gender and Climate Change Adaptation measures have taken shape in several countries, under the aegis of UNDP. Like, Burundi National Adaptation Program of Action, Democratic Republic of Congo National Program of Action, Malawi and Burkina Faso experiences are some of the emerging adaptation measures which ensure gender equality in dealing with Climate Change. In the Indian context,

such measures can be seen in case of organic farming in Uttar Pradesh; desilting, deepening, and cleaning ponds for rainwater harvesting in Gujarat, creation of seed banks in Orrisa; Kul Irrigation in Himachal Pradesh; and Benefit-Sharing Fund Project in Kerala.

Policy and Regulatory Measures for Women's Participation in India

In India's policy making, local communities assume centre stage because the pursuit of adaptive strategies continues to strengthen their climate resilience, which warrants replicating adaptive strategies at the macro level. Furthermore, to address the spectrum of multiple threats of Climate Change, the need for climate-proofing of all governmental schemes has been realized. This requires a proper streamlining of all developmental plans at several policy levels of governance in India. A community-based approach should be paramount in its developmental schemes.

In 2008, India adopted NAPCC, highlighting the strategies to address the challenges of Climate Change. However, it emphasized more on Mitigation, rather than Adaptation. With time, India has realized the Plan's strengths and weaknesses, and subsequently, adopted a State Action Plan on Climate Change. At their implementation stages, these State Action plans give a framework for integrating climate-related concerns into existing plans, policies, and programs. Thus, ultimately strengthening the adaptive capacities of India at local levels.

However, any climate-based action should be based on a complete understanding of climate-based vulnerabilities. These understandings can be gained only through a structured approach to risk assessment. With the available local knowledge and systematic scientific support, a judicious decision can be made to address the adverse effects of climate change through a decentralized framework. A better understanding of climate vulnerabilities requires proper assessment tools and techniques. Indicators and composite-based vulnerabilities will enable the decision-makers to understand the grass-root problems associated with climate change and its related adaptive strategies. "It is a truism in policy-making that everything is related to everything else so that, in one sense, all interrelationships and

subsequent effects should be taken into account before decisions are made."

In India, the MoEFCC is the nodal agency in the administrative framework of the Central Government. It is entrusted with the responsibilities of promotion, planning, and implementation of the country's environmental laws, policies, and programs. It also acts as the nodal agency for several international environmental programs and multilateral bodies like UNEP, ICIMOD, SACEP, CSD, GEP, etc.

The Ministry has certain broad objectives, which include pollution abatement, conservation of flora, fauna, forests and wildlife, regeneration of degraded areas, afforestation, etc. To meet the ends of those broad objectives, several enabling regulatory and legislative instruments have been enacted from time to time. Alongside the statutory framework, the ministry is also guided by policy measures such as the NFP 1988, NCSPSED 1992, NEP 2006, etc. Though the Ministry plays an important part in improving and conserving the environment, that has not increased women's participation in environmental decision-making. However, this does not mean that women are not involved at any stage of policy-formation or its implementation.

By virtue of a Bill (though lapsed), 33% of seats in the Parliament were proposed to be reserved in favour of women. Similar reservation measure should be adopted in selecting the members of the various Environment divisions, Boards and Tribunals. Further, women are not consulted while implementing projects that are likely to affect the environment or involve displacement.

Conclusion and Suggestions - The Way Forward

Due to its complexities and consequences, climate change studies and research needs an integrated and collaborative approach from several dimensions and disciplines. The matter of gender is emerging slowly but the same will require an immense push, not only from international or regional but also at national and local levels of governance. Socio-economic factors have, no doubt, a significant role to play in this regard, but alongside, an application of feminist gerontology is also required. A deep ecology perspective, which recognises that human well-being is distinct from the well-being of the natural world, is promoted by an eco-social work

lens. Additionally, it adopts a rights-based and social justice perspective on climate change issues, acknowledging the connection between structural injustices and socioeconomic inequalities and the diverse experiences and effects of climate change. Finally, it acknowledges that interventions must be community-based and participatory.¹⁵ When it comes to feminist gerontology, if the same is considered too along with the wider gender-based integration, several insights on vulnerabilities to Climate Change will also gain attention from several fronts. Older women, for example, are one vulnerable group which is underrepresented. Similarly, pregnant women are also at a higher risk due to climate change. It is, therefore, immensely required to be addressed within the recently integrated lens of GAP and the Lima Work Program.

The elements of Global Climate Change negotiation have immensely widened in the last decade. The bottom-up approach and top-down approach together can bring a brighter future for the gender-based approach to Climate actions. The hybrid approach should continue to figure in several gender-responsive Climate actions. Certain sectors of the Climate Change framework should be featured in the national and municipal policies of countries. Farmers' abilities to adapt to climate change are significantly influenced by their income levels, regularity, and predictability of revenue, and the majority of them are women who reside in low-income, resource-poor nations.¹⁶ The emerging action plans and strategies should ensure income security from the lens of gender equality. Access to credit is another area of significance because in many low-income developing countries and even least developed countries, access to capital and assets excludes women due to patriarchal property and succession laws. In furtherance, this deprives women of access to credits, which is required for several adaptive measures. The international framework cannot transgress the national legislative arena in this regard. Still, global recognition of women in Climate decision-making and its further implementation via national focal points can gradually imbibe a sense of parity amongst the rule-makers of these affected countries. This process will be gradual but effective. Several UNDP and World Bank projects are already functional in these countries, which encourages women participation. Such integration has turned out to be fruitful in ensuring equal rights for both

women and men. The gender dimension has to be recognized at grass root levels, and for that, continuing capacity-building exercises should keep accelerating. Promoting gender-oriented schemes in adaptation efforts will strengthen the long-term goal of gender integration in Climate Change policy making.

The systemic issues of environmental degradation and gender inequality are not mutually exclusive. Since women must play a crucial part in society's response to Climate Change, their involvement and engagement at all levels are essential to developing sustainable solutions to the health threats they face.¹⁷ The composition matrix of the environmental decision-making bodies is changing with more participation of women. Still, the real-time socio-economic challenges are yet to lose grip in several patriarchal societies. Enabling laws are enacted with a sound objective of gender equality. Still, when it comes to its practical application, the terrain is quite difficult as the change in the mindset will require continuing education and true empowerment of women. Women must actively pursue climate justice for this to be viable. With GAP and Lima Work Program, a new regime has already set its trajectory towards a gender-based Climate equality and equity. However, with time, this has to be further strengthened. Along with adaptation, mitigation and finance, other elements of Climate negotiations have also taken a course in gender mainstreaming. Climate technologies are yet to be gender neutral and to ensure equal participation of men and women in the use of climate technologies, the UNFCCC's CTCN has initiated strategies and action plans for exploring the area of Climate Change and Gender. These humble and operative beginnings are commendable endeavors of UNFCCC to ensure gender equality.

In the pursuit of gender justice vis-à-vis Climate Change, certain goals must be enunciated. To transform unjust power relations, promoting women's participation in climate-compatible development must go beyond the technical level of providing and gaining access to basic services. Otherwise, a crucial window of opportunity for women's development may be missed.¹⁹ The participatory form of environmental governance has brought positive results in addressing the issues relating to the rights of indigenous communities

across the globe. The same model can also be fruitful for gender-sensitive approaches to a sustainable climate. To begin with, the national focal points should further aim to ensure compliance with international commitments. as regards gender integration in environmental governance. Along with the same, extensive endeavor should also be laid upon skill-building. The process has already started at both international and several national levels and hopefully, the same will strengthen further in the days to come. Last but not the least, effective implementation of all gender-based climate initiatives will be futile unless there are good monitoring, reporting and verification mechanisms to tap the outcomes of all set targets and goals for a gender-integrated and neutral sustainable climate policymaking. For India, to achieve gender-neutrality in environmental governance, it is first necessary to make the Indian environmental laws in compliance with international ratifications. Secondly, non-legislative and non-regulatory measures should be ensured to increase women's participation. For example, measures should be adopted to conduct seminars and workshops exclusively for women.

Such seminars should highlight the importance of women and their participation in environment-policy decision-making. Further, for the approval of any environment project, prior approval of at least 50% of women who are likely to be affected or displaced by such a project should be taken. This approval should be taken after giving complete information to such women about the kind of project and the likely effect on their livelihood, residence, incomes, etc. Also, to mandate women's participation at the policy level, mandatory reservations should be made of a considerable number of seats in favor of women.

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