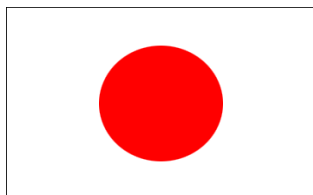




Australian Government

Australia



Japan

Canada

Canada



United States

12 September 2019

**Submission on the implementation of the gender action plan, identifying areas of progress, areas for improvement and further work to be undertaken in subsequent action plans to inform the synthesis report on this topic to be prepared by the Secretariat for consideration at SBI 51 (November 2019).
Mandate: FCCC/SBI/2018/L.22**

I. Overview

1. This submission contains the views of the Governments of Australia, Canada, Japan, and the United States (hereinafter referred to as the Parties) in addressing the implementation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) adopted at COP23, including areas of progress, areas of improvement and further work to be undertaken in subsequent action plans.
2. The Parties recognise climate change can have different impacts on women and men, girls and boys, and that women and girls are particularly vulnerable. Women are also powerful agents of change, particularly given their livelihoods often depend on sectors where the impacts are acute, such as agriculture, forestry, and water. The Parties support inclusive and gender-responsive climate policies and programs, which recognise that women are critical to an effective global response.
3. The Parties are concerned that women remain under-represented in climate-related decision making at all levels. The Secretariat's most recent gender composition report (FCCC/CP/2018/3) shows women made up only 37 per cent of delegates at COP23 and 24 per cent of Heads of Delegation. These figures have not improved significantly in recent years.

4. The Parties are of the view that the Lima work programme on gender (LWPG) and its GAP have helped to drive important progress to highlight gender equality in the UNFCCC. There is a valuable role for the LWPG and its GAP to continue to guide the work of the UNFCCC and its Parties by articulating the rationale, evidence for, and benefits of gender-responsive climate action and setting out practical, concrete activities to advance this work in the UNFCCC context.
5. We welcome the opportunity to work with other Parties to ensure continued relevance and impact of the LWPG and its GAP, and look forward to adopting an enhanced work program and action plan at COP25 in Santiago, Chile.

II. Areas of progress

6. The GAP adopted at COP23 demonstrated significant progress in outlining relevant priorities for gender and climate issues in the UNFCCC, and established a practical and achievable workplan. Significant steps have been taken to advance this work, but there is still more to be done.
7. The GAP has proven valuable in communicating the importance of gender-responsive climate action across the UNFCCC, particularly through its focus on coherence. The Secretariat's work to provide capacity-building to chairs and members of UNFCCC constituted bodies has been a particularly good example of this work.
8. The Parties welcome the continued regular sharing of information on gender composition of UNFCCC bodies and the information that Parties may provide on a voluntary basis regarding gender balance in national delegations, including heads of delegations, as adopted in 23/CP.18. This monitoring and reporting provides helpful information on efforts to promote gender balance across UNFCCC work.
9. The Governments of Australia and Canada are pleased to have directly supported implementation of the GAP through their focus on priority area B 'gender balance, participation and women's leadership'. Australia and Canada provided negotiation and leadership training, combined with travel fund support, to boost the voices of women from the Pacific, the Caribbean, and Francophone Africa in UNFCCC negotiations.
10. The Government of the United States strengthened its gender-responsive policies including through the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment (WEEE) Act. Under the WEEE Act and its existing policies, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) performs a gender analysis to integrate gender equality and female empowerment throughout the agency's program cycle across all sectors, including climate change and the environment.
11. The Government of Japan, through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), is actively promoting gender-mainstreaming in all development sectors and projects, including climate change and disaster risk reduction.

III. Areas for improvement

12. The Parties view the LWPG and its GAP as complementary. While the LWPG sets out the broad rationale, evidence for, and benefits of gender-responsive action, the GAP operationalises and guides this work into a concrete plan in the context of the UNFCCC's work. The Parties believe an enhanced GAP should build on experience with the existing plan, especially aspects that have been particularly effective, and should remain closely linked with the LWPG. We see the outcome of COP25 as one LWPG decision with an annexed GAP.
13. A two-year timeframe was appropriate for the initial phase of the GAP as it helped lay the foundations and provided valuable experience and an early opportunity for review ahead of further phases. We consider an enhanced GAP should be extended to five years to enable a longer time for implementation, in turn supporting a more strategic approach to achieving objectives set out in the LWPG.
14. The Parties see merit in a further review of the implementation of the updated LWPG and GAP at the end of the five years.
15. The current GAP includes several activities that are specific, implementable, and achievable, with only a small number of activities that are broad and lack specificity. An enhanced GAP could be improved by ensuring activities are framed in such a way that progress can be more easily monitored over time, including for impact and effectiveness.
16. An enhanced GAP should consider carefully where demands are being placed on the Secretariat and ensure these are appropriate given available resources.
17. The Parties note that around 50 countries have established National Gender and Climate Change Focal Points (NGCCFPs). Consideration should be given to an articulation of the role of the NGCCFPs. Parties view the role of the UNFCCC Gender Focal Point as useful and would like to see it continue.
18. The Priority Action Areas should focus on those that Parties judge most strategic and have highest value. A concise list of Priority Action Areas will help to communicate the GAP to external audiences.
19. The Parties see a role for a continued focus on capacity building and learning, particularly for members of constituted bodies across the UNFCCC and UNFCCC Secretariat staff, to improve capacity to support implementation of gender-responsive policies and programs.

IV. Further work to be undertaken

Elements of an enhanced Lima work programme on gender (LWPG) and gender action plan (GAP)

20. The Parties view gender mainstreaming and coherence throughout the UNFCCC process as cross-cutting elements of an enhanced GAP, including in the work of constituted bodies, as appropriate.

21. The Parties view gender equality as critical to an enhanced GAP. While there have been efforts toward increasing gender balance of delegations, we should also promote women's empowerment in leadership, decision making, influence, and voice across the UNFCCC.

Priority areas and possible activities

22. The Parties found the priority areas presented in the informal note by the co-facilitators (document SBI50.IN.i16) useful to advance ideas on work to be undertaken in a subsequent action plan. We support the inclusion of a description of each priority area to provide clarity and promote a common understanding of the work.
23. Given the clear linkages between capacity building and gender-responsive implementation in the UNFCCC, we also see an opportunity to streamline and integrate these priority areas.
24. The activities in the enhanced LWPG and GAP should align with the relevant mandates under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement to promote coherence.
25. The GAP should clearly define activities, responsible actors, timelines, and deliverables. It should be written with a mind to be accessible to broad audiences.
26. Below are some suggested activities under the priority areas identified in the informal note, which could add value to an enhanced LWPG and GAP. This list is intended as input to discussions and is not exhaustive.

A. Capacity-Building and learning

This area should focus on a defined number of activities that promote capacity-building and learning on gender issues across the UNFCCC. It could build upon some of the tools and data explored in priority area C and include workshops and trainings on best practices.

A.1

Invite the Facilitative Working Group (FWG) of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP), to the extent consistent with its work program and within existing resources, to build capacity for the engagement of indigenous women and women from local communities into the UNFCCC process.

A.2

Build on efforts to enhance capacity of members of UNFCCC constituted bodies and UNFCCC Secretariat staff to support implementation of gender-responsive climate action.

B. Gender-responsive implementation

Promoting implementation of gender-responsive projects and policies, particularly at the national level, is an important role of an enhanced GAP. This priority area could include activities to advance the development of guidance and to build capacity for this work, including in taking forward the elements of gender-responsive climate action at the national level. We encourage Parties to think innovatively about this process in a resource-constrained environment.

B.1

Hold an in-session workshop on gender considerations in the context of domestic climate policies and initiatives, including as they relate to NDCs. Parties would have the opportunity to reflect their work on gender in the communication of domestic climate policies, including future NDCs. The workshop could also provide an opportunity to discuss how to make use of the long-term strategy, as appropriate and as applicable, to mainstream gender considerations into climate policies.

B.2

Recognising that new ideas for gender-responsive measures are constantly being developed, we see value in holding an in-session dialogue on the relatively new implementation of gender budgeting, which the IMF explains as ‘an approach to budgeting that uses fiscal policy and administration to gender equality and girls’ and women development’. The in-session dialogue could focus on sharing experiences and innovative approaches in order to understand the impacts such measures have on countries’ policies and programs.

B.3

Share best practices in, and challenges to, creating policies and programs that help enable women to secure jobs in their local economies given ongoing energy and environmental transitions, particularly as it pertains to industries more vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

C. Knowledge management and communication

Lack of sex-disaggregated data and lack of information on strategies to integrate gender is an obstacle to furthering the goals of the GAP. Activities under this priority area would encourage knowledge sharing and highlight existing tools, technical advice, and data sources that could be used to help develop gender-responsive programs and policies.

C.1

Hold an in-session dialogue with relevant stakeholders, as applicable, to make information on mainstreaming gender considerations into low-emission, climate-resilient economic development pathways more accessible.

C.2

Hold an in-session dialogue with relevant experts to showcase existing knowledge bases and tools that provide technical advice and data, and that could be used to help develop gender-responsive programs and policies.

D. Gender balance, participation and women's leadership

Women's participation throughout the UNFCCC process is a vital component of the gender work. This track also seeks to promote coherence and consistent implementation of gender-related mandates and activities throughout UNFCCC bodies and the Secretariat. This should also encourage men's involvement and participation in UNFCCC gender work, to include trainings, workshops, and data collection.

D.1

Articulate roles and responsibilities to guide the work of the UNFCCC gender focal point and national focal points.

E. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting [and learning]

To understand how we can improve and enhance this work in the future, we must be able to track and evaluate how successful the activities have been in creating a shift toward gender-responsive implementation and elevating women's leadership in the UNFCCC. This could also include tracking how countries include gender in their UNFCCC reporting, as appropriate and as applicable.

E.1

Continue to share with Parties information on the gender composition of UNFCCC constituted bodies, as well as the information that Parties may provide on a voluntary basis regarding gender composition of national delegations at COPs, including Heads of Delegation.

E.2

We see usefulness in requesting the Secretariat, following further guidance from Parties and upon availability of resources, to inform Parties on progress made in implementing an enhanced LWPG and GAP.