

MenEngage Alliance COP27 Political Agenda

Transforming patriarchal masculinities and working with men and boys, including men in positions of power, to address the climate crisis

We stand together and behind the leadership of all feminist, indigenous, climate, youth, and other social justice movements at the 27th Session of the Conference of Parties (COP27) to the UNFCCC, in challenging the dominant patriarchal, socio-economic and political systems perpetuating climate crisis. We stand with all movements for justice at this time, to ensure an urgent and just transition based on feminist systems transformation towards green economies of care, including by centering adaptation and mitigating efforts of the worst effects of climate change among the most vulnerable communities and nations around the world. The climate crisis poses an existential threat for all humans, all lifeforms on earth and for the planet itself. As the recent UNFCCC report has warned, it's 'now or never' for the global community to limit global warming to 1.5°C (2.7°F)¹. We call on all Governments at COP27 to heed this imminent warming and to take bold and transformative action centered on climate and gender justice for all.

Key Messages on patriarchal masculinities and the climate crisis

What we know about gender and climate

Climate change is one of the most urgent global challenges facing the world today. Its immediate impacts are already being felt around the globe, although unequally. As we speak, many communities, predominantly in the Global South and especially women, girls, LGBTIQ and indigenous peoples, are already experiencing the devastating and deadly consequences of this global crisis.

- The gender dimensions of the climate crisis are well documented². Analyses from eco-feminist theories on climate change have long drawn links to the roots of this crisis in histories of colonial resource extraction and capitalist industrial production, which themselves are shaped and legitimated by patriarchal logics of domination and exploitation.
- They have also pointed to how the impacts have been and will be most devastating on the most marginalized³. A feminist understanding of the climate catastrophe highlights the intersectional nature of the gender inequalities unleashed as a result, including increased violence against women, girls and gender non-conforming individuals.
- The degradation of livelihoods and biospheres produced by climate change is also fueling an unprecedented displacement and movement of people, both within and between countries and

¹ [UNFCCC Report](#)

² Kato-Wallace, Jane et.al. 2016. "Men, Masculinities & Climate Change: A Discussion Paper." Washington, DC: Menengage Alliance.

³ The Mexico City feminist convening noted that the effects of climate change are "particularly acute for those living in small island states and territories, least developed countries, the global South, as well as for indigenous peoples, urban poor, rural and remote communities, Afro-descendant people, people with disabilities, migrant communities, LGBTI people, ethnic minorities, girls, the elderly, communities experiencing descent and work-based discrimination, and many others." Anon 2019.

across continents. As many studies have shown, women, girls and LGBTIQ people face many forms of sexual violence and exploitation at all stages of their journeys as migrants and refugees, from state officials, military personnel and criminal gangs alike⁴.

- As well, women and girls from affected communities, on the margins of the margins, have been in the forefront of struggles to defend their rights in the face of threats posed by corporate and state elites. Many such activists and human rights defenders continue to experience intimidation and reprisals, some which has resulted in physical harm, injury and or loss of life.
- Most women, girls and LGBTIQ people face double injustice due to climate change and gender inequality in all aspects of their lives: women and children are more likely to drown during disasters than men and boys, and more often live in poor conditions that make them more vulnerable during climate crises. At the same time, women and girls are more likely to recycle and have on average a smaller ecological footprint than men and boys do.
- Gender stereotypes around care are also well documented, putting most of the burden of care duties on women and girls' all over the world—including care for nature.

The Link Between Patriarchy and Climate Change

Patriarchy is harmful to our climate. Indeed, there is a need to better understand how harmful ideals around patriarchal masculinities that include the need for men and boys to have power over others – ‘others’ being understood as women, girls, LGBTIQ peoples, other men, children and nature – perpetuate environmental degradation.

- The climate crisis and gender inequality both stem from, among other factors, the root cause of patriarchal ideologies and systems. In order to achieve climate justice and to address the root causes of the climate crisis, it will require tackling harmful social norms and eradicating all forms of oppression that reproduce gendered power inequalities.
- For example, responses to the climate crisis are often blocked or paralysed by gender stereotypes, such as men and boys refusing to take eco-friendly actions because they are not perceived as ‘manly’. Thus, focusing on the deconstruction and transformation of patriarchal masculinities will support in strengthening future and existing solutions for climate change adaptation and resilience.
- Ecofeminist analysis has unpacked how climate change is rooted in histories of colonial resource extraction and capitalist industrial production. These practices are masculinist, patriarchal and eurocentric in the way they maintain structures of power and dominance that continue today to exclude women, girls and people of all genders as well as exploit natural resources with disregard for people and planet, escalating inequalities around the world. It is urgent that we end the current patriarchal patterns of exploitation, extractive economic models and financial systems, and their many forms of control over bodies, land and livelihoods, entrenched within political systems of privileges, impunities and entitlements..
- Other structures of oppression—such as race and socioeconomic status—must also be unpacked through an intersectional perspective to ensure work is not complicit with colonial systems. For example, wealthier men and men in the Global North contribute much more to climate destruction relative to men in the Global South.
- Further exploration in understanding boys’ and men’s multiple roles in climate change is needed, including by conducting an analysis of masculinities (characteristics associated with

⁴ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/gender-based-violence-against-women-both-cause-migration-and-risk-along-journey>

what it means to be a man) in patriarchal systems that play a contributing role in perpetuating climate change. This can guide the way for future efforts, by identifying opportunities to work with men and boys as agents of positive change, alongside women, girls, and gender nonconforming people and further strengthen the call for action on social, economic and environmental justice for all.

- As such, intersectional feminist approaches to transform patriarchal masculinities, can be an important contribution to work with women, girls and people of diverse gender identities to respond to the climate crisis, and can serve as a valuable opportunity to synchronize different voices towards the shared concern of addressing harmful climate change. It is not the only key piece to shift action on climate change. A major challenge of climate change is, in fact, that there are no easy single-step solutions. However, men and boys must contribute to the creation of a gender-equitable and ecologically sustainable society.

We call on all leaders, especially men in positions of power

We join the calls of all marginalized communities for the right to join COP27 safely, to be allowed access, to be heard, to participate, and to contribute leadership and expertise towards transformative shifts away from the current climate crisis.

- COP27 is a critical moment for feminist, LGBTIQ, youth, indigenous and climate justice activists, organizations and movements to raise our collective voices and demands to ensure that transformative change is achieved, from the grassroots to feminist systems change. **This will not happen without the decisive leadership of political leaders around the world.**
- We urge all leaders, especially men in positions of power to listen to, to learn from, and to center the voices, the leadership and the political agendas of feminist, indigenous & youth climate justice activists and **human-and-environmental rights defenders** and movements, everywhere and to take bold and transformative actions for climate, gender and social justice.
- We call on all **leaders, especially men in positions of power**, to be **held to account** for their actions, or more appropriately, their inactions. **Political complacency, delay, and excuses** must be seen for what they are: gross failures of leadership, and a tragic failure for humanity and all life on Earth. The international scientific community has long-established the magnitude and urgency of the climate crisis. Governments must heed their calls with the scale and urgency demanded by climate science and climate activists.
- We call for **ending all impunity for decision-makers** - in **corporations, financial institutions and governments**. Leaders who are guilty of ecological destruction or ecocide should be prosecuted in order to prevent further crimes.
- We call for **work and advocacy with boys and men, in all their diversities, on their multiple roles and responsibilities in the climate crisis** and to put forward analyses on the interconnections between patriarchal masculinities & their contributing role in perpetuating the climate crisis. Make the harm of men in power positions visible and make the link with patriarchal structures and norms clear.

We raise the voices and demands of feminist, indigenous, youth and climate justice movements

Youth Movements Demands

We stand by- and urge all governments today to act in alignment with the principles and advocacy asks laid out by **Fridays for Future for “No More Empty Promises”** including for:

- A moratorium on all new fossil fuel projects.
- End all investments in the industry;
- Annual and binding carbon budgets;
- Economic, racial and gender justice in climate policy;
- Protect and safeguard democracy.
- Citizen participation in climate decision making; and
- Making ecocide an international crime.

Feminist Climate Justice Movements

We stand by- and urge all governments today to act in alignment with the principles and advocacy asks laid out by the **Women and Gender Constituency (WGC)**:

As the WGC, we bolster these regional demands and with a global perspective, building on several years of collective advocacy¹, call on the following to drive outcomes at COP27:

- **Ensure the full and inclusive participation of women - in all their diversity - across all climate action and advance implementation of the gender action plan via its mid-term review.** Outcomes at COP27 under the gender agenda item must acknowledge the current realities the world faces in terms of both urgent climate crisis and gender inequalities and update activities to best respond to areas where progress is lacking.
- **Recognize, redress and compensate for loss and damage**—the immediate and unequal climate-related destruction that is occurring beyond any attempts at adaptation—centering the most marginalized people and communities.
- **Deliver on climate finance - achieving, at minimum, the US\$100 billion per year goal**, ensuring finance is gender-responsive, and that the proportion of grants-based funding for adaptation is significantly increased, with new, additional funds for loss and damage, as a matter of climate, social and gender justice.
- **Dismantle false solutions to climate change**, particularly the emphasis on net zero, carbon trading and offsets, and nature-based solutions in the climate and biodiversity arenas.
- **Advance a just and equitable energy transition**, shifting from a fossil-fuel based economy to a low-carbon and renewable energy system that upholds women’s human rights and advances social and environmental justice.
- **Invest in resilient, gender-transformative, climate justice education**
- **Apply a social-justice framework** and human rights based approach to climate action that includes the full range of **sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)**;
- **Fulfill commitments to gender equality and ecosystem integrity** via the full implementation and realization of sustainable development and biodiversity goals;

We call on intersectional, accountable, feminist-informed work to transform patriarchal masculinities to end the climate crisis

Listen to and learn from feminist, youth, and climate justice movements and act together as allies; deconstruct industrial and eco-modern⁵ masculinities and construct an inclusive, caring humanity and world view.

- Advocate for systems change as allies in diverse feminist movements and institutions, such as in relevant United Nations bodies.
- Mainstream education on feminist climate justice concepts, including the impact of industrial and eco-modern⁶ masculinities and patriarchal structures on climate problems; gender-transformative education with men and boys on gender equality and climate justice practices such as connecting rational, social and emotional journeys in solving the climate problems with greater inclusion, as well as learning to heal and deal with eco-anxiety.
- Encourage further empirical research, quantitative and qualitative, to develop relevant concepts and theory. Diverse theories must be allowed to grow and change, and a community of practice must be built to develop the topic of masculinities and climate justice.
- Challenge and deconstruct the idealization of hegemonic masculinities based on dominance. This includes, for example, being hunters or looking at hunting as a rite of passage.

Center all humans and nonhumans and their livelihoods and environmental threats in our work, breaking the male-female gender binary and the human-nature binary; avoiding other patriarchal binary systems of control and oppressive power (production, utility, logic, value rankings) typical of colonialism, racism, classism, and ageism.

- Develop an intersectional understanding on all identities across genders, ethnicities, education, location, skin color, nationality, occupation by redefining relationships among and between peoples, with other species, and with other forms of life.
- Reject and replace ownership and notions of utility and control over relationships and an ethics of mutuality and solidarity of care for all. It also means looking beyond the myopia of Global North worldview and decolonizing work.
- Engage with, pass the microphone to and make room at the table to the people most affected by climate change, people and areas most neglected and excluded from policy decisions and promote ways to amplify their voices, especially women and girls and LGBTIQ people, and people of color.
- Develop climate responses that center human rights and gender equality.
- Refuse to partake in actions that are not in line with global justice movements.

Contribute to sustainable justice (in relation to climate, gender, and human rights) by understanding and acting accordingly to the complexity of the climate crisis, its

⁵ Around the globe, unfettered industrialisation has marched forth in unison with massive social inequities. Making matters worse, anthropogenic pressures on Earth's living systems are causing alarming rates of thermal expansion, sea-level rise, biodiversity losses in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and a sixth mass extinction. As various disciplines have shown, rich white men in the Global North are the main (although not the only) perpetrators of this slow violence. This book demonstrates that industrial/breadwinner masculinities have come at terrible costs to the living planet and eco-modern masculinities have failed us as well, men included.

<https://www.routledge.com/Ecological-Masculinities-Theoretical-Foundations-and-Practical-Guidance/Hultman-Pule/p/book/9780367893699>

⁶<https://www.routledge.com/Ecological-Masculinities-Theoretical-Foundations-and-Practical-Guidance/Hultman-Pule/p/book/9780367893699>

interconnected features and relationships that require accountability to those leading climate justice efforts and those whose livelihoods are most threatened by the climate crisis.

- Be accountable to women, girls, LGBTIQ people, and people of color, as well as to feminist and youth climate movements. Whenever possible and welcome, men should use their privilege to assist climate justice movements, and they should be accountable for harm done in the past and present.
- Hold men in power, corporations, and governments accountable for their responsibilities to tackle climate change. Prosecute men who are guilty of planetary destruction or ecocide through their activities. Make their harm visible while making the link with patriarchal norms and values clear.
- Defend the defenders of human- and environmental rights. Hold those accountable who are harassing (in person and online) and even killing activist women, girls, men and LGBTIQ people and help build safe spaces that allow for constructive dialogue.
- Ensure climate finance is analyzed from the lens of the historically most polluting countries being held accountable to the most affected countries, people, and areas—not as aid. It should be compensation for loss and damage due to the climate crisis.

Prioritize collaborative work that allows most often marginalized people to speak up and make decisions about issues that directly impact them by staying connected to other justice and change movements and avoiding tokenistic responses.

- Build democratic structures and shift power to those who are unheard, prioritizing safety, care, and solidarity.
- Refuse to participate when you are the only voice at venues or events representing the most affected people and areas being discussed/addressed.
- Insist on the active participation of affected people and those from the affected areas in the decision making process about those issues.
- Refuse to speak for others who are more directly affected by issues at stake and defer to them or follow their guidance if/whenever they want others to use their privilege to raise sensitive issues for them.

Demand and work for feminist systems change by conducting cross movement-building for shared causes.

- Demand feminist systems change and do not become sidetracked by solutions that delay or spread doubt or false solutions.
- Collaborate with feminist movements to recognize inadequate solutions to climate change that negatively impact advances in gender justice and insisting on meaningful actions with a just and equitable transition.
- Address the personal, political, and glocal (global connection and local action) concurrently striving for a balanced way of ensuring transformation that is led by those most impacted, owned by all humans affected, and inclusive.
- Demonstrate the effectiveness and benefits of working on the *glocal* scale such as financing small-scale, community-led, sustainable projects focused on adaptation and resilience, as well as co-creating solutions.
- Demand policy change that addresses alarming global trends head-on with a sense of urgency. Such as, demanding democratic energy and resource sharing and social gender equality. Tax havens and financial flow towards elite men should be dismantled, and

societies should unite behind the technical and human sciences, listening to scientists and disseminating knowledge to the grassroots.

- Take steps to collaboratively build legal frameworks that end impunity for ecocide and secure land rights for those who work on the land, and particularly to those who are often excluded from land rights legislation such as women and Indigenous people.
- Take steps to replace climate crisis masculine or militaristic language (e.g., fight, battle, or tackle) with constructive, inclusive language (e.g., building, inviting, and connecting).
- Promote local and traditional knowledge in climate solutions