



GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE NETWORK –
WOMEN FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE



POSITION PAPER
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genderCC Network – Women for Climate Justice

Together with women`s organization and women experts from around the world

There will be no climate justice without gender justice

**WOMEN FROM ALL REGIONS OF THE WORLD STRONGLY
OPPOSE INCLUDING NUCLEAR ENERGY INTO THE
CLEAN DEVELOPMENT MECHANISM**

On Tuesday, December 4th at the UNFCCC meeting in Bali, Japan launched the discussion once again of bringing nuclear energy into the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). India and France have already been advocating strongly for nuclear energy to be included as a CDM for several years and India has entered into agreements with the US regarding transfer of technology. This all sends the wrong signal to the world.

We, as women from all regions of the globe, strongly oppose including nuclear energy into the CDM. Already, the environmental integrity of the CDM is questioned by many, due to an increasing number of unsustainable projects that have been included. Allowing nuclear energy projects would turn CDM completely into a farce. It would undermine the integrity and credibility of the entire international climate regime and in particular the Kyoto Protocol.

There are good reasons that this technology is excluded from the CDM.

Nuclear energy is not a clean energy. To make a sound comparison, the entire fuel cycle of the nuclear process from uranium mining to the disposal of high level radioactive waste needs to be taken into consideration. Not only GHGs but radioactivity and other toxic substances are emitted.

Nuclear power carries an inherent injustice to the land-based indigenous peoples of the world on whose territories the uranium is mined and the nuclear wastes are most often stored.

High level nuclear waste is radioactive for thousands of years. There are still no completely safe solutions for nuclear waste storage. It`s irresponsible to increase the nuclear inheritance for our children and grandchildren.

Nuclear power is not a solution for climate change. It provides barely 3 percent of the world`s total energy consumption. If nuclear power would be expected to cover a much higher portion of global energy needs, thousands of new plants would have to be built in a short time – an extremely unrealistic scenario.

Fossil fuels are not the only finite energy source, uranium is also limited. The estimated reserves will last for about 70 more years. If we drastically increase the development of electricity from nuclear power, the uranium reserves will run out that much sooner.

By continuing to spread nuclear technologies, the access to nuclear weapons capable material becomes easier and the danger of illegal nuclear proliferation dramatically increases. The world will not become more secure.

Nuclear power causes health problems. Radioactivity even in low doses is a risk for many illnesses like cancer and leukaemia. Some epidemiological studies reveal a statistically significant increase of childhood cancer (all malignancies) in our youngest children (0 – 4 years) living in the vicinity of commercial nuclear power plants (< 5 km) in normal operation. It would be drastically worse in the case of a serious accident. This should be reason enough to shut down all nuclear power plants.

Nuclear power plants are extremely unlikely to provide any benefits for the local population. In the contrary, local people are at risk living near nuclear power plants in operation or uranium mining areas. Women and children are the most affected because they are more sensitive on radioactivity as men. Moreover, due to gender roles, women tend to be more responsible and caring about the family. They have no benefits of the nuclear industry and almost no jobs. All over the world, women (and many men, of course) want to have clean, healthy and sustainable energy. There is evidence from surveys and public-opinion polls in many countries, that women oppose more strongly nuclear power than the average.

Women all over the world demand that the final statement of the Bali UNFCCC agree with the conclusion of the environmental ministers of Austria, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Norway, Luxembourg and Iceland who met in Vienna on 1 October 2007 and who said that they (the ministers) do not consider nuclear power an instrument to answer the challenge of climate change.

We further affirm that a basic premise of any worthwhile response to climate change must be the reduction of energy consumption by the North and by elites in the South, by the protection of natural environments and the peoples that conserve them and by the elimination of use of fossil fuels without necessarily replacing them with other equally damaging energy extraction and production processes.