

PACIFIC, AFRICAN, LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN WOMEN ENVISION A JUST AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Background:

In this important period before the Earth Summit (Rio+20) in July 2012, young women activists across the economic South are articulating and advocating for an equitable, transformative vision of sustainable development based on a critical feminist analysis that interlinks gender, economic and ecological justice (GEEJ). Below are some key points drawn from GEEJ regional statements, configured for use at the UNCSD Sub-regional Preparatory Meeting for the Pacific, held in Samoa on 20-21 July, 2011.

1) 'Green Economy' and 'Blue Economy':

- Any concept of a green economy must reaffirm rather than replace or undermine the concept and goal of sustainable development. Thus, any definition of the 'Green Economy' must have at its core an affirmation of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (United Nations, 1993) and Agenda 21 (ibid.), where the concept of sustainable development is clearly perceived as encompassing the goals of *social development, economic development, and environmental protection.*;
- Ensuring an interlinked approach to all sustainable development policy that addresses the multiple crises of climate, finance, food, and fuel, and a rejection of any unsustainable production and consumption patterns that do not contemplate an integral vision of development but on the contrary, deepen social inequalities and undermine environmental sustainability;
- Any new global climate fund or so-called 'Green Fund' must be established within the UN and expressedly without involvement of the World Bank. All funding for adaptation must be new funds, viewed as compensatory of climate debt, and therefore provided exclusively in the form of grants, not climate loans that further impoverish already resource-poor states¹;
- Cautioning against use of the 'blue economy' concept which may seem initially conceptually useful in calling attention to Pacific marine matters and the special needs of small island states but which include a certain risk to state and regional governance by conceptually decoupling land and marine based economies, therefore potentially encouraging separate EEZ and international waters discussions;
- Commending those Pacific states that are already taking steps through regional policy agreements and national legislation to ensure that strong regulatory frameworks and practices are in place for flora, fauna and marine conservation, to

¹['No' to climate loans: statement by civil society groups in the global south'](#)

sustainable fisheries² and increasing the number and size of land and marine reserves in the region;

- Calling for stronger regulation to protect the Pacific island states and ocean from destructive extractive industry by transnational corporations, and the identification of ecologically sound alternatives;

2) Institutional framework for sustainable development (IFSD)

- Recognizing the challenges and uncertainties that the Pacific region is facing in the context of systemic global crises, and the crucial need to address the gaps and fragmentation in global, regional and national institutional and policy responses by global and regional governance institutions, and governments;
- Calling for Constitutional recognition of economic, social, cultural and ecological rights and integral social policy that equitably redistributes power, resources, income and services taking into account gender differences across ethnicity, race, class, sexual orientation, generation, ability and belief;

3) Critical and Emerging Issues

Gender:

- Affirming the important role of Pacific women in all sustainable development work, and therefore ensuring that any institutional framework must ensure it uses a gendered human rights perspective, including that it:
 - (a) ensures justice for women who are physically and sexually abused and denied their sexual & reproductive health life & rights, thus making it difficult for them to exercise their rights to sustainable development³
 - (b) provides women with equal access, control and ownership of resources of both land and the sea;
 - (c) ensures women's meaningful participation in decision making in politics and citizen's mobilizations;
 - (d) reaffirms women's reproductive rights and health and rejects population control policies based on the false premise that overpopulation is a primary cause of environmental degradation rather than unsustainable patterns of consumption and production in industrialised countries;
 - (e) supports the empowerment and voices of Pacific women to confront aspects of our culture that are hampering our development and autonomy;
 - (f) ends all forms of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, class, gender identity and sexual orientation, and abilities.

Marketised technological approaches to Sustainable Development

- Rejecting the mercantilism and privatization of nature and the use and dissemination of technologies that endanger our planetary system and are false solutions to the

² [The Nauru Agreement](#) is a subregional agreement on terms and conditions for tuna purse seine fishing licences in the region. The Parties to the Nauru Agreement are Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu;

³ As in accordance with the Cairns Communiqué (2009), Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and CEDAW (1979);

climate crisis. These include agrofuels, genetically modified organisms, nanotechnology and geo-engineering, as well as mechanisms for reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD+6), monoculture plantations and other mega-projects;

- Also the rejection of development and generation of nuclear energy and deep sea oil and gas drilling, which does not present a solution to reducing greenhouse gases and instead poses a serious threat to the earth's ecological system;

4) Partnerships

- Emphasising local, national, regional, small island state, economic south and global partnerships that address sustainable development that is designed to empower Pacific communities, families and individuals, rather than exposing them to market assault and the changes in climate that affect land, livelihoods, handicrafts, indigenous medicines, staple food, symbolic wealth and caring social relationships, that include women's informal networks of mutual support;

Dated: 20 July 2011

These talking points are drawn from the GEEJ Pacific, Africa and Latin American statements by young feminists and women activists from Fiji, Nauru, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Cook Islands, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Mauritius, Mexico, Brazil, Costa Rica, Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia, Chile, Republica Dominica, Peru, Venezuela, and Bolivia - and adapted for use at the Pacific CSD Sub-Regional Meeting – 20-21 June 2011 in Samoa,

***More information on the GEEJ process can be found at www.dawnnet.org
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