



*Photo Credit: UN Women, International Women's Day 2022: Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow*

## **A call to youth driven, gender responsive climate and environmental action in Albania**

This Call to Action expresses our keen interest in ensuring that national policies and programmes on climate change and the environment address the demands, needs and vulnerabilities of women and youth in Albania, and recognize our readiness to respond to climate change and environmental disasters.

The impact of climate change amplifies gender inequalities: climate change and environmental disasters often result in greater challenges for women and girls including less access to resources and energy, increased pay gap, unequal ownership of assets and increased poverty, which constrain women's ability to absorb and recover from climate shocks. Climate change is already having a disproportionate effect on youth by impacting education, employment, health conditions through additional stress and anxiety, leading to migration due to livelihood disruption and deteriorated living conditions. Worldwide, young people have been proven to be pivotal leaders to climate action and are leading the way to stopping climate change. In Albania, we also believe that youth can accelerate impactful climate action, if adequately empowered and with their voices heard.

As such, **we put forward the following recommendations**, which target public institutions, private sector and international organizations including: the Ministry of Tourism and the Environment, the Ministry of State for Youth and Children, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Ministry of Defence and the National Agency for Civic Protection, the Ministry of Finance and the Economy, the Ministry of Education and Sport, the State Agency of Strategic Programming and Aid Coordination (SASPAC), local councils, the private sector, civil society, youth organizations and international organizations present in Albania as leaders in the areas of gender equality, climate change and youth.

### **Place gender equality at the centre of climate change governance, analysis and response:**

1. Increase support to rural women in agriculture, strengthening their economic empowerment and their economic and food security, systematically mainstreaming gender in relevant national strategies and plans. This involves, inter alia, adding gender and climate indicators to relevant

strategies, as well as producing and using research and data on the intersection between gender equality and climate change.

2. Promote gender mainstreaming into disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and climate change policies and programmes, increasing the availability of research and data on how disasters affect women and men differently.
3. Address gender stereotypes and recognise the role of men and boys in addressing gender inequality and climate change.
4. Revitalize the role of different actors as agents of change in the climate and environmental field, including young women and girls.
5. Provide civic and environmental education for women and girls and increase their awareness about climate change and disasters.
6. Include gender mainstreaming in formal and non-formal education, including on subjects related to climate change and the environment.
7. Include climate change as part of the peace and development agenda, including the Women, Peace and Security Agenda as well as the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda in Albania.
8. Ensure gender-equal representation at all levels of climate change governance by increasing the number of young women in leadership and decision-making in the field of climate change and the environment.
9. Include gender mainstreaming in comprehensive sexuality education, including on subjects related to climate change and the environment.

**Promote and invest in the leadership of youth to develop climate change solutions:**

1. Recognize youth as change makers in addressing climate change and developing solutions, including them in climate negotiations and amplifying their voices in relevant decision-making processes.
2. Elevate climate literacy and understanding among young people on their potential role in addressing climate change and environmental disasters through tailored-made education means for young people, and effectively communicate with youth by adjusting language to this audience for their increased engagement.
3. Establish diverse youth climate advisory-groups at central and local levels to bring community driven, intersectional, ambitious and innovative stand points in climate and environmental decision-making processes for climate solutions and built a zero neutral society with focus on renewable energies, reduced consumption, efficient use of resources, etc.
4. Promote youth employment in innovation and technology through non-traditional education and training on job related skills, to address the climate crises at local and national level.
5. Conduct continuous communication with youth stakeholders in Albania to ensure that young people are politically aware on the national and local climate & environmental commitments, and their role and involvement is well-defined.
6. Empower youth-led and intersectional climate and environmental grassroots activism by generating substantial financial support to swiftly improve the resilience of frontline communities exposed to climate extreme events in Albania, especially for those located in the coastal regions, communities settled nearby water bodies, etc.

7. Implementation of environmental and climate education programs in curriculum to raise awareness on sustainable development, climate change and environment through non-formal education means.
8. Mainstream youth engagement in existing and upcoming strategies including National Gender Equality Strategy and Climate Change strategy, as well as mainstream gender in the national Youth Strategy and the DRR Strategy.
9. Promote youth employment in innovation and technology through nontraditional education and training on job related skills, to address the climate crises at local and national level
10. Identify and support the needs of individuals (and/or businesses) operating in the market with a reduced environmental footprint.
11. Encourage to formally recognize and subsidize green businesses and provide increased developmental support, so that they are put at a market advantage amongst their non-environmentally friendly competitor peers.

**Promote a more inter-connected climate change and environmental agenda:**

1. Increase coordination and capacities of public institutions to include a gender and youth lens in the response to disaster and climate risks.
2. Addressing vulnerabilities and coping capabilities of young people and women in disaster and climate risk assessments
3. Raise awareness of young people on the opportunities for engagement in climate change and environmental policy making at national and global level and encourage youth in Albania to carry out stronger advocacy initiatives to address climate change.
4. Raise awareness through campaigns targeting the general public about the effects of climate change on women and youth.
5. Leverage policies, programmes and awareness raising initiatives to encourage changing consumption behaviours in our daily life, including by encouraging recycling and more sustainable practices; and develop actions to reduce existing greenhouse gas emissions, by supporting green transport modalities such as bicycles, carpooling.
6. Include different stakeholders in decision-making processes pertaining to climate change and the environment, including by establishing criteria for engagement of youth in climate and environmental governance – for example by identifying quotas.
7. Adopt a multi-stakeholder, intersectional and intergenerational approach to partners' engagement in climate and environmental governance by engaging youth, civil society, women's organizations, private enterprises to participate in public hearing and debates for sustainable development approaches and models.
8. Commit to gender and youth mainstreaming in the decision-making processes and in drafting national strategies
9. Reaffirm the commitment to the full and effective implementation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and other intergovernmental commitments as highlighted in the Sendia Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Paris Agreement for Climate Change; and the CEDAW General Recommendation No. 37 on gender responsiveness of policies, legislation, plans, programmes, budgets and activities related to DRR and climate change.

**Across these three themes**, we urge to strengthen research and evidence-based policy making on the intersection between climate change, gender equality and youth issues. We also call for alignment of all relevant legislation with international and EU provisions on gender equality and gender-responsive disaster risk reduction, climate change and environmental policies.

Young people will help monitor these recommendations through existing structures such as the UN Youth Advisory Group and the UN Youth Delegates, as well as other existing mechanisms for youth engagement and coordination at national and local level.

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