

Preface

This book emerges from the Gender and Climate Change: Women, Research and Action Conference held at Monash University Prato Campus, in Italy in 2011. Monash University's Gender Leadership and Social Sustainability (GLASS) Research Unit convened this conference which brought together researchers, policy makers and community advocates from across the globe to discuss the latest research findings in the area of gender and climate change and to develop strategies to address differential gendered impacts. GLASS academics led by the writer, senior research fellow, Kerri Whittenbury, and several Ph.D. students working through GLASS, participated in the conference. The timing of the conference was critical in that conveners and speakers hoped that information shared at the conference can provide input for significant international fora including Conferences of Parties (COP), Commission on Status of Women (CSW) and Earth Summit.

Delegates from 24 countries and from every continent discussed, debated and analysed how climate change differentially impacts women and men. Delegates also discussed the way research can inform policy makers and encourage action that recognises and addresses these gendered impacts and opportunities of climate change. To make the conference as constructive and progressive as possible there was a strong focus on developing shared priorities and platforms for further research, policy and advocacy work.

To enable widespread global input, GLASS received significant support from AusAid (ISS program) and from the US Department of State (Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues) to sponsor delegates from the Asia-Pacific region, African nations and South America. A global representation was critical to facilitating a comprehensive discussion and reinforced that despite diversity, there are common experiences and similar ideas and priorities.

The conference included nearly 60 paper presentations across the three themes of:

- Gendered impacts of climate change
- Law, policy and frameworks
- Advocacy and innovation

The final afternoon of the conference was devoted to collaborative workshops to determine key priorities for research and action. The following outcomes statement is a summary of the workshops (GLASS 2011).

Delegates affirmed that climate change provides a unique opportunity for change – change that incorporates and facilitates gender equality and women’s empowerment in programs, research, action and advocacy.

Critical issues requiring action that emerged from the conference are:

- *That our understanding of climate change be reframed to incorporate analyses of gender and particular impacts on women*
- *That gender be viewed as a critical factor in climate change analysis, policy and planning*
- *That a technological/scientific focus alone does not address critical issues facing women and their families. The inclusion of a human rights, social justice and gender framework is essential for climate change analysis*
- *That vulnerable countries and groups within countries be supported to positively adapt to climate change*
- *That issues of food and water security encompass an analysis of impact on women that the global community mandate for reduced emissions*
- *That green technologies be resourced and developed and the adoption of these at community levels be facilitated*
- *That the development of green technologies provides a unique space for women’s empowerment and involvement*
- *That women be viewed not just as victims but as equal partners with men facing the challenges of climate change*
- *That women be given equal representation on decision-making bodies and that these bodies address social and community impacts*
- *That women’s local knowledge be valued and incorporated in climate change actions and research*
- *That research gaps be addressed in areas such as forced migration resulting from climate change; climate change and cities; managing technological solutions; renewable energies – and that this research have a gendered lens*
- *That all research and policies include gender-disaggregated data and analysis*

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Alston, M.; Whittenbury, K. (Eds.)

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