

Gender

Greening growth: Transformative practices and reflections on gender and environmental justice

A. Rationale

Gender and social inequality are intrinsically linked with environmental change. Key findings in gender and environment literature in the last three decades show that people are differentially affected by environmental and climate change in socially specific ways based on their intersecting gender, ethnic, class, age, and religious identities, and in specific economic, political and social contexts.

‘Green growth’ – envisaged to create a path of economic growth that uses natural resources in a sustainable manner – has emerged as a response to unsustainable forms of development. Is the ‘greening growth’ approach the way forward? A more just and inclusive vision of greening our world is needed and we invite proposals which can help advance our understanding on how this can be done. There is a need to address gender equality, public participation and women’s empowerment perspectives vis-à-vis current efforts to advance the ‘green growth’ paradigm. This includes (i) understanding how workings of power at multiple scales and the intersections of gender with other identities have implications on the use of resources; (ii) unpacking complex and inter-dependent society-environment relations by understanding people’s experiences and their fixed nature in the power relations shaping environmental and institutional contexts; and (iii) raising awareness and seeking multi-stakeholder-informed solutions on the growing commodification of nature.

B. Important keywords

Gender, ethnicities, disadvantaged groups, social inclusion, human rights, environmental development, inequality, sustainable development and green growth

C. Sub-themes

- 1) Actions to advance gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes:** This sub-theme will focus on examples of transformative practices that move beyond technical approaches and address questions of gender equality and empowerment, power, and differences in analyses of the underlying causes of gender and social injustices at various scales and within policy formulation and implementation.
- 2) Feminist alternatives to ‘green growth’:** ‘Green growth’ is increasingly promoted as a solution to environmental problems and wasteful resource use. This approach, however, does not challenge existing gender and social inequalities, with less focus on who actually benefits from it. This theme will be dedicated to unpacking how different groups of resource users experience the production and effects of green growth. It will also

investigate how green growth moves beyond borders, for example, through transnational land investments. What are the environmental and gender inclusive alternatives to these current production systems? It will also ask how these systems can be promoted through multi-stakeholder partnerships that bring together local and international partners in open negotiations with desired outcomes.

- 3) Multiple experiences of environmental changes and development:** Apart from addressing the productive impacts of green growth on women's livelihoods, there is a need to increase knowledge on women and men's different experiences. This theme will explore this need, and will additionally include emotions, bodily effects such as disruptions in health and physical well-being, and the mobility of resource users affected by environmental and climate change.
- 4) Redefining resilience for sustainable and empowering development:** This theme explores whether, and how, promising resilience-building strategies that go beyond technocratic means have the potential for gender inequality transformation and social and environmental justice. What can we learn from these strategies and practices to guide more transformative resilience-building?