

**The Asian Co-benefits Partnership (ACP)** serves as an informal and interactive platform to improve information sharing and stakeholder coordination on co-benefits in Asia. The ACP was launched with the support of the Ministry of the Environment, Japan in 2010 to help mainstream climate and environmental co-benefits into decision-making processes in Asia. Learn more about us at our website: <http://www.cobenefit.org/>.



## Highlights

### Gender equality: strengthening the relationship between climate mitigation and women's empowerment



**Fleur Newman**

Gender Focal Point  
Programme Officer  
Strategy and Relationship, Management, Sustainable Development Mechanisms  
The Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

*Women frequently play an important role in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), but often lack the incentives and training to access climate finance. Fortunately, there is growing recognition that empowering women to actively participate in the decision-making on climate change at all levels can help climate actions become more equitable, successful and sustainable. The ACP interviewed Ms. Fleur Newman, Gender Focal Point of the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), on she in helping to achieve those objectives.*

**Q) Can you describe how your office in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has sought to strengthen the relationship between climate mitigation and other development priorities such as gender equality in recent years?**

Following the twentieth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP20) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the UNFCCC Secretariat, at the request of Parties, organised a workshop on gender responsive climate policy focusing on mitigation and technology development and transfer. This request from Parties demonstrated their growing interest in making the link between gender and other issues under the UNFCCC. This workshop was notable because it was the first time Parties shared experiences and challenges involving gender, mitigation, and technology. The Secretariat summarised the workshop's outcome and the results were then considered at the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) – one of two permanent subsidiary bodies to the UNFCCC established by the COP.

Another effort that aims to strengthen the climate and

gender relationship involved collaboration among other United Nations agencies on gender issues. For instance, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), United Nations Women and the UNFCCC Secretariat co-hosted an expert group meeting on gender-responsive climate financing, technology development and transfer, and mitigation, which resulted in a set of recommendations that were presented at a side event at COP 21. These recommendations are expected to help strengthen the connection between climate change mitigation and gender equality both within and beyond the UNFCCC processes.

**Q) What have been the greatest challenges you have encountered in the efforts described in the previous question?**

It has become increasingly common to hear gender equality discussed in relation to some aspects of climate policy, such as adaptation. However, gender is only one of numerous issues that the UNFCCC Secretariat supports. Parties have many competing priorities for funding work under the UNFCCC; thus the Secretariat always needs to consider a range of different priorities and schedule programmes accordingly. Similarly, many

other UN agencies support developmental priorities, including gender and climate change, but gender equality is not always the primary focus for these organisations. This can result in several ongoing efforts addressing gender and climate, but not necessarily a comprehensive effort to link gender to the many different aspects of climate policy.

### Q) Can you give an example of how you have sought to overcome those challenges?

One of the ways is fully utilising flexibility mechanisms like the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). The CDM Executive Board has worked to host more CDM projects in under-represented regions. The UNFCCC Secretariat has recently established a Regional Collaboration Centre to promote CDM in Asia-Pacific. We expect this will provide opportunities to build capacity on gender co-benefits. In order to capitalize on this opportunity, it will be important to communicate with people in the region that are under-represented-in the CDM about the potential for gender-responsive CDM projects.



## Updates

### ACP Members Attend Clean Air Week from 23-27 November

Over 120 participants from more than 20 Asia Pacific countries attended the Asia Pacific Clean Air Week organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) from 23-27 November in Bangkok, Thailand. Clean Air Week consisted of a week of meetings and events focusing on strengthening air quality management in Asia. The week was headlined by the launching of the Asia Pacific Clean Air Partnership (APCAP). The APCAP supports a Joint Forum that is designed to bring together multiple air pollution initiatives under a single umbrella in Asia. APCAP is also supporting a Science Panel that will synthesize science on air pollution for policymakers in Asia. Additional details can be found here: <http://web.unep.org/regions/roap/events/apcap/events>.

Another way that we have helped to overcome challenges is to strengthen coordination with other UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) on gender and climate change. We often exchange information and ideas about gender-responsive climate policy through initiatives such as the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Gender Partnership.

### Q) What role can international networks like the Asian Co-benefits Partnership (ACP) play in helping to promote co-benefits?

The notion of co-benefits implies the need to engage with multiple stakeholders. The ACP could play a valuable role in facilitating this stakeholder engagement. Being visible at workshops and expert meetings will help to raise the awareness of different stakeholders on co-benefits. This will also help the UNFCCC Secretariat to disseminate information on the multiple benefits of gender-responsive climate actions across other networks.



## Publications

### ■ (Information) "The Co-Benefits of Sustainable City Projects"

(October 2015, Published by C40 Cities)

This report aims to provide best practice insights on the economic co-benefits of green city initiatives, how they are measured, and the data and methodologies used." The ACP interviews C40 about this report in the next newsletter Vol.7.

Download this report:

[http://c40-production-images.s3.amazonaws.com/other\\_uploads/images/486\\_Co-Benefits\\_of\\_Sustainable\\_finance\\_highres.original.pdf?1450463417](http://c40-production-images.s3.amazonaws.com/other_uploads/images/486_Co-Benefits_of_Sustainable_finance_highres.original.pdf?1450463417)

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## Activities

### ■ IGES held a side event at UNFCCC COP 21: Making an Integrated Approach to Air Pollution and Climate Change a Reality in Asia

(Paris, France, 3 December, 2015)

Panellists discussed efforts to integrate air pollution and climate change mitigation activities in Asia. The panellists underscored the co-benefits for human health, climate change mitigation and sustainable development from controlling atmospheric pollution. From IGES, Dr. Eric Zusman moderated this session.

See more details:

<http://www.iisd.ca/climate/cop21/enbots/3dec.html#event-6>

