**WEP Climate Justice Manifesto Asks**

**Position Statement**

Climate Justice and Social Justice must go hand-in-hand: we can’t have one without the other. Climate Justice is about economics, culture, and society; it is intrinsically political and concerned with power relations. It is a feminist issue. It is an equality issue.

1. Climate change adds to and exacerbates the intersecting axes of injustice and discrimination that affect women.
2. The *causes* of climate change are linked to economic systems that exploit both the environment and women’s work to maximise profit. The *impacts* of climate change disproportionately affect the poorest people and the poorest places, and particularly women. And women are *excluded* from developing the solutions: Women’s voices, priorities, knowledge, ideas, and lived experiences must shape climate action.
3. Achieving Climate Justice requires a systemic transformation in our economy, a revolution in representation and democracy, in education, in health and care, in jobs and communication.
4. WE have undertaken an audit of all our objectives to understand how they link with climate and how we can embed Climate Justice across all our policy areas. This is different from other parties that have a separate climate or green policy which is often in conflict with other areas.
5. There are important synergies between our existing objectives and Climate Justice. For example, more women in positions of power has been shown to result in stricter or more effective environmental regulations1; care jobs are green jobs and investment in the care economy results in lower carbon emissions than investing in physical infrastructure2; the climate emergency is fuelling VAWG3, so tackling climate change in the long term, and helping people deal with its impacts in short term, helps to address VAWG.
6. WE are the only party not just talking about net zero and emission targets – we are embedding Climate Justice across all areas of society and economy

**Actions**

***At international level:***

* Re-instate international aid to the poorest countries (46 Least Developed Countries) immediately to support gender-just climate resilience actions.4
* Demand equal representation at COP26 that moves beyond symbolic representation to enable women’s voices and interests to really shape the agenda and outcomes.5
* Push for a global Ecocide law to hold international polluters to account.6

***At national level:***

* Adopt alternative measures to GDP/GNP that highlight wellbeing, equality and environmental health.
* Ensure the effective enforcement of environmental legislation to protect our natural resources and have knock-on benefits for health and climate. Continue to align our national policies to international environmental goals.7
* Address the Climate Emergency in Build Back Equal actions – including investment in social infrastructure such as care jobs not physical infrastructure, such as roads.2

***Locally and regionally:***

* Apply and amend the ‘Doughnut’ economic model for regional, city and other local strategies which identify a safe and just space for development.8
* Make intersectional equality analysis compulsory in all Local Authority Carbon and Climate Plans and publish the findings. Push for the establishment of Women’s Commissions to advise local government and put equality central to local plans.9
* Establish deliberative democratic fora, including Citizens Assemblies, so that women’s and other marginalised voices are heard and heeded in Zero Net Emissions/Climate Emergency strategies.

**Explanations, Evidence and Examples**

1. A recent study of 91 countries found that female representation leads countries to adopt more stringent climate change policies https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpoleco.2018.08.001 . Female political representation may be an underutilized tool for addressing climate change. There is also evidence that women’s representation and leadership in other organisations has impact on sustainability, and that empowering women has beneficial impacts on environment, see https://womendeliver.org/2019/women-politics-and-the-environment <http://climate.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/WomenGhG2.pdf>

2. This is clearly articulated in a recent report by the Women’s Budget Group Cohen, M., & MacGregor, S. (2020). *Towards a feminist green new deal for the UK: A PAPER FOR THE WBG COMMISSION ON A GENDEREQUAL ECONOMY*. Women’s Budget Group.

3. Report from IUCN *Gender-based violence and environment linkages* collates data and case studies from over 1000 sources and documents the extensive direct links between environmental pressures and gender-based violence. Climate change in terms of extreme events (heatwaves, floods) and long-term change (land becoming less fertile, water scarcer) has impacts through pathways such as earlier marriage and trafficking as a result of stressed livelihoods <https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/48969>

4. The government has announced cuts to international aid spending. In this, spend on the [46 least developed countries](https://unctad.org/topic/vulnerable-economies/least-developed-countries/list) to fall by £1.2bn; Humanitarian spending to be £0.9bn lower; health spending to be £0.3bn lower. Building resilience to worst ravages of climate change amongst poorest communities requires building capacities in health, education, agriculture and water security, not just investing in large-scale technology transfer. Educating girls and empowering women economically and politically are critically important for climate adaptation. <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/overview-impact-proposed-cuts-uk-aid>

5. There are concerns that the UK government lacks credibility to lead the talks (partly because of recent decisions [https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/foreign-aid-budget-cut-climate-change-b1762262.html](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Fclimate-change%2Fnews%2Fforeign-aid-budget-cut-climate-change-b1762262.html&data=04%7C01%7CKatrina.Brown%40exeter.ac.uk%7C0e9537ece8da4a66745d08d8eacd0109%7C912a5d77fb984eeeaf321334d8f04a53%7C0%7C0%7C637517513520064188%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=v45YqmbqaNGxBpw6LJoeOVkzd%2BX%2FYO3xwpvsIpysr1g%3D&reserved=0)) and that commercial and industry sponsors will have undue influence.

6. Ecocide is defined as “the extensive destruction, damage to or loss of ecosystem(s) of a given territory, whether by human agency or by other causes, to such an extent that peaceful enjoyment by the inhabitants of that territory has been severely diminished.” Ecocide, such unregulated deforestation is linked to widespread abuse of human rights, violent intimidation and poor health impacts, especially amongst indigenous people and those already socially marginalised. It also relates directly to, and fuels, climate change and disasters, such as extensive floods and wildfires. The proposed ecocide law, to be implemented through the International Criminal Court, would criminalise large-scale commercial activities such as tar sand oil extraction and deforestation. This would render many destructive business models unviable and should, in theory, allow more environmentally friendly ones to flourish.

<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/environment/2020/03/could-ecocide-become-international-crime-1>

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20201105-what-is-ecocide>

7. Environmental pollution directly damages limited natural resources and the health of the communities that live within them. Pollution can move across national boundaries and it is therefore the responsibility for all countries to accept full economic and environmental responsibilities for their own pollution. This can only be achieved through the effective implementation of protective environmental regulation and aligning our policies with international environmental goals. According to a recent EU Court ruling, the UK has been exceeding air pollution legal limits for a decade. <https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/48969>

8. See doughnuteconomics.org for examples of applications at city and other scales. The environmental ceiling includes climate change and carbon emissions. Integrating climate goals into local and regional planning in more effective, more democratic and responds to local needs and priorities more effectively than national or international targets.

9. For example, Bristol Women’s Commission <https://www.bristolwomensvoice.org.uk/bristol-womens-commission/>

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