

Intervention by Hon. Amberoti Nikora Minister for Internal & Social Affairs
Kiribati

Interactive Expert Panel on the theme “Gender Perspectives on Climate Change” Fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women, 28 February 2008: United Nations Headquarters, New York

Gender and Climate Change

I am speaking on behalf of the sixteen member states of the Pacific Islands group.

Climate change in the Pacific is not just an environmental issue. It has deep implications for economic growth, sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and it is in this vein that our Leaders in 2007 agreed that climate change measures be integrated into strategic development planning processes at national level.

Despite contributing the least to global warming and climate change the small, low-lying islands of the Pacific which are home to over 8 million people are the most affected by the impacts of land degradation, coastal erosion, threats to freshwater supply, sea based pollution and loss of biodiversity.

Chair,

The nexus between gender and climate change is one that has not gained much traction in the Pacific although women make a significant contribution to the informal economy particularly in the rural sector in agriculture, fisheries and micro-enterprise initiatives.

Chair,

We therefore recognise the importance of the inclusion of gender in developing mitigation activities such as through improved access to resources including credit extension services, information and technology.

Furthermore, adaptation efforts should address the gender specific impacts of climate change in the areas of energy, water, food security, agriculture and fisheries, biodiversity and eco-system services, health, industry, human settlements, disaster management and conflict and security.

It is also important to take into account women’s specific priorities and needs and to make full use of their traditional knowledge and practices in the development of new technology to address climate change.

The Pacific recognises that strong partnerships between public and the private sector as well as enhanced collective international actions are required to provide the level of financing particularly for small and vulnerable economies.

Thank you.