2022 SPECA Economic Forum
‘Greener and Safer Future’

Session VI:
Gender equality and women’s empowerment

17 November 2022
Women and the environment:

‘Women and the environment’ is one of the 12 critical areas of concern identified by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

- SDG 5 on gender equality
- SDG 13 on climate action
Climate change in SPECA countries

- Natural disasters cost Central Asia $10 billion a year
- 3 million people face the consequences of climate change in the region every year
- Women are disproportionately affected by climate change compared to men
- Yet, climate plans and policies do not adequately account for these distinct impacts
Agriculture and climate change

Women are key actors in agriculture and rural development

- Women represent 41 per cent of the agricultural labour force
- But they still face institutional barriers that prevent their economic independence
- These barriers make it harder for women to adapt to climate change
ESCAP’s Work on Women and Climate Action - At a Glance

- Advancing gender-responsive food security programming with a focus on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization

- Forging regional consensus on CSW66 Priority Theme 2022: Achieving gender equality & the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes

- Gender, the Environment and Sustainable Development (ESCAP publication, 2017)

- Fostering innovation: ESCAP’s ‘Leaving No One Behind’ platform is an effective tool for informed policy making, including for women in climate action
UNECE’s activities in the SPECA region to strengthen women’s economic autonomy in the context of the climate crisis: key highlights

- Energy transition and the post-COVID-19 socioeconomic recovery – role of women and impact on them: publication due in December 2022
- The 1999 UNECE/World Health Organization Protocol on Water and Health places specific emphasis on equitable access to water and sanitation
  - Equitable Access Score-card: supporting policy processes to achieve the human right to water and sanitation for all
- UNECE/FAO joint publication “Forest Sector Workforce in the UNECE Region: Overview of the Social and Economic Trends with Impact on the Forest Sector”
Challenges

Women’s vulnerability stems from several factors:

- Climate change intensifies the work involved in caring for people
- Women spend two to three times as much time on unpaid care and work than their male counterparts
- They are left out of national and global climate negotiating bodies
The way forward

SPECA countries must:

- Strengthen women’s participation in climate change decision-making
- Address gender inequality in climate-change policies and programmes
- Do more to understand the links between gender and climate change
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