



WOMEN'S CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON GREEN ECONOMY

“Potential Impacts on Women from the
Proposed Expansion of the ‘Bioeconomy’
and the Need for Appropriate Support for
Sustainable Initiatives”

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Potential Impacts on Women from the Proposed Expansion of the 'Bioeconomy'

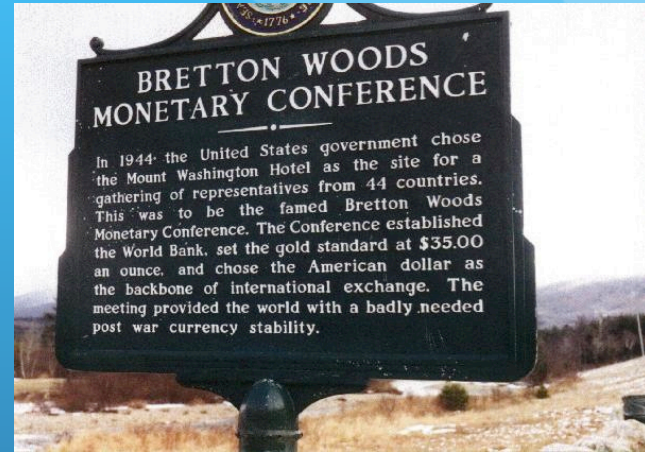
- According to UNICEF, women constitute 70% of the world's poor: lower income, less land ownership, unpaid and/or unrecognized work.
- No capital assets, more disadvantages in markets.
- Microcredits (para 102 alt bis c) not solving any inequities (examples in Bangladesh and/or India)
- Instead of adapting women to flawed economic models and policies we should adapt economic policies to ensure they respond the rights and needs of women.



Photo: Stelios Grafakos

Potential Impacts on Women from the Proposed Expansion of the 'Bioeconomy'

- In 1987 the Brundtland commission - link between environment and development objectives.
- Later, recognition of economic institutions, trends like Bretton Woods institutions and corporate driven globalization as a main drivers of forest loss and environmental destruction.
- Hopes that economic policies would be adapted to the needs of conservation...



- Increasingly environmental policies shaped by the rules of main stream neo-liberal economics.
- "Green Economy" - promoting expansion of 'bioeconomy', expanded markets in ecosystem based goods and services.

Potential Impacts on Women from the Proposed Expansion of the 'Bioeconomy'

- Payment for Environmental Services scheme (PES) = paying countries or communities for the “environmental service they provide” - *need commodification of life.*
- Economic rationale of promoting markets in PES is to have market based mechanisms such as Carbon Trade (e.g. REDD), Certification, Trade in Genetic resources, Ecotourism operating *under the premise of being equitable but, what if they are not?*
- Biodiversity and the environment into marketable goods = current approach to conservation - *markets necessarily need privatization.*

What are the consequences for women if a resource that used to be freely accessible is now privatized?

Potential Impacts on Women from the Proposed Expansion of the 'Bioeconomy'



- *“The socio-economic value of biodiversity of those groups in society that depend on it for their livelihoods, as many Indigenous women do, is much higher than the socioeconomic value of biodiversity for an energy company seeking to offset its carbon emissions, for instance” - Naidoo & Ricketts.*
- Women usually provide their families with key resources such as fuelwood, medicinal plants, fodder, edible fruits and nuts, and collect seeds. *“Biodiversity means everything to them” (Mulenkei, 2008)* as they are more dependent on its non-monetary benefits.

Potential Impacts on Women from the Proposed Expansion of the 'Bioeconomy'

- Women as caretakers of biodiversity, valuable knowledge often unrecognized.
- Case in the Colombian Amazon: women most impacted when protected areas are suddenly declared.
- PES - formally recognized land tenure rights.
- Men in charge of closing deals - lack of skills including language sometimes.



- Decisions with impacts in governance local systems.
- Case in Paraguay: carbon offsets in Protected Area thus soy monocultures expansion creating impacts (health, social, economic, access) .

Potential Impacts on Women from the Proposed Expansion of the 'Bioeconomy'

- The largest environmental services market: forest carbon offsets
- But REDD+ is more than 90% publicly funded: mainly readiness funding
- Ready for what? No mandatory REDD market until 2020 if at all. EU position on Green Climate Fund: Only 20% Official Development Assistance. But no caps, no trade: Carbon markets are very uncertain and volatile as a funding source.
- Uncertainties about future REDD+ funding; cases of deceiving IPs and communities
- Hard for women to participate: small-scale initiatives not something for REDD.
- Forest land grabbing and elite resource capture: Uganda Case - Mount Elgon
- Certification: women can't assume high costs

... and the Need for Appropriate Support for Sustainable Initiatives

- Most successful conservation experiences can be found on recognized indigenous lands and territories and community conserved areas (ICCAs).
- Recognition of ICCAs could play a major role on reaching gender equity.
- Rewarding women for their biodiversity stewardship - especially in reference to saving seeds and nurturing trees - through targeted and effective public governance measures.



- Ensure the effective enforcement of the UN Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

... and the Need for Appropriate Support for Sustainable Initiatives

- Implement UNDRIPS, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples - respect for customary rights and traditions as a fourth pillar for sustainable development.
- Retain access to biodiversity and the environment and keep environmental functions and forests out of markets, out of privatization.
- Community-led initiatives
- Cheaper alternatives that do not increase value of forests, inc:
- Address drivers such as consumption, fuel, poverty
- Moratoria / bans on deforestation
- Change UN definition of forests



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