

PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR CLIMATE POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Guidance for the guarantee of the economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights of women and girls



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PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR CLIMATE POLICIES AND ACTIONS

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environmental rights of women and girls

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The opinions expressed in this document belong exclusively to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and its Special Rapporteurship on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights (REDESCA)

ABBREVIATIONS

- **AO:** Advisory Opinion
- **CBD:** Convention on Biological Diversity
- **CEDAW:** Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
- **CESCR:** Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- **Climate R&D:** Climate Research and Development
- **CHS:** Comprehensive Health Services
- **COP:** Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- **CRC:** Committee on the Rights of the Child
- **ECLAC:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- **EIA/C:** Environmental impact assessments with a climate component
- **Escazú Agreement:** Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation, and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean
- **ESCER:** Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights
- **FPIC:** Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
- **GBV:** Gender-based violence
- **GHG:** Greenhouse gases
- **GO:** General Observation
- **IACHR:** Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
- **IACtHR:** Inter-American Court of Human Rights
- **IASHR:** Inter-American Human Rights System
- **ICESCR:** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- **IOM:** International Organization for Migration
- **IPCC:** Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- **LWPG:** Lima Work Program on Gender
- **SLCPs:** Short-lived climate pollutants
- **Montreal Protocol:** Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer
- **NAP:** National Adaptation Plan
- **NDC:** Nationally Determined Contribution



ABBREVIATIONS

- **OHCHR:** Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- **Ozone Layer Convention:** Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer
- **PAHO:** Pan American Health Organization
- **REDESCA:** Special Rapporteurship on Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights (of the IACHR)
- **SDGs:** Sustainable Development Goals
- **SLAPP:** Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation
- **UN:** United Nations
- **UNCLOS:** United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
- **UNDP:** United Nations Development Program
- **UNDRR:** United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
- **UNFCCC:** United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- **UNFPA:** United Nations Population Fund
- **UNICEF:** United Nations Children's Fund
- **WHO:** World Health Organization
- **WMO:** World Meteorological Organization



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 Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

I. INTRODUCTION

A. CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

1. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to the risks associated with climate change. The climate emergency is a crisis of social and gender justice. Available evidence indicates that its impacts are unevenly distributed due to historical power relations, the sexual division of labor, and unequal access to resources; which limits the adaptive capacities of women and girls. Integrating a gender perspective into climate policies responds to international obligations and contributes to more inclusive and effective public responses, especially when governments coordinate contextualized measures. In this context, climate policies must respond to environmental challenges while avoiding deepening existing inequalities or generating new forms of exclusion.

2. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and its Special Rapporteurship on Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights (REDESCA) have recognized climate change as a human rights emergency. In the Resolution 3/21¹, the IACHR highlights the responsibility of States to address this crisis, and REDESCA's 2024-2026 Work Plan² identifies the climate emergency and environmental protection as a strategic priority. Likewise, Resolution No. 2/24³ establishes general guidelines for States to provide an integral human rights-based response to human mobility induced by climate change, reaffirming the principle of *non-refoulement* in the face of risks derived from the climate emergency and requiring the application of differentiated and intersectional approaches to protect the most vulnerable groups.

3. In the Inter-American Human Rights System, this relationship between the climate crisis and rights was also forcefully established in Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR), which expressly highlights the existence of a human right to a healthy climate—derived from the right to a healthy environment, with specific content—and outlines the legal obligations of States in the face of climate change⁴.

4. In developing the specific obligations of States in relation to the impacts of climate change, the Inter-American Court reiterated that differentiated and reinforced measures must be adopted to protect individuals and groups in situations of particular vulnerability, including women and girls. It also highlighted the need to guarantee their full and effective participation in decision-making related to climate policies, as well as to ensure access to justice and adequate mechanisms of redress for the damages suffered. In this context, the Court also emphasized the duty to recognize and respect traditional, local, and indigenous knowledge, assess the nature and extent of climate risks that disproportionately affect certain groups, and ensure comprehensive reparation for the harm caused to individual and collective victims⁵.

¹ IACHR, REDESCA, [Resolution 3/2021: Climate Emergency: Scope of Inter-American Obligations in the Area of Human Rights](#), Washington, D.C., 2021.

² IACHR, REDESCA, [REDESCA Work Plan 2024-2026](#).

³ IACHR, Resolution No. 2/24 on Human Mobility Induced by Climate Change, Document No. 252, December 26, 2024.

⁴ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 237.

⁵ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 237.

5. Existing economic, social, and cultural structures largely determine both how different social groups experience the effects of climate change and their ability to actively participate in solutions. Structural inequalities—based on income, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, geographic location, among others—often influence who suffers most from the consequences of environmental degradation and who has the least influence on environmental decision-making processes. In many cases, those who have contributed least to greenhouse gas emissions—such as indigenous peoples or local communities—are the ones who face the greatest risks and barriers to influencing responses. This guide builds on this assessment to guide climate policies that remove barriers and respond in a differentiated manner to inequalities.

6. In this context, the climate justice approach is necessary to address structural inequalities in climate policies. This approach can transform climate policies into more just, inclusive, and effective responses, ensuring that the fight against climate change does not exacerbate inequalities but rather promotes social and environmental equity⁶. This involves, for example, incorporating the principle of equality and non-discrimination into climate policies, constantly assessing the extent of climate risks that disproportionately affect women, girls, or defenders of the land and the environment.

7. If climate policies do not address gender gaps—such as women's and girls' limited access to resources, land, education, or technology—they risk reproducing or even deepening inequalities. It is therefore particularly essential to: (i) adopt differentiated measures that respond to specific needs and situations; (ii) ensure the full and effective participation of women and girls in climate decision-making; and (iii) ensure adequate protection for environmental and land/territory defenders, so that they can continue their essential work without risk of reprisals. This requires a combined or "two-pronged" approach to climate policy: on the one hand, mainstreaming a gender perspective in the design and implementation of climate measures and, on the other, incorporating specific measures aimed at reducing structural inequalities and promoting the empowerment of women and girls.

B. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

8. This Guide is based on the recognition that climate change is not gender neutral. Therefore, its main objective is to highlight the differentiated impacts that the climate crisis has on women and girls and to offer guidance on how to integrate this reality into public policies. The Guide shows how economic, social, cultural, and territorial factors condition their participation and

⁶ Equity, in the context of human rights standards, refers to a principle of substantive justice —often used interchangeably with substantive or material equality— that goes beyond formal equality by recognizing that individuals and groups have different starting points, needs, and vulnerabilities. It requires differentiated treatment, affirmative measures, and the fair distribution of benefits, burdens, and resources in order to redress structural and historical inequalities and achieve fair and effective human rights outcomes, including across generations. United Nations, [Analytical study on the impact of loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change on the full enjoyment of human rights, exploring equity-based approaches and solutions to addressing the same](#), A/HRC/57/30, August 28, 2024, paras. 3 and 52; IACHR, [Economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights of Persons of African Descent: Inter-American standards to prevent, combat and eradicate structural racial discrimination](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 109, March 16, 2021, para. 28; Clifford, Jarlath, "Equality", in Dinah Shelton (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of International Human Rights Law*, 2013, p. 421; [Declaration of Principles on Equality](#), 2008.

access to the benefits of mitigation measures, their capacity for adaptation and resilience, and the exercise of their rights to access information, participation, and justice. In particular, it emphasizes the situation of women and girls who live in contexts of intersectional discrimination, whose possibilities for response are limited by multiple structural inequalities—such as poverty, ethnicity, territorial exclusion, gender stereotypes, limited access to resources, and low participation in decision-making processes.

9. The Guide also offers practical examples and legal guidance to demonstrate how climate policies can address the specific needs of diverse groups of women and girls. The recommendations are framed within the international human rights obligations that States have assumed within the Inter-American system.

10. In light of the above, this Guide invites States to link their climate policies to an analysis of the social, economic, cultural, and access to justice barriers faced by women and girls, recognizing their fundamental role in mitigation and adaptation strategies, as well as in processes of redress for damages associated with the impacts of climate change. In this sense, it seeks to contribute to the design and implementation of climate public policies that are environmentally effective and socially just, capable of reducing inequalities, protecting women and historically discriminated-against groups of women, and strengthening community resilience.

11. To guide action, this Guide includes tables with lists of obligations, operational decisions, and indicators, among other categories. The tables include non-exhaustive and non-prescriptive references and propose lines of action derived from international standards—especially the inter-American human rights framework—and the best available evidence on gender and climate.

12. The definition of specific responses, their prioritization, and the allocation of resources are the responsibility of the competent authorities in each country, in accordance with applicable regulations, territorial contexts, and their risk assessments, with the effective participation of women and girls. These responses are not static: they must be reviewed and updated in light of new scientific knowledge, technological advances, and the identification of emerging risks. These guidelines should be adapted and further developed locally, in line with the principles of equality and non-discrimination, progressivity, precaution, enhanced due diligence, common but differentiated responsibilities, and accountability. While the scope and costs of measures may vary depending on the particular circumstances of each State, the obligation to prevent and act with due diligence on climate issues applies equally to all, regardless of their level of development; without prejudice to the specifications relating to international cooperation and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities⁷.

13. Finally, the Guide proposes some indicators that may be useful for climate action and for considering the specific impacts suffered by women and girls. Far from presenting a closed or definitive model, what is offered is a flexible methodological tool for analysis, the collection of gender-disaggregated data, and the identification of structural inequalities. This will facilitate the

⁷ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 237.

design, monitoring, and evaluation of climate policies, guiding decision-makers in the construction of more equitable and effective climate responses.

14. The operational purpose of this document is to translate legal standards into practical guidelines and proposals for possible actions that can be useful in guiding the responsible authorities throughout the climate policy cycle: from the identification of problems, the design of measures, and the implementation of programs, to the monitoring and evaluation of results. At each of these stages, the proposed approach requires incorporating effective participation mechanisms, guaranteeing access to information, ensuring avenues for complaint, access to justice and redress, and adopting differentiated prevention and protection measures.

C. METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

15. The methodology of this Guide was designed with the aim of offering States and social actors a practical tool for integrating a human rights and gender approach into climate policies and actions. The process was structured in successive phases aimed at ensuring a participatory, intersectional, and evidence-based approach.

16. First, intersectional assessments and analyses of climate information were developed to identify the most relevant inequalities and vulnerabilities, with special attention to the differentiated impacts on women and girls in contexts of poverty, rurality, ethnicity, age, disability, migration status, or employment status. These inputs were complemented by an examination of legal and public policy frameworks—national, international, and within the Inter-American system—to assess the incorporation of gender and human rights perspectives into climate strategies.

17. The process of developing this Guide included consultations with civil society, state representatives, and interviews with experts on climate change, gender, and human rights. Based on these inputs, the Guide was developed, incorporating practical examples, legal guidance, and methodological tools, as well as monitoring indicators to highlight inequalities, identify structural gaps, and contribute to the design of more inclusive, gender-sensitive, and climate justice-oriented policies.

The background of the page is a dark purple color with a large, stylized graphic of a leaf or branch. The leaf is composed of several overlapping, rounded shapes in various shades of purple, from dark to light, creating a sense of depth and texture. The main text is centered on the right side of the page.

 **Chapter II**

CLIMATE JUSTICE APPROACH FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE AMERICAS

II. CLIMATE JUSTICE APPROACH FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE AMERICAS

A. CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

18. The approach adopted in this Guide is based on the inter-American legal framework for human rights, which recognizes the State as the guarantor of rights and individuals and communities as the holders of those rights⁸. From this perspective, climate policies and actions are not merely technical or environmental responses, but rather instruments that must be designed and implemented in compliance with legal obligations, in a manner consistent with the principles of human dignity, equality and non-discrimination, effective participation, transparency, and access to justice.

19. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has clearly established in its Advisory Opinions —AO-23/17 on Environment and Human Rights and AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights—that States must make environmental and climate decisions from a human rights perspective, ensuring that all mitigation, adaptation, financing, or remediation measures comply with the duties of prevention, precaution, cooperation, and equality and non-discrimination⁹. These principles oblige States to anticipate risks, adopt protective measures against serious or irreversible damage, cooperate and prevent damage in a transboundary context, and ensure that climate policies do not exacerbate existing inequalities.

20. In this vein, REDESCA has argued that human rights must be at the center of all public policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation processes. From this perspective, environmental protection is not only a sectoral policy but also an obligation derived from human rights, indispensable for guaranteeing the right to life, health, food, water, housing, development, among others. Regarding the latter, it is important to recall that the right to development¹⁰ is an inalienable human right that entitles all persons and peoples to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from development processes aimed at improving human well-being¹¹. Therefore, development must be sustainable, as an essential element for the realization of human rights within the framework of the limits imposed by environmental protection¹². This right and the climate crisis are inextricably linked, as sustainable development is the only viable pathway to guarantee human rights in an unstable environment¹³. Thus, States have an immediately exigible obligation to define

⁸ IACHR, Public Policies with a Human Rights Approach, 2018.

⁹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-23/17 on Environment and Human Rights, Series A No. 23, November 15, 2017. Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025.

¹⁰ General Assembly, United Nations, Declaration on the right to development, Resolution 41/128, December 4th, 1986. In the Inter-American Human Rights System, it is grounded in Articles 30, 31, 33 y 34 of the OAS Charter, Article 26 of the American Convention on Human Rights, Article 1 of the Protocol of San Salvador and Article 15 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter. See also: Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 211, 270 and 368.

¹¹ IACHR, Business and Human Rights: Inter American standards, CIDH/REDESCA/INF.1/19, November 1st, 2019, para. 45; Thematic study by the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development, Operationalizing the right to development in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, A/HRC/48/63, July 6, 2021, para. 11.

¹² United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, A/CONF.199/204, September 2002, para. 5; Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 370.

¹³ The Inter-American Court has established that the climate emergency can only be properly addressed through urgent actions of mitigation and adaptation that lead toward sustainable development. Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 205 and 369.

and maintain a national strategy for sustainable development within their domestic laws and public policies¹⁴; while the definition of the strategy is immediate, the implementation of specific measures to achieve it is an obligation of progressive development¹⁵. Additionally, state actions on climate issues must also be aimed at transforming the structural conditions that perpetuate inequality, discrimination and vulnerability, with special attention to the differentiated impacts faced by women, girls, and other historically excluded groups¹⁶.

21. Likewise, in developing the specific content of state obligations in the face of climate change, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights reiterated in Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 that States have a duty to identify, according to their national context, the individuals and groups that are most exposed or structurally disadvantaged and to adopt differentiated and reinforced measures for them¹⁷. This includes, among others, women and girls—particularly when they face concurrent factors of discrimination, such as indigenous or Afro-descendant identity, rurality, disability, or mobility—; as well as indigenous peoples and tribal communities, Afro-descendant persons and communities, rural and peasant populations, persons in situations of poverty or extreme poverty, and migrants. This obligation is not limited to predefined lists, but extends to all populations that, due to the confluence of structural factors of discrimination, face disproportionate climate impacts.

22. In line with the position of REDESCA, the Court has recognized that climate change exacerbates the vulnerability of certain groups due to the confluence of structural factors of discrimination. For example, as will be discussed in depth below, women and girls face specific risks from climate change—such as greater exposure to gender-based violence during disasters, loss of livelihoods, and an overload of care tasks, among others—which are exacerbated by pre-existing inequalities¹⁸.

23. International climate change institutions have progressively incorporated a human rights perspective into their agendas and mechanisms. A significant milestone in this regard was the Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in Paris in 2015. COP21 adopted the Paris Agreement, a universal climate agreement based on contributions from all States, whose preamble expressly recognizes the relevance of human rights, gender, and intergenerational equity. Indeed, the Parties declared that, in taking action against climate change, they must consider their human rights obligations (including the right to health; the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, and persons with disabilities; and the right to development), as well as gender equality, women's empowerment, and intergenerational equity¹⁹.

¹⁴ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 371.

¹⁵ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 372.

¹⁶ IACHR, REDESCA, Resolution 3/2021: Climate Emergency: Scope of Inter-American Obligations in the Field of Human Rights, 2021.

¹⁷ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 223 and 420.

¹⁸ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 420 and 629.

¹⁹ United Nations, Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Paris Agreement, December 12, 2015.

24. Likewise, at COP20 in Lima (2014), a year earlier, the first comprehensive initiative to integrate a gender perspective into multilateral climate action had been launched. The Lima Work Program on Gender was established at that conference, initially conceived as a two-year plan to promote gender balance and achieve gender-responsive climate policies²⁰. This work program sought to increase women's participation in UNFCCC bodies and guide Parties in mainstreaming gender equality in all mitigation and adaptation actions.

25. COP22, held in Marrakech, approved the extension of the Lima Work Program on Gender and strengthened the mandate to move towards a more systematic implementation of the gender approach within the UNFCCC framework. As a result of these decisions, the development of a Gender Action Plan (GAP) was requested, which was formally adopted in 2017 during COP23 in Bonn²¹. The 2017 GAP established five priority areas (knowledge and capacity building, gender balance, coherence, gender-responsive implementation, and monitoring/reporting) aimed at strengthening women's participation and influence in climate decisions and promoting equitable benefits from climate action.

26. The international development agenda has consistently highlighted the interconnection between climate change, sustainable development, human rights, and gender equality. For example, Principle 20 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development emphasizes the importance of women's full participation in achieving sustainable development, recognizing their crucial role in achieving equitable and effective development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015²², also include Climate Action and Gender Equality among their 17 Goals, and the Pact for the Future in 2024 renewed this commitment.

27. In summary, the conceptual approach that guides this Guide integrates inter-American and international normative developments in the areas of human rights, gender equality, and climate action. From this perspective, the climate emergency is an imperative that calls on States to guarantee the right to a healthy climate through inclusive, participatory, and transformative policies and actions. Hence, this instrument is intended to serve as a practical tool for translating legal standards into operational guidelines, with the aim of strengthening the region's climate policies to be environmentally robust and, at the same time, promote social justice, gender equality, and the comprehensive protection of human rights.

B. THE DIFFERENTIATED IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

28. Climate change does not affect all people equally. Its impacts are unevenly distributed and are mediated by social, economic, cultural, and territorial factors that determine the capacity of communities and individuals to cope with its effects. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights,

²⁰ United Nations, Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, [Lima Work Program on Gender](#), Decision -/CP.20, December 1, 2014.

²¹ United Nations, Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Gender Action, [Decision 3/CP.23: Gender Action Plan. Bonn: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#), November 17, 2017.

²² United Nations, [Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), Resolution AG/RES/70/1, September 25, 2015.

in its Advisory Opinion AO-32/25, has pointed out that climate change acts as a threat multiplier and that the threats associated with the climate emergency do not affect all people equally, insofar as risk depends on the interaction between exposure and vulnerability, amplifying pre-existing inequalities and placing historically discriminated-against groups at greater risk²³.

29. Structural conditions such as poverty, territorial exclusion, gender and ethnic-racial discrimination, lack of access to productive resources and basic services, as well as limitations in access to information and justice, condition the way in which different populations experience climate impacts. These inequalities not only determine differential exposure to environmental risks, but also people's capacity for response, adaptation, and resilience. In addition, the combination of marginalization and vulnerabilities often translates into greater exclusion from access to information and decision-making processes, reinforcing their invisibility in climate debates and responses. In Latin America and the Caribbean, these impacts are intertwined with widely recognized *structural inequalities* in regional gender equality frameworks, linked, among other things, to the persistence of poverty and socioeconomic inequality; the sexual division of labor and the unfair social organization of care; patriarchal and discriminatory patterns; and the unequal concentration of power²⁴.

30. Regional figures confirm this reality: 32% of the population lives in poverty and more than 13% in extreme poverty, disproportionately affecting women, especially young women, rural women, and indigenous and Afro-descendant women²⁵. The fact that 58 million women live in rural areas where poverty is most intense—and that less than 5% of them have access to technical assistance for agricultural production—illustrates the magnitude of exclusion²⁶. The gaps are even wider when ethnic and racial factors are considered in Latin America, where nearly 43% of indigenous women live in poverty²⁷, as do 21.6% of women of African descent²⁸. Poverty rates also increase for young women, particularly those between the ages of 25 and 44²⁹, a key stage of economic autonomy and caregiving responsibilities. These structural inequalities, stemming from traditional roles and persistent gender stereotypes, increase the exposure of women and girls to climate impacts and reduce their options for addressing them on an equal footing.

31. Given that women and girls are disproportionately affected by poverty in all its dimensions³⁰, it is essential to deepen our understanding of the differentiated impacts that climate change has on them in order to adapt climate policies so that they do not act as a multiplier of pre-existing inequalities. This is even more urgent when considering data from UN Women suggesting that, by 2050, climate change could push 158 million more women and girls into poverty and cause

²³ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 97 and 461.

²⁴ ECLAC, [Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda in the Framework of Sustainable Development towards 2030](#), 2017.

²⁵ ECLAC, [Social Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean Transforming education as a basis for sustainable development](#), 2022.

²⁶ OXFAM, [How rural women are adapting to climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), December 10, 2014.

²⁷ ECLAC, UN Women, [The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Regional Gender Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean: gender indicators for 2024](#), LC/TS.2025/8, April 3, 2025.

²⁸ ECLAC, UN Women, [The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Regional Gender Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean: gender indicators for 2024](#), LC/TS.2025/8, April 3, 2025.

²⁹ ECLAC, UN Women, [The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Regional Gender Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean: gender indicators for 2024](#), LC/TS.2025/8, April 3, 2025.

³⁰ United Nations, [Regional Gender Equality Profile for Latin America and the Caribbean](#), 2024.

232 million to face food insecurity³¹. In this regard, it is necessary to understand how multiple forms of inequality intersect and how these interactions generate unique experiences of discrimination, privilege, or exclusion in the context of the climate emergency.

32. At the same time, the effects of climate change and the triple planetary crisis—biodiversity loss, pollution, and climate crisis—significantly alter the conditions essential for a dignified life. In this context, women and girls, who are overrepresented among the region's poor, face greater risks of violence, loss of livelihoods, care work overload, time poverty and exclusion from decision-making processes. Thus, the climate emergency cannot be understood solely as an environmental problem, but rather as a profoundly social and structural crisis that requires an approach based on climate justice and human rights.

C. SUBSTANTIVE EQUALITY AND AGENCY IN CLIMATE POLICIES

33. The mainstreaming approach proposed in this Guide must start from a basic premise: women and girls are not only groups exposed to risk, but rights holders with the capacity to exercise agency in climate action—as producers of knowledge, community leaders, environmental defenders, and decision-makers. Therefore, differentiated measures must avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes of fragility and incapacity and, instead, guarantee effective and meaningful participation with real impact; access to resources and financing; recognition of knowledge; and enabling conditions for the exercise of freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, including protection from gender-based violence, intimidation, threats, harassment, or reprisals.

34. Based on this premise, mainstreaming gender and rights means reviewing every climate law, policy, or program to identify differentiated impacts on women and girls throughout the public policy cycle—diagnosis, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation—; and anchoring that review in disaggregated information systems, indicators, and accountability. According to the IACHR, participation is not a consultative gesture but an enforceable state obligation, which must be guaranteed especially for the people and groups most affected by the climate emergency³². Climate action necessarily requires the active participation of women, girls, and adolescents, not only because it is a right, but also because the effectiveness and legitimacy of the response depend on it; their exclusion weakens the measures adopted and can exacerbate damage, harm and inequalities³³.

35. Consequently, effective participation mechanisms must be established—prioritizing historically discriminated-against groups—so that climate decisions truly integrate their contributions. This must be accompanied by monitoring and evaluation systems with gender-sensitive indicators that allow for the verification of rights compliance and the activation of accountability. To sustain this social control, the State has a duty to proactively produce, disseminate, and update climate information, governed by the principle of maximum disclosure, in an accessible, effective, and timely manner, including clear information on how to access

³¹ UN Women, *Feminist Climate Justice: A Framework for Action*, 2024, p. 6.

³² IACHR, *Public Policies with a Human Rights Approach*, 2018.

³³ OHCHR, *Analytical Study on Gender-Responsive Climate Action for the Full and Effective Enjoyment of Women's Rights*, May 1, 2019, para. 60.

participation and justice mechanisms³⁴. In addition, when requests for information are denied or not adequately addressed, there must be recourse to independent administrative bodies or courts. At the same time, there must be administrative and judicial avenues for complaint and access to justice in response to impacts resulting from climate-related decisions or omissions. In this sense, substantive equality is linked to other state duties: regulating, supervising, and monitoring public and private activities with the potential for climate damage; conducting environmental impact assessments with a climate component (EIA/C)³⁵ with the participation of women and girls; and applying the principles of prevention and precaution so that climate action closes gaps rather than reproducing them³⁶.

36. The response of States to the climate emergency cannot be limited to the adoption of international commitments or the issuance of isolated regulations. To be effective and comply with inter-American standards, climate policies must take the form of comprehensive public policies that articulate environmental objectives with the guarantee of human rights, gender equality, and social justice. This involves defining national and local strategies that incorporate indicators, adequate budgets, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and spaces for effective participation by civil society, particularly women and girls.

37. From a human rights perspective, the design of public climate policies requires an intersectional approach capable of identifying how socioeconomic, ethnic-racial, territorial, and gender inequalities interact to produce differentiated impacts. In light of inter-American jurisprudence, the climate emergency triggers a standard of *enhanced due diligence* that imposes intensified obligations of prevention, regulation, supervision, and sanctioning in the face of foreseeable risks; the conduct of *ex ante* and *ex post* assessments of climate and human rights impacts; the application of the principles of prevention and precaution; and monitoring, reporting, and verification systems with disaggregated data³⁷. This enhanced due diligence requires effective participation with decision-making power for women and girls—including indigenous, Afro-descendant, rural, informal settlement, persons with disabilities, and older women and girls—safeguards to avoid disproportionate burdens, consultation and free, prior, and informed consent for indigenous peoples, access to information and justice, as well as comprehensive redress mechanisms and guarantees of non-repetition.

38. A central element of gender mainstreaming is recognizing the chains of impact that the climate crisis has on women and girls: a single climate event increases caregiving tasks, vulnerability to gender-based violence, reduces available time to secure their own recovery, and restricts access to comprehensive health services, which includes sexual and reproductive health

³⁴ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 492. IACHR, RELE; United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression; Representative on Freedom of the Media of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe; and Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Africa [Joint Statement on Climate Crisis and Freedom of Expression](#), May 3, 2024.

³⁵ Unlike the traditional Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which focuses primarily on the direct environmental impacts of a project, the Environmental Impact Assessments with a climate component (EIA/C) broadens and deepens the analysis by explicitly incorporating climate-related impacts, including the risks of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as their cumulative and long-term effects, as explained in Section V.C of this document.

³⁶ IACHR, [Public Policies with a Human Rights Approach](#), 2018.

³⁷ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/2025 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 594.

services. If prevention, response, and reconstruction measures do not incorporate this approach, climate action may end up reproducing the very gaps it seeks to correct. Hence the need to ensure continuity of essential services, care support, and specific accessibility to health services for women and girls in emergency contexts.

39. Climate change should not be addressed solely as a technical or environmental challenge, but as a structural problem that requires coordinated interventions in areas such as health, education, food security, risk management, and social protection. The effectiveness of climate policies must also be assessed based on their ability to reduce or eliminate social, gender, ethnic, disability, and other inequalities. In addition, they must avoid reproducing structures of exclusion, guarantee the meaningful participation of the most vulnerable groups, ensure transparency and accountability mechanisms, and promote sustainability.

40. The inclusion of a rights and gender approach in climate policy can translate into concrete measures, such as the establishment of climate information systems with data disaggregated by sex, age, and ethnic-racial affiliation; the incorporation of gender-sensitive budgets into adaptation plans; or the adoption of human rights safeguards in energy transition processes. These lines of action show that rights-based climate action is not only a legal mandate, but also a strategy for institutional effectiveness and legitimacy.

41. Therefore, this Guide emphasizes that States should conceive their climate policies as a cyclical and dynamic process involving: participatory diagnosis, evidence-based design, multisectoral implementation, and accountable evaluation. All of this requires ensuring coherence between national and international regulatory frameworks, strengthening institutional capacities, ensuring financial sustainability, and, above all, recognizing women, girls, and communities in vulnerable situations as active subjects of public climate policy, and not merely as passive beneficiaries



RAPID IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX WITH A FOCUS ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

GUIDELINE	OPERATIONAL SUMMARY
<i>Climate policy cycle with a rights-based approach</i>	Align regulations, plans, budgets, implementation, and evaluation with measures, targets, and deadlines that improve outcomes in the lives of women and girls; define responsibilities and corrective mechanisms.
<i>Intersectional diagnosis and baseline</i>	Map risk–exposure–vulnerability–capacity with disaggregated data (sex, age, pregnancy, disability, ethnicity/race, territory, socio-economic status) and time use surveys; analyze the relationship of women and girls with the territory and ecosystem services (provisioning, regulating, supporting, and cultural: water, forests/mangroves, soils, seeds, artisanal fishing), identifying who uses/manages/decides and who benefits; apply

	<p>impact chains that reveal specific barriers (water and care, mobility, land and resource tenure, income/insurance); and make territorial prioritization (informal settlements, rural areas/coasts, islands) with public feedback of results and periodic updates.</p>
<p>Effective participation</p>	<p>Include organizations of women, girls, and adolescents (indigenous, Afro-descendant, rural, urban-popular, persons with disabilities, and elderly) in all phases, ensuring effective and meaningful participation with real capacity to influence, and public feedback on results. Ensure strict compliance with procedural rights—access to information, participation, and access to justice—in all climate decisions. In indigenous peoples and tribal/Afro-descendant communities, guarantee consultation and, where appropriate, free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), in accordance with inter-American standards.</p>
<p>Climate services and accessible information</p>	<p>Ensure seasonal forecasts, scenarios, and climate and budget information in clear language, indigenous languages, and accessible formats (easy reading, audio, sign language), under the principle of maximum disclosure. Establish multimodal alerts (community radio, SMS, messaging) designed with and for women (rural, urban, indigenous, with disabilities). Elaborate strategies for regular dissemination of information on causes/effects, state response, impact assessment findings, and how to access information, participate, and access justice. Guarantee climate and digital literacy; and protect personal data in risk and mobility registries.</p>
<p>Care systems for resilience and participation</p>	<p>Care networks and services; care for older persons and people with disabilities; compatible transportation and schedules so that women and girls can participate in and benefit from climate actions. In emergencies, ensure access to nearby water, clean energy, safe transportation, comprehensive health services (CHS), and care services that function in emergencies.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>Enhanced climate due diligence: comprehensive risk identification and assessment; proactive and ambitious preventive measures; best available science; integration of human rights and gender perspectives; ongoing monitoring of impacts; transparency, accountability, and anti-greenwashing measures; thorough assessment and conditioning/denial of activities with the potential for significant harm to the climate system; regulation and oversight of corporate due diligence.</p>

<p><i>Just transition and responsible closure/exit</i></p>	<p>Responsible closure/exit from the outset; reconversion with gender targets; affordable clean energy and efficiency in female-headed households; protection of livelihoods and heritage; FPIC and benefit sharing; participatory monitoring.</p>
<p><i>Adaptation and ecosystem-based solutions</i></p>	<p>Water, health, education, housing, agriculture, and fishing: co-design with women and girls—indigenous, Afro-descendant, rural, and coastal—adaptation measures and nature-based solutions (watershed and mangrove restoration, agroecology, soil/seed management). Ensure nearby water and sanitation; continuous, accessible, and resilient infrastructure and services; and measures to promote diversification of livelihoods.</p>
<p><i>Land use planning, housing, and infrastructure</i></p>	<p>Low-income neighborhoods and coastal areas: adequate housing, shelters, and services with universal accessibility; continuous services (local water, sanitation, clean energy, safe transportation); resilient building codes and secure tenure for women. In an emergency situation: shelters and community centers with separate bathrooms, menstrual management, and accessibility</p>
<p><i>Affirmative action in governance</i></p>	<p>Effective participation mechanisms with verifiable impact; earmarked budgets and specific funds; procurement/contracts with equality clauses and supplier targets; transparency and accountability rules; public dashboards for monitoring commitments.</p>
<p><i>Prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV)</i></p>	<p>Integrate GBV risk into assessments and projects; intersectoral protocols with reporting and redress routes; 24/7 services (hotlines, psychosocial and legal support), shelters, and safe spaces; GBV-sensitive water, sanitation, and hygiene policies (separate bathrooms, menstrual management, lighting/security); codes of conduct and safeguards against sexual exploitation and abuse in works and programs; training for staff and community committees; specific measures for girls and adolescents (safe schools and transportation).</p>
<p><i>Comprehensive protection for environmental, land, and territory defenders</i></p>	<p>Recognition and a safe environment (free from intimidation, threats, illegal surveillance, and judicial harassment); risk analysis and early warnings; special duty of protection with a personal, family, and community focus (including preventing stigmatization and obstacles to their work); non-criminalization and anti-SLAPP frameworks; specialized prosecutors/units and enhanced due diligence; participation in NDCs, NAPs, land use planning, and restoration; FPIC; corporate due diligence</p>

	and sanctions; digital security and data protection; emergency funds and care support.
<i>Gender-sensitive budgeting and indicators</i>	Climate budget labeling with resources to close gaps; annual targets and funding windows for women's organizations; monitoring-reporting-verification system with outcome indicators, open data dashboards, and social audits.
<i>Climate and human rights regulation and due diligence</i>	Regulate, supervise, and oversee public and private activities with climate risk; require and approve EIAs/Cs and human rights assessments with differentiated analysis and a gender and intercultural approach; ensure that studies are independent, participatory, respectful of indigenous peoples, and based on the best available science, including cumulative impacts and impacts on the climate system; establish monitoring, mitigation/contingency measures, and remediation; ensure transparency and accountability, and strict compliance with procedural rights (information, participation, and justice); supervise corporate due diligence, including supply chains.

Source: Own elaboration.

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 **Chapter III**

WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

III. WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

A. STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES AND VULNERABILITIES

42. Climate change is not gender neutral: its impacts are unevenly distributed and, in practice, tend to reproduce and deepen existing structural gaps. In Latin America and the Caribbean, women and girls—particularly those living in poverty, in rural areas, who are indigenous, of African descent, persons with disabilities, LGBTQIA+, elderly, or in contexts of human mobility—face specific vulnerabilities in the face of extreme weather events and environmental degradation. In line with inter-American developments, these impacts require the integration of a gender perspective into climate policies and recognition of the particular exposure of vulnerable individuals and groups, including women and girls. Inequality in access to land, credit, technology, basic health and education services, as well as the persistence of unpaid care roles, their participation in the informal economy, and gender stereotypes decisively condition their possibilities for adaptation and resilience.

43. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has pointed out that climate change exacerbates intersectional and structural discrimination, which requires States to acknowledge and address the differentiated impacts in their public policies, with special attention to the rights to life, health, housing, water and sanitation, food, and to live free from all forms of violence³⁸.

44. In practice, climate disasters increase specific risks for women and girls, such as loss of livelihoods, increased care burdens, exposure to sexual and gender-based violence in contexts of displacement, and impacts on their comprehensive health. These phenomena, identified by REDESCA and other bodies of the Inter-American system, are intensified when factors such as extreme poverty, structural racism, or ethnic and cultural discrimination are present³⁹.

45. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the combination of provisioning and caregiving responsibilities within the home and limited access to land, credit, technology, and services places women and girls at greater risk and vulnerability in the face of extreme events. For climate action to be fair and effective, it is essential to recognize these constraints, ensure women's participation in planning, and equip policies with indicators and disaggregated information that enable gaps to be closed.

46. From this perspective, climate policies, in addition to reducing emissions or promoting mitigation technologies, must identify, prevent, and address the differentiated impacts that the climate emergency has on women and girls, adopting positive measures aimed at reversing structural inequalities and guaranteeing substantive equality and non-discrimination. The incorporation of a gender and intersectional approach in climate action is essential to guarantee

³⁸ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO 32/2025 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 594.

³⁹ IACHR, REDESCA, [Impacts of Flooding in Rio Grande do Sul: Observations and Recommendations to Guarantee Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/III.doc.50/25, March 31, 2025. IACHR, REDESCA, [Impacts of forest fires on economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights and biodiversity: report on REDESCA's working visit to Bolivia](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II.doc.91/25, May 30, 2025.

substantive equality⁴⁰, ensure that responses do not act as multipliers of inequalities, and, at the same time, empower women as agents of change.

B. EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION AS GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF CLIMATE ACTION

47. Equality and non-discrimination are cardinal principles of international human rights law and, in the Inter-American System, function as structuring principles of the entire protection order. They are an indispensable prerequisite for the effective enjoyment of all human rights and, therefore, must guide public policies on climate issues across the board, not only by avoiding arbitrary differential treatment, but also by ensuring real conditions for substantive equality, which includes the adoption of positive measures to reverse discriminatory situations and the provision of special protection to persons and groups in situations of vulnerability⁴¹.

48. At the universal and inter-American levels, various instruments consolidate this mandate. The Belém do Pará Convention and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) oblige States to guarantee women's equality and eradicate gender-based violence, including that which may intensify in the context of the climate emergency. Likewise, Article 3 of the Protocol of San Salvador enshrines the State's commitment to guarantee the exercise of rights without discrimination, as part of the regulatory framework applicable to economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights (ESCER).

49. The Inter-American system has consistently developed the link between discrimination and violence against women, highlighting that structural discrimination creates conditions for gender-based violence and that, in its most serious manifestations, this violence can constitute an extreme form of discrimination. The centrality of the principles of equality and non-discrimination with respect to women encompasses civil, political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights⁴².

⁴⁰ Substantive equality—frequently referred to as material, structural, or real equality—is a principle that requires States to go beyond the mere formal absence of discriminatory laws to create the conditions necessary for human rights to become a lived reality for all by dismantling systemic barriers and correcting historical disadvantages. IACHR, [The economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights of indigenous peoples and tribal people of african descent in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc 52/23, March 21, 2023, para. 40; IACHR, [Economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights of Persons of African Descent: Inter-American standards to prevent, combat and eradicate structural racial discrimination](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 109, March 16, 2021, para. 28; IACHR, [Business and Human Rights: Inter American standards](#), CIDH/REDESCA/INF.1/19, November 1st, 2019, para. 44. United Nations, [Substantive gender equality - Guidance document of the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls](#), Resolution A/HRC/WG.11/42/1, March 14, 2025, paras. 16-19.

⁴¹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Yatama v. Nicaragua*, Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs, C No. 127, Judgment of June 23, 2005, para. 184; Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Servellón García et al. v. Honduras*, Merits, Reparations and Costs, C No. 152, Judgment of July 21, 2006, para. 94; Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Case of the Xákmok Kásek Indigenous Community v. Paraguay*, Merits, Reparations and Costs, C No. 214, Judgment of August 24, 2010, para. 269; Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Case of Atala Riffo and Daughters v. Chile*, Merits, Reparations and Costs, C No. 239, Judgment of February 24, 2012, para. 79; Inter-American Court, *Case of Nadege Dorzema et al. v. Dominican Republic*, Merits, Reparations and Costs, C No. 251, Judgment of October 24, 2012, para. 225; IACHR, Report No. 5/14, Case 12.841, Merits, Angel Alberto Duque v. Colombia, April 2, 2014, para. 60.

⁴² IACHR, [Legal Standards Related to Gender Equality and Women's Rights in the Inter-American Human Rights System: Development and Application](#), 2015, para. 129.

50. Equality and non-discrimination take on central importance in the context of the climate emergency. Women, girls, indigenous peoples, people of African descent, persons with disabilities, older persons, rural communities, and migrants are affected by multiple forms of structural and intersectional discrimination, which increases their exposure to risks and reduces their capacity to adapt.

51. Therefore, the approach to gender equality and non-discrimination should not only be understood as a legal and ethical imperative, but also as an indispensable condition for the effectiveness of climate policies. Women's autonomy and empowerment are essential to achieving resilient and sustainable societies. Ensuring their active and meaningful participation in environmental and climate decision-making strengthens the democratic legitimacy of these policies and enhances the diversity of solutions, from traditional knowledge to technological innovation.

52. Furthermore, the integration of human rights obligations and the principles of equality and non-discrimination into climate mitigation and adaptation policies stems from ratified human rights treaties. In the inter-American framework, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has emphasized that the state's duty to prevent climate damage must be guided by the best available science and therefore cannot be based on its denial or on information that contradicts the scientific consensus⁴³.

C. RIGHT TO A HEALTHY CLIMATE

53. In the Inter-American system, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has recognized the right to a healthy environment as an autonomous right protected by Article 26 of the American Convention, interpreted in light of the OAS Charter and the Protocol of San Salvador⁴⁴. In the context of the climate emergency, AO-32/25 further developed the right to a healthy climate as a right derived from and complementary to the right to a healthy environment, with a specific purpose: the protection of the climate system from dangerous anthropogenic interference⁴⁵. Based on this, the Court systematized that States must respect and guarantee these rights with enhanced due diligence, guiding their decisions by the principles of prevention, precaution, and cooperation, and considering the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in its dimension of international cooperation⁴⁶.

54. The Inter-American system has specified obligations for regulation, prevention, mitigation, and redress in the face of environmental and climate damage, which must be adopted based on the best available science and through appropriate assessment processes. In particular, AO-32/25 specifies that climate decision-making requires rigorous use of scientific evidence,

⁴³ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO 32/2025 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 236 and 486.

⁴⁴ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-23/17 on Environment and Human Rights, supra. Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Case of Indigenous Communities Members of the Lhaka Honhat Association (Our Land) v. Argentina, Merits, Reparations and Costs, Judgment of February 6, 2020, Series C No. 400.

⁴⁵ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/2025 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, para. 303.

⁴⁶ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/2025 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, supra.

avoiding omissions, alterations, or misrepresentations of relevant data, and adopting measures against misinformation, as part of the duty of guarantee and enhanced due diligence⁴⁷.

55. Resolution 3/21 of the IACHR, prepared by its REDESCA, represents another important step in the development of the right to a healthy climate within the Inter-American system⁴⁸. By explicitly acknowledging that the climate emergency is also a human rights crisis, the resolution broadened the understanding of state obligations by establishing that climate action must be guided by the principles of equality, non-discrimination, climate justice, participation, and non-regression, and incorporated a differentiated approach that addresses the needs of vulnerable individuals and groups, including women, girls, indigenous and afro-descendant peoples, and local communities.

56. On that basis, AO-32/25 of the IACtHR recognizes the human right to a healthy climate—derived from and complementary to the right to a healthy environment—and specifies obligations of prevention, precaution, cooperation, reparation, and progressivity, with enhanced due diligence in the face of serious or irreversible risks. The Opinion emphasizes its dual dimension: collective (benefiting present and future generations; intergenerational equity) and individual (a condition for a dignified life, health, water, food, housing)⁴⁹. For public policies, this implies that the main pillars of climate action—mitigation, adaptation, financing, loss and damage, and just transition—must be designed and implemented with a rights-based and gender-based approach, avoiding measures that reduce emissions but deepen gaps or shift disproportionate burdens onto women and girls.

57. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has emphasized the particularly demanding nature of the state's obligation to prevent irreversible environmental and climate damage, which raises the standard of enhanced due diligence in the planning and implementation of mitigation and adaptation measures. In gender-responsive climate policies, this requires avoiding decisions that, even if aimed at reducing emissions, generate irreversible impacts on territories and on the rights of women and girls, especially in contexts of structural inequality⁵⁰.

58. AO-32/25 reaffirms that it is the responsibility of States to regulate, monitor, investigate, sanction, and guarantee redress for damage linked to business activities that contribute to climate change or generate significant risks⁵¹. It is incumbent upon States to regulate, monitor, investigate, sanction, and provide redress for damages linked to high-risk activities, such as the exploration, extraction, transport, and processing of fossil fuels, the manufacture of cement,

⁴⁷ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/2025 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, *supra*. Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Case of the Residents of La Oroya v. Peru, Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs](#), Series C No. 511, Judgment of November 27, 2023. Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Case of the Indigenous Communities Members of the Lhaka Honhat \(Our Land\) Association v. Argentina](#), Series C No. 400, Judgment of February 6, 2020. Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Case of the Residents of La Oroya v. Peru, Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations, and Costs](#), Judgment of November 27, 2023, Series C No. 511.

⁴⁸ IACHR, REDESCA, [Resolution 3/2021: Climate Emergency: Scope of Inter-American Obligations in the Field of Human Rights](#), 2021.

⁴⁹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/2025 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, cited above.

⁵⁰ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/2025 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, 2025.

⁵¹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Case of the Kaliña and Lokono Peoples v. Suriname*, Series C No. 309, November 25, 2015 (Merits, reparations, and costs). *Case of the Workers of the Santo Antônio de Jesus Fireworks Factory and their Families v. Brazil*, Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations, Series C No. 407, July 15, 2020. Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Case of the Residents of La Oroya v. Peru, Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations, and Costs](#), Series C No. 511, November 27, 2023. REDESCA-IACHR, [Business and Human Rights: Inter-American Standards](#). OAS/Ser.L/V/II IACHR/REDESCA, 2018.

or agro-industrial activities and the inputs used in such activities⁵². This implies requiring due diligence in climate and human rights throughout the entire value chain, including risk disclosure, mitigation measures, and decarbonization plans, as well as environmental and climate impact assessments with a rights-based and gender-based approach. The Court also highlights the need for robust and independent mechanisms—judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative—with sufficient technical capabilities, and for measures to discourage practices such as greenwashing, while also ensuring the effective protection of defenders⁵³. The Court also insisted on the obligation of States to enact legislation that requires companies to act with due diligence on climate change and human rights throughout the value chain, and reiterated the responsibility of States to require the disclosure of GHG mitigation measures and the conduct of EIAs/Cs when there is a risk of significant environmental damage⁵⁴.

59. This regulatory framework is complemented by developments in the universal system, such as: General Comments of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (GC 15, 26, and 27 on the right to water, land rights, and the environmental dimension of sustainable development)⁵⁵, of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (GC 15 and 26 on health and the environment with a focus on children and adolescents)⁵⁶, CEDAW (GC 37 on gender, disaster, and climate change)⁵⁷, and the Human Rights Committee (HRC) (GC 36 on the right to life and the environment)⁵⁸. All of these bodies agree that climate strategies must incorporate substantive equality, effective participation, access to information and justice, with differentiated measures for historically discriminated-against groups.

60. The aforementioned General Recommendation 37 of the CEDAW Committee⁵⁹ constitutes a normative milestone at the intersection of gender, human rights, and climate change, consolidating a framework of obligations for States to incorporate the perspective of substantive equality in all phases of climate action. In this regard, it recognizes that all measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change must be designed and implemented in accordance with the human rights principles of substantive equality and non-discrimination, participation and empowerment, accountability, access to justice, transparency, and the rule of law. States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women must apply the obligation to promote and protect women's human rights at all stages of prevention, mitigation, response,

⁵² IACHR, [Business and human rights: inter-American standards](#), OAS/Ser.L/V/II IACHR/REDESCA, 2018. Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), supra, para. 345.

⁵³ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), supra, paras. 123-127 and 354.

⁵⁴ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), supra, para. 358.

⁵⁵ United Nations, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, [General Comment No. 15 on the right to water, articles 11 and 12, E/C.12/2002/11](#), January 20, 2003. United Nations, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, [General Comment No. 26 on land rights and economic, social and cultural rights](#), E/C.12/GC/26, January 24, 2023. United Nations, Committee on the Rights of the Child, [General Comment No. 26 on children's rights and the environment, with a focus on climate change](#), CRC/C/GC/26, August 22, 2022.

⁵⁶ United Nations, Committee on the Rights of the Child, [General Comment No. 15 on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, article 24](#), CRC/C/GC/15, April 17, 2013.

⁵⁷ United Nations, CEDAW, [General Recommendation No. 37 on the gender dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change](#), CEDAW/C/CG/37, March 13, 2018, para. 14.

⁵⁸ United Nations, Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 36 on Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, concerning the right to life, CCPR/C/GC/36, September 3, 2019, para. 62.

⁵⁹ United Nations, CEDAW, [General Recommendation No. 37 on the gender dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change](#), CEDAW/C/CG/37, March 13, 2018, para. 14.

recovery, and adaptation in the context of climate change and disasters⁶⁰. In its recommendations, the Committee has repeatedly pointed out the particular impacts affecting rural women and girls, indigenous and Afro-descendant women, women with disabilities, women environmental defenders, migrants, and women living in poverty. It should also be noted that several countries in the region have received recommendations from the CEDAW Committee on the lack of gender-sensitive criteria in environmental impact assessments and the absence of specific gender-sensitive indicators that include the role of women as guardians and caregivers in their climate policies.

61. Likewise, through a joint statement, several treaty bodies—the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities—urged all States Parties to bear in mind their human rights obligations when reviewing their climate commitments. And noted that the risk of harm is particularly high for those sectors of the population that are already marginalized or in situations of vulnerability or that, due to discrimination and pre-existing inequalities, have limited access to decision-making or resources, such as women, children, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and persons living in rural areas⁶¹.

62. Finally, the international climate architecture (UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol, and Paris Agreement—whose preamble expressly recognizes human rights and gender equality— as well as advances in gender at the COPs— Lima Work Program on Gender and Gender Action Plan—) offers operational tools for mainstreaming gender perspectives in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and in climate policies on mitigation, adaptation, financing, and transparency. This is articulated with instruments such as the Escazú Agreement on access to environmental information, participation, and justice, and with Principle 20 of the Rio Declaration. Integrating these frameworks into public planning and budgeting allows international legal obligations to be translated into institutional changes, metrics, and results that verifiably improve the lives of women and girls in the context of the climate emergency.

63. This background is particularly relevant given that the interpretation of the obligations and rights contained in the Inter-American system in light of other relevant international treaties and norms has been a consistent practice of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights⁶². In fact, the American Convention itself expressly refers to the norms of international law for its interpretation and application in the IASHR⁶³.


⁶⁰ United Nations, CEDAW, [General Recommendation No. 37 on the gender dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change](#), CEDAW/C/CG/37, March 13, 2018, para. 16.

⁶¹ United Nations, CEDAW, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, Committee on the Rights of the Child, and Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, [Statement on Human Rights and Climate Change](#), HRI/2019/1, May 14, 2020.

⁶² Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Case of the Residents of La Oroya v. Peru. Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs](#), Series C No. 511, Judgment of November 27, 2023.

⁶³ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Case of the U'wa Indigenous People and its Members v. Colombia, Merits, Reparations, and Costs](#), Series C No. 510, December 20, 2024; [Case of the Rama and Kriol Peoples, the Indigenous Black Creole Community of Bluefields, and Others v. Nicaragua](#), Series C No. 498, November 17, 2023.; [Case of the Tagaeri and Taromenane Indigenous Peoples v. Ecuador, Preliminary Exception, Merits, Reparations, and Costs](#), Series C No. 443, September 27, 2021; and [Advisory Opinion AO-23/17 on the environment and human rights](#), cited above.

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 **Chapter IV**

DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

IV. DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

A. INTERSECTIONAL PERSPECTIVE AND STRUCTURAL DETERMINANTS

64. The climate emergency interacts with inequalities based on gender, ethnicity, race, territory, age, disability, and migration status, among others⁶⁴. These structural and intersectional inequalities amplify the exposure and vulnerability of women and girls and reduce their ability to anticipate, adapt, resist, and recover⁶⁵. Vulnerability must be understood as a dynamic and contextual condition; therefore, the response by States requires identifying the rights and groups that are most exposed or disadvantaged and adopting differentiated or reinforced measures.

65. Due to the gender division of labor and barriers to accessing resources and services —such as water and sanitation, education, adequate housing, employment and social protection, clean energy, land, credit, technology, information, and early warning systems—, women and girls face differentiated impacts from biodiversity loss, soil degradation, pollution, and multiple threats⁶⁶. This combination increases risks to their health, livelihoods, and safety⁶⁷.

66. Women, who bear the brunt of unpaid care work, face differentiated climate impacts largely due to the confluence of three factors: (i) greater exposure to income and asset losses— due to their concentration in informal occupations with low social protection and limited access to credit and insurance; (ii) reduced capacity to adapt due to "time poverty" resulting from care overload; and (iii) structural barriers to participation and decision-making in risk management and reconstruction.

67. States must adopt differentiated measures to address all women in their different roles and, in particular, to prevent, investigate, punish, and redress gender-based violence when they are exposed to climate- and environment-related events and disasters (floods, storms, landslides, mudslides/debris flows, earthquakes), incorporating an intersectional approach and ensuring accessible and culturally relevant protection and reporting routes⁶⁸.

68. In disaster contexts, these inequalities are exacerbated. When basic services (water, sanitation, health, school meals) collapse or classes are interrupted, caregiving tasks intensify and fall mainly on women (mothers) who are heads of households and primary caregivers, who often put their own safety, health, and livelihoods on hold to prioritize the care of children, older persons, or people with disabilities. The resulting "time poverty" reduces their access to information, compensation mechanisms, housing procedures, and opportunities for temporary employment or emergency loans, reproducing cycles of women's impoverishment. In situations of drought, flooding, or heat waves, supply and care tasks increase, mobility is restricted, and access to essential information and services is hampered. This limits participation in decision-making spaces

⁶⁴ United Nations Development Program (UNDP), [Integración del enfoque de género en cambio climático, resiliencia y reducción del riesgo de desastres](#), 2024.

⁶⁵ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), [Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#), Chapter 18, 2022.

⁶⁶ ECLAC, [Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda in the Framework of Sustainable Development towards 2030](#), LC/CRM.13/5, 2017.

⁶⁷ CEDAW, [General Recommendation No. 37 on the gender dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change](#), CEDAW/C/GC/37, March 13, 2018.

⁶⁸ IACHR, REDESCA, Resolution 3/2021 Climate Emergency: Scope of Inter-American Human Rights Obligations, December 31, 2021, para. 19.

and can exacerbate risks of gender-based violence⁶⁹. Therefore, integrating care into risk management—from preparedness to recovery—is a prerequisite for ensuring that climate action does not perpetuate inequalities and has a rights-based approach.

69. The effective, meaningful, and truly influential participation of women and girls—including those belonging to indigenous peoples, Afro-descendant and rural communities, those living in informal settlements, persons with disabilities, and older persons, among other groups—is a prerequisite for the cultural relevance and effectiveness of adaptation, mitigation, loss and damage, and just transition measures. States must guarantee mechanisms for participation, access to information, and transparency throughout the entire public policy cycle, with conditions of accessibility (schedules compatible with caregiving tasks, transportation, interpreters, and feedback on results) that allow for real, rather than merely formal, intervention.

70. According to UNICEF, girls and women, often in unsafe conditions, are usually responsible for fetching water to take home or are often the first to be taken out of school to help support their families in times of crisis⁷⁰. Women spend, on average, two-thirds of their time on unpaid work, while men spend only one-third on it⁷¹. In this sense, women and girls may be disproportionately affected by climate impacts due to traditional roles, limited access to resources, and restricted participation in decision-making⁷².

71. According to inter-American standards, the principle of equality and non-discrimination must guide climate action across the board and involves removing obstacles, adopting differentiated measures, and prioritizing groups that have historically been discriminated against. This is linked to the rights to participation, access to information, and justice, as well as the obligation of accountability.

72. An intersectional approach identifies how gender, ethnicity, territory, age, disability, and migration status intersect and amplify risks. This approach avoids gender-neutral responses that reproduce gaps and, at the same time, recognizes women's knowledge and capacities (water management, seeds, crop diversification, community organization) as assets for resilience. To make it operational, it requires accessible information systems with disaggregated data that allow for the identification of barriers and the targeting of differentiated measures.

73. In contexts of poverty and extreme poverty, rurality, urban informality, and service deficits, climate risks are intensified. Policies must prioritize these realities with measures for effective access to rights, territorial adaptation, and community participation. Responses should be coordinated with risk management systems and adaptive social protection schemes to prevent,

⁶⁹ IPCC, [Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#), 2022.

⁷⁰ UNICEF, [The climate crisis is a child rights crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index](#), 2021.

⁷¹ Unpaid work refers to: "Domestic and care work includes, among other things, food preparation, cleaning and maintenance of the home, maintenance of clothing, care of pets, shopping and errands for the home, and activities related to the care of children, older persons, persons with disabilities who require it, or persons in situations of dependency."(ECLAC, [Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, broken down by sex \(SDG indicator 5.4.1\)](#), September 20, 2023).

⁷² ECLAC, OHCHR, [Climate Change and Human Rights: Contributions from and for Latin America and the Caribbean](#), 2019.

mitigate, and repair disproportionate impacts on women and girls, and ensure the continuity of essential services during emergencies.

B. TERRITORIAL DIMENSIONS OF CLIMATE RISK AND VULNERABILITY

1. *Informal settlements and low-income urban neighborhoods*

74. In Latin American and Caribbean cities, climate risks—flash floods, landslides, heat waves, and poor air quality—are amplified in informal settlements and low-income neighborhoods characterized by a lack of adequate housing, basic services, and urban planning. The combination of climate threats, high exposure, and social vulnerabilities places women and girls at the center of the impact: difficulties in accessing water and sanitation, energy, and transportation; increased caregiving burdens; reduced mobility to seek livelihoods; delayed access to information and public services; and increased risk of gender-based violence, especially when schools, school meal programs, or health centers are disrupted.

75. Urban vulnerability is shaped by pre-existing inequalities—in income, land, gender, age, and disability—which the climate crisis tends to exacerbate, disproportionately affecting women and girls due to their caregiving roles and lower social protection. Therefore, urban adaptation plans and programs must integrate a gender perspective as a continuous process—generating knowledge with the participation of women and girls, promoting partnerships, inter-institutional management, procedural measures, and feedback on results—and not as a one-off addition.

76. Evidence from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) indicates that urban vulnerability is shaped by structural inequalities—such as gender inequality—and that the intersection of poverty, informality, and discrimination increases the likelihood of severe and unequal impacts in urban contexts in the region. Therefore, climate responses in cities require intersectional and gender-sensitive approaches throughout the policy cycle (diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation)⁷³.

77. In terms of public policy, urban responses must articulate adaptation and risk management with land use planning and management—including comprehensive neighborhood improvement, resilient drainage and sanitation, green infrastructure, and slope and watershed protection—and incorporate differentiated measures for specific groups, such as women, girls and adolescents, older adults, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and Afro-descendant populations. This requires earmarked budgets, basic services that function in emergencies (water, sanitation, energy, care), and, when necessary, gender-sensitive resettlement processes. The REDESCA report on Brazil showed that strengthening urban planning with risk management and resilience is key to serving populations facing cumulative disadvantages in urban contexts⁷⁴.

⁷³ IPCC, AR6 WGII, Chapter 6: "[Cities, Settlements and Key Infrastructure](#)," 2022.

⁷⁴ IACHR, REDESCA, Impacts of Flooding in Rio Grande do Sul: Observations and Recommendations to Guarantee Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights, OEA/Ser.L/V/III, Doc. 50, March 31, 2025.

78. This requires participation with material conditions for women and their organizations throughout the public policy cycle—from diagnosis to monitoring—with feedback on results and access to resources and effective remedies in case of violations, in accordance with inter-American standards on access to information, participation, and access to justice.

2. Rural women, peasant women, and artisanal fisherwomen

79. Rural women—peasant farmers, indigenous women, women of African descent, and artisanal fisherwomen—are on the front lines of the climate emergency. Droughts, floods, and other extreme events directly affect agri-food production; at the same time, sea level rise, ocean warming and acidification, and the loss of coastal habitats impact artisanal fishing and coastal livelihoods. These risks are exacerbated by structural determinants that are particularly pronounced in the region: gaps in land tenure and control, including collective tenure and the territoriality of indigenous peoples and Afro-descendant communities; reduced access to credit, insurance, technical assistance, technologies, and climate services; care overload; and limited participation in decision-making bodies (irrigation committees, cooperatives, fisheries co-management arrangements)—which reduce their capacity for anticipation, adaptation, and recovery.

80. The vulnerability of agriculture to climate change depends, among other factors, on timely access to land, water, inputs, financing, climate services, and extension and technical assistance systems. However, in much of the region, these systems have been designed with male producers and larger-scale farms in mind, and therefore reach rural, indigenous, and Afro-descendant women less and less effectively. This limits their ability to adopt adaptation practices and technologies (agroecology, efficient irrigation, resilient seeds), conditions their crop decisions, and increases their exposure to risk. This is not a "deficit" in women's capacities, but rather institutional and gender gaps in the provision of services and access to credit and property that states must correct in order for adaptation to be effective⁷⁵.

81. Furthermore, it is estimated that 58 million women live in rural areas, but only 30% of them own agricultural land; less than 5% have access to technical assistance. Limited access to land, credit, and technical support exacerbates the vulnerability of these women. A report by UN Women, noting that droughts and floods intensify soil erosion and threaten water resources, highlights the important role of rural and indigenous women in domestic food security and climate adaptation strategies on the continent⁷⁶. It is often women who cultivate family plots, raise domestic animals for consumption, conserve seeds and resistant varieties, manage water and domestic fuel, or process, dry, and store food.

82. The rural and coastal labor market is dominated by seasonality and informality, with particularly high rates among women⁷⁷. Women disproportionately assume unpaid care work,

⁷⁵ Sellers, Shyla, *Global Gender and Climate Change*: Women's Environment & Development Organization (WEDO), 2016.

⁷⁶ UN WOMEN, *The Unjust Climate - Measuring the impacts of climate change on rural poor, women and youth*, Practice: Women's Resilience to Disasters Programme, 2021.

⁷⁷ According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), in 2019, 85.7% of workers employed in the agricultural sector were informal, while in the non-agricultural sector the informality rate was 65.8%. In the case of women, the proportion of informality is higher

which is intensified by water and health stress; at the same time, the temporary migration of men due to crop losses or bans increases the "feminization" of family farming and post-harvest fishing activities (handling/sorting, processing, retail), often without social protection or economic recognition. The result is greater time poverty, unstable incomes, and reduced resilience to climate shocks.

83. In artisanal fisheries, changes in the availability and distribution of species, the loss of coastal habitats, and ocean warming and acidification can affect income and food availability. Women participate throughout the chain—harvesting on shore and in mangroves, processing, marketing—but face specific barriers: less access to boats and equipment, licenses, and credit; underrepresentation in co-management arrangements; and exposure to safety risks on beaches and in markets after extreme events. In indigenous and Afro-descendant coastal communities, these impacts are intertwined with structural racism, territorial isolation, and a lack of basic services.

84. Climate change has a particularly intense impact on rural women and girls, peasants, and artisanal fisherwomen because climate risks overlap with historical gaps in access to resources, services, and participation. But that same position in food systems and in the daily management of water, seeds, and territories makes them bearers of practical knowledge that is an asset for adaptation, including traditional agricultural techniques and the management of coastal marine areas. This means incorporating them into adaptation systems, opening specific windows in climate funds, using public procurement from women producers, and paying for restoration and conservation services. At the same time, it requires states to ensure effective participation and adopt measures with a gender and intersectional approach—access to land and financing, social protection, care services, and technical training—for a just transition and truly effective adaptation.

3. Coastal areas, archipelagos, and islands

85. Coastal areas, archipelagos, and, in particular, several small island states and low-lying territories in the Caribbean are among the territories most vulnerable to the climate emergency. They are exposed to more intense hurricanes, storm surges, droughts, and floods, as well as rapid sea level rise. For several of these countries and territories, the climate crisis poses an existential threat: much of their population, infrastructure, and economic activity is located in low-lying coastal areas highly exposed to hydrometeorological and marine-coastal hazards⁷⁸. While these phenomena impact the entire population, their effects are disproportionate on women and girls, as recognized in Resolution 3/21⁷⁹.

86. In the Caribbean, where hurricanes and coastal storms cause mass evacuations, women are often forced to leave their communities in greater numbers, losing their homes and support networks. The risk of gender-based violence is not limited to temporary shelters: it also

than that of men, with the rate in the agricultural sector reaching 91.6% (UN WOMEN, *8M: Gender equality today for a sustainable future*, March 7, 2022).

⁷⁸ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), *Climate emergency threatens the lives, livelihoods, and health care of 41 million people living in low-lying coastal areas in Latin America and the Caribbean*, May 28, 2024.

⁷⁹ IACHR, REDESCA, *Resolution 3/2021: Climate Emergency: Scope of Inter-American Obligations in the Area of Human Rights*, Washington, D.C., 2021.

arises during evacuations—due to overcrowding or lack of lighting—upon return to damaged homes, and during the rehabilitation and reconstruction phases, where the absence of accessible reporting mechanisms and safe spaces increases exposure to abuse and exploitation⁸⁰.

87. Disasters and the gradual effects of climate change in coastal and island areas hit women's livelihoods hard. In Latin America and the Caribbean, women already had higher levels of poverty than men and were heavily dependent on natural resources that are now at risk. An extreme event can exacerbate these gaps: for example, after Tropical Storm Erika, according to available information, women were particularly affected because about 55% of informal economic activities (a sector where they predominate) were disrupted. Additionally, two major hurricanes that impacted the Caribbean are Dorian (Bahamas, 2019) and Melissa (Jamaica, 2015). Many Caribbean women also work in tourism and services, sectors that collapse after a hurricane, resulting in massive female unemployment⁸¹.

88. Damage to health infrastructure and disruption of supply chains after major hurricanes illustrate this vulnerability. For example, Hurricane Maria in 2017 devastated facilities and forced health personnel to leave, leaving the system in a critical situation. These operational collapses often result in delays or lack of services for women and girls when they need them most⁸².

89. Overall, in the coastal areas, archipelagos, and islands of the Caribbean, climate change is not gender neutral. Women and girls face greater impacts, a higher probability of displacement, disruption of livelihoods, care overload, and greater risks of gender-based violence, as well as greater barriers to accessing aid and reconstruction. Therefore, adaptation and risk management plans must incorporate planned relocation with the effective participation of women in site selection, guarantee access to adequate housing, water, and essential services, and ensure the equivalent or improved replacement of coastal and fishing livelihoods, preventing relocation from becoming a new layer of inequality.

C. GROUPS IN SITUATIONS OF PARTICULAR VULNERABILITY

1. *Indigenous women and girls and tribal communities*

90. Among indigenous and tribal peoples, historical inequalities (land, basic services, representation, structural racism) combine with territorial exposure to produce differentiated climate impacts on women and girls. The Inter-American Court has emphasized that, in climate emergencies, state measures must incorporate differential approaches to ensure equality and non-discrimination for groups in particularly vulnerable situations, including indigenous women, integrating local knowledge and effective participation from the design to the evaluation of policies and projects.

91. Food and water security are particularly affected by the provisioning and caregiving roles assumed by many indigenous women. After disasters or droughts, they are often the primary

⁸⁰ UNFPA, *Climate Emergency Threatens the Lives, Livelihoods, and Health Care of 41 Million People Living in Low-Elevation Coastal Areas in Latin America and the Caribbean*, op. cit.

⁸¹ El País, *When the storm passes, there is no calm for women*, March 8, 2022.

⁸² PAHO/WHO, *UHC COVID-19 Alliance. Stories from the field: Dominica*, December 2020.

responsible for obtaining water and food, which increases their workload and, in some cases, their exposure to risks of violence during displacement or longer journeys to access safe sources. In addition, forced displacement—whether internal or cross-border—resulting from hydrometeorological events or loss of livelihoods disproportionately impacts indigenous women and girls, who face greater barriers to accessing information, health care, protection, and justice, as well as greater risks of gender-based violence during transit and in shelters. For this reason, States must prevent, investigate, and punish violence against women in disaster contexts as well, and incorporate a gender and intersectional approach into all risk management and adaptation actions.

92. Indigenous peoples face specific challenges when they are displaced across international borders due to climate change. In 2018, it was estimated that there were 83,000 indigenous "international migrants" in nine Central American countries, most of whom were women. In the case of these peoples, climate change has been identified as one of the causes of international displacement. In such situations, indigenous peoples may face a range of human rights violations, such as extrajudicial killings, sexual assault, and harassment. They also face a variety of health problems due to lack of access to medical services⁸³.

93. The spiritual, cultural, and subsistence relationship of Indigenous Peoples with their territories means that climate decisions—mitigation, adaptation, forest management, energy infrastructure—must respect their collective rights, ensure culturally appropriate consultations, and prevent cultural impacts. In this regard, it has been pointed out that “when it comes to the health of indigenous women, its collective dimension cannot be ignored; in this sense, it must be considered a comprehensive and holistic issue that concerns all members of the community and contains physical, social, mental, environmental, and spiritual dimensions”⁸⁴.

94. Additionally, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights highlights the "decisive" role of indigenous women in the preservation and transmission of traditional knowledge—for example, in the management of water, seeds, forests, and agroecological practices essential for managing risks, protecting biodiversity, and building resilience to extreme events⁸⁵. Recognizing and strengthening this knowledge, including its documentation and protection against misappropriation, is key to ensuring that adaptation measures are relevant and effective.

95. States must prevent damage to the environment in indigenous or tribal territories and adopt effective measures to protect the habitat and resources necessary for the life and subsistence of these communities. In this context, climate and environmental decisions that may affect them must incorporate prior consultation and, where appropriate, free, prior, and informed consent, with differential approaches⁸⁶. These measures must integrate a gender and

⁸³ UN, Human Rights Council, Providing legal options to protect the human rights of people displaced across international borders due to climate change—Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change, Ian Fry, [A/HRC/53/34](#), April 18, 2023.

⁸⁴ IACHR, Indigenous Women and Their Human Rights in the Americas, April 17, 2017, para. 45.

⁸⁵ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 482.

⁸⁶ Under Inter-American human rights standards, free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC)—as opposed to consultation alone—is required when a proposed measure may cause a significant or intense impact on the lands, resources, cultural heritage, livelihoods or wellbeing of indigenous or tribal peoples. This includes, in particular: (i) large-scale development or investment projects; (ii) displacement or relocation from their lands; (iii) storage or disposal of hazardous materials; (iv) projects that are not “large-scale” in isolation if their cumulative impact—when combined with other existing or proposed projects—causes a major impact on the territory or the community’s

intersectional approach, including the identification and management of differentiated impacts on women and girls, through differentiated and reasonable measures to ensure their substantive equality⁸⁷.

96. In the report on REDESCA's working visit to Bolivia, it was noted that in the indigenous territory of Monteverde, the burning of the Copaibo reserve—a tree that requires at least 25 years to reach maturity—represents a critical loss of a source of life and work for women in the long term, who depend on this resource to manufacture oil and other products derived from Copaibo, which they also use to treat illnesses and to manufacture shampoos, soaps, and lip balms. Similarly, it highlighted that in the Palestinian community of the municipality of Concepción, the loss of coconuts, collected, crushed, and ground by women to produce oil has directly affected their ability to manufacture shampoos and conditioners, reducing or eliminating their source of income and livelihood⁸⁸.

97. In accordance with inter-American standards, the States must ensure strict compliance with procedural rights—in particular, access to information, participation, and access to justice—in all climate decisions. In the case of indigenous and tribal peoples, rights-based climate governance must guarantee informed participation in their own language, through culturally appropriate processes of access to information and prior consultation in accordance with their representative institutions, as well as, where appropriate, free, prior, and informed consent. To ensure substantive equality, States must adopt specific measures to guarantee the effective and influential participation of indigenous women in all phases of climate policies and projects. They must also ensure access to effective and accessible resources and justice mechanisms, including interpreters and translators when necessary, and protect traditional knowledge through appropriate processes of knowledge co-production and safeguards against misappropriation.

98. Ultimately, the climate crisis can intensify historical inequalities that specifically affect indigenous women and girls and those from tribal communities. Closing this gap requires climate policies with a rights-based, gender-sensitive, and intercultural approach that: (i) adopt differentiated and reasonable measures to guarantee substantive equality; (ii) ensure compliance with procedural rights (information, participation, and justice) in all climate decisions; (iii) guarantee prior consultation and, where appropriate, free, prior, and informed consent; and (iv) establish accessible and culturally appropriate mechanisms for access to justice, with effective safeguards and real capacity for redress.

survival, and (v) military activities in indigenous territories, unless such activities are justified by a relevant public interest or have been freely requested by the communities themselves. Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Case of the Saramaka People. v. Suriname. Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations, and Costs, Judgment of November 28, 2007, Series C No. 172, para. 132-135; IACHR, Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendent communities, and natural resources: Human rights protection in the context of extraction, exploitation, and development activities, OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 47/15, December 31, 2015, paras. 183-193; Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Case of the Rama and Kriol Peoples, the Black Creole Indigenous Community of Bluefields et al. v. Nicaragua. Merits, Reparations and Costs, Judgment of April 1, 2024, Series C No. 522, para. 240; Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 608 and 609. See also: United Nations. Free, prior and informed consent: a human rights-based approach Study of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Resolution A/HRC/39/62, August 10, 2018, paras. 33, 36 y 37.

⁸⁷ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 611.

⁸⁸ IACHR, REDESCA, Report on REDESCA's Working Visit to Bolivia - Impacts of Forest Fires on Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights and Biodiversity, OAS/Ser.L/V/II. Doc.91/25, May 30, 2025, para. 172.

2. Afro-descendant women and girls⁸⁹

99. The historical trajectories of colonization and enslavement structured power hierarchies that continue to reproduce inequalities based on race, gender, and class in Latin America and the Caribbean. In the context of the climate emergency, these inequalities increase exposure and reduce the capacity to respond to climate threats, with differentiated impacts on women and girls of African descent. Consequently, climate policies and measures must be implemented free of discrimination and with a differentiated and intersectional approach, considering additional factors of discrimination such as ethnic-racial origin.

100. In the region, ECLAC evidence shows that the "matrix of social inequality" articulates race, ethnicity, gender, life cycle, and territory, producing persistent gaps in poverty, employment, education, health, housing, and access to services. These gaps disproportionately affect households of African descent and, within them, women. Some reports from international organizations document that these populations face multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination—based on gender, race, class, and territory—which intensify their exposure to the adverse effects of climate change and reduce their capacity to respond. According to ECLAC, poverty disproportionately affects the Afro-descendant population in Latin America and the Caribbean: nearly 50% of Afro-descendant women live in households in poverty or extreme poverty⁹⁰. In line with inter-American standards, States must assess the nature and extent of climate risks that disproportionately affect certain groups, including Afro-descendant communities, while also taking into consideration how inequality and multidimensional poverty affect these risks⁹¹.

101. The connection between Afro-descendant women and girls and climate change is also evident in the differentiated impacts that reflect both historical structural inequalities and current vulnerabilities. In this regard, environmental racism manifests itself in the location of Afro-descendant communities near landfills, such as those for toxic waste, extractive industries, industrial and mining areas, factories, and power plants, which often results in high rates of asthma, cancer, and other chronic diseases related to the environment⁹². In some contexts, people of African descent are 40% more likely than non-Afro-descendants to reside in areas with the highest projected increases in mortality rates due to climate-related changes in extreme temperatures⁹³.

102. The gender dimension of disaster risk is also clear: the synthesized regional literature documents that, after a disaster, unpaid care burdens increase, women take longer to re-enter the workforce, and face barriers to accessing support, credit, and reconstruction due to tenure biases and formal requirements. These dynamics have a particularly severe impact on women of African

⁸⁹ Afro-descendant women are women who self-identify as Afro-descendant and share a common African ancestry, which in the Americas largely derives from the transatlantic slave trade, while encompassing diverse cultural, historical, and social identities shaped by their specific contexts. IACHR, [Economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights of Persons of African Descent: Inter-American standards to prevent, combat and eradicate structural racial discrimination](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 109, March 16, 2021, para. 16.

⁹⁰ ECLAC, [The Afro-descendant population and the matrix of social inequality in Latin America: challenges for inclusion](#). Santiago: United Nations, 2022.

⁹¹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion A0-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 389 (i).

⁹² United Nations, Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, A/HRC/48/78, September 21, 2021, para. 57.

⁹³ United States Environmental Protection Agency, [Climate Change and Social Vulnerability in the United States: A Focus on Six Impacts](#), 2021.

descent, who are concentrated in highly exposed sectors (services, tourism, informal trade) and in vulnerable coastal areas⁹⁴.

103. REDESCA has pointed out that Afro-descendant communities face significant risks due to extreme weather events, such as floods and storms, which affect their livelihoods and food security⁹⁵. Consequently, integrating a gender and ethnic-racial perspective into climate policy requires highlighting the racial dimension of the crisis, recognizing the differentiated impacts on Afro-descendant women and girls, and considering additional factors of discrimination, including ethnic-racial origin. Furthermore, in accordance with inter-American standards, States must adopt specific measures to prevent the climate crisis from affecting the rights of Afro-descendant communities and incorporate meaningful participation and, where appropriate, consultation in the planning and implementation of climate actions. At the same time, it is essential to recognize and strengthen cultural and ancestral economies sustained by women (e.g., shellfish gathering, traditional cooking, handicrafts, community tourism) as adaptation assets eligible for public protection and financing⁹⁶.

3. Women and girls with disabilities

104. Women and girls with disabilities face high and cumulative risks from extreme events—hurricanes, floods, droughts, and heat waves—as well as from slow-onset events, due to persistent barriers to mobility, communication, and accessibility, as well as pre-existing socioeconomic and gender inequalities⁹⁷. These barriers translate into less effective access to services and institutions—such as health, education, employment, political participation, and justice—and can exacerbate impacts on food, drinking water and sanitation, adequate housing, and decent work, increasing their exposure and vulnerability to the climate emergency.

105. The rights-based approach and the social model of disability require States to identify and eliminate physical, communication, institutional, and attitudinal barriers; guarantee universal accessibility, reasonable accommodations, and supports for independent living; and adopt specific measures to address intersectionality (disability with gender, age, ethnicity, rurality, or poverty). In situations of risk and disasters, this means: ensuring accessibility to information and communication before, during, and after emergencies, and in early warnings (with visible and audible alerts); providing information in national sign languages and plain language (with pictograms where appropriate); and ensuring safe evacuation, adequate support and relief, as well as appropriate, accessible, and safe temporary shelters. It also requires continuity of comprehensive health services—including sexual and reproductive health—and enhanced

⁹⁴ IACHR, REDESCA, [Impacts of Flooding in Rio Grande do Sul: Observations and Recommendations to Guarantee Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/III.doc.50/25, March 31, 2025. IACHR, REDESCA, [Impacts of forest fires on economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights and biodiversity: report on REDESCA's working visit to Bolivia](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II.doc.91/25, May 30, 2025. UNDRR, [Towards gender equality and women's leadership for disaster risk resilience in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), 2022. Bowie, Grace, [Women and Girls are a Critical Climate Solution](#), Aspen Institute Energy & Climate Program, March 27, 2024.

⁹⁵ IACHR, REDESCA, [Impacts of Flooding in Rio Grande do Sul: Observations and Recommendations to Guarantee Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/III.doc.50/25, March 31, 2025.

⁹⁶ Jose Wilches-Gutierrez and Patricia Documèt, "What is known about sexual and reproductive health in Latin American and Caribbean mining contexts? A systematic scoping review," *Public Health Reviews*, vol. 39, No. 1, 2018, pp. 2 and 3.

⁹⁷ Climate Investment Funds (CIF), [Disability Inclusion in Climate Finance](#), February 2024. Spotlight Initiative, [Colliding Crises: How the climate crisis fuels gender-based violence](#), 2022.

protection against gender-based violence, with the effective participation of women with disabilities and their organizations, disaggregated data, and monitoring⁹⁸.

106. In the Inter-American system, the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities reinforces the State's duty to prevent and eliminate discrimination and to adopt measures for the full integration and inclusion of persons with disabilities; and Article 18 of the Protocol of San Salvador establishes their right to receive special attention in order to achieve the maximum development of their personality⁹⁹. At the universal level, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities obliges States to guarantee their safety and protection in situations of risk and disaster; in addition, its Committee has called for the integration of disability into climate action. For its part, CEDAW, in its General Recommendation No. 37, requires that disaster risk reduction and climate action incorporate substantive equality and specific measures for women and girls—among them, those with disabilities—in all phases: prevention, response, recovery, and adaptation¹⁰⁰.

107. Likewise, recent inter-American standards also identify persons with disabilities as among the groups that suffer most intensely from the effects of the climate emergency, imposing on States reinforced duties of prevention, participation, and non-discrimination¹⁰¹. Guaranteeing equality and non-discrimination requires a shift from welfare-based or medical-rehabilitation approaches to public policies focused on rights, deinstitutionalization, recognition of legal capacity with support, and meaningful participation throughout the climate policy cycle, in line with the paradigm shift introduced by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which states that disability is not inherent to the person, but arises from the interaction between their conditions and the physical, social, communicational, and attitudinal barriers in the environment. Public policies aimed at women and girls with disabilities must be carried out with their participation and taking into account disability- and gender-sensitive budgets and indicators, accountability mechanisms, and the mainstreaming of the principle of accessibility in health, education, work, infrastructure, and risk management. The IACHR emphasizes that only a paradigm shift in public policies—from individual deficits to the removal of social barriers—will allow women and girls with disabilities to exercise their rights on an equal footing, including in the face of the climate crisis¹⁰².

108. A cross-cutting problem is the lack of adequate information and monitoring: there is still a shortage of climate and risk management data disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, and disability in the region, which makes it difficult to identify gaps and target resources. In line with inter-American standards on rights-based public policies, States must strengthen information systems with a minimum disaggregation by sex, age, disability, and ethnic-racial affiliation; and

⁹⁸ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 617. IACHR, Situation of the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Americas, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 1/25, January 31, 2025. IACHR, Resolution on Human Mobility Induced by Climate Change, [Resolution No. 2/24](#), December 26, 2024, para. 72.

⁹⁹ Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities; Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (“Protocol of San Salvador”), Article 18.

¹⁰⁰ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, art. 11; Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, [Declaration on the inclusion of disability in climate action](#), November 19, 2024; Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, [General Recommendation No. 37 \(2018\) on the gender dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change](#).

¹⁰¹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 617.

¹⁰² IACHR, Situation of the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Americas, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 1/25, January 31, 2025.

generate performance indicators that measure inclusion (e.g., percentage of women with disabilities who have access to accessible shelters; coverage of assistive technologies in emergencies; access to CHS in disaster contexts). Despite international consensus of the greater vulnerability of persons with disabilities to climate change, disability issues have received little attention. Only 37 of the 192 Parties to the Paris Agreement mention persons with disabilities in their nationally determined contributions (NDCs), meaning that 81% of States do not mention persons with disabilities in their NDCs¹⁰³.

109. In summary, without explicitly incorporating women and girls with disabilities, climate action risks reproducing and deepening inequalities. Closing this gap requires applying standards of equality and non-discrimination throughout the climate policy cycle—from design to evaluation—with universal accessibility, reasonable accommodations and supports, effective participation of individuals and their organizations, accessible and safe alerts and shelters, disaggregated data and verifiable indicators, as well as specific budgets and safeguards against violence.

4. Older women

110. Older women face differentiated climate impacts due to a confluence of biological, social, and economic factors that increase their exposure and reduce their capacity to respond¹⁰⁴. Globally, heat-related mortality among people aged 65 and older grew by ~85% between 2000–2004 and 2017–2021, a trend driven by longer and more intense heat waves and by housing, income, and health conditions that limit adaptation—patterns that are replicated and exacerbated in Latin America and the Caribbean, where social protection and health coverage is often unequal for older women. These data support the need for specific thermal risk mitigation policies for this age group¹⁰⁵. Some estimates indicate that by 2050, exposure to extreme heat will double, affecting 250 million older adults in different regions of the Global South¹⁰⁶.

111. In the inter-American context, it has been noted that, in certain circumstances, older adults face differentiated impacts and are at risk of exclusion in disaster situations. They may also be particularly affected during evacuations due to their reduced mobility, lack of access to information, or specific requirements. Climate change can also affect their mental health and increase loneliness and isolation, deepening their vulnerability¹⁰⁷.

112. Public health evidence shows that vulnerability to heat depends both on physiology (age, comorbidities, polypharmacy) and on factors that increase exposure (poorly ventilated housing, precarious roofs, neighborhoods with low tree cover, insufficient income for cooling, social isolation). In heat emergencies or hydrometeorological events, older adults face obstacles to

¹⁰³ CIF, [Disability Inclusion in Climate Finance](#), February 2024.

¹⁰⁴ UN WOMEN, [The Unjust Climate - Measuring the impacts of climate change on rural poor, women and youth](#), Practice: Women's Resilience to Disasters Programme, 2021.

¹⁰⁵ UNEP, [Heat waves put older people at high risk, warns UN report](#), July 10, 2025.

¹⁰⁶ The Guardian, [Heat exposure of older people across world to double by 2050](#), finds study, May 14, 2024.

¹⁰⁷ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 614; IACHR, REDESCA, [Impacts of Flooding in Rio Grande do Sul: Observations and Recommendations to Guarantee Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/III.doc.50/25, March 31, 2025. IACHR, REDESCA, [Impacts of forest fires on economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights and biodiversity: report on REDESCA's working visit to Bolivia](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II.doc.91/25, May 30, 2025.

mobility, communication, and timely access to services—for example, difficulties in traveling to shelters, receiving early warnings in accessible formats, or maintaining the supply chain for chronic medications—. WHO/PAHO and regional guidelines recommend heat-health plans, monitoring of at-risk groups, "cooling centers," and specific guidance for caregivers and local services, measures that should be adopted with a gender lens given the greater likelihood that women will age alone, in poverty, and with caregiving responsibilities.

113. From a rights-based perspective, the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons sets out the general duties of States Parties to achieve the full enjoyment and exercise, under conditions of equality, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to a healthy environment. United Nations special procedures have emphasized that climate change exacerbates pre-existing inequalities and can result in violations of older persons' rights to life, health, water, food, and housing, requiring states to respond with enhanced due diligence: prevention, adaptation, accessible information, participation, and access to justice. In particular, the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons has called for the integration of older persons—including older women—into climate governance and warning, evacuation, and care systems, avoiding their invisibility or stigmatization as a "burden" during emergencies¹⁰⁸.

114. Integrating the perspective of older women into climate action is an obligation and a condition for effective public policy. This requires concrete prevention and response measures that ensure safe evacuations, access to adequate housing, provision of supplies tailored to specific needs, and available, accessible, acceptable, and quality health care, as well as preventive health care plans and training for caregivers or family members in the event of emergencies or disasters associated with climate change. In climate mobility scenarios, it also requires guaranteeing priority access to basic services and social support, and ensuring that information is age-appropriate, thereby ensuring inclusion and participation in adaptation and response decisions.

5. Women and diversity

115. Within the framework of inter-American standards, the climate emergency can exacerbate discrimination and structural inequalities that affect LGBTIQ+ people, specially people with gender diversity. Indeed, emergency policies fail to recognize diverse family structures and gender identities, increasing their exposure to risks and barriers to accessing services and assistance in disaster contexts¹⁰⁹. For instance, with respect to Hurricane Katrina's impact on New Orleans in 2005, LGBTIQ+ persons were blamed by some religious leaders for the disaster and

¹⁰⁸ United Nations General Assembly, [Human rights of older women: the intersection between aging and gender](#), A/76/157, 2021.

¹⁰⁹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 389 and 618; and IACHR, REDESCA, [Resolution 3/2021: Climate Emergency: Scope of Inter-American Obligations in the Area of Human Rights](#), 2021. See also: Alibudbud, Rowalt, Gender in Climate Change: Safeguarding LGBTIQ+ Mental Health in the Philippine Climate Change Response From a Minority Stress Perspective, *J Prev Med Public Health*, March 13, 2023; 196–199. Mann, Samuel J.; McKay, Tara; Gonzales, Jr., Gilbert, Climate Change-Related Disasters & the Health of LGBTIQ+ Populations, *Journal of Climate Change and Health*, Volume 18, July-August, 2024; Goldsmith L, Bell ML. [Queering Environmental Justice: Unequal Environmental Health Burden on the LGBTIQ+ Community](#). *Am J Public Health*, 2022.

excluded from disaster response policies¹¹⁰. In this regard, States must identify particularly vulnerable rights and groups and assess the nature and scope of the climate risks that disproportionately affect them, in order to adopt prevention, response, and recovery measures with a focus on equality and non-discrimination.

116. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has emphasized that, in the face of the climate emergency, States must identify the rights at stake and assess the nature and scope of climate risks that disproportionately affect certain groups, including LGBTIQ+ persons. It has also warned that gender-diverse persons may face an elevated risk of violence during and after climate-induced disasters and, in some cases, additional barriers to accessing shelter, food assistance, water, or other emergency support. Consequently, States must adopt differentiated prevention and protection measures, ensure accessibility and non-discrimination in humanitarian assistance, and guarantee effective mechanisms for reporting, protection, and access to justice¹¹¹.



DIFFERENTIATED IMPACTS ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

PRIMARY IMPACT	EVIDENCE	PUBLIC POLICY IMPLICATIONS
<i>Vector-borne diseases (Zika, dengue) with differentiated effects</i>	Zika can be transmitted from mother to fetus; care burdens fall on women; barriers to accessing CHS in emergencies.	Ensure continuity of care services in emergencies; combined prevention; psychosocial and economic support for caregivers.
<i>Injuries and mortality in disasters (floods, landslides, hurricanes)</i>	Precarious housing and exposed informal settlements; gaps in mobility/early warning; caregiving roles that delay evacuation.	Provide gender-sensitive evacuation and shelter plans; early warnings and information in accessible and inclusive formats; meaningful and non-discriminatory participation of women in risk management committees from early stages, with feedback on results.
<i>Maternal and neonatal health in extreme heat</i>	Greater occupational and domestic exposure to heat, less access to cooling and timely health services in peri-urban and	Integrate heat risk into maternal and child plans (early warnings, protected hours, cooling centers, adaptation of services);

¹¹⁰ Dominey-Howes, D., Gorman-Murray, A., & McKinnon, S, Queering disasters: on the need to account for LGBTI experiences in natural disaster contexts, *Gender, Place & Culture*, 21(7), 905-918, 2014; Goldsmith L, Bell ML. Queering Environmental Justice: Unequal Environmental Health Burden on the LGBTIQ+ Community, *Am J Public Health*, 2022.

¹¹¹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights*, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 389 and 618.

	rural areas; pregnant women at high risk of premature birth/low birth weight.	surveillance with disaggregated data.
<i>Disruption of CHS and menstrual health in emergencies</i>	Closure/damage to services; low prioritization of CHS and menstrual hygiene supplies.	Promote protocols for continuity of CHS (contraception, prenatal care/childbirth, sexual violence) and hygiene supplies in shelters; referral routes and service maps.
<i>Rural livelihoods (agriculture, livestock, fishing)</i>	Gaps in access to land, credit, technical assistance; ownership of smaller plots with less legal security.	Ensure joint titling and security of tenure; equal access to extension, irrigation, insurance, and climate services co-designed with rural women.
<i>Forced migration and climate displacement (internal/cross-border)</i>	Loss of housing/livelihoods due to extreme events or slow-onset change; disruption of networks and documentation; associated risks.	Guarantee safe routes and shelters with health services, registration, and identity; mobile legal clinics and free legal aid; livelihood support for displaced women; gender-sensitive regularization procedures; participation of women's organizations in relocation plans and monitoring with disaggregated data.
<i>Urban livelihoods (informality/exposure)</i>	High female participation in the informal economy; housing with service deficits and resilient infrastructure.	Provide adaptive social protection for informal workers; local green jobs for women, adaptation of training according to context.
<i>Care workload</i>	Water/energy/food shortages increase collection and care time, tasks that fall disproportionately on women and girls.	Strengthen care infrastructure (water close to home, clean energy, safe transportation); emergency care services; gender-sensitive budgets.
<i>Gender-based violence (GBV) in</i>	Disruption of networks, overcrowding, unsafe travel, and	Guarantee safe shelters (lighting, privacy), prevention of trafficking, trained staff, reporting services,

<i>disasters and displacement</i>	economic stress increase the risk of GBV.	and psychosocial and legal support.
<i>Mental and psychosocial health</i>	Loss, trauma, and caregiving overload disproportionately affect women (primary caregivers).	Integrate mental health and psychosocial support with a gender focus in response and recovery; community and caregiver support.
<i>Older women</i>	Higher mortality and morbidity in heat waves and floods; isolation; polypharmacy; limited mobility.	Gender-sensitive heat-health plans; cooling centers; home visits; transportation to shelters and continuity of medication.
<i>Women and girls with disabilities</i>	Mobility/communication barriers; interruption of support and therapy; exclusion from shelters and transfers; increased risk of GBV during evacuation.	Ensure accessible alerts and shelters (including signage and sign language); accessible transportation; continuity of support and devices; free and accessible legal aid; data disaggregated by disability.
<i>Women and diversity</i>	Transgender and LGBTQIA+ people excluded or criminalized in shelters; disruption of essential healthcare (including continuity of HIV care); rise in physical violence and scapegoating of LGBTQIA+ communities during disasters.	Enforce non-discrimination shelter policies; guarantee continuity of care and inclusive emergency health protocols; integrate protection measures and anti-violence safeguards in disaster response.
<i>Climate participation and decision-making</i>	Underrepresentation in decision-making bodies limits cultural relevance and effectiveness of measures.	Promote participation quotas/targets; funding for women's organizations; mechanisms for meaningful, informed, and early participation, with conditions of accessibility and feedback on results.
<i>Access to justice and redress for climate damage</i>	Barriers to reporting and litigating (costs, excessive time, limited standing); lack of public defense	Guarantee free public defense; class actions; <i>pro actione</i> standard and urgent injunctions;

	and gender-sensitive expert testimony; bias against specific groups of women; invisibility of differentiated harm; criminalization of women defenders.	environmental prosecutors; accessibility; comprehensive reparation; compliance monitoring; protection of women defenders (including measures against SLAPP); mobile ombudsmen; no costs for women and vulnerable communities.
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Source: Own elaboration.



CLIMATE RISK MATRIX AND MINIMUM AGE-SENSITIVE RESPONSES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

STAGE / PRIORITY GROUP	KEY DETERMINANTS AND IMPACTS	MINIMUM OPERATIONAL RESPONSES (EXAMPLES)
<i>0–5 (early childhood) – girls in rural areas, informal settlements, and indigenous/Afro-descendant communities</i>	Malnutrition and acute diarrheal disease due to unsafe water; heatstroke; family separation in emergencies; linguistic/cultural barriers.	Safe water and sanitation close to home; intercultural health posts; cooling stations; reunification records and protocols.
<i>6–17 (girls and adolescents) – low-income urban and rural areas</i>	Educational disruption; overload of tasks; risks of GBV in shelters and on routes; exposure to heat/pollution.	Resilient schools (separate bathrooms, menstrual management, safe water); adequate continuous school feeding; safe shelters; age-appropriate climate information.
<i>6–17 with disabilities</i>	Alert/evacuation barriers; interruption of therapies and support; inaccessibility of schools and shelters.	Accessible alerts (sign language, Braille, easy reading, visual alert system); accessible transportation and shelters; continuity of therapies and devices
<i>12–17 in transit/displacement</i>	Risk of trafficking and GBV; loss of documentation; school dropout; lack of CHS.	Safe routes and shelters with CHS; education in transit; registration and identity; mobile advocacy services.
<i>18–24 (young people) indigenous and Afro-descendant</i>	Exclusion from decision-making; barriers to green	Quotas and mentoring in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; skills certification; participation with voting rights in risk

	jobs/technology; structural racism.	committees/plans; support for climate entrepreneurship.
<i>25–59 (adults) informal urban and rural workers</i>	Exposure to heat/radiation/vectors; loss of income; zero social protection; "time poverty" due to caregiving.	Occupational health standards (heat, vectors); hydration/shade points; microinsurance and care-focused promotion policies; community daycare centers.
<i>Caregivers and female heads of household (all ages, especially 25–44)</i>	Care overload during service collapse; reduced access to information, procedures, and assistance.	Resilient public care services; evacuation and care support; priority and mobile service windows; care leave and transfers; protected schedules.
<i>Rural, peasant farmers</i>	Droughts/erratic rainfall; pests; reduced access to land, credit, technical assistance; reduced participation in irrigation committees/cooperatives.	Access to land/water and credit; agroecological technical assistance; public procurement from women producers; participation in irrigation committees/cooperatives.
<i>Artisanal and coastal/island fisherwomen</i>	Change in species; damage to boats/landing/cold chain; tourism paralyzed in disasters.	Resilient fishing infrastructure; insurance and soft loans; co-management with meaningful and, where appropriate, binding participation; safe coastal shelters.
<i>Indigenous and tribal women (all ages)</i>	Impact on territories and natural assets (land/water/seeds) and loss of livelihoods; displacement; linguistic and cultural barriers to accessing information/services and participating in decisions; GBV in mobility and shelters.	Active transparency and climate/project information in their own language and culturally appropriate; prior consultation and, where applicable, free, prior, and informed consent, with direct participation of women; essential and intercultural emergency services (health/water/protection); territorial and livelihood safeguards; accessible complaint mechanisms and access to justice.
<i>Afro-descendant and Afro-Caribbean women</i>	Environmental racism and territorial segregation; settlements in risk areas; multidimensional poverty and inequality that increase exposure and reduce response capacity;	Risk/damage assessment and mapping with disaggregated data; comprehensive neighborhood improvements and safe access to housing/water/sanitation; simplified routes for aid and unimpeded reparations; post-disaster

	employment in exposed sectors (services/tourism/commerce).	employment/retraining programs; protection against GBV.
<i>Women and girls with disabilities (any age)</i>	Mobility/communication barriers; exclusion from justice and aid; increased risk in emergencies.	Universal accessibility throughout the cycle; reasonable accommodations; personal assistance; free and accessible legal representation.
<i>Older women (60+)</i>	Isolation, low pensions, heatwave mortality; limited mobility; poorly ventilated housing; polypharmacy; care dependency.	Heat-health plans; accessible cooling centers; priority in alerts and evacuations; home visits; transportation to shelters and access to medication.
<i>Women and girls in areas of extractive projects and infrastructure (all ages)</i>	Water stress and pollution; loss of land and livelihoods; displacement and disruption of networks; information asymmetries and misinformation associated with projects; private controls on routes/services; GBV, criminalization, and stigmatization of women leaders; cumulative climate-water-biodiversity impacts.	Active transparency and maximum publicity about the project (including emissions), and publication of technical characteristics/impacts/measures and available technologies; integrated climate-water-biodiversity assessment; protective measures compatible with care; consultation and consent where appropriate; conditional licensing with safeguards; prevention of displacement and, if it occurs, planned relocation with housing/water/CHS/education/livelihoods; GBV protocols, accessible grievance and remedy mechanisms.
<i>Women defenders of the environment, land, and territory</i>	Threats, attacks, and violence (including gender-based violence); criminalization and judicial harassment (including SLAPPs) to discourage public participation; stigmatization and obstacles to accessing information and participating/deciding; impunity.	Protection programs with a differential and gender-based approach, agreed upon with defenders; investigation and punishment of attacks with due diligence; measures against judicial harassment/SLAPPs and other reprisals; specialized prosecutors and protocols; legal support; transparent monitoring and oversight

		mechanisms for abuses linked to private/extractive actors; guarantees for effective participation with decision-making power in plans/NDCs.
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Source: Own elaboration.

D. SITUATIONS OF AGGRAVATED RISK

1. *Women defenders of the environment, land, and territory*

117. The Inter-American Commission and its REDESCA have found that in the Americas, defending the environment, land, and territory continues to be one of the most risky activities for defenders, and that these attacks have intensified, especially against women, indigenous leaders, Afro-descendants, and community leaders. Those who oppose extractive, infrastructure, or natural resource exploitation projects often face murder, threats, harassment and criminalization, stigmatization campaigns, and other forms of violence¹¹².

118. In the context of the climate emergency, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has warned that this heightened risk can also manifest itself through censorship of debates on the environment and climate, online and offline violence, repression of protests and public gatherings, arbitrary detentions, illegal surveillance¹¹³ and strategic legal actions against public participation, including by private actors and public authorities. This scenario triggers a special duty of protection that obliges authorities to refrain from imposing illegitimate restrictions on advocacy work and to adopt public policy instruments, internal provisions, and relevant practices to ensure the free and safe exercise of their activities. Women defenders, due to the intersection between their gender and their advocacy work, also face gender-based violence—such as sexual harassment, threats in digital spaces, and smear campaigns based on stereotypes— which places this group at heightened risk that States are obligated to prevent and protect against, and to investigate with due diligence—doubly reinforced in the case of women defenders—punish, and provide full reparation¹¹⁴.

¹¹² IACHR, [Third Report on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in the Americas](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 119/25, April 15, 2025. IACHR, REDESCA, Poverty, Climate Change, and ESCER in Central America and Mexico, in the Context of Human Mobility, July 28, 2023, para. 155.

¹¹³ In this regard, it is important to consider that any interference with privacy, including digital surveillance, must strictly adhere to the principles of legality, necessity, and proportionality and must be subject to independent judicial authorization and robust external oversight mechanisms to prevent abuse. IACHR, [Business and Human Rights: Inter American standards](#), CIDH/REDESCA/INF.1/19, November 1st, 2019, para. 282; United Nations, Human Rights Council, [Right to privacy in the digital age](#), Resolution A/HRC/RES/54/21, October 16, 2023; IACHR, [The Impact of Digital Surveillance on Freedom of Expression in the Americas](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II CIDH/RELE/INF.33/25, September 7, 2025, para. 218; Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 569.

¹¹⁴ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 567 and 568. See also: IACHR, [Third Report on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in the Americas](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 119/25, April 15, 2025.

119. The IACHR considers a human rights defender to be any person who, by any means, promotes or seeks to achieve the human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized at the national or international level¹¹⁵. Accordingly, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)¹¹⁶ has emphasized that the determining criterion for identifying a person as a human rights defender is the nature of the activity they carry out, without other factors such as whether or not they receive remuneration for such work or their membership in a civil society organization being relevant.

120. Respect for human rights in a democratic State depends, to a large extent, on effective and adequate guarantees for defenders to freely carry out their activities¹¹⁷. Based on this, the IACHR and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights have consolidated specific standards on defenders¹¹⁸. Likewise, the Escazú Agreement reinforces the duties of access to information, public participation, and environmental justice, and establishes the obligation to guarantee a safe and conducive environment for human rights defenders in environmental matters, adopting adequate and effective measures to recognize, protect, and promote their rights.

121. In particular, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has warned that women defenders face specific risks related to their gender—like violence and sexual harassment, threats in digital spaces, and smear campaigns based on stereotypes—that seek to delegitimize their work¹¹⁹. Consequently, and in accordance with inter-American standards and the provisions of Article 9 of the Escazú Agreement, States must expressly recognize the essential role of women as environmental, land, and territory defenders; ensure their effective participation in decision-making on policies and measures to combat climate change; and implement public policies and concrete measures to protect them from gender-based aggression, harassment, or violence. Protective measures should be designed with an intersectional and culturally appropriate approach and, where appropriate, agreed upon in consultation with the defenders themselves and their organizations, and may include measures to protect the family unit and access to psychosocial services and other relevant support.

122. In practice, these risks manifest themselves in three patterns that States must address with enhanced due diligence: (i) physical violence, threats, and other attacks against their integrity or that of their families; (ii) criminalization and misuse of criminal law, for example, with the promotion of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP) or disproportionate administrative proceedings aimed at discouraging their work; and (iii) gender-biased stigmatization campaigns that seek to delegitimize their leadership, reputation, or caregiving roles¹²⁰. In response to these patterns, States are obliged to prevent, investigate, and punish with the utmost

¹¹⁵ IACHR, [Second Report on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in the Americas](#), 2011.

¹¹⁶ OHCHR, [Information Sheet No. 29: Human rights defenders: protecting the right to defend rights](#), 2004.

¹¹⁷ IACHR, [Second Report on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in the Americas](#), 2011.

¹¹⁸ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Case of Kawas Fernández v. Honduras. Merits, Reparations and Costs](#), Series C No. 196, Judgment of April 3, 2009, para. 149. Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Case of Luna López v. Honduras. Merits, Reparations and Costs](#), Series C No. 269, Judgment of October 10, 2013. Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Case of Baraona Bray v. Chile](#), Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs, Series C No. 481, Judgment of November 24, 2022, paras. 76-79.

¹¹⁹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Case of Digna Ochoa and Relatives v. Mexico](#), Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs, Series C No. 447, Judgment of November 25, 2021, paras. 46 and 125.

¹²⁰ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 568, 570, 587, and 614.

seriousness, and to ensure a safe and enabling environment for women defenders to continue their work¹²¹.

123. In line with AO-32/25 of the Interamerican Court, this requires: collecting and maintaining up-to-date disaggregated data on acts of violence and other harmful acts; designing and implementing policies and strategies aimed at addressing structural causes and preventing new events, with effective participation and an intersectional approach; and establishing or strengthening national protection programs that establish mechanisms for receiving requests in response to harassment and criminalization, conducting risk analyses, adopting appropriate measures, and ensuring their monitoring through protocols¹²².

124. In this regard, the CEDAW Committee has noted that indigenous women and girls who are human rights defenders may be at particular risk and have been subjected to various forms of violence and harassment, including threats and arbitrary detention¹²³. Consequently, prevention and protection must incorporate an intersectional approach that considers the concurrent factors of discrimination and violence that exacerbate the risks faced by women defenders.

125. When companies or other private actors are involved in threats or impacts, States must regulate, supervise, and monitor these activities, strengthening transparent and effective mechanisms for monitoring, surveillance, and control, and imposing effective sanctions and adequate reparations¹²⁴. This includes requiring human rights due diligence processes—including impact assessments—as well as public disclosure of information on emissions, risks, and plans to reduce them, and the prevention of *greenwashing* practices¹²⁵.

2. Women and girls in situations of human mobility

126. In Latin America and the Caribbean, human mobility induced by climate change—also known as climate mobility—is a multi-causal phenomenon that can be triggered when the adverse impacts of climate change deepen pre-existing vulnerabilities. In the region, these processes are linked to extreme events and slow-onset processes, such as storms and hurricanes, floods, landslides, extreme droughts, earthquakes and forest fires, as well as processes such as desertification and salinization. As the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has pointed out, migration and forced displacement can be the result of other impacts of climate change, such as the loss of fertile land, droughts, instability in water cycles, crop losses, sea level rise, or drastic

¹²¹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 567.

¹²² Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 575.

¹²³ CEDAW, [General Recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, updating General Recommendation No. 19](#), July 26, 2017, CEDAW/C/GC/35, para. 1.

¹²⁴ IACHR, REDESCA, [Inter-American Standards on Business and Human Rights](#), 2019.

¹²⁵ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, [Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights](#), Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 347 and 360.

increases in temperatures, which result in food insecurity, water scarcity, or physical insecurity in one's usual place of residence, lack of jobs and income, and disruption of ways of life¹²⁶.

127. The IACHR has identified that these impacts are more severe for historically discriminated-against groups—such as indigenous women and girls, Afro-descendants, rural women, women with disabilities, and women living in poverty—due to barriers to decision-making and high dependence on natural resources, which exacerbates the importance for human mobility to ensure dignified living conditions¹²⁷. The Commission distinguishes three main forms of climate-related mobility: forced displacement, migration with elements of voluntariness, and planned relocation¹²⁸. A fourth group, called "trapped or immobile population" encompass people—often female heads of household, older persons, people with disabilities, or caregivers—who face increasing climate and hydrometeorological risks without the resources to move and require specific support and risk reduction measures¹²⁹.

128. REDESCA has emphasized that the effects of the climate emergency are uneven and require timely decisions with the effective participation of all those affected. Climate stress factors—extreme events and slow-onset processes—interact with pre-existing inequalities—poverty, informality, lack of services, ethnic and racial discrimination, age, disability—deteriorating livelihoods, food security, health, and social cohesion. This intersection drives human mobility and conditions the specific risks and needs of women and girls¹³⁰. During transit, stays in shelters, return, and reconstruction, migrants or displaced persons face a higher risk of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, trafficking, and exploitation, due to the breakdown of networks, overcrowding, and the lack of safeguards for women and children¹³¹.

129. Displacement, comprising cross-border displacement, can affect territorial, cultural, and spiritual ties, especially in the case of indigenous, Afro-descendant, and tribal communities due to their close relationship with the land, territories, and natural resources. In these cases, States must apply intercultural and gender-sensitive approaches to prevention, protection, and durable solutions, ensuring the full participation and consultation—and, where appropriate, informed consent—of the affected communities, in their own language, including in planned relocation processes¹³². The Court also emphasizes that the safe, orderly, and regular management of migration flows in the context of the climate emergency is a shared concern and responsibility of the international community, which requires the adoption of common strategies at

¹²⁶ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion A0-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 417.

¹²⁷ IACHR, Resolution No. 2/24 on Human Mobility Induced by Climate Change, Document No. 252, December 26, 2024.

¹²⁸ IACHR, Resolution No. 2/24 on Human Mobility Induced by Climate Change, Document No. 252, December 26, 2024.

¹²⁹ IOM, Written observations submitted to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the context of the Request for an Advisory Opinion on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, 2024.; and United Nations Migration Network, Messages on migration and climate change for the 2021 High-Level Political Forum, 2021.

¹³⁰ IACHR, REDESCA, Resolution 3/2021: Climate Emergency: Scope of Inter-American Obligations in the Area of Human Rights, 2021. IACHR, REDESCA, Impacts of Flooding in Rio Grande do Sul: Observations and Recommendations to Guarantee Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights, OEA/Ser.L/V/III.doc.50/25, March 31, 2025; and Impacts of Forest Fires on Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights and Biodiversity: Report on REDESCA's Working Visit to Bolivia, OEA/Ser.L/V/II.doc.91/25, May 30, 2025.

¹³¹ IACHR, REDESCA, Poverty, climate change, and DESCA in Central America and Mexico, in the context of human mobility, July 28, 2023, para. 56.

¹³² Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion A0-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 427, 428, and 429.

the international and regional levels, based on multilateralism and cooperation¹³³. Furthermore, the IACtHR mentioned that States shall establish and implement protocols to protect access to and use of personal data during the displacement process¹³⁴; similarly, this Commission established that administrative registries used to track displaced populations must respect the rights to privacy, data protection, and non-discrimination¹³⁵.



PROTECTION ROUTE FOR DEFENDERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, LAND, AND TERRITORY

INTER-AMERICAN STANDARD	STATE OBLIGATION	OPERATIONAL DECISIONS
<p><i>Right to defend human rights and to a safe and enabling environment</i></p>	<p>Refrain from unlawful restrictions; formulate and implement public policy instruments and regulatory/practical adjustments to ensure free and safe exercise; prevent and mitigate risks and adopt appropriate and effective protection measures; investigate, punish, and redress attacks, threats, or intimidation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a protocol for the protection of women climate defenders in relevant climate program instruments and public policy instruments. • Assess all risks associated with the development of extractive projects for women. • Establish safe reporting channels and protection measures that also cover family/organization/community of women defenders. • Implement public recognition actions and campaigns/guidelines to prevent stigmatization and discourse that legitimizes violence or criminalization.
<p><i>Prevention with enhanced due diligence and an intersectional approach</i></p>	<p>Act on structural causes that create hostile environments; take positive action to create an enabling environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include climate and human rights due diligence in environmental/energy licensing. • Establish conditions for permits to consultation and FPIC, where appropriate. • Build a risk matrix that identifies women defenders (indigenous, Afro-descendant, rural, with disabilities).

¹³³ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, paras. 431.

¹³⁴ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, Series A No. 32, May 29, 2025, para. 404.

¹³⁵ IACHR, Resolution No. 2/24 on Human Mobility Induced by Climate Change, Document No. 252, December 26, 2024, para. 11.

<p><i>No criminalization and no obstruction</i></p>	<p>Identify selectively/recurrently used or ambiguous regulations with an intimidating effect; review their conventionality and repeal/modify them; create avenues for early dismissal of intimidating legal/administrative actions (including SLAPP) and train operators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a regulations review to repeal criminal offenses used against legitimate climate protest. • Ensure procedures for the swift dismissal of SLAPP suits and disproportionate administrative procedures before imposing restrictive measures. • Train authorities and justice operators on protecting the right to defend and standards of non-criminalization.
<p><i>Differentiated protection for women defenders</i></p>	<p>Recognize intersectional risks and discrimination (gender + other factors); adopt specific measures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure risk assessment/monitoring procedures with a gender focus, and the possibility of adjustment according to risk variation, agreed upon in consultation. • Design protection plans with a gender-based approach: risk assessment by territory/care roles. • Provide temporary shelters, accessibility, and childcare; psychosocial support and specialized legal assistance.
<p><i>Inter-American precautionary protection</i></p>	<p>Promptly and effectively comply with precautionary measures adopted by the IACHR; understand its precautionary and protective role to prevent irreparable harm.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish inter-institutional protocol for receiving/implementing precautionary measures. • Provide for focal points in the environment, security, justice, and gender; peremptory deadlines; public reporting on compliance on climate portals.
<p><i>National protection mechanisms</i></p>	<p>Implement and strengthen specialized mechanisms with an intersectional approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link the Protection Mechanism with climate authorities and ensure the participation of beneficiaries in analysis and implementation. • Implement protocols for receiving requests, risk analysis, adoption, and

		<p>monitoring of measures (adjustable according to risk variation).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish early warning mechanisms for socio-environmental conflicts, panic buttons, and risk maps. • Ensure budgetary and logistical resources to maintain active measures while the risk persists; dissemination/training actions on the functioning of the mechanism.
<i>Investigate, punish, and fight impunity with enhanced diligence</i>	<p>Investigate/prosecute/punish with enhanced diligence; strengthen institutional capacity; incorporate an intersectional perspective (including gender and ethnic/territorial affiliation); ensure reparation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop investigation protocols and create specialized prosecutors' offices/units for crimes against environmental defenders. • Incorporate an intersectional perspective into relevant investigations and expert reports. • Develop indicators for reducing impunity.
<i>Comprehensive protection (family/community dimension)</i>	<p>Measures should allow the defender to continue their work and protect their family/organization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement collective protection plans in areas of high climate conflict (water, forests, energy). • Promote community networks, joint committees. • Design safe evacuation routes in socio-environmental emergencies.

Source: Own elaboration.



WOMEN AND GIRLS IN CLIMATE MOBILITY

INTER-AMERICAN STANDARD	STATE OBLIGATION (SUMMARY)	OPERATIONAL DECISIONS
<p><i>Prevention of avoidable displacement (in situ adaptation)</i></p>	<p>Prevent forced displacement through adaptation, equality, and non-discrimination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen information/early warning systems and the identification of displacement risks; integrate internal displacement into risk and contingency management plans; ensure assistance and protection (including shelters/refuges) and continued access to essential goods and services with a differentiated approach, avoiding disproportionate impacts on women and girls.
<p><i>Planned relocation/resettlement with human rights safeguards</i></p>	<p>Consider planned relocation as an exceptional measure/last resort; base it on reliable scientific information; ensure access to information, participation, and access to justice; and, where applicable, ensure consultation and FPIC of indigenous and tribal peoples.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design relocation plans with participatory and accessible procedures; ensure dignified conditions and continuity of rights during transit and resettlement, incorporating a gender and intersectional perspective and specific protection measures for women and girls.
<p><i>International protection, due process guarantees, and the principle of non-refoulement in cross-border mobility due to climate impacts</i></p>	<p>Respect the principle of non-refoulement and due process guarantees; avoid collective expulsions and returns that expose people to serious risks; ensure special protection and assistance for women and girls in situations of mobility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement binational and/or regional protocols for climate emergencies with safe routes. • Establish care and referral procedures to identify protection needs, facilitate documentation/regularization where appropriate, and guarantee access to health, justice, and assistance, with a

		differentiated approach for women, girls, and adolescents.
<i>Identity, registration/documentation, data protection, and educational continuity in climate mobility</i>	Guarantee identity, civil registration, and documentation; ensure confidentiality, privacy, and data protection; and adopt measures to sustain educational continuity, particularly in emergencies and displacement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement mobile/expedited mechanisms for registration and document replacement; coordinate administrative registries with confidentiality safeguards; and provide for mechanisms for educational continuity and validation in transit or shelter situations.
<i>Portable livelihoods and social protection</i>	Ensure rights and assistance without discrimination and with a differentiated approach; characterize needs and provide interventions aimed at lasting solutions, addressing risks of economic insecurity that disproportionately affect women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use administrative records to identify needs and guide assistance; ensure access to essential services and specific measures that promote economic autonomy (including microcredit and technical assistance) and social protection in response, recovery, and reconstruction processes. • Ensure portability of transfers, pensions, and health care; care services to facilitate labor market integration.
<i>Prevention and strengthened response to gender-based violence in disasters and climate mobility</i>	Prevent, investigate, and punish violence against women and girls in contexts of climate disasters and mobility; incorporate a gender and intersectional perspective into all emergency, assistance, and reconstruction actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement specific protocols in shelters/refuges; train staff; codes of conduct; 24/7 hotlines; create safe spaces for women and girls; and ensure access to specialized health services, social protection, and psychosocial/legal support, with accessible reporting channels. • Conduct GBV risk analysis in climate plans.
<i>Due process, access to justice, and effective</i>	Guarantee effective remedies and access to justice in proceedings and decisions related to climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure accessible avenues for complaint and review (administrative and judicial),

<p><i>redress in contexts of climate mobility</i></p>	<p>mobility (including planned relocation and migration measures), ensuring reparation where appropriate, with a differentiated approach.</p>	<p>clear information on procedures and guarantees, and effective mechanisms for reporting violence and obtaining protection and redress, especially for women, girls, and adolescents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement post-disaster mobile legal clinics; urgent precautionary measures; free/fee exemption; reparation with ecological restitution, health rehabilitation, and compensation that recognizes care costs.
<p><i>Governance of climate mobility based on access rights: information, participation, and accountability</i></p>	<p>Produce, disseminate, and facilitate access to climate and mobility information; ensure effective participation and access to justice; and generate data/records with gender-sensitive disaggregation and safeguards for confidentiality and data protection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement environmental information systems and administrative records on risk/displacement, with disaggregated data (gender/age/condition); mechanisms for periodic dissemination and early warning; and inclusive participatory spaces to incorporate the voices of women and girls in the design and monitoring of climate mobility policies. • Include climate mobility goals with a gender focus in NDCs, NAPs, and urban-coastal plans; earmarked budgets.

Source: Own elaboration.

The background of the page is a dark purple color with a large, stylized graphic of a leaf or branch. The leaf is composed of several overlapping, rounded shapes in various shades of purple, from dark to light, creating a sense of depth and texture. The main text is centered on the right side of the page.

 Chapter V

GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTER-AMERICAN LEGAL FRAMEWORK

V. GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTER-AMERICAN LEGAL FRAMEWORK

130. This chapter brings together legal and technical guidance aimed at facilitating the implementation by States and other public and private actors of the inter-American legal framework on human rights, the environment, and climate, incorporating a gender and intersectionality approach. The following proposals are not exhaustive or unique: they must be adapted to the internal legal systems, distribution of powers, institutional capacities, and climate risk levels of each country. Their purpose is to provide a common reference point for converting the standards of the IACHR, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights—including AO-32/25—and the Escazú Agreement into operational measures, encompassing the adaptation of domestic law to give effect to these rights, and considering that the Court has identified, in particular, the prohibition of irreversible damage to the climate and the environment as a standard of the highest normative hierarchy.

A. OBLIGATIONS AND PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

131. The right to a healthy climate is consolidated as an integrating axis to guide States' duties to respect and ensure rights, to prevent harm, and to exercise due diligence in the face of climate impacts, in conjunction with the right to a healthy environment. In AO-32/25, the Court has linked this right to state obligations of mitigation (comprising emissions reduction) and adaptation to the risks and impacts of climate change. Climate change erodes the effective enjoyment of ESCER—including food, water, housing, health, work, social security, and culture—and does so in a differentiated manner, disproportionately affecting those who face structural vulnerabilities, such as women and girls, indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants, rural communities, and people living in poverty, which requires immediate and reinforced state measures to prevent and address disproportionate impacts¹³⁶.

132. The structure suggested in this Guide serves as a bridge between norms and action: it takes obligations from the Inter-American system—duty to prevent, enhanced due diligence, precautionary principle, procedural rights, protection of defenders, and cross-border dimension—and translates them into steps that can be gradually integrated into the public policy cycle, under a standard of enhanced due diligence, so that they can be monitored and evaluated.

133. Among the measures that States should consider are: reviewing regulatory compatibility with inter-American standards; incorporating EIA/C with a rights-based and gender-based approach; aligning mitigation plans and trajectories with the 1.5 °C target, including verifiable measures and responsibilities; establishing gender and intercultural safeguards; and creating monitoring, reporting, and verification systems with disaggregated data. When the risk is serious, information is insufficient, or disproportionate impacts on women and girls may occur, States should activate corrective measures (e.g., suspension, precautionary measures, moratoriums, or

¹³⁶ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, May 29, 2025, paras. 240, 241, 242, and 623.

"no-go" zones)¹³⁷. In the face of imminent threats, they must also immediately inform the population at risk with the information necessary to activate alerts and prevent harm¹³⁸.

134. In line with inter-American jurisprudence, the principle of prevention and, where appropriate, the precautionary principle should be translated into oversight packages, the power to impose restrictions or moratoriums on high-risk activities, and the progressive strengthening of control authorities. Likewise, the prohibition on causing serious, massive, and irreversible damage to the environment—recognized in AO-32/25 with the legal weight of an imperative norm—can be operationalized, according to each legal system, through nullity or ineffectiveness clauses, expedited cessation or suspension procedures, and rules for public entities and companies not to finance or facilitate high-impact activities¹³⁹.

135. In the proposal contained in this Guide, procedural rights are implemented through prior, independent, and periodic EIAs/Cs that incorporate climate scenarios, analysis of alternatives—including non-implementation—and accessible information¹⁴⁰. In the case of indigenous and tribal peoples, consultation and, where appropriate, free, prior, and informed consent must be ensured, with the specific participation of women and girls, in their language and with a record of how their contributions influence the decision.

136. Effective climate protection requires democratizing environmental decision-making and ensuring public participation throughout the policy cycle. Strengthening rights-based environmental governance—including transparency, participation, access to information, and advocacy mechanisms—is a prerequisite for informed and effective public decisions, reducing gaps, and consolidating democracies that are resilient in the face of the climate emergency.

137. Along with this, corporate accountability is reinforced—as part of the state's duty to prevent and control impacts derived from private activities—including regulation and supervision of due diligence on climate and human rights and the disclosure of relevant risks and plans. It also strengthens the protection of environmental defenders—recognizing their role and establishing measures for prevention, protection, and investigation in the face of attacks and threats, with attention to gender-differentiated risks, including responses to SLAPPs and non-criminalization—and cross-border cooperation to prevent, investigate, and repair damage that exceeds national borders.

138. To move forward in an orderly manner and using the following table as a guide, States can: (i) conduct a diagnosis of regulatory, institutional, and budgetary compatibility; (ii) align NDCs, adaptation plans, and land use planning with inter-American standards and the Escazú Agreement;

¹³⁷ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, May 29, 2025, para. 326.

¹³⁸ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, May 29, 2025, paras. 520–521.

¹³⁹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, May 29, 2025, paras. 292–293.

¹⁴⁰ United Nations, General Assembly, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, [Framework for environmental, social and human rights impact assessments and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment](#), Doc. A/80/187, July 17, 2025.

(iii) institutionalize participation protocols with effects and care supports; (iv) regulate and oversee the climate due diligence of companies and public finances; and (v) create monitoring, reporting, and verification systems with disaggregated data and outcome indicators. Consistency between regulatory, preventive, procedural, and cooperation frameworks is a prerequisite for guaranteeing the right to a healthy environment and climate in accordance with inter-American standards.



RIGHT TO A HEALTHY CLIMATE

OBLIGATIONS	PRACTICAL GUIDELINES
<p><i>Respect and guarantee rights, and adopt domestic legal provisions (Art. 2 ACHR and Art. 2 of the Protocol of San Salvador) to harmonize legislation with inter-American standards; ensure their stable and consistent application in the face of the climate emergency.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct systematic diagnoses of laws, regulations, policies, climate and environmental plans—including budgetary, energy, and sectoral instruments—in light of AO-23/17 and AO-32/25, identifying regulatory and institutional adjustments necessary to ensure consistency, effectiveness, and stable application of inter-American standards. • Ensure the progressive development of ESCR while respecting the principle of equality and non-discrimination, with an intersectional approach. • Incorporate the principle of environmental and climatic progressivity and non-regressivity with a gender and intersectional approach, stipulating that any regressive measure must be exceptional and have reinforced justification, avoiding disproportionate impacts on women and girls. • Establish in climate change framework legislation and environmental laws an express rule of interpretation and application in accordance with the Inter-American Human Rights System, ensuring that administrative, legislative, and judicial authorities exercise broad conventionality control, with a gender and intersectional approach. • Establish a legal mandate for gender mainstreaming and intersectionality in all

	<p>climate policy—mitigation, adaptation, and risk management, including resettlement processes—that takes into account demographic, geographic, ethnic, economic, and climatic profiles; differentiated diagnoses; disaggregated targets and indicators; and ex ante and ex post assessments to identify, prevent, and correct differentiated impacts on women and girls.</p>
<p><i>Avoid massive and irreversible damage to the environment and the climate system, including transboundary and extraterritorial impacts.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulate, supervise, and monitor the activities of private actors that generate or increase climate risks and human rights impacts, as part of the state's duty of prevention and control. • Establish mitigation targets and trajectories compatible with 1.5 °C (including sectoral targets and, where appropriate, carbon budgets) and adopt performance standards for climate-relevant emissions and pollutants. • Conduct climate impact assessments of laws, policies, and plans, incorporating scenarios, cumulative and synergistic impacts, and differentiated risk analysis for women and girls, and integrating contingency plans where appropriate. • Generate climate hazard maps and integrated early warning systems (basins, coasts, air quality, temperatures, etc.), with contingency plans to ensure essential services and, in the event of imminent threats, immediately inform the population at risk with the information necessary to activate alerts and prevent damage and rights violations. • Strengthen land use planning and resilient construction standards, and promote green and blue infrastructure (bioclimatic corridors, sustainable urban drainage) as measures for adaptation and climate risk reduction. • Implement zero deforestation or sustainable forest management policies; protect sinks (forests, mangroves, peatlands, wetlands,

	<p>and oceans) and promote ecosystem-based restoration in high-risk areas.</p>
<p><i>Enhanced due diligence: identify, assess, prevent, mitigate, and monitor risks using the best available science.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent rights violations and progressively adopt all appropriate measures to achieve the full effectiveness of ESCER. • Adequately regulate and supervise due diligence in relation to climate change and human rights by private (and, where applicable, public) entities, including clear obligations for identification, prevention, mitigation, and accountability, and effective state oversight mechanisms. • Assess risks based on the best available scientific and technological information, taking into account the urgency and magnitude of the risk and relevant international standards; this includes considering both existing information and information that the State must produce to identify, prevent, and mitigate impacts, incorporating a gender and intersectionality approach in the assessment of impacts on rights. • Define plans and trajectories consistent with the 1.5 °C goal, in a manner compatible with national capacities, with sectoral goals and trajectories, measures, responsible parties, timelines, and budgets, incorporating operational controls and shutdown mechanisms in the event of imminent risk. • Establish systems for monitoring, independent verification, and public reporting. Where appropriate, incorporate due diligence criteria into public procurement and public financing as mechanisms to encourage compliance. • Promote international technical, scientific, financial, and capacity-building cooperation to prevent and address climate impacts and their effects on human mobility, in

	<p>accordance with responsibilities and capabilities.</p>
<p><i>Precautionary and prevention principle with enhanced due diligence: regulate, supervise, and monitor risky activities; impose restrictions or moratoriums where appropriate.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the legal framework that defines environmental and climate control competencies and mandates, ensuring that high-risk activities are specifically regulated according to their level of risk, with powers of inspection, investigation, and sanction, including the possibility of ordering the cessation of activities carried out in violation of regulations, with a human rights approach. • Implement a comprehensive strategy for national and subnational authorities that ensures functional and financial independence, sufficient technical capacities, continuous training (environment, climate, human rights, and gender), and inspection protocols. • Define restricted areas or activities and, in the event of risks of serious or irreversible damage, adopt measures of restriction, suspension, or prohibition, applying the precautionary principle. Precautionary principle: refrain from developing or authorizing strategies or measures that may affect the integrity of ecosystems without a prior EIA/C to ensure their viability. • Establish proactive regulation/supervision/enforcement with clear rules for risky activities, inspections, and the power to suspend/close down in the event of imminent risk, and a minimum prevention package. • Require prior environmental impact assessments—including the impact on the climate system where applicable—for projects undertaken by both the State and private actors; consider their renewal or updating in the event of new phases, extensions, or modifications. Regulations must be clear about covered activities, procedures, responsibilities, and the use of

	<p>results in authorization and control decisions. In addition, require contingency plans and safety measures to minimize risks and mitigate damage.</p>
<p><i>Prohibition of causing serious or irreversible damage to the environment and the climate system; duty to prevent, end, and not facilitate conduct that generates or perpetuates such damage, in compliance with guarantee obligations and enhanced due diligence.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate into climate and environmental legislation an express clause prohibiting the authorization, contracting, or execution of activities that involve a clear risk of serious or irreversible damage to the environment or the climate system, establishing their legal invalidity or immediate suspension of authorizations, contracts, or administrative acts incompatible with such prohibition. • Establish expeditious and effective procedures to order the immediate cessation of activities when a clear risk of serious or irreversible damage is detected, including precautionary measures, powers of suspension or closure, and obligations to adopt corrective measures. • Prohibit public entities and companies under jurisdiction from financing, insuring, or supplying projects that cause such damage; require climate due diligence from parent companies and subsidiaries throughout the chain and sanction non-compliance. • Set carbon budgets and emission reduction targets consistent with the 1.5 °C goal, and establish the obligation to review or adjust any policy, plan, authorization, or project that is incompatible with those goals.
<p><i>Mitigation and adaptation as obligations derived from the right to a healthy environment and climate, in accordance with inter-American standards and science-compatible targets.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define clear mitigation targets and maintain an up-to-date comprehensive climate strategy, based on human rights, with measurable objectives, monitoring mechanisms, and periodic review, aimed at effective compliance. • Establish emission reduction trajectories compatible with the 1.5 °C target, including binding targets for 2030 and 2050 and,

	<p>where appropriate, national carbon budgets and sectoral caps for relevant emissions and climate pollutants—such as methane—incorporating biodiversity safeguards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the National Adaptation Plan and subnational plans with climate risk analysis, priorities in health, water, food, and housing, and gender-sensitive measures. • Implement climate spending labeling and tracking systems, align public procurement and financial taxonomies with mitigation and adaptation objectives, and provide for adaptive social protection and decent employment mechanisms to accompany a just transition.
<p><i>Protection of nature and its components; consideration of future generations in decision-making.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before approving regulations, plans, or projects, apply an ecosystem integrity assessment and intergenerational analysis that evaluates alternatives—including non-implementation—and considers cumulative impacts. When there is a risk of serious or irreversible damage to nature or a disproportionate impact on future generations, deny, suspend, or redesign the measure in accordance with the principles of prevention and precaution. • Create or strengthen legal tools that enable the effective defense of nature and future generations, with powers of prevention, early warning, adoption of precautionary measures, and cessation of activities that generate a clear risk of serious or irreversible damage, and incorporate mechanisms for the participation of children and youth in climate and environmental decisions. • Integrate indigenous, rural, local, and Afro-descendant knowledge into the management, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems, as part of the right to science and knowledge, guaranteeing intercultural processes, effective participation, and recognition of the specific role of women and

	<p>girls in the transmission and protection of such knowledge.</p>
<p><i>Guarantee consultation and, where appropriate, free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) of indigenous and tribal peoples, with the effective participation of women and girls.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that consultations are carried out and, where appropriate, consent is required, with criteria relating to the impact on lands, territories, and resources and recognition of indigenous authorities. • Design intercultural and accessible processes with specific measures: assemblies and time slots for women, care, interpreters, security, and disaggregated recording of contributions/decisions. • Ensure that the consultation has a real and effective impact on the final decision and that, where consent is required, it is free, prior, informed, and duly documented, including agreements, safeguards, and, where appropriate, benefit-sharing mechanisms. The process must recognize the legitimate possibility of not granting consent, without reprisals or distortion of the right. • Eliminate rules, practices, or exceptions that allow for the circumvention or emptying of the obligation to carry out prior, free, and informed consultation processes or to require consent when appropriate, including abusive uses of declarations of urgency, public interest, or other equivalent mechanisms.
<p><i>Require prior, independent, and periodic environmental impact assessments with a climate component (EIA/C) for activities or projects that involve climate risks, incorporating the identification of differentiated impacts, including those that specifically affect women and girls.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require EIA/C before authorizing policies, plans, or projects with significant risk, through independent studies that incorporate climate scenarios and analyze risks to human rights, including the identification of differentiated impacts on women and girls, indigenous peoples, and other vulnerable groups. • Assess reasonable alternatives, including non-implementation, considering cumulative and synergistic impacts and interaction with

	<p>associated projects; define prevention and mitigation measures and contingency plans, and periodically update these assessments in line with new scientific information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the participation of women and girls from the study stage, with understandable, accessible, and timely information, and mechanisms for real advocacy (response matrix). Provide for specific measures for the participation of women and girls and indigenous peoples. • Make approvals conditional on the suitability and adequacy of the EIA/C and, where there is serious risk or insufficient information, apply the principles of prevention and precaution, including the denial, suspension, or redesign of the activity and the adoption of precautionary measures. • Publish studies, data, and monitoring results in open and accessible formats, in accordance with the principle of maximum disclosure; Implement periodic monitoring, reporting, and verification systems on compliance with EIA/C measures and adjust decisions and conditions when scientific evidence changes.
<p><i>Duty to prevent, regulate, supervise, investigate, sanction, and remedy the conduct of private actors under state jurisdiction, particularly companies, through due diligence on climate and human rights, including responsibility for intra- and, where applicable, extraterritorial impacts.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish by law clear climate and human rights due diligence obligations for all companies under state jurisdiction, including identification, prevention, mitigation, and accountability for actual and potential impacts, with continuous monitoring, independent assessments, public disclosure of relevant information, and effective mechanisms for participation and accountability. • Create and provide independent and effective oversight and enforcement mechanisms—judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative—with sufficient resources, technical capabilities, and autonomy to investigate, inspect according to risk level,

	<p>prosecute and punish noncompliance, and order the cessation of infringing activities, including those of companies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective redress/remedies for victims, including: administrative and judicial channels with the capacity to investigate, prosecute, and sanction companies with significant amounts, respecting procedural rights; provide for precautionary measures and effective enforcement. • Renegotiate or issue joint interpretations of bilateral investment protection treaties so that climate and human rights measures adopted in good faith prevail without automatic compensation, eliminating stabilization clauses, requiring climate diligence from investors, and ensuring transparency and public participation in disputes.
<p><i>Equality and non-discrimination as cross-cutting principles of climate action: adoption of differentiated measures and enhanced protection for structurally vulnerable individuals and groups, with an intersectional approach, including women and girls.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require that all climate plans or strategies—including mitigation, adaptation, risk management, and resettlement—incorporate an analysis of differentiated impacts from a gender and intersectional perspective. • Incorporate indicators and data disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, disability, and other relevant factors, and use them for resource prioritization, results monitoring, and accountability of climate policies. • Incorporate mandatory protocols to prevent, investigate, and punish violence against women and girls in climate emergency contexts, including shelters, evacuation routes, and resettlements, and guarantee non-discriminatory access to essential services such as health, housing, water, and food. • Ensure accessible accommodation, shelters, and services, through reasonable adjustments, for women with disabilities and older persons, guaranteeing their autonomy, safety, and dignity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure physical, communicational, and transportation. accessibility—including easy-to-read formats, sign language, and mobility aids—in shelters, refuges, and information and participation processes related to climate action. • Establish mechanisms for equal participation and decision-making power for women and girls—including environmental defenders, indigenous women, women of African descent, fisherwomen, and rural women—throughout the climate policy cycle. • In EIAs/C and sectoral plans—water, agriculture, energy, mining—require the identification of gender-differentiated impacts and the adoption of specific safeguards to prevent disproportionate effects.
<p><i>Strengthened procedural rights in environmental and climate matters: timely, complete, and understandable access to information; effective and inclusive public participation; and access to justice with adequate rules of evidence, effective precautionary measures, reasonable timeframes, and effective enforcement of decisions.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain a single public portal for the production, systematization, and updating of climate and environmental data, with strict response deadlines, minimum quality standards, and periodic updates. • Promote the active dissemination of climate and environmental information in open, accessible, and reusable formats, and implement proportionate measures to prevent and correct misinformation, with strict response deadlines. • Provide climate and environmental information in accessible and inclusive formats (indigenous languages, easy reading, sign language, digital and mobile media) and ensure inclusive early warning systems and evacuation routes, with an intersectional approach for women, children, persons with disabilities, and older persons. • Establish, implement, and publish in a transparent manner the terms and conditions of authorizations and concessions, including the results and conditions derived from EIA/C, and enable clear, accessible, and

	<p>effective procedures for complaints and grievances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize broad individual and collective standing and apply the pro actione principle, ensuring reasonable timeframes and the provision of adequate means to litigate. Adopt a special and adapted approach to ensure the effective participation of children and adolescents, in accordance with progressive autonomy. • Incorporate criteria of dynamic or reversal of the burden of proof when relevant information is held by the party potentially causing the damage; ensure the admission of technical, scientific, and community evidence, and provide for timely and effective precautionary measures to prevent serious or irreversible damage. • Evaluate the creation or strengthening of specialized environmental and climate courts (or chambers/units), with adequate training, resources, and evidentiary tools for timely and effective decisions. • Maintain air quality and general environmental monitoring systems, and establish environmental and climate warning systems that are timely, accessible, and compatible with response and evacuation measures. • Ensure access to comprehensive individual and collective remedies and reparations for environmental and climate damage, including restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition, while also ensuring effective enforcement of decisions.
<p><i>Generate, systematize, and disseminate environmental and climate information, with disaggregated data (by sex, age, ethnicity, disability, territory, and income), as part of the positive obligation to provide information and</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require that all climate and environmental records (inventories, monitoring, reporting and verification, EIA/C, risks and loss and damage) include disaggregation by sex and age, and variables of ethnicity, disability, territory, and income, with specific indicators

<p><i>the principle of maximum disclosure, in order to identify differentiated risks, impacts, and vulnerabilities.</i></p>	<p>on women and girls, and consider disclosure duties applicable to companies and other individuals when their activities are relevant to the causes and impacts of climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish participatory governance of climate information, incorporating women's organizations—including indigenous, Afro-descendant, rural, persons with disabilities, and youth organizations—into the design of indicators, data validation, and monitoring committees, and ensuring traceability of how their participation influences public decisions and democratic control over climate information and policies • Ensure accessibility and inclusivity: regularly update, publish in formats that are accessible and appropriate for vulnerable groups, and maintain public environmental information systems/portals. • Adopt progressive measures to counter climate misinformation and ensure the integrity of public information, ensuring that official information is clear, accurate, accessible, timely, and supported by the best available science. • Require transparency in media and online platform content governance policies, including disclosure of conflicts of interest that may influence decisions on environmental and climate content. In adopting these measures, respect freedom of expression and refrain from imposing restrictions that involve prior censorship or arbitrary or disproportionate limitations.
<p><i>Right to science and knowledge: ensure non-discriminatory access to the benefits of scientific and technological progress and recognize and integrate local, traditional, and indigenous knowledge as part of the best available scientific knowledge for</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide relevant education and scientific outreach on climate change and its applications; and ensure equitable and non-discriminatory access to the applications and benefits of science and technology, avoiding disproportionate impacts on women and girls and considering reasonable accommodations where appropriate.



climate action, ensuring participation and ethical safeguards.

- Adequately regulate and certify new technologies and climate measures prior to their adoption or deployment, to ensure ethical and responsible development and use, based on widely accepted scientific knowledge and in dialogue with the scientific community.
- Define research and development climate priorities that incorporate impacts and solutions for women and girls (including indigenous, Afro-descendant, rural, persons with disabilities, and mobile women and girls), and ensure funding and calls for proposals that promote their effective access to science education, training, and scientific careers related to climate action.
- Establish permanent mechanisms to integrate science and local, traditional, and indigenous knowledge (e.g., knowledge committees, platforms, or territorial laboratories), ensuring the effective participation of indigenous, rural, and Afro-descendant women from design to evaluation, as a condition for making decisions based on the best available knowledge.
- Establish technology transfer and adaptation programs (e.g., early warnings, water, clean energy, resilient agriculture) informed by the best available science and, where appropriate, by traditional and indigenous knowledge, with training targeted at women and girls and support for community innovations led by them.
- Adopt standards and safeguards to recognize and protect community knowledge (intellectual property, protocols for use and benefit sharing), ensuring the authorship and consent of women knowledge holders.
- Promote structured dialogues between scientific knowledge and local, traditional, and indigenous knowledge—including documentation and intergenerational

	<p>transmission when communities so determine—ensuring the participation of women and girls and avoiding uses that disregard their cultural value and collective ownership.</p>
<p><i>Specific protection for human rights defenders in environmental and climate matters (guaranteeing a safe and enabling environment; prevention, protection, investigation, punishment, and redress in the face of attacks, threats, intimidation, and illegitimate restrictions).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize, promote, and guarantee the work of human rights defenders in environmental and climate matters, refraining from imposing illegitimate restrictions and avoiding stigmatization or other forms of obstruction of their work. • Guarantee a safe and enabling environment for the work of defenders, free from threats, harassment, violence, criminalization, and other reprisals that may have an intimidating effect on the exercise of their rights. Incorporate differentiated and intersectional risks into state assessment and response, including those that disproportionately affect women and girls. • Create or strengthen a protection program with the effective participation of defenders; ensure risk assessments and monitoring with a gender-based approach—and, where appropriate, an intersectional approach—and appropriate, effective, and adjustable measures according to the variation in risk. • Design special protection measures in line with the functions of defenders and the specific risk situation, incorporating a gender perspective. Where appropriate, consider measures such as adapted protection, protection of the family unit, and access to psychosocial support. • Strengthen institutional capacities to investigate, prosecute, and punish crimes committed against environmental defenders with due diligence, including the adoption of specialized protocols and, where appropriate, units or prosecutors' offices with specific competencies.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt specific measures for women defenders, guaranteeing their public action and participation without criminalization or illegitimate restrictions, and providing responses to strategic legal actions against public participation (SLAPP) and other forms of judicial harassment. Ensure inter-institutional coordination and the operational capacity of the mechanism to activate and sustain protection measures while the risk persists. • Investigate and, where appropriate, punish attacks, threats, or intimidation against defenders, and repair the damage caused, with reinforced due diligence. In the case of women defenders, apply doubly enhanced due diligence by virtue of their dual status.
<p><i>International cooperation and cross-border dimension: cooperate in good faith through early notification, exchange, and dissemination of information in the event of climate risks or damage with cross-border implications; coordinate assistance and ensure prompt, adequate, and effective redress for transboundary damage, guaranteeing access to justice even for non-resident persons and entities; and strengthen economic, technical, scientific, and technological cooperation for the progressive realization of ESCER and protection against the climate emergency.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish binational or multilateral protocols for early notification, information exchange, and coordination in the event of risks or damage with a transboundary dimension; ensure procedures for consultation and cooperation in good faith before authorizing measures or projects with a risk of significant damage outside the territory, documenting how the contributions received were incorporated; Include specific mechanisms for the safe and effective participation of women and girls and other vulnerable persons within the framework of the agreed cooperation. • Incorporate binational/subregional mechanisms into cooperation and coordination agreements to manage climate mobility in a coordinated manner, with information exchange, reception agreements, and humanitarian assistance responses; ensure that measures (including, where appropriate, planned relocation) integrate a gender perspective and protection of livelihoods, with attention to barriers to care and access to services.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require prior and independent transboundary EIA/Cs, with analysis of cumulative impacts and climate scenarios, alternatives (including not implementing), and a specific chapter on differentiated impacts on women and girls; deny or redesign under precaution if serious risk persists. • Enter into cooperation agreements for immediate assistance and operational coordination in the event of climate impacts with a transboundary dimension, with specific safeguards for women and girls; ensure mechanisms for prompt, adequate, and effective redress for transboundary climate damage with access to justice for affected persons. • Adopt regulatory measures so that companies and other actors under state jurisdiction or control prevent and manage risks of transboundary climate damage, in accordance with the effective control of the State of origin over activities; regulate, supervise, and monitor private activities that may significantly affect the environment within or outside the territory, and establish procedures to minimize accidents and mitigate significant damage.
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Source: Own elaboration.

B. INTEGRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS INTO SECTORAL CLIMATE ACTION

139. To integrate climate into different sectors of public policy, a sectoral matrix is proposed that translates rights into concrete decisions for climate action with a focus on women and girls. For each sector/right—water and sanitation, food, health, education, labor and social security, housing and property, cultural rights, and the right to care—three levels are organized: (i) obligations and standards; (ii) practical guidelines that translate those standards into operational measures; and (iii) a cross-cutting emphasis on effective participation, universal accessibility, and intercultural relevance. The logic is simple and operational: start with the recognized right, identify some of the State obligations that derive from it, and convert them into verifiable actions that close the specific gaps faced by women and girls. This involves translating standards into concrete

decisions—with responsible parties, resources, implementation schedules, goals, indicators, and deadlines—and ensuring financial and technical provisions for their implementation, without losing sight of adaptation to the context and the effective participation of women and girls themselves.

140. The matrix can help authorities detect gaps, prioritize actions, assign responsibilities, and build verifiable indicators for monitoring, reporting, and evaluation, drawing on existing capacities. For example, it can link sectoral measures to national information and alert systems to feed into baselines and outcome indicators, and to emergency health plans to ensure the continuity of essential services for women and girls¹⁴¹. Applied sequentially—diagnosis → decision → implementation → evaluation—the matrix facilitates the compatibility of each sectoral policy with inter-American standards and its adaptation to the legal and territorial framework of each State, responding directly to the needs and rights of women and girls, avoiding new inequalities, and strengthening the resilience of communities and ecosystems, with periodic publication of progress and measures to enable public scrutiny.

141. As seen in the previous section, the implementation approach must consider reinforced procedural rights: access to information, effective participation, and access to justice, including evidentiary facilitation, precautionary measures, reasonable timeframes, and effective enforcement. In particular, the Inter-American Commission and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, have considered that, in the context of the climate emergency, States have a positive obligation to ensure active transparency, generating timely, complete, understandable, clear, accessible, culturally appropriate, accurate, and expeditious information on adaptation, mitigation, and means of implementation on climate change for all people, taking into account the particularities and specific requirements of vulnerable individuals and groups¹⁴².

142. In substantive terms, the matrix identifies, by way of example and without limitation, bottlenecks and high-impact responses in different sectoral and cross-cutting areas. Among other examples, in water and sanitation, it highlights physical proximity to water and continuity in emergencies; in adequate food, it seeks to ensure nutritional continuity and strengthens the livelihoods of rural and fishing producers; in health, it incorporates the approach to extreme heat and social determinants, with intercultural and accessible services; in education, it prioritizes guaranteeing continuity of learning and safe spaces; in labor and social security, it combines climate occupational health with job retraining and protection of care work; in adequate housing and property, it integrates climate risk into land use planning, security of tenure, and planned relocation with a gender focus; in climate finance, it promotes gender-sensitive budgets and traceability of spending and results; in culture and heritage, it reserves a place for biocultural heritage and non-economic losses and damages; and in care and social protection, it highlights the importance of establishing systems and networks as essential infrastructure for resilience.

¹⁴¹ IACHR, REDESCA, [Impacts of forest fires on economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights and biodiversity: report on REDESCA's working visit to Bolivia](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II.doc.91/25, May 30, 2025.

¹⁴² Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, May 29, 2025, para. 495. IACHR, REDESCA, Resolution No. 3/2021 “Climate Emergency: Scope of Inter-American Obligations in the Area of Human Rights,” December 31, 2021, para. 33.

143. The transition from standards to practice requires, as a basis, robust and accessible information and participation systems, and budgets with a gender perspective. Adaptable to the context of each State, this implies: (i) disaggregated data—at least by sex, age, ethnic-racial affiliation, disability, territory, and income—with baselines, targets, process and outcome indicators, as well as the publication of information in open formats, safeguarding privacy, and participatory governance of information that incorporates women's organizations in the design of indicators, data validation, and monitoring committees, documenting how their participation modifies decisions; (ii) equal participation with decision-making power, in their own languages and with universal accessibility, incorporating response matrices that document how contributions modify decisions and, where appropriate, free, prior, and informed consultation and consent with the effective inclusion of women; (iii) early warning, information, and services in accessible formats and universal design in shelters, water points, health facilities, and schools; and (iv) gender-sensitive climate budgets, with climate budget labeling and markers to track spending and results, adaptive social protection, and direct access financing for women's organizations, including indigenous, Afro-descendant, and persons with disabilities.

144. The following guidelines are operational but not exhaustive or prescriptive: they offer lines of action consistent with inter-American standards and the best available evidence, so that each State can adapt them to its legal and institutional framework and incorporate mechanisms for correction, monitoring, and periodic evaluation of results.



SECTORAL MATRIX OF CLIMATE RIGHTS AND ACTIONS WITH A FOCUS ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

SECTORS / RIGHTS	OBLIGATIONS AND STANDARDS	PRACTICAL GUIDELINES
<p><i>Cross-cutting implementation standards</i></p>	<p>Equality and non-discrimination; procedural rights; universal accessibility; progressivity and non-regression.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish baselines and disaggregated indicators (gender, age, ethnicity, disability, territory, and income) with public monitoring, reporting, and verification dashboards. • Ensure informed and effective participation throughout the decision-making cycle, with adequate, clear, understandable, accessible, and timely information, and document how contributions were considered in the decision. • Mobilize maximum available resources and ensure budget allocations for gender-responsive mitigation/adaptation, including adaptive social protection mechanisms for women and girls, and facilitate (without

		<p>discrimination) women's organizations' access to climate finance instruments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure, when there are specific impacts on indigenous peoples, consultation in good faith and access to information in their own language, and, where applicable in accordance with the applicable standard, ensure free, prior, and informed consent; in all cases, with the effective participation of women and girls.
<p><i>Water and sanitation</i></p>	<p>Ensure universal, safe, continuous, and affordable access to water and sanitation; preserve water resources and ensure the provision of drinking water; strengthen water resilience; prevent contamination and hoarding; and require impact assessments (including climate dimensions) and contingency plans for activities or projects with significant risk to water sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure household connections and/or nearby supply points, prioritizing, as a special measure, female-headed households and women in contexts of greater vulnerability (informal settlements, rural/coastal areas), in order to achieve real equality in access. • Preserve sources and watersheds, ensure water quality through pollution monitoring and corrective measures, and make authorizations for activities with significant risk (including extractive/agro-industrial) conditional on impact assessments (including climate dimension) and contingency plans, with effective oversight. • Social tariffs and prohibitions on service disconnections for women in poverty and older women during heat waves/droughts. • Regulate agro-industry and mining; sanction and restore rivers/aquifers/wetlands in territories of indigenous, Afro-descendant, and rural women. • Guarantee schools and shelters with separate bathrooms, menstrual management, and universal accessibility for girls and women with disabilities. • Adopt contingency plans and early warning systems, and disseminate relevant water information (quality, availability, restrictions, risks) in a clear, accessible, timely, and appropriate format, with public monitoring.

<p>Adequate food</p>	<p>Ensure sufficient, nutritious, and culturally acceptable food, without discrimination, and protect livelihoods and access to territories/resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify vulnerable individuals and groups experiencing food insecurity. • Promote school and community feeding programs, with protocols to ensure continuous access to food and safe water during climate risks and disasters, prioritizing girls and adolescents and incorporating cultural relevance (including in rural areas and mobility). • Ensure support for school meal programs/cooking facilities with clean kitchens in low-income neighborhoods led by women. • Promote resilient agriculture and public procurement from rural women producers, peasant farmers, and artisanal fisherwomen. • Provide emergency kits agreed upon with indigenous and Afro-descendant women (culturally appropriate foods).
<p>Health</p>	<p>Strengthen the resilience of the health system; ensure available, accessible, acceptable, and quality access; base policies on the best science on climate impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate the health risks of climate change (including heat waves) into prevention and response plans, strengthening the resilience of health infrastructure and ensuring continuous access to comprehensive health services, including SRHS, also in disaster contexts • Provide comprehensive health services (physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive) for women and girls, including in disasters. • Incorporate mental health and psychosocial support measures, recognizing the aggravated impact of climate change on the mental health of girls and adolescents. • Carry out an analysis of the social determinants of health, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases associated with environmental impacts. • Incorporate resilient health infrastructure in rural, coastal, and flood/drought areas. • Ensure intercultural health with interpreters for indigenous women; programs on pollution/air quality for Afro-descendant, indigenous, and

		<p>rural women; reasonable accommodations for women with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support for indigenous knowledge and health systems.
Education	<p>Ensure availability, accessibility, acceptability, and adaptability; ensure continuity of learning in emergencies; strengthen the resilience of educational infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the resilience of educational infrastructure (at all levels) to climate impacts and ensure continuity of learning in the face of risks and disasters, including hybrid modalities for rural areas and mobile populations. • Implement curricula addressing climate change and rights with a gender focus; teacher training for disaster response. • Establish school alert and communication systems accessible to families and educational continuity.
Work and social security	<p>Prevent climate-related occupational hazards; guarantee decent conditions; ensure a just transition with social participation; strengthen social protection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote or strengthen occupational health standards and climate risk prevention (heat, radiation, vectors), including adjustments to working hours and conditions and the provision of sun protection and hydration for agricultural workers, cleaners, recyclers, fishermen, and workers in public spaces. • Implement reintegration and retraining strategies with technical training for rural women, women in urban settlements and low-income neighborhoods, women in transit, and young women. • Ensure social protection for care work and the feminized informal economy. • Implement adjustments and accessibility for women with disabilities at work. • Adopt protection mechanisms for workers particularly exposed to vector-borne tropical diseases. • Approve social insurance against climate shocks (e.g., extreme heat subsidies) for workers in exposed sectors. • Monitoring and evaluating the impacts of climate change on employment and working conditions, and ensuring access to justice for affected workers.

<p>Adequate housing and property</p>	<p>Prevent forced evictions; assistance and reconstruction after disasters; incorporate climate risk into land use planning and building codes; equal access to land/property.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote resilient social housing and accessible/safe shelters for women and girls (including those with disabilities). • Implement incentives for sustainable technologies in reconstruction; security of tenure for rural women. • Ensure effective consultation and participation—and, where appropriate, FPIC—in reconstruction, relocation, and alternative means of living; ensure that the decision incorporates full and informed participation and that the State refrains from exposing people to serious climate risks. • Promote equal land titling and use for rural and peasant women; participation in territorial governance. • Guarantee planned relocation with a gender focus where appropriate, with participation; guaranteeing lasting solutions (adequate housing, services, livelihoods, and community continuity), ensuring that the measure does not lead to new situations of precariousness or repeated displacement.
<p>Climate finance</p>	<p>Use maximum available resources with equality and non-discrimination; ensure progressivity and non-regression; adopt budgets and fiscal policies compatible with climate and human rights obligations; ensure international cooperation and accountability with effective participation (including women's organizations) in the financial cycle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Label and publish climate spending; annual investment targets for measures that directly benefit women and girls. • Establish direct access windows/calls for proposals with technical assistance and risk-proportionate criteria, open to women's organizations. • Implement accessible and non-discriminatory financial and social protection instruments for mitigation and adaptation, with safeguards and prioritization of women and girls in vulnerable situations; where appropriate, use insurance and concessional financing for resilience measures (water, housing, care infrastructure), with transparency and complaint mechanisms.

<p><i>Culture and heritage</i></p>	<p>Protect, conserve, and revalue natural and cultural heritage; recognize women as custodians of knowledge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt biocultural heritage measures in adaptation with the binding participation of indigenous, Afro-descendant, peasant, and coastal women. • Incorporate the identification and addressing of losses and damages, including non-economic damages (e.g., cultural, community, and livelihood impacts), into adaptation plans and post-disaster responses, with measures for redress and guarantees of non-repetition. • Implement an equitable distribution of benefits and safeguards against violence and discrimination in projects. • Establish safeguards to protect traditional knowledge and prevent its misappropriation, ensuring effective participation and equitable benefits when such knowledge is used in climate policies, projects, or technologies. • Promote programs for intergenerational transmission (languages, trades, seed conservation, soils, traditional agricultural techniques) with care services that enable participation. • Implement cultural protection policies for climate migrant women and girls. • Promote direct access financing for women-led initiatives as adaptation assets.
<p><i>Care and social protection</i></p>	<p>Address the right to care in emergencies; equitably redistribute burdens between the state, private sector, community, and men; public systems and care networks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide care services and networks in rural areas and low-income neighborhoods, with infrastructure resistant to heat waves/floods. • Ensure labor protection and social security for care workers (formal and informal). • Include caregivers and care recipients (children, people with disabilities, older adults) in prevention/adaptation plans. • Ensure that risk management and emergency response incorporate care responsibilities (alerts, evacuation, shelters, and continuity of services), with specific support for caregivers and those who require care, avoiding disproportionate burdens on women and girls.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt specific measures for indigenous women, women of African descent, and women with disabilities (technologies, transportation). • Guarantee budgets and contingency funds to sustain care during emergencies and planned relocations; disaggregated indicators of coverage and use. • Include training and preparation for climate emergencies for community networks and caregivers, with protocols for continuity of care and referral to services, and with disaggregated indicators of coverage and use.
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Source: Own elaboration.

C. EIA/C AS A TOOL TO GUARANTEE THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

145. This Guide proposes evolving from traditional Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) toward environmental impact assessments with a climate component (EIA/C), applying a human rights- and gender-based approach that places women and girls at the center and conducts a comprehensive and cumulative assessment of direct and indirect, short-, medium-, and long-term impacts on climate, biodiversity, and social dynamics. In particular, the EIA/C shall be based on adequate and disaggregated information, and the best available science: and should be developed through independent studies with the participation of the people and communities concerned. The proposed matrix incorporates variables relevant to women and girls—including care, health, rural and coastal livelihoods, mobility, and access to ecosystem services—; and highlights the need to identify and manage the project's climate impacts in any of its phases, as input for deciding on lower-impact alternatives and defining conditions, measures, targets, and verifiable indicators.

146. The Inter-American Court reaffirms that environmental impact studies—and, where applicable, climate impact studies—are a structural tool for the duty of prevention and, therefore, a prerequisite for States to adopt public decisions that are compatible with their obligations to respect and guarantee. In terms of enhanced due diligence, the IACtHR emphasizes that these studies must be prepared by independent and technically capable entities, under state supervision, consider cumulative impacts, incorporate participation, be based on the best available science, and include content and measures—such as contingency and mitigation plans—commensurate with the nature and magnitude of the project and its potential climate impact¹⁴³.

¹⁴³ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, *supra*, para. 363.

147. Given that the impact on the climate system constitutes a form of environmental damage that States must prevent, protect, and repair in accordance with the American Convention, the environmental impact assessment must explicitly include an assessment of the possible effects on the climate. In particular, projects that involve a risk of significant greenhouse gas emissions—in any of their phases—must undergo such an assessment¹⁴⁴. The first duty of the State is to identify, within the framework of its mitigation strategy, which projects or activities should be subject to an assessment that adequately considers that impact, which can be done through an initial study or through internal regulations that establish the activities subject to assessment and the applicable criteria¹⁴⁵.

148. Once a decision on a project has been made, States must have institutional mechanisms in place to ensure compliance with the approved conditions, encompassing monitoring, verification, and indicator mechanisms. They must also penalize non-compliance and ensure adequate measures to stop conduct or operations that are incompatible with what has been authorized, as well as guarantee redress where appropriate. These obligations apply to the implementation of what has been approved and are linked to access to effective remedies¹⁴⁶.

149. The EIA/C also allows for the pillars of access to information, participation, and justice to be specified: (i) proactive, understandable information in accessible formats, in accordance with the principle of maximum disclosure; (ii) early and meaningful participation; and (iii) effective remedies for decisions that compromise rights. In line with this, authorities must ensure the publication of the findings of climate impact assessments and consider, as part of the analysis, alternatives—such as not carrying out the project when necessary to prevent damage¹⁴⁷. Access to justice must include timely and adequate remedies, including approaches that facilitate effective judicial protection in environmental matters.

150. EIAs/Cs must guarantee women's right to meaningful participation and require an impact assessment with a gender and intersectional perspective, with disaggregated information and conditions that enable their effective participation. With regard to indigenous and tribal peoples, consultation standards and, where applicable, FPIC apply, with adequate and culturally relevant information, including availability in their own language. In the context of the climate emergency, the applicable standard is enhanced due diligence, taking into account the predictability of the damage, its possible irreversibility, and the differentiated impact on vulnerable individuals and groups. The proposed matrix is indicative and not exhaustive: each State must adapt it to its legal system and institutional capacities, while maintaining the objective of

¹⁴⁴ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, *supra*, para. 359.

¹⁴⁵ IACHR, REDESCA, VIII [Annual Report of the Special Rapporteur on ESCER of the IACHR, 2024](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/III, Doc. 39/25, v.3, March 13, 2025.

¹⁴⁶ United Nations, General Assembly, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, [Framework for environmental, social and human rights impact assessments and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment](#), Doc. A/80/187, July 17, 2025.

¹⁴⁷ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, *supra*, para. 521.

measurably improving the lives of women and girls and complying with human rights obligations in accordance with inter-American standards.



ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPACT STUDIES

RIGHT/OBLIGATION	SPECIFIC OPERATIONAL DECISIONS
<p><i>Prevention of harm and early assessment before authorizing projects.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require that any plan or project with significant risk incorporate an EIA/C based on the precautionary principle, with gender and intersectionality analysis; risk checklist for girls, pregnant/breastfeeding women, older persons, and people with disabilities; lower-impact alternatives and adaptation measures. • Refrain from authorizing projects that involve exposure to serious climate risks.
<p><i>Comprehensive and cumulative assessment, compatible with international obligations (direct/indirect, short/long-term, climate, biodiversity, social, and human rights impacts).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include baselines and scenarios with disaggregated data (gender/age/disability/ethnicity/territory); assess effects on care, CHS, food security, rural/coastal livelihoods, and mobility. • Include cumulative and cross-border impacts and define specific and budgeted measures.
<p><i>Principles of precaution, prevention, proportionality, and non-discrimination.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply safeguards when uncertainty exists; prioritize groups with greater barriers (indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, rural communities, informal settlements, persons with disabilities). • Ensure the sequence of measures: prevention, mitigation, and, only if unavoidable, compensation, conditioning permits and management plans on targets and indicators to close gender gaps.
<p><i>Access to information, public participation, and access to justice as elements of the right to a healthy climate throughout the process.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish information in accessible formats (easy reading, indigenous languages, sign language); hold hearings at times compatible with caregiving, transportation, and support; ensure parity and representation of women and girls. • Promote active dissemination at all stages of the process (initiation, implementation, and evaluation); mobile legal aid and outreach services and free legal aid.

<p><i>Remove barriers to participation (reasonable deadlines, understandable formats, proximity).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish appropriate deadlines; childcare and eldercare in workshops; travel expenses/transportation; territorialized consultation; feedback on results and response matrices to observations from women's and girls' organizations. • Adopt appropriate and special measures to ensure their effective participation.
<p><i>Continuous monitoring, adaptive management, and authority to modify/suspend or revoke if risks or violations arise.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create multiparty oversight committees with parity; monitoring with outcome indicators (e.g., access to water, health, education, employment) and review clauses and automatic suspension triggers in the event of violations or the emergence of new climate risks; ensure independent and public evaluation of results.
<p><i>Transparency and participatory oversight (access to reports and data; third-party audit; judicial/administrative review).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement open portals with disaggregated datasets; social audits led by women's networks; secure complaint channels (data protection, GBV protocols); maximum response times • Ensure judicial access to environmental and climate information
<p><i>State due diligence: regulate, authorize, and qualify consultants; mandatory multidisciplinary experience.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure mandatory strategic environmental and climate assessment prior to policies and plans • Adopt a public registry of consultants with training in human rights and gender; terms of reference requiring teams with expertise in gender/interculturality/disability; ongoing training and penalties for non-compliance
<p><i>Areas to be assessed (including energy transition and adaptation/geoengineering actions).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require EIA/C or equivalent with gender safeguards in wind, solar, infrastructure, fisheries, mining, and large-scale projects; also subject adaptation actions and new technologies aimed at climate protection to assessment • Prevent mitigation from causing rights violations (e.g., loss of livelihoods or increase in unpaid care work)

Source: Own elaboration.

The background of the page is a dark purple color with a pattern of large, overlapping, stylized leaf shapes in various shades of purple and blue. The leaves have prominent veins and are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement.

 Chapter VI

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

VI. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

151. In the Inter-American system, the right to a healthy environment has explicit recognition in treaty law and robust jurisprudential development. At the normative level, Article 11 of the Protocol of San Salvador establishes that "every person has the right to live in a healthy environment and to have access to basic public services," and imposes on States the obligation to promote its protection, preservation, and improvement. At the jurisprudential level, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights established in AO-23/17 that the right to a healthy environment is an autonomous human right, with individual and collective dimensions, and specified corresponding State obligations. Subsequently, in the case of Indigenous Communities Members of the Lhaka Honhat Association v. Argentina (2020), in its first contentious ruling on the matter, it declared a violation based on Article 26 of the American Convention¹⁴⁸.

152. In this context, the Inter-American System has acknowledge that the adverse effects of climate change can deepen pre-existing gender inequalities, generating disproportionate impacts on women and girls and increasing risks and violations of rights—including exposure to gender-based violence during and after hydrometeorological and climate hazards. Consequently, States must incorporate differential measures and a gender and intersectional perspective into their actions in response to the climate emergency, and ensure effective conditions for participation in decision-making on mitigation and adaptation policies and measures¹⁴⁹.

153. More recently, in AO-32/25 on climate emergency and human rights, the Court recognized that the right to a healthy environment also gives rise to a right to a healthy climate, and outlined State duties of respect, guarantee—and progressive development—and cooperation with regard to the protection of the climate system¹⁵⁰. In the aforementioned Advisory Opinion, the Court affirmed that the incorporation of differential measures in all actions undertaken by States is necessary to guarantee real equality in the enjoyment of rights in the context of the climate emergency. It also specified that climate events can have disproportionate effects on women, and that women and girls face a greater risk of gender-based violence during and after hydrometeorological and climate-related hazards, as well as other socio-environmental emergencies; which is why States must incorporate a gender and intersectional perspective into all actions related to the climate emergency¹⁵¹.

154. Given this reality, in accordance with the Inter-American normative and jurisprudential framework, States have obligations to respect, guarantee, progressively develop, adopt domestic legal provisions, and cooperate. In this context, they must prevent significant environmental damage and, under the precautionary principle, avoid serious or irreversible risks to the climate and the environment; carry out ex ante environmental and climate impact assessments, with

¹⁴⁸ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Case of Indigenous Communities Members of the Lhaka Honhat Association (Our Land) v. Argentina, Merits, Reparations, and Costs, Series C No. 400, Judgement of February 6, 2020.

¹⁴⁹ IACHR, REDESCA, Resolution 3/2021: Climate Emergency: Scope of Inter-American Obligations in the Area of Human Rights, 2021.

¹⁵⁰ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, *supra*.

¹⁵¹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, *supra*, para.

gender, intersectional, and intercultural approaches, and considering cumulative and transboundary effects. This includes mitigating GHG emissions, regulating and supervising corporate due diligence with respect to polluting activities, prioritizing the protection of key ecosystems—incorporating the expansion of protected areas and biological corridors—and cooperating to safeguard transboundary ecosystems.

155. Climate plans, strategies, and policies must also have implementation timelines, targets, indicators, and deadlines, publicly report on progress, and promote public scrutiny of their implementation. They must also ensure transparency, timely access to information, meaningful public participation, and access to justice with effective remedies. At the same time, priority must be given to protecting environmental defenders—investigating, punishing, and remedying any threats or attacks with due diligence and —and to orienting policies toward decarbonization pathways based on the best available science, under the principles of non-regression and progressivity and a just transition that avoids new inequalities and eliminates existing ones, with special attention to women and girls¹⁵².

156. To implement the inter-American standards set forth above, States must translate them into public policies with a human rights approach throughout the entire cycle (design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation), understood as the set of state decisions and actions aimed at protecting, promoting, respecting, and guaranteeing rights, under the principles of equality and non-discrimination, access to justice, accountability, transparency, participation, mainstreaming, and intersectorality, and with control of conventionality throughout the entire cycle.

157. This Guide demonstrates that guaranteeing the right to a healthy climate for women and girls is not an addendum to climate policy, but rather a condition of its legitimacy and effectiveness. To translate inter-American standards into results, States must build a compliance architecture that articulates regulatory, preventive, procedural, and cooperative measures, with safeguards against regression, access to justice, and enhanced protection for women and girls defenders, in addition to comprehensive reparations.

158. In operational terms, this architecture translates into a set of concrete tasks—developed in this Guide—that link obligations to verifiable decisions, measures, and indicators, and provide for monitoring and correction pathways. Conceived as an adaptable roadmap that is neither exhaustive nor necessarily prescriptive, it allows each State to contextualize the lines of action and move from commitments to sustained implementation, guided by the best available science and inter-American standards: prevention and precaution, enhanced due diligence in high-risk activities and sectors, effective participation and access to information and justice, cooperation—including cross-border cooperation—substantive equality and non-discrimination, intercultural relevance and universal accessibility, and policy trajectories compatible with the 1.5 °C goal¹⁵³.

¹⁵² Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, *supra*.

¹⁵³ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on Climate Emergency and Human Rights, May 29, 2025, para. 326.

159. The required measures to comply with these obligations are not static: they may vary over time in light of new scientific knowledge, technological advances, or the identification of emerging risks. Their scope and costs are also influenced by the particular circumstances of each State and by the distribution of common but differentiated responsibilities. However, as noted above, the obligation to prevent and exercise due diligence in climate matters applies equally to all States, regardless of their level of development, without prejudice to the details relating to international cooperation and the manner in which these responsibilities are implemented. The objective is to move towards climate action and a just transition, understood as part of a broader transformation with substantive equality, which reduces inequalities and places women and girls in all their diversity at the center. REDESCA makes this Guide available as a practical and living tool to guide public and private decisions.



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