



52nd Session of the Human Rights Council
Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment
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Thank you Chair.

The Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) welcomes the Special Rapporteur's report on women and girls and the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.

The report raises important points with regard to human rights-based climate and environmental action, which must contribute to tackling structural discrimination and inequalities and promote the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. We specifically welcome the report's recommendation on climate mitigation, adaptation, and compensation as well as on strengthening the regulations on chemicals that disproportionately harm women and girls.

The report rightly emphasizes that the triple planetary crisis is negatively affecting the rights of women and girls, as it intersects with gender-based discrimination, patriarchal norms, and structural inequality. The science is very clear that in order to effectively tackle pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change, it is imperative to address one of their key drivers: fossil fuels.

As already highlighted by the Special Rapporteur in previous reports, fossil fuels have devastating impacts on ecosystems and communities and are one of the key drivers of climate change. The concept of "sacrifice zones", which the Special Rapporteur addressed jointly with the Special Rapporteur on human rights and toxic, is particularly relevant as it captures the intersecting forms of environmental degradation and human rights violations that are associated with fossil fuels and the petrochemical industry.

In order to protect the rights of women and girls - both domestically and extraterritorially - States must rapidly phase out fossil fuel extraction, consumption, and trade as well as adopt moratoriums on licenses for expansions or new petrochemical facilities.

This report illustrates how *"microplastics are more likely to accumulate in women and are associated with a range of adverse health effects."* Indeed, as the UN Secretary General stated in late December, *"plastics are fossil fuels in another form & pose a serious threat to human rights, the climate & biodiversity."* This reaffirms the need to integrate a human rights-based approach with a particular focus on women and girls, in the plastics treaty negotiations and within the future the provisions of the treaty itself.

As pointed out in this report, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) - along with other Treaty Bodies - is conducting pivotal work in further specifying States' obligations in the context of climate change and other environmental crises, including fossil fuels. We urge States to fully implement relevant recommendations issued by Treaty Bodies as well as further explore the role that the UPR could play in this regard to ensure that climate and energy policies respect, promote and protect the rights of women and girls across the globe.