

Diversifying the Energy Transition: Women Leading Clean Energy

October 30th

EDT 9:00am | UTC 01:00pm



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About

The virtual dialogue furthers the integration of gender perspectives into energy policies, ensuring that women are not only beneficiaries but also key players in the energy transition. Discussions will focus on the leadership of women in promoting a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable energy future for the Americas. The clean energy transition is central to global efforts to combat climate change. The shift from fossil fuels to clean and renewable energy is not solely dependent on technological innovation and financing; it also requires gender inclusivity and equity.

According to IRENA, women make up only 22% of the global workforce in the oil and gas industry but represent 32% in the renewable energy sector—a sign of progress, though more work is needed. In Latin America, the gender gap in STEM fields remains significant, with women comprising only 30% of researchers and innovators, according to UNESCO. Additionally, the World Economic Forum reports that women hold just 20% of senior roles in the energy sector, a lower percentage compared to other industries. In terms of compensation, women in the energy sector earn 19% less than men on average, a wider gap than in many other fields.

On the other hand, studies have shown that gender-diverse teams are more innovative and effective at problem-solving, as they bring a wide range of perspectives and experiences to the table. In fact, companies with greater gender diversity in leadership positions often outperform those with less diversity, both in terms of financial performance and innovation. In the policy arena, at the IX Summit of the Americas, held in Los Angeles in June 2022, the Heads of State and Government committed to “Accelerating the Clean, Sustainable, Renewable, and Just Energy Transition.” The leaders emphasized the importance of an inclusive approach that integrates gender equity into sustainable energy strategies, specifically calling for the empowerment of women in energy transition efforts. Their commitment further stressed that strategies incorporating a gender perspective are essential for addressing the unique barriers women face in the energy industry, including mining, which provides essential components of clean energy technologies, such as lithium-ion batteries, solar panels, and electric vehicles.

At the OAS, the IV Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development, held in Nassau in October 2023, the countries of the Americas adopted the “Inter-American Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2030.” This Action Plan embeds gender-responsiveness across all its objectives, recognizing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women and girls. It also emphasizes the need to empower women and girls as climate change leaders.

In line with these commitments on policy, the event “Energizing Change: Women Shaping the Future of Latin American and Caribbean Energy”, held in Bogota in May 2024, brought together leaders from across the region to explore the pivotal role women play in shaping the energy future. The event featured discussions on women's leadership in renewable energy, gender equality in the energy sector, and the challenges facing women in STEM fields. It highlighted key initiatives, such as efforts to promote sustainable energy practices and innovations in energy technology, while fostering a more inclusive energy transition in Latin America and the Caribbean. Events and initiatives like this, alongside efforts to include women in the mining sector, are critical given the growing importance of diversifying the supply chains for critical minerals that underlie clean energy technologies. These efforts promote gender equity in the energy sector.

The Department of State launched its Women in Energy Strategy in 2022 and is promoting women in energy efforts in all world regions, including in the Americas. Women in energy is a priority policy area, critical to advancing two leading foreign policy imperatives - mitigating climate change and ensuring energy security for our friends and allies. For this reason, the Department's Bureau of Energy Resources is joining forces with the U.S. Mission to the OAS and the Department of Energy to partner with ECPA to expand the network of women in energy in Latin America and the Caribbean. ECPA continues to promote gender equity into clean energy transition goals. Through initiatives that empower the leadership of women in clean and renewable energy and critical minerals, ECPA aims at encouraging the integration of gender perspectives into energy policies, ensuring that women are not just beneficiaries but also key drivers of the energy transition.

Diversifying the Energy Transition

Women Leading Clean Energy

Agenda

9:00 am Welcome and Opening Remarks

- **Juan Cruz Monticelli**
Chief of Section, Sustainable Energy, Department of Sustainable Development, OAS
- **Kimberly Ballou**
Acting Director Asian Affairs, Office of International Affairs, U.S. Department of Energy
- **Maxine Pitter Lunn**
Spokesperson, Bureau of Energy Resources (ENR), U.S. Department of State
- **Alejandra Mora Mora**
Executive Secretary, Inter-American Commission of Women, CIM

9:05 am Role of Gender Equity in the Clean Energy Transition

- **Rosilena Lindo Riggs**
Former Energy Secretary of Panama
- **Celia García-Baños López**
Programme Officer, IRENA
- **Q&A**

9:10 am Women Leading the Charge for a Clean Energy Future

- **Olga Vergara**
Electricity and Energy Transition Leader, SierraCol
- **Lili Colon**
Principal Deputy Director, Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response, U.S. Department of Energy (TBC)
- **Q&A**

9:40 am Best Practices for Closing the Gender Gap

- **Raquel Chacón**
Project Manager, Hivos Latin America (TBC)
- **Eduarda Zoghbi**
Climate and Energy Leader
- **Q&A**

10:10 am Overcoming Challenges Facing Women and Girls in STEM

- **Cheryl Senhouse**
Finance Innovation Director, Caribbean Climate-Smart Accelerator
- **Chadia Abreu**
Energy Regulations and Clean Technology Advisor, Ministry of Energy and Mines, Dominican Republic
- **Q&A**

10:30 am Closure



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