

A Feminist Agenda for a Green New Deal

Principles and Values

The proposed [Green New Deal](#) has sparked an important, overdue national conversation around the urgent work needed to confront the global climate crisis and offers a foundation for movement-building, education, strategic advocacy, and immediate action. In this moment where the climate crisis has broken onto the national stage, critical feminist and climate justice voices have stepped up to offer an intersectional and feminist perspective to the policy discussion.

As a collective, we welcome the opportunity presented by the Green New Deal - and by the efforts of advocates and progressive policymakers - to secure rights-based policies and programs recognizing the global implications of US climate action and inaction.

To truly address the root causes, as well as the scope and scale of the climate crisis, the Green New Deal must be cross-cutting in its approach, steadfast in feminist principles, and strive to combat historical oppressions. It must advance a transformative feminist agenda that centers the leadership of women, and acknowledges and addresses the generational impacts of colonization and anti-Black racism. It must end oppression against and be led and articulated by frontline, impacted communities – especially women of color, Black women, Indigenous women, people with disabilities, LGBTQIAP+ people, people from the Global South, migrant and refugee communities, and youth.

The climate crisis has emerged from interlocking systems of capitalism, resource extraction, labor exploitation, the commodification of nature, settler colonialism, imperialism, and militarism. It has roots in the exploitation of enslaved people, whose labor created wealth in the Global North, and of the continuing systemic racism that deepens and institutionalizes global inequity.

To confront this crisis, we need coherence across policy sectors, from trade to military spending to development, to confront these interconnections. We must recommit to multilateralism and a democratic rule of law to build a policy architecture that can stabilize the planet and secure a just transition to post-exploitative economies.

We believe in a Green New Deal guided by principles of justice and accountability that reflect:

- the urgent need for a just transition of all US economic, environmental, and political systems through measures that:
 - redress economic disparity and provide accountability for the global impacts of US policy;
 - shift from the privatization and commodification of resources toward regenerative, sustainable, cooperative, and collective models; and
 - divest from the extractive and military-industrial complex and reinvest in social and public goods and the promotion of peace and justice;

- support for mitigation, adaptation efforts, solutions, and leadership of frontline communities within the US and globally, including commitments to respect and uphold Indigenous rights, to work to end environmental racism, and to confront the criminalization of environmental defenders; and
- the prioritization of women's leadership, gender justice, and human rights in policymaking and public discourse, including through the disruption of patriarchal and male-dominated power structures, informed by the voices of feminist activists and movements.

Principles for Engagement

As policymakers, advocates, and communities shape the Green New Deal, we must:

- 1. Require intersectional gender analysis across all actions.** In our deeply unequal society, gender interacts with sexuality, race, national origin, class, disability, and other identities to shape people's access to power and resources, leaving some disproportionately impacted by and vulnerable to climate disruption. A Green New Deal must be part of a just transition that addresses how people are impacted differently based on systemic exclusion and exploitation, and that ensures policies, plans and actions across all sectors are transformative to challenge inequity and offer reparation for harm. A just transition requires that women are actively brought in and benefit from green jobs and social policies, including pay equity, paid family leave and free child care. A just transition must also recognize and redress gender-based violence across industries, from sexual violence in mining towns to the exploitation of women farmworkers by industrial agriculture.
- 2. Recognize that there is no such thing as domestic climate policy.** More than ever, we must understand the links between domestic and foreign policy. We can only avert climate catastrophe if the US works with the rest of the world to mitigate climate change and advance a feminist foreign policy that serves people and their communities, and is not coopted by corporate, militarized or exploitative agendas. This will require a commitment to global justice through diplomacy, international cooperation, and a recognition that the US has been the world's largest historic carbon polluter, while those in the Global South have suffered its worst impacts. The US must address this debt to the Global South through ambitious and urgent emissions reductions; unprecedented commitments to climate finance; reparations for impacted communities, women and girls, and environmental defenders in the Global South; trade and tax policies that support Global South nations in transitioning to just, renewable economies; and ending US extractivist interventions globally. We must support migrants and refugees impacted by climate change, who are fleeing the very crisis the US has created, while funding adaptation efforts so communities do not have to leave. We must confront a US-led military-industrial complex that defends extractive industries, pollutes the environment, worsens climate change, and undermines peace and human rights.

- 3. Confront institutional patriarchy and racism.** These systemic oppressions show up throughout our communities, movements, and policymaking spaces – from the criminalization of our bodies to racist gerrymandering and voter suppression, and from community red-lining for government flood insurance to the school-to-prison pipeline. Unless we tackle these systems head-on, they will continue to undermine the climate solutions we seek. We must fight for a true, participatory democracy. We cannot call on people to use their voice to confront the climate crisis when we know marginalized people's voices are systematically oppressed. We must challenge unequal power dynamics and demand accountability from each other and from policymakers.
- 4. Center Indigenous Peoples' rights and leadership.** Indigenous Peoples hold rights over and protect 25% of the earth's land surface and 80% of remaining biodiversity. To accurately reflect substantive solutions to the climate crisis, Indigenous sovereignty and solutions are paramount. This includes binding legal recognition of Indigenous land rights, real enforcement of the vital framework of Free, Prior and Informed Consent, and recognition of the Rights of Nature.
- 5. Systemically confront exploitative and unsustainable production patterns.** The roots of the climate crisis lie in an economic system that encourages corporate greed, unsustainable production, and profit-seeking over the well-being of people and the planet. Globally, this system further entrenches neocolonial patterns of power and production between North and South countries and within settler-colonies like the United States. This endless pursuit of material growth empowers the fossil fuel, mining, and polluting industries most responsible for climate change. Tackling these patterns systemically requires engaged citizenship, movement building, organizing with labor, public education, and mobilization aimed at transforming our economy to one grounded in justice, equity, rights, sustainability, and respect for nature and ecological balance.
- 6. Advance reproductive justice.** Our fights for climate justice and for bodily autonomy are linked. For example, toxic chemicals that pollute our water, air and land jeopardize our health, including reproductive health, often with a disproportionate impact on Black, Indigenous and Latinx women due to systemic and institutional injustice. We reject false population growth alarmism and arguments that affix the blame for climate change on people's, especially women's, reproductive capacities. We advocate for accessible education that advances literacy and understanding of climate, gender and reproductive justice. We affirm that the true causes of our global climate crisis lie in industrial policy and that a sustainable future requires bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive rights in all circumstances.
- 7. Ensure democratically controlled, community-led solutions.** Through the leadership of women's groups and local movements in creating local and global climate policy, the outcomes will be more democratic, stronger, and longer-lasting. Crucially, the Green New Deal must prioritize community self-determination regarding any policy or development

project that impacts their land and livelihoods, and affirm the necessity of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent. The solutions offered by the Green New Deal must be community-owned and community-led, including inclusive financing and equitable distribution of energy and the development of just housing and education policies. It must also draw from, uplift, and support existing women and community-led solutions to the climate crisis, in the US and globally.

- 8. Reject false and harmful responses to climate change that fail to address root causes.** We must demand a 100% transition to renewable energy that is justly sourced and divest from the mining, fossil fuel, and agribusiness corporations responsible for fueling climate change. We must reject false 'solutions' that allow these drivers of the climate crisis to persist, that perpetuate oppressions, and that greenwash their harms. These include carbon trading, which allows industries to pay to pollute; biofuels that promote agribusiness at the expense of smallholder and subsistence farmers, the majority of whom are women; dangerous nuclear power plants; increased natural gas extraction justified by carbon capture and storage and other techno "fixes"; mega-dams that cause irreversible damage to biodiversity, food sovereignty and livelihoods; geo-engineering; and bioenergy.
- 9. Create regenerative economies that center systemic, feminist alternatives.** A just transition must address inequalities in power and wealth while transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy. This means transforming an extractive, unjust status quo into new, socially just and environmentally sustainable economies that respect and balance nature's regenerative capacity. We must shift from the privatization and commodification of nature to sustainable, equitable production and resource use. This includes understanding that GDP is an insufficient and detrimental economic indicator and that alternatives are required that measure quality of life and well-being rather than production. Feminist economics further shows that women around the world have long disproportionately performed labor like housework, raising children, and elder work. This work is almost always unpaid, undervalued, and invisibilized in economic and social policies at all levels. Our society is constructed upon and dependent on care work, and it is valuable, low-carbon, community-based work that should be revalued and centered in our new economy.
- 10. Respect the leadership of young people as they fight for future generations.** Young feminists know there is an urgency to act, with many around the world already facing disastrous climate change impacts. We understand the need to leave the planet better than we found it, to learn from long-held traditions of resistance, and to embrace the vital work led by youth to confront climate change. Justice and our survival demand that we work together across generations to make major, far-reaching changes quickly.

Working together, according to these values, we have the capacity to create the change demanded of us now by generations to come.