4 How to make Germany's climate policy gender-responsive

Experiences from research and advocacy

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Introduction

A cornerstone to open the political perspective of the German climate policy to gender and gender justice was a research project titled: 'The contribution of gender justice to successful climate policy: impact assessment, interdependencies with other social categories, methodological issues and options for shaping climate policy' (Gender and Climate research project) commissioned by the German Federal Environment Agency (UBA). It was carried out from November 2016 to October 2019 by three partners: Wuppertal Institute Environment, Climate, Energy, ISOE-Institute for Social-ecological Research and GenderCC-Women for Climate Justice. The project aimed at reviewing existing findings on the gender and climate change nexus in industrialised countries, examining the added value of the gender perspective for climate policies and developing recommendations for action for the German national framework, in line with the UNFCCC provisions on gender. Moreover, the knowledge of obstacles towards a gender perspective in climate protection and adaptation was to be enhanced (Röhr et al., 2018; Spitzner et al., 2020). The study was based on the assumptions that, a) a gender perspective supports the development of policies tailored for different target groups, thereby improving the effectiveness of climate policy in particular in terms of acceptance; b) a gender-responsive climate policy can counteract gender inequality; and c) in this way, synergies can be created between climate protection/adaption and gender justice. In the first step, a systematic literature review of national and international literature on sex and gender aspects in climate-relevant areas of action in countries of the Global North, as well as an analysis of gender provisions and mandates accruing from the UNFCCC process, have been conducted (Röhr et al., 2018). In a second step, a 'Gender Impact Assessment' (GIA) has been conceptualised for climate policies and measures, and developed in a participatory process. As a third step, the prerequisites for gender analyses and requirements for gender-responsive climate policies have been determined in order to derive action and policy recommendations at the federal level. The outcomes of the research project resulted in some advocacy activities within the ministry (Spitzner et al., 2020).

The research project as well as the developments in the German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety (BMU) were backed by the latest gender-outcomes of the UNFCCC, which urge all governments to develop gender-responsive climate policies.

In the following section, we provide an overview of how gender considerations evolved in German climate policy. Then, in the next section, we look at two potential paths to integrate gender into climate policy. Finally, we discuss these options and, in conclusion, suggest next steps for working towards gender-responsive climate policy.

The starting point: Climate policy and gender in Germany

German governments have generally considered themselves as forerunners in climate policy. Germany has been successful in presenting and advocating for ambitious climate goals and thereby pushing the climate agenda forward at EU and international levels, but it has not, however, been as successful in achieving these goals. It should, nevertheless, be noted that Germany is currently striving for emissions reductions of 55% by the year 2030 while at the same time phasing out nuclear power and also – in the longer term – the use of coal energy.

The Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU), run by a Minister from the Social-Democratic Party, has the lead in national climate policy. Yet, it is not in charge of central fields of action for implementing the climate protection goals. Therefore, even if the BMU was a pioneer in terms of attempts to integrate gender into climate policy approaches and goals, it has little influence on the implementation in the various sectors. Energy policy, for instance, is located in the Ministry of Economic Affairs, while transport, agriculture, housing and construction are in the hands of three other ministries. All these ministries are currently run by the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) or Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU) and are working very closely with the private sector in the respective areas. They are not yet ready for a transformative policy in general, let alone for a gender-equitable policy. Thus, this fragmentation of climate policy is difficult in terms of effective climate change mitigation and it also hampers the integration of gender and intersectional approaches.

Mainstreaming gender into Germany's climate policy

The road to mainstreaming gender into climate policy in Germany started to look promising in 1995, when the first Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP1) took place in Berlin. It was chaired by the (at that time) German Environment Minister and former Minister for Women Affairs, Dr Angela Merkel, who later on, in 2005, became Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. Theoretically, this could have been the ideal condition for advancing gender-equitable climate policy.

Furthermore, in 1998, the first red-green Federal Government agreed to implement gender mainstreaming and to recognise the realisation of equality of men

and women as a universal guiding principle for policy planning in all ministries. These regulations are still in place. Since then, governmental coalitions have changed several times, and the strong efforts for an organisational anchoring of gender mainstreaming in the BMU have had only very limited success (Sauer, 2014).

With the exception of a few selective measures, gender-responsive climate policy has not been an issue in the German Environment Ministry in the past 20 years. Particularly, it is still striking that the gender mainstreaming process had not found its way into climate policy. So, despite the mandate to mainstream gender into all policy areas, it was only recently and in connection with and supported by UNFCCC decisions on gender, that it gained more attention in German national climate policy.

So, while the importance of gender relations for an effective climate policy was largely underestimated by the government for a long time, some progress has been made in the last few years, giving a reason to hope for a move towards a gender-equitable climate policy in the near future. After the federal elections in 2017, at the beginning of the current legislative period, Svenja Schulze came into office as the new Environment Minister. She placed greater emphasis on gender equality, both in terms of gender balance and of gender-sensitive or gender-responsive policy. She set up, or reactivated, internal networks and training for the staff, particularly at decision-making levels, installed a new department dealing with gender aspects of environmental policy, and announced the development of a gender strategy for environment, nature protection and climate policy (BMFSFJ, 2020). Moreover, the current Minister Schulze holds regular meetings with female leaders of environmental non-governmental organisations to discuss difficulties in, and solutions for, addressing gender and gender equality in the organisations, as well as to present and discuss up-to-date environmental policies and programmes. Considerable steps have been taken to make staff aware of the added value of integrating gender into the climate policy field, namely due to more effective emission reductions measures that address the needs and preferences of all sections of society and, thereby, might gain a higher acceptance by citizens.

The updated UNFCCC Gender Action Plan (GAP), adopted in 2019 (UNFCCC, 2019), added momentum to these efforts. While the vast number of earlier UNFCCC decisions (Röhr et al., 2018, p. 90ff) that call for the consideration of gender equality and the broad gender mandate provided by the Paris Agreement (PA) of 2015 (UNFCCC, 2015) were considered as applying mainly to developing countries, the enhanced GAP functioned as an eye-opener for the relevance of gender mandates for industrialised countries. Internal meetings in the BMU were held in order to identify core fields of action to implement GAP provisions. This involves, for example, capacity-building on the gender dimensions of climate policy which plays a prominent role in a number of UNFCCC decisions and the GAP (Röhr et al., 2018, p. 90ff; UNFCCC, 2019).

The advancing introduction of gender in the UNFCCC process was the context in which the research project 'Interdependent gender aspects of climate

policy' was commissioned by the UBA. The project underpinned the new move at the BMU towards gender-responsive policies and it provided evidence to the importance of integrating gender into climate policy and the need for relevant data. As a result, at present (October 2020) there is a growing openness towards gender equality in environment and climate policy in the ministry, as well as in environmental organisations that adopt the minister's perception regarding gender equality in climate policy – yet, do not necessarily point out gender issues actively.

Two potential paths for climate institutions to bring gender into climate policy

As a first option, in the next section, we present and discuss our experience with raising gender issues in participatory processes, organised by the BMU to involve a broad range of stakeholders and citizens in the development of German climate protection programmes. With these extensive participation processes, new ground was broken in Germany. The following evaluation is based on personal involvement in the processes and – where available – evaluation reports from other organisations and researchers.

Thereafter, we present, as a second option, gender analysis as an attempt to strengthen a gender perspective within administrative processes. On an institutional level, gender mainstreaming requires governments to assess 'the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels' (UN, 1997). This is usually done by integrating gender analysis in the policy process in order to analyse and evaluate the impact of political measures on gender justice. As a cornerstone, the 'Gender and Climate' research project developed a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) tool to strengthen a gender perspective in the German Climate Protection Programmes. Hence, the second path we describe is based on our experiences in adapting and improving a GIA to the field of climate policy.

Implementing gender-responsive climate policy in participatory processes

'Stating a policy objective is no guarantee that it will be realised in practice' (Rose, 1984, cited from Engeli and Mazur, 2018, p. 117). Thus, how is the goal of gender equality operationalised in climate policy in Germany? The following section will shed light on the participation processes that support the development of German climate change programmes. Since 2015, the federal government has launched two participation processes, one of which (initially) focused on achieving the short-term emission reduction targets for 2020, the other focused on the more long-term target of 2050. Both processes were led by the BMU, and are very different, which is also due to the time horizon of emissions reduction targets for 2020/2030 and 2050. Such extensive participation processes previously have not taken place in Germany and can therefore be described as innovative.

The Action Alliance for Climate Protection (Aktionsbündnis Klimaschutz)

The first participation process, the Action Alliance, had its first meeting in spring 2015 upon invitation of the BMU. It is organised in the ‘Vienna setting’, which means that the various stakeholder groups are divided into so-called thematic ‘benches’. Initially comprised of 15 benches in number, in 2019 ‘youth’ was added as the 16th bench. Each bench consists of various organisations that appoint speakers for the meetings to represent the positions of the bench. All other representatives of the bench take part as listeners. The ‘members of a bench exchange views on their respective climate protection positions, strive to understand the positions of other bench members and try to find synergies and similarities in their positions’.¹

Gender issues do not have a separate bench, but some gender expertise is involved in the process. Currently, there are three women/gender-focused organisations regularly participating, all of them are part of the Environment, Nature and Climate Protection bench.

The Action Alliance meets twice a year for one-day meetings. At the first session, one of the women/gender-focused organisations, GenderCC-Women for Climate Justice, representing the bench for the Environment, Nature and Climate Protection, had the opportunity to explain fundamentally how gender relations and climate protection are linked. Since then, there have only been opportunities for very brief statements. As the speaking time per subject (usually two or three per session) is limited to five minutes per bench and about 30 organisations are represented on the environmental bench, the chance to introduce gender aspects to the agenda items is extremely limited.

In terms of content, until 2017 the Action Alliance dealt with short-term measures aimed at achieving the CO₂ reduction targets for 2020. Before the sharp emission decline due to the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, Germany was far from meeting its target, thus there was a high pressure to achieve as much emission reduction as possible in a very short time. This might have been one reason why the measures presented, and later on decided by the German Bundestag, focused mainly on technical solutions, respectively, solutions the government coalition could agree on. A transformative (gender) perspective, questioning the economic system and growth paradigm, criticising the focus on technical efficiency, and demanding actions for addressing sufficiency, was brought into discussion by gender representatives and some environmental organisations, but had no chance of being recognised, neither by most of the other benches, nor by the ministries responsible for the measures. This broader and more holistic perspective was postponed to the programmes dealing with the mid and long-term goals for 2030 and 2050.

Participation process for the development of the Climate Protection Plan 2050

The process for developing the climate protection programme for 2050 took place parallel to the Action Alliance for Climate Protection and its task to

support the 2020 programme of measures for climate protection. This very complex process started with inviting 550 people as representatives of stakeholders. Representatives of women's associations, such as the German Women's Council – a major umbrella organisation which perceives itself as the lobby for women in Germany – was invited but, unfortunately, they did not participate in the process, and neither did other women's associations. Most German women's organisations focus on more traditional women and gender equality issues, like the gendered labour market, care economy, violence against women and health issues, etc. This might have been a reason why they didn't feel familiar with climate change issues and did not participate.

In addition to the stakeholder dialogue, 100 randomly selected citizens were each invited to a citizen dialogue in five cities, which later on resulted in two online dialogues to propose a number of climate protection measures and vote for the preferred actions. Without being able to go into the process in further detail here, the effort to participate was extensive. Particularly for civil society organisations relying on volunteer work, participation in this process was extremely challenging.

The process ended in March 2016 with the handover of a catalogue of 97 proposed measures to achieve the long-term climate protection goals to the BMU, but the impact was limited, as in the end, the Federal Government's climate protection plan was drawn up 'in 2016 on the basis of scientific studies and scenarios and in the light of the Paris Agreement. The results and recommendations of the broad dialogue **also informed the process**'² (accentuated by the authors).

Three evaluations of this process were undertaken. Greenpeace commissioned a rather critical assessment of the impact of the process (Rucht, 2016), the BMU commissioned the overall process evaluation (Bohn and Heinzelmann, 2017) and an evaluation of the citizen participation also took place (Faas and Huesmann, 2017). All three evaluations came to a cautiously positive assessment of the process. Despite this, Greenpeace (Rucht, 2016) criticises that there has been a significant shift of weight in favour of economic interests by clearly weakening and watering down a number of sectoral targets and proposed measures from the participation process (Rucht, 2016, p. 6). None of the three evaluations took notice of the lack of gender expertise in the whole process and in developing or assessing the measures. A content-orientated analysis of the Climate Protection Programme 2050 from a gender perspective can be found in the final report of the research project (Spitzner et al., 2020, Chapter 5.5.1).

In 2018, the two processes were merged in the Action Alliance for Climate Protection. The Action Alliance is now described on the BMU website as

the central dialogue forum for the continuous discussion of climate protection policy positions between social groups and with the Federal Government. It supports the Federal Government in achieving the climate protection goals for Germany and recognises the shared responsibility of its members for the success of the transformation to a largely greenhouse gas-neutral society by 2050.³

In conclusion, both processes might have been important and innovative from the point of view of the German Government, as they led to the involvement of more stakeholders in defining Germany's climate policy. One expectation was to achieve acceptance for ambitious emission reduction measures and sectoral reduction targets. But these processes were, and still are, completely insufficient in terms of addressing the need for gender justice in climate policy and action.

In order to establish a connection between the climate policy process and the gender mainstreaming process, which run independently of one another, the research project 'Gender and Climate' has created a 'handout for gender-appropriate evaluation and updating of the 2030 climate protection program'⁴ for BMU-internal use (Röhr and Stieß, 2019). This refers to the Climate Action Programme⁵ finally adopted by the German Parliament at the end of 2019, its evaluation and update, as well as the envisaged (and meanwhile adopted) climate protection law. The handout recommends taking into account the social impacts including their gender differences, in the implementation, evaluation and updating of the programme, and where and how the corresponding expertise is to be included in the basic structures implemented by the law.

Gender Impact Assessment as an analytical tool in the area of climate policy in Germany

This section introduces Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) as a tool for researchers and practitioners in climate institutions for analysing the equality impacts of climate policy and discusses how GIA can be re-designed in order to introduce an intersectional and non-binary perspective on gender into climate policy-making. GIA is rooted in the field of impact assessment which is the 'process of identifying the future consequences of a current or proposed action' (IAIA, 2020, n.p.). In contrast to other impact assessment procedures (e.g., technology, environmental, or health impact assessment), a GIA takes up the basic idea of gender mainstreaming that gender equality should be promoted as a guiding principle through all policy measures. Gender is taken as the central category of analysis and the investigation is oriented towards the normative goal of gender equality.⁶ The objective of GIA is to produce recommendations for political decisions, the outcome of GIA is usually binding and applied to a specific policy intervention.

According to this, a GIA is a structured application of procedures and methods aiming to assess whether a political project – for example, a draft law, regulation, programme, or concept – and the day-to-day administrative action takes adequate account of gender aspects and the command for equality. This assessment can take place at different points in the policy cycle: as ex-ante evaluation, but also as ex-post evaluation or during the implementation of a policy measure.

The implementation of a GIA after the completion of a measure can reveal 'gender gaps', but in the case of measures that have yet to be developed or are ongoing, it is possible to identify gender aspects and then integrate them into the measure. In the case of the accompanying GIA, the possibility of

integrating gender aspects is far greater than in a retrospective GIA. If the GIA is integrated into the development of a measure, gender aspects can be systematically introduced into decision-making processes, negative impacts and unintended side-effects on gender equality can be identified before the political measure is implemented, and alternative solutions can be presented. (Life e.V./FrauenUmweltNetz, 2004, p. 10f)

A GIA can be applied to different policy areas at the level of ministries, as well as subordinate authorities and administration.

Applying intersectionality and gender dimensions to a GIA guidance for climate policy

In Germany, a regulatory GIA baseline tool was adopted in 2006 to support gender mainstreaming by the federal government (BMFSFJ, 2007),⁷ but the general practice of GIA has proven to be difficult in terms of practitioners' receptivity and the institutionalisation of the instrument. In the past 20 years, only a few policy GIAs were fully executed and documented in public administration (Veit, 2010; Lewalter, 2013; Sauer, 2018). There was a certain stickiness within the administration preventing them from including new ideas such as feminist concepts in the policy-making process (Sauer and Stieß, i.p.).

The GIA design for climate policy took the regulatory GIA baseline tool as the starting point. The re-design was based on a non-binary understanding of gender and also took intersectionality into account. The tool acknowledges different genders ('male, female, diverse'), in order to consider the diversity of gendered identities. Gender is conceived as an interdependent category – which is marked by the term 'Gender+'.⁸

The basic idea of the GIA is that gender and other social differences that generate inequality are to be considered on a case- and context-specific basis; the categories and their significance must be worked out in the process of analysis itself (cf. Hankivsky, 2014, p. 3). The GIA tool, therefore, applies an iterative procedure. Starting from the gender perspective, 'internal' intersections of gender with other categories of inequality are examined in an iterative process.⁹ For the concrete subject of investigation, this does not claim to include all categories involved in the constitution of social inequality, but rather focuses on those that are most relevant to the respective area of action. In a first step, the impact on the hierarchical relations between the genders is examined. In a second step, further characteristics/categories of social inequality can be introduced into the analysis – for example, to examine the effect of a project with regard to further discrimination and exclusion due to socio-economic or socio-cultural characteristics such as age, income, religion, etc. – in the sense of 'where the difference done, matters the most' (Sauer, 2018, p. 146). Taking housing and energy poverty as an example, a first step of analysis could focus on differences between genders and then add income and place as further categories of analysis (Großmann, 2017).

As a second task, the GIA tool was thematically adapted to the policy area of climate protection and climate adaption. The tool's thematical structure is built on the so-called 'gender dimensions' which provide a framework for gender analysis. The gender dimensions are analytical categories for investigating the structurally unequal power relations between the genders and their causes and characteristics. They are linked to central areas or fields of societal structuring by which hierarchical gender relationships are established, maintained and reproduced (Verloo and Roggeband, 1996; Verloo and Lombardo, 2007). These interconnected structures include norms, values, institutions and organisations. Drawing on the seminal work of Mieke Verloo and Connie Roggeband and insights from GIAs in the field of environmental, research and transport policy (cf. Schultz et al., 2001; Turner, Hamilton and Spitzner, 2006; Alber and Röhr, 2011), the conceptual framework was elaborated. Finally, six gender dimensions and a seventh cross-sectional dimension ('symbolic order') were devised, representing areas of life in which a sex- and/or gender-specificity can still be discerned and which are relevant for climate policies. These gender dimensions describe the social areas of the care economy and caring work, employment, shaping of public infrastructures, institutionalised rationalities, participation in decision-making and physical integrity. The gender dimensions include:

- *Symbolic order* (as a cross-sectional dimension): hierarchisations, attributions and positions of meaning, gender-hierarchical narratives and modernisation strategies
- *Care economy/care work*: attribution, significance, distribution and instrumentalisation in societies' economies
- *Market-driven/labour economy*: horizontal and vertical segregation, economic job evaluation, poverty, property, financial capabilities
- *Public resources/infrastructures*: provision, alignment, prioritisation, accessibility, usability
- *Institutionalised androcentrism/power of definition*: masculinity models set as the standard and benchmark in action-field-specific rationalities, problem perceptions, methods, etc., institutionalised gender hierarchisations
- *Shaping power at the actors' level*: participation and consideration of gender expertise in decision-making in science, technology, and politics
- *Body/health/safety/privacy (intimacy)*: the social organisation of sexuality, health, freedom from violence, privacy, sexual self-determination

For each gender dimension, main gender aspects like the unequal distribution of care, income, wealth, or resources are presented. These general topics are linked to specific issues of climate change using the results of the literature analysis on gender and climate change carried out in the first step of the project as a reference (Röhr et al., 2018). For each gender dimension, specific questions are provided, linking the more general dimensions to specific topics of climate change (Stieß et al., 2019).

The GIA contains two-stages of evaluation:

- The preliminary or *relevance test* (screening) checks whether the analysed project has gender-relevant implications and decides whether a GIA is to be carried out or not. In the first step, the given measure or project and its target groups are identified. The relevance of gender equality is determined on the basis of key questions referring to the different gender dimensions. If gender equality relevance is noted, the main examination is carried out.
- The *main examination* builds upon the questions of the relevance check. Gender aspects that were identified in the first step are scrutinised further in an in-depth examination, comprising of both qualitative and quantitative methods such as expert interviews or the analysis of statistical data. For each gender dimension, a detailed analysis of the policy impacts is carried out on the basis of a set of questions. As a result of the assessment, concrete opportunities for improving the outcome on gender equality are identified. On this basis, recommendations are formulated.

The re-design of the GIA tool was carried out in a participatory process. A prototype of the tool was tested in a workshop in order to adapt it to the requirements and needs of the future users of the instrument. Employees from different departments of the UBA were invited to the testing. Ongoing projects of UBA were used as examples to examine how the set of questions can be applied to make the significance of gender for climate policy visible. The selected projects covered topics from the fields of climate protection and adaptation with a high gender relevance: scenarios for reducing the degree of motorisation in cities as a contribution to a compact mixed-function city (climate protection), and recommendations for behavioural heat protection in connection with the preparation of heat action plans (climate adaptation). Drawing on the literature review on gender and climate (Röhr et al., 2018), main findings in the respective fields were collected and structured with the help of the gender dimensions. Examples are the different mortality and morbidity rates of women and men in the case of heatwaves and the gendered distribution of car ownership in cities in the case of the motorisation scenario. These findings were presented in a test workshop. In a second step, the participants were encouraged to analyse the selected examples with the help of the questions of the GIA tool. The workshop yielded valuable insights and suggestions about how to improve the practical suitability of the tool and facilitate its application. These findings were taken into account in the revision of the tool as well as the recommendations gleaned from the comments of gender experts. Finally, a second test was carried out in a workshop with UBA employees and external gender experts.

In summary, the GIA tool proved to be useful to assess the gender impacts of climate policy. It has the potential to assess the impact of climate policy measures with regard to gender/'Gender+', and can support knowledge transfer between societal stakeholders and political and administrative stakeholders on gender topics.

Until now, no full GIA of a climate policy measure has been executed. However, the tool was applied in a consulting assignment. The assignment had the objective of identifying gender-relevant aspects in an early stage of climate policy-making. In the context of the implementation of the climate protection programme 2030 of the German Federal Government, selected measures of the package were analysed. The results were communicated in consultancy papers and presented and discussed in an internal expert hearing in 2019. These first experiences show that the tool is well suited for screening gender aspects and identifying relevant aspects/questions from a gender perspective.

However, a crucial prerequisite for the implementation of GIA in German climate policy would be conducive governance structures in the institutions. As Sauer (2018) states ‘gendered analysis is rarely executed without strong institutionalised equality governance structures within and knowledgeable, partial actors to carry it’ (Sauer, 2018, p. 510). In terms of governance structures required, Sauer suggests a helpful distinction between ‘embedded’, ‘embodied’ and ‘entrenched’ governance structures. ‘Embedding’ of gender or gender justice refers to processual aspects within institutions. ‘Embodied’ refers to the required gender expertise within relevant institutions. ‘Entrenched’ refers to the need for gender to be rooted in the knowledge cultures of institutions. ‘Creating accountability is an effective method for entrenching gender equality’ (Sauer, 2018, p. 516). However, such governance structures within institutions would have to be reflected in corresponding policy structures and processes of climate policy.

Discussion and outlook

Even if there is progress in mainstreaming gender into climate policy in Germany, there are still a lot of institutional challenges. The provisions adopted in the international process definitely support gender-responsive climate policy in Germany. But because of the limited scope and character of provisions in the GAP and ‘the clash between the rhetorical commitments to gender mainstreaming and the actual gender norms embedded within an institution’ (Mergaert and Lombardo, 2017, p. 106), the progress at national levels will continue to depend strongly on further factors, such as the engagement of individuals in decision-making positions and civil society interventions.

Which factors are decisive for a transition to a more gender-responsive climate policy? Based on studies in the field of institutional resistances (e.g. Waylen, 2013; Kaijser and Kronsell, 2014; Mergaert and Lombardo, 2017; Göldner, 2018) and experiences in our research and advocacy work, we identified the following drivers that could help to overcome resistance to change.

One of the institutional drivers is, of course, a certain tradition of addressing gender, and this is the case in Germany, although early efforts have been suspended for quite a while (Göldner, 2018). A fundamental requirement is a political will to implement a climate policy geared towards gender equality. This is currently the case in the Federal Ministry for the Environment and is shown, particularly, in the establishment of a ministerial unit on gender issues and in the

planned development of a gender strategy. Furthermore, there is some awareness for this topic in the management levels of the BMU that supports the framing of climate change issues from a gender perspective. Also, there is an internal feminist agency in the ministry and the subordinate authority UBA, which can back the efforts. Another driver would be the involvement of ministries or other bodies in charge of gender equality, the so-called 'gender machinery' (Göldner, 2018).

For the sustainable, long-term implementation of gender-responsive policies, however, further structural changes are required. As stated by Arora-Jonsson (2014), it needs 'to remedy the "invisibility" of privilege – whether of men, class, caste that discriminates. The structures and relations that cause disadvantage to persist need to be challenged'. This includes 'making visible the mechanisms by which environmental governance takes place – the daily practices of knowledge production and action' (Arora-Jonsson, 2014, p. 306). Usually, it takes at least five to ten years after a policy has been put into place for it to make change visible. Thus, if the intended gender strategy of the BMU and, in particular, the GIAs are implemented in climate policy and if these actually lead to gender-just climate measures, it will only happen and be assessed in the long term (Engeli and Mazur, 2018, p. 120). Thus, it is important to follow up on the implementation with research in the next years.

Androcentrism is deeply embedded not only in the structures of institutions, but also in the framing of problems and solutions (Sauer, 2010; Spitzner u. a., 2020). A transition to a gender-just, low-carbon society would require challenging these norms (Mazur and McBride, 2010; Kronsell, 2013; Kaijser and Kronsell, 2014).

In the climate change process, the 'Fridays for Future' movement has shown how quickly external pressure can lead to changes, at least at the level of discourse. Whether these changes are reflected in real political effects or only result in including more youth representatives in participation processes is still an open question. Likewise, the advocacy of women and gender civil society groups would be key to emphasise the gender-climate-justice nexus. Yet, in Germany, there are only a handful of organisations and experts who deal with these topics. As noted, the German Women's Council – the most important actor at the national level – deals exclusively with more 'traditional' women's and gender equality issues. Previous attempts to get them on board with climate policy issues have so far failed. On the other hand, environmental organisations are showing increasing openness to gender issues, although this is still in its infancy.

Data and facts on the gender aspects of climate policy measures are fundamental to designing them in a gender-just way. For the first time, these were summarised for industrialised countries in the research project 'Gender and Climate' presented here, which also points to the large data gap and shows that there is still a long way to go to make climate policy sound and evidence-based in a gender-responsive manner (Spitzner et al., 2020).

Besides data, developing gender-responsive policies and measures – e. g. in the energy, transport, or agriculture sectors – requires challenging current priorities

fundamentally, especially, but not only with regard to economic growth. A stronger focus on public services and common welfare is needed. If the political will is lacking to tackle these issues, the consideration of gender equality might decay into ‘gender greenwashing’.

These restrictions, particularly the data gap, also hamper the application of the GIA in climate policy. Still, data, the expertise of the persons in charge, and above all resources (staff, time, money) are missing while climate protection specialists in the ministry are chronically overloaded. Even though there is a willingness to work on gender, it is desired that it ‘should not take much time’. Hence, again, without providing resources for the gender mainstreaming process to the ministerial departments dealing with climate change (as well as with other environmental issues) – additional staff and money for external expertise for example – there is little room for implementing a gender-responsive climate policy.

A genuine intersectional approach would make it even more difficult. Hankivsky (2012) points out that the aim of an Intersectionality Based Analysis (IBA) is to identify how different policies address the inequality experiences of different social groups. An intersectional perspective ‘changes the policy questions that are asked, the kind of data that is collected, how data is collected and how it is disaggregated and analysed to produce evidence-based policy making’ (Hankivsky, 2012, p. 177). In view of the existing powerful political pragmatism, however, she sees difficulties in introducing even more complicated policy processes. Changes would therefore have to take place gradually (*ibid.*, p. 178).

Next steps

In order to pave the way for gender mainstreaming in climate policy, the research project ‘Gender and Climate’ developed a wide range of recommendations (Spitzner et al., 2020). It included demands in the fields of methodology, data requirements and data collection, research needs and regulations. Moreover, the project’s conclusions included principles for integrating gender equality into climate policy, general policy recommendations and recommendations for the implementation of the Gender Impact Assessment.

One of the demands is that the development and adoption of a national climate policy gender action plan that should define concrete steps for the coming years, including responsibilities, deadlines and deliverables, in order to strengthen commitment and clarity for all stakeholders. This national GAP might be included in the projected Gender Strategy of the BMU.

More generally, it is necessary for the planning and development of climate policy programmes and measures to be based on the state of gender-responsive specialist research. It is also advisable to draw on specialist gender expertise (in-house or external) when planning and implementing climate policy measures. In order to secure gender competence in the long term, it should be integrated into the training of civil servants in institutions and administration.

Binding and regular application of the GIA or similar instruments makes an important contribution to taking gender consistently into account in the

development of climate policy projects. Appropriate resources should be available for this purpose. Accountability ensures that the instrument will be embedded within the institution.

And, finally, ongoing monitoring and evaluation with well-defined gender criteria and indicators to be developed from the gender dimensions elaborated in the research project are necessary (Spitzner et al., 2020, p. 39f). Particularly, the monitoring and evaluation might help to shed further light on the institutional and individual resistances and obstacles in the development of a climate policy, that is gender-just and addresses intersectional discriminations. Due to stakeholder participation and lobbying and a political will from the head of the administration, gender justice reappeared on the climate policy agenda of the German Federal Government. However, in order to make considerable progress towards gender-responsive climate policies, deeply embedded routines and knowledge cultures in the administration still need to be challenged. Experience so far has shown that this transformation will take time and appropriate governance structures and resources are necessary to make climate policy administrations more responsive and accountable for gender justice.

Notes

- 1 <https://www.bmu.de/themen/klima-energy/climate-protection/national-climate-policy/action-program-climate-protection/action-alliance-climate-protection/>
- 2 <https://www.bmu.de/en/topics/climate-energy/climate/national-climate-policy/greenhouse-gas-neutral-germany-2050/>
- 3 <https://www.bmu.de/themen/klima-energie/klimaschutz/national-climate-policy/action-program-climate-protection/action-alliance-climate-protection/>
- 4 An important intermediate step to the 2050 climate protection programme.
- 5 The measures of the plan were developed in the ministries responsible for transportation, energy, housing, agriculture and forests, etc., according to their sectoral emission targets. They were presented and (critically) commented on in the meetings of the Actions Alliance, though with very little impact.
- 6 The concept of GIA originated in development cooperation and was applied mainly at a project level. Later, this concept was transferred to other policy areas and levels (cf. Verloo/Roggeband, 1996; EC 1997/98, p. 3). In the Netherlands, Mieke Verloo and Conny Roggeband (1996) developed a GIA for impact assessment of political programmes in the field of social policy and education. The authors based their work on existing instruments of impact assessment, especially environmental impact assessment, and regarded the GIA as 'an instrument designed to analyse potential effects of new government policies on gender relations' (Verloo/Roggeband, 1996, p. 3).
- 7 The predecessor of this instrument was developed originally by the Institute for Social-Ecological Research (ISOE), in a project for and with the UBA and the German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) in 2002 and emulated environmental impact assessment (EIA). This early BMU GIA was successfully tested in the case of radiation (Hayn and Schultz, 2002); however, it was not routinely applied afterwards.
- 8 The term 'Gender+' (Gender plus) was first used in the European research project QUING ('Quality in Gender+ Equality Policies in Europe' [2006–2011]) (www.quing.eu). The authors of the QUING project apply the concept of intersectionality to the analysis of policy fields and use the concept of 'Gender+' to describe the relational and dynamic relationships between different forms of inequality. The Austrian project

'GIAClim' – Gender Impact Assessment in the context of climate change adaptation and natural hazards also uses the term 'Gender+' with reference to QUING: 'The term "Gender+" includes other individual factors such as age, origin or special needs in addition to gender in the analysis and thus makes multiple discrimination visible. Gender+ includes knowledge about the complexity of gender and structural inequalities' (Damyanovic et al., 2014, p. 23).

- 9 In addition to the differences, both concepts – intersectionality and interdependencies – also have significant commonalities: both are directed against an additive understanding of gender and inequality and the notion of a homogenous female or male subject. Both concepts consider it necessary to analyse the category of gender in its historically specific entanglement with other aspects of social and economic inequality.

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