

Feminist approaches to global environmental change

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Abstract

We are witnessing unprecedented changes at the planetary level, a phenomenon denoted as the global environmental change. Expanding academic literature and scientific assessment are documenting widespread impact of human activities on the Earth's systems. The policy response to global environmental change is represented by leading global sustainability and environmental policies which aim to decrease the human influence on planetary processes and improve well-being of all humans. Most of these policies have started to address existing gender inequalities and injustices only recently. The aim of the thesis is to critically analyse how feminist theory and gender inequality have been reflected in global environmental change and sustainability research and where they have been ignored. The guiding question is how innovative feminist conceptions can inform policy making and contribute to gender transformative action. The thesis focuses on a review of analytical frames that are useful for the feminist analysis of global environmental change. Drawing on feminist approaches, the thesis examines possible controversies within sustainability, climate change, disaster risk reduction and biodiversity policies, and analyses the selected themes resonating in these global policies. The feminist lens is applied to analyse core concepts used in global environmental change discourse to show possible gaps as well as future agenda for feminist approach to global environmental change and transformative sustainability change.

Keywords: global environmental change, feminist ecologies, critical frame analysis, gender transformative policy, sustainability