

WOCAN Webinar: Women Climate Entrepreneurs and the Enabling Ecosystem
Thursday, October 28, 2021

Marialena Vyzaki (W+ Standard Coordinator) presented the results of the [WOCAN Survey on Women in the Environmental Markets Ecosystem](#). Indeed, this is an unexplored area, it's a little-studied group that provides a unique opportunity to scale up impact on both gender and climate. This was a survey of 23 women project developers, carbon brokers, investors, auditors. Many respondents think there is a market for carbon units with gender co-benefits and that buyers are willing to pay a premium price for this. However, there is considerable lack of awareness about credits with benefits to women (such as the W+ Standard) and lack of data on women who are actively engaged in the environmental market ecosystem.

Katie Turner (Consultant, ecosystem development, gender/climate nexus, impact investing) provided an overview of her research on [Accelerating Women Climate Entrepreneurs \(AWCE\)](#), led by Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) in consortium with World University Service of Canada (WUSC) and Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) -which is funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC). Research findings will soon be launched by end of 2021, focusing on gender-responsive green growth recommendations to the Government of Canada, in line with its feminist foreign policy: (a) capacity-building, (b) mentoring, (c) financial models, and (d) partner engagement.

Hannah Simmons (Project Developer of REDD+ Project in Brazil, CEO of ERA) provided an overview of [ERA Brazil](#) activities. She presented her work on implementing (a) the REDD Cerrado Program (RCP), generating premium carbon credits certified to the Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS) and SocialCarbon Standard (SCS); and (b) the Pollen Program to catalyze the regeneration of degraded ecosystems in the Brazilian Cerrado, by encouraging regenerative agriculture and reforestation with native seedlings. In 2020 ERA Brazil won a grant from Switzerland as the Entrepreneur of the Year for the development of a carbon conservation project, and received funding from Carbon Streaming.

Sue Phillips (Gender Advisor, TFSVCM) shared insights of her experience working as the Gender Advisor to the [Task Force on Scaling Voluntary Carbon Markets](#), a privately-led initiative buy the UN Envoy on Climate Finance, Mark Carney to enable market standardization of high quality standards. The aim is to integrate gender considerations in the carbon principles, given the huge opportunity of funding this presents for gender. In her role she has approached the Task Force as a strategic opportunity establishing higher integrity of the market which, if focused on gender, it would have a ripple effect.

Rachel Vestergaard (Founder and CEO, Empower Co.) spoke about the launch of her company [EMPOWER CO.](#) in early 2022, committed to exclusively selling W+ units. A lot of building from the ground up, building the market, yet it's critical to be able to shape the market. She also aims to create awareness about gender co-benefits: most of the large corporations who are carbon buyers are not aware of what is out there (W+) and what fits into the wider goals. So far, big corporates are buyers of environmental commodities, are familiar with monetization of carbon and, if they are aware of co-benefits they will be even more familiar, they can seek out for units with gender co-benefits.

Chintal Barrot (2X Collaborative; The Rallying Cry) spoke about her work with the [2X Collaborative](#), a group of DFI and MDB investors, on how to promote gender-lens investing in the field of climate finance. She leads the DFI/MDB Investment Officers Working Group, whereby she designs and delivers trainings on how to ensure an investment meets the [2X criteria](#). She also co-authored the Climate Finance & Gender Toolkit of the 2X Collaborative, providing guidance on how to design climate finance investments that, at the same time, meet the 2X criteria. Finally, she is also an advisor to the *Rallying Cry: Catalysing Action on Climate Change and Gender in Africa*, a private sector-led initiative to surface and enhance the unique and critical role that women have to play in contributing to climate solutions. It consists of an inclusive, purpose-driven eco-system approach at the intersection of climate change and gender to allow for a wider, diverse range of voices to be heard.