

Proceeding Paper

# A Liable Gender Approach in Environmental Grind in Albania <sup>†</sup>

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**Abstract:** Albania has only begun to address environmental and sustainable development issues as recently as the 1990s. The environment has received the attention of consecutive governments that drafted the relevant legislation based on EU experience, ratified several conventions, and signed international agreements. Meanwhile, the national environment strategy and plan were approved, while environmental and sustainable development elements became cross-cutting issues. A particular aspect in the environmental legal framework is the gender aspect. This is relevant in contemporary society due to climate change, land degradation, and biodiversity conservation. All of these require gender attention and new environmental planning methods. This paper aims to analyze the implementation of the environmental legal framework through the gender perspective and gender roles.

**Keywords:** development; environment; women; legislation



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## 1. Introduction

Scholars point out that women have a 'special' relationship with the environment, as active users or managers. In studies on development issues, this approach has become known as WED (Women, Environment, and Development) [1,2]. WED's theoretical and well-known discussions focus on the current roles of women [3] as users and managers of natural resources [4,5] and, of course, the impact this has on society and the environment. As a common emphasis of policy and intervention, it represents an apparent attempt to link previous approaches to WID (Women in Development) with the latest environmental policy concerns.

Albania has a set of already consolidated laws which focus on the environment or treat it as a cross-sectoral issue. National environmental legislation has been developed in full compliance with the European legal framework (Acquis Communautaire) because integration into the European Union is the country's principal strategic and political objective. Additionally, during the last 15 years, both the legal and political framework has been agreed with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which is critical to ensure that the new laws in Albania are in line with the principles of sustainable development. In the meantime, the gender aspect, especially the empowerment of women and gender equality [6–13], is present in all laws, sectorial or cross-sectoral strategies, ratified conventions, or signed agreements related to the environment and development.

Regarding the structure, this paper presents the theoretical framework on gender and environment, a brief description of the environmental situation in Albania, with a focus on gender mainstreaming in environmental policies, and a scientific perspective towards the connection between gender and biodiversity loss desertification. Climate change impacts

all this in the local context of equal participation of women and men in the planning, implementing, and monitoring of various environmental issues.

## 2. Methodology

The methodology used is based mainly on a desk review of existing reports, research, strategies, the legislative framework in Albania, and different international policies related to the environment analyzed from a gender perspective. The international experience presented is a starting point for recommendations on how it can be adopted in the Albanian context. The focus is on recognizing the multiple dimensions of and interactions between gender equality and the environment within an integrated policy framework, considering inclusive growth and environmental considerations at local, national, and international levels.

## 3. Conclusions

Embarking on a gender-mainstreaming strategy calls for knowledge and understanding of the issue and validation of women's contributions to sustainable development by ensuring full and active participation of women together with gender equity in natural resource management, research, planning, and decision making at all levels.

Gender mainstreaming in environmental policies is an issue for both women and men. Therefore, the strategy to encourage their equal participation deliberately addresses men and makes them—together with women—responsible for a gender approach to environmental work. Additionally, the focus on gender must not only exist on the international level, still, it must advance within a specific local context, considering other elements of social gender diversity such as age, skills, ethnicity, etc.

## 4. Recommendations

The engagement of women and men in participatory processes at the local level is not a new concept in the Albanian context; many initiatives have been undertaken to date, especially regarding women's engagement in planning and decision-making processes. This engagement is crucial, not simply in the planning phase such as drafting the local development plans in the frame of decentralization and the new territorial reform, but also during the implementation and monitoring phase. These experiences should further strengthen women's voices in planning, implementing, and monitoring different environmental policies and actions

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