



"In a changing world where drastically new business models will be required to adapt to these changes, women can play a major role as the much needed change agents."

Dr Jeanne Ng, CLP

The panel event that was organized by the Hawthorn Club in cooperation with the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) at the UNFCCC COP-18 Climate talks was a great success. Women leaders discussed what overall energy challenges and opportunities they have in the different regions of the world. The panel, titled *Women Working in Energy*; was held on 29 November in Doha at the Qatar National Convention Centre where the Climate negotiations were taking place. The discussants included leading women from all over the world, including South Africa, the UAE and China.

The COP-18 Climate Conference was attended by some 9,000 delegates and the conference led this year to the adoption of the *Doha Climate Gateway*. In essence, the *Doha Climate Gateway* secures the continuation of the Kyoto Protocol to 2020 (and its carbon markets), and reaffirms that negotiations are well on track to deliver a new climate instrument with enhanced mitigation commitments by all countries by 2015, for implementation in 2020.



Meade Harris, Founder of the Hawthorn Club, Moderator

- **Andrea Bacher, Energy & Environment Manager, ICC**
- **Rouda Al Otaiba, Government, Head of the IRENA Section, Directorate and Counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UAE**
- **Mandy Rambharos, Senior Manager, Climate Change and Sustainable Development, Eskom**
- **Dr. Jeanne Ng, Director – Group Environmental Affairs, CLP**
- **Tanya Morrison, International Government Relations Manager for Energy and Climate, Shell**

The panel was asked to comment on how we can work in more innovative ways to create a low-emissions future, as well as addressing the question of which low emissions technologies they think should be deployed in the different regions and how they will become economically viable. They also addressed the questions of what role business should play in the UNFCCC talks - should it become more or less involved in the discussions?

Andrea set the scene by giving some background on the business landscape today and what that means for businesses in the future. There is a deluge of data about the persistently low levels of representation of women in leadership and its impact on business. Economic impact of women-owned firms in the US is \$3 trillion annually, they are growing faster than any other category, and are expected to create 1/3 of the new jobs in the US by 2018. Women are deeply engaged in business as employees, managers, executives, investors, entrepreneurs, but they remain underrepresented on executive teams and corporate boards on listed companies, she explained, this is bad for business. Companies with three or more women on their board of directors in four of five years, on average, outperformed companies with zero women on their board of directors:

- 84% return on sales
- 60% return on invested capital
- 46% return on equity

Rouda focused her presentation on women in the UAE more broadly. She said the reason that the UAE has so many women working both in traditional energy fields as well as in the diplomatic service like herself, is education. In fact, 40% of the UAE delegation at this COP was made up of women. She said in a country that is as young as hers, equal opportunity for education has been one of the key factors that have enabled young women to move ahead in these traditionally male dominated fields.

"The energy challenge of meeting increasing demand, supplying modern energy for all and reducing CO2 will need investment and innovative solutions. Women should join the energy sector to bring their unique insights to help address these challenges."

Tanya Morrison, Shell

Tanya discussed how we are to transition to this low carbon world and that she expects the world is going to need more engineers many of whom should be women. Everything from human resources to on the ground engineers will be needed, so she thinks we should be encouraging more women to join the industry. Tanya also made the point that it is so important for women that are in senior positions not to act like men, but rather embrace their more nurturing side. With regard to the UNFCCC climate talks, Tanya pointed out that women are often able to see the broader picture and we need women to help find solutions within these complex negotiations.

Mandy gave a brief overview of Eskom and discussed some of her previous experiences. Eskom is the largest electricity producer in Africa, with 90% from coal fired power generation and it has 42 GW of established capacity. They employ 43,000 people in South Africa and one of the key challenges they have is affordable access to energy. Eskom has a board made up of 7 women and 7 men, and 26% of senior management are women; there isn't an issue with gender equality at her company, in fact she explained that she has always been encouraged and promoted the same as her male colleagues. She started with a story about when she first started at Eskom and had to go to a site visit to one of their coal fired power stations and there were no boots for women to wear. Now she says all stations are equipped with all sizes of boots for site visits. She said she is seeing a real transformation of mindsets in South Africans, it is becoming normal for women to be working in these traditionally male roles and thinks that is something which all of us need to help encourage in our different regions. Her final message was that it is important to be yourself; women need embrace what we have and the skills that we possess.

Jeanne spoke about how the world is changing and quickly. In a changing world you need change agents. She said that women are well placed to be these much needed change agents; and in this changing world, there are increasing social and governance risks for these large infrastructure projects and these governance risks that companies face are all about people, and understanding people. Women are more sensitive to cultural differences. She talked a bit about how CLP has made custom fit helmets for the women in India that have been adapted so that women can carry some of the supplies on the top of their helmets as that is how they are used to carrying things around on their heads. It is small innovations like those that go a long way.

She said she has found that women need to be inspired in roles, rather than only encouraged by only monetary gain or power, many women do their jobs because they believe they are making a positive impact on society.

She finished by noting that it is important to find a company that appreciates you for who you are and your strength. She said, *'If the company doesn't appreciate you, then they do not deserve you.'*

There was a lively discussion after the talk, which Elaine Gibson-Bolton from SJ Berwin and a member of the Hawthorn Club actively participated. She said that we must normalize the fact that women are in these senior roles and encourage younger women to put themselves forward and push the boundaries.