

November 2017

## Trade Unions' Topline Demands for COP23



1

### Raise Ambition and Realise the Job Potential of Climate Action

COP 23 must deliver concrete emission-reduction initiatives before 2020. Governments must increase national contributions through the 2018 “facilitative dialogue,” which is designed to lay the ground for five-year review cycles. Science and fairness must be the guiding principles of this exercise.

2

### Deliver on Climate Finance and Support the Most Vulnerable

COP 23 must deliver certainty on how climate finance commitments will be achieved. Current contributions to mobilise USD 100 billion annually by 2020 should be the starting point for post-2020 finance.

3

### Commit to Securing a Just Transition for Workers and Their Communities

The Paris Agreement took a first step in securing the commitment to a Just Transition for workers to a zero-carbon economy. COP23 must consolidate it by parties incorporating Just Transition measures into their Nationally Determined Contributions, and recommend future work on this issue.

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# Foreword

## There are good jobs on a living planet

When it comes to strong, effective and just action on climate change, the trade union movement is on the right side of history. We stood strong for the Paris Climate Agreement as the basis for global action, and are relentless in pursuing more ambition on the ground. The current rate of greenhouse gas emissions is leading humanity to its own destruction. Unions have a vital role in helping the world change course.

Where some still claim that climate change action harms jobs, the international labour movement responds with a responsible, forward-looking answer: There are good jobs on a living planet. We must ensure a Just Transition to a low-emissions economy for all the workers and communities who depend on the unsustainable status quo, along with decent work and fair wages in their new jobs. This will

**People are more ambitious than their governments about climate action. Two-thirds of people want their governments to promote a Just Transition to a zero-carbon future.**  
ITUC Global Poll 2017

require national development plans, plus industry and business strategies, all developed with workers, employers and others. And it means developing improved social protection and labour market policies that accompany workers into new jobs.



**The Paris Agreement, together with the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, show the way to a zero-poverty, zero-carbon world. Let's follow that path together.**

As the harshest impacts of climate change are felt by the world's most vulnerable people, we must increase climate funding for relief, adaptation and social protection plans. Fiji's Presidency of COP 23 is a reminder to us all of the impact of climate change today.

The public sector and citizens themselves are vital in delivering action on climate, but need not act alone. In their role as investors, unions call on all pension funds to demand of the companies they invest in to present plans consistent with the Paris Agreement for a Just Transition, including job protection and, where necessary, re-skilling and redeployment measures<sup>1</sup>.

In 2015, government leaders signed the Paris Agreement, which will regulate international climate action from 2020. For unions, every step towards global governance in favour of rights, justice and solidarity in effective climate action is welcome. However, we know that governments' long-term objective of staying well below a 2°C increase in average temperatures (and aiming at 1.5°C), requires

dramatic changes to our production and consumption patterns. This will only happen if national emissions-reduction objectives, particularly in developed countries, are made more ambitious before 2018.

We need greater ambition if we are to trigger sustainable investments that result in decent, secure jobs – especially as half the world's workers are unemployed or in vulnerable employment.

Governments and employers must sit and engage with workers and their unions to commit to protecting our future through a Just Transition strategy. The inclusion of a Just Transition in the Paris Agreement is an important first step.

Unfortunately, some corporations refuse to diversify their energy base, and worse still, set out to frighten workers through deliberate misinformation on the necessary shift away from business-as-usual. But scaremongering will only increase the costs of action and make organising a Just Transition more difficult.

**Sharan Burrow, General-Secretary,  
International Trade Union Confederation**

**85% say the world would be a better place if governments were more committed to action on climate change. ITUC Global Poll 2017**

## Case Study

# Fiji: Rising sea levels mean rising unemployment

Current emission trends, which will very likely put us beyond the 2°C temperature increase threshold, will have catastrophic impacts in many countries. Coastal zones will be permanently flooded, including small island states in the Pacific where working families are already threatened by the risk of losing their homes and being displaced.

“Our islands are shrinking, our people are being asked to relocate and abandon their lands, culture and homes. Fijians that were used to living on agriculture are now moving to the city and adding their number to the list of unemployed.

We can do very little to curb the emissions that are causing the problem, and despite this we are the frontline of the impacts. We want to keep our lands and our homes, our jobs and rights, our families and our culture.” Agni Deo, Fiji



# 1. The international trade union movement and climate change – a timeline of action

Workers and their unions have a long history of action for climate justice; these key moments mark the international trade union movement's support for climate action:



## 2. A Just Transition for all workers and communities

Trade unions have a vital role to play in:

- protecting jobs and improving the quality of work by demanding sustainable industrial transformation;
- organising workers in new jobs emerging from environmentally sound investments and policies; and
- fighting for the Just Transition measures that will ensure we leave no one behind.

The science tells us what's required.

The industries of today are the foundations for the industries of tomorrow. The next 15 years will be critical. The opportunities for jobs are significant. So too are the challenges.

In order to have a chance to stay within the 2°C limit, and reach the internationally agreed 1.5°C objective, emissions should be reduced to zero as soon as possible, and no later than between 2055 and 2070.

Entire economic sectors must transform their carbon footprint to reach that goal. All jobs must be made climate-compatible.

### What a 2°C increase means

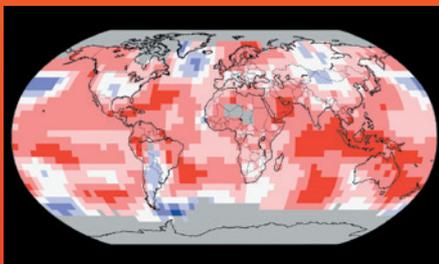
Melting glaciers will be a danger for Andean cities.

Ninety per cent of Andean glaciers will be lost. World coral ecosystems will be reduced to 10 per cent of pre-industrial levels. Crop yields could decrease by up to 30 per cent at 1.4 - 2°C in the Middle East and North Africa.

The worst is that the 2°C scenario, catastrophic as it is, is not the one followed by current policies. Unless ambitious policies are implemented, current trends will drive us to an increase of 4°C or more by 2100.

## Tipping Points – Global Risks

**The heat goes on:  
2016 Global warming record**



NOAA and NASA gave a global record warm for 13 consecutive months of heat in 2016. The planet has experienced almost 30 years – 358 consecutive months – where combined global land and ocean temperature was above average<sup>6</sup>.

**\$14 billion on climate related health costs**



The estimated costs of six climate change related events in the United States in the last decade came to \$14 billion dollars and involved 21,000 emergency room visits, nearly 1,700 deaths, and 9,000 hospitalisations<sup>6</sup>.

**Export earnings**

Credit: Oxfam



By 2080 between 65% and 100% of land currently used for coffee production will become unsuitable for production. In Uganda alone, coffee exports represent almost 30 % of foreign currency earnings. By 2050, 3% Africa's land will no longer be able to grow maize<sup>6</sup>.

**The ITUC has established a Just Transition Centre.**

It brings together and supports unions, companies, communities and investors in social dialogue with governments and cities to develop plans, agreements, investments and policies for fast and fair transition to zero carbon and zero poverty.



**JUST  
TRANSITION  
CENTRE**

[www.justtransitioncentre.org](http://www.justtransitioncentre.org)

**Jobs and Investment – All sectors hold opportunities**

Up to USD 90 trillion investment is needed in infrastructure by 2030 to lay the foundation for a zero-emissions future. And with infrastructure requirements in transport, energy, water systems and buildings, this means jobs. We must ensure these are decent jobs that contribute to building a fairer economic system as well.

A 2010 study for the ITUC by the Millennium Institute showed that if just 12 countries invested two per cent of GDP each year for five years in major sectors, this could generate around 48 million green jobs<sup>7</sup>.

The ILO found most studies show a positive net employment effect from policies facilitating the climate transition, with potential net gains of up to 60 million jobs.

Climate adaptation and resilience policies also offer opportunities for job creation in the public sector, especially at the municipal level, where capacities should be strengthened to respond to the climate challenge.

**FAST FACT – Cost of climate**

A 2017 study by The International Renewable Energy Agency showed that investments in renewable power and energy efficiency would add nearly one percent to global gross domestic product by 2050 – that’s a boost of USD 19 trillion, not to mention millions of new jobs.<sup>9</sup>

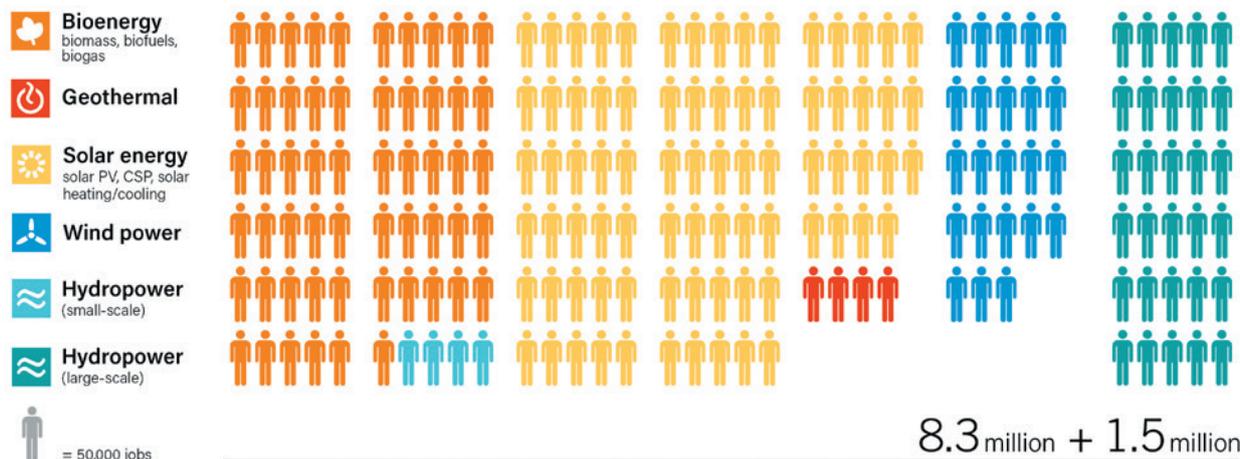
**FAST FACT – Cost of climate**

In the US, the building and appliance efficiency sectors directly employed nearly 2.2 million workers in 2016. Growth rates in this sector for 2017 are predicted to be 9-11 per cent.<sup>10</sup>

**FAST FACT – Cost of climate**

Globally, **9.8 million** people are employed in renewable energy, over half (62 per cent) live in Asia<sup>8</sup>.

**Jobs in Renewable Energy**



## Renewable energy is vital energy

The key to the transformation of our industries and our communities is reliable, renewable energy. Estimates vary, but studies show that at least 80 per cent of current fossil fuel reserves will need to be left in the ground to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement. Opponents of alternative energy sources cite their relative cost (though this is dropping rapidly) but ignore health and pollution costs in our current energy dependency on fossil fuels – not to mention the hefty subsidies these fossil fuel businesses enjoy.

### FAST FACT – Cost of climate

Canada could generate over **3.9 million** direct jobs in the building trades by 2050, and **19.8 million** jobs if induced, indirect, and supply-chain jobs are included.<sup>10</sup>

### FAST FACT – Cost of climate

**2.4 million** jobs in the European Union are “green jobs” in energy efficiency and their supply chains.<sup>12</sup>

## Case Study

# Jobs for tomorrow

Reaching net zero emissions by 2050 could generate nearly four million building trades jobs in Canada, according to new research.

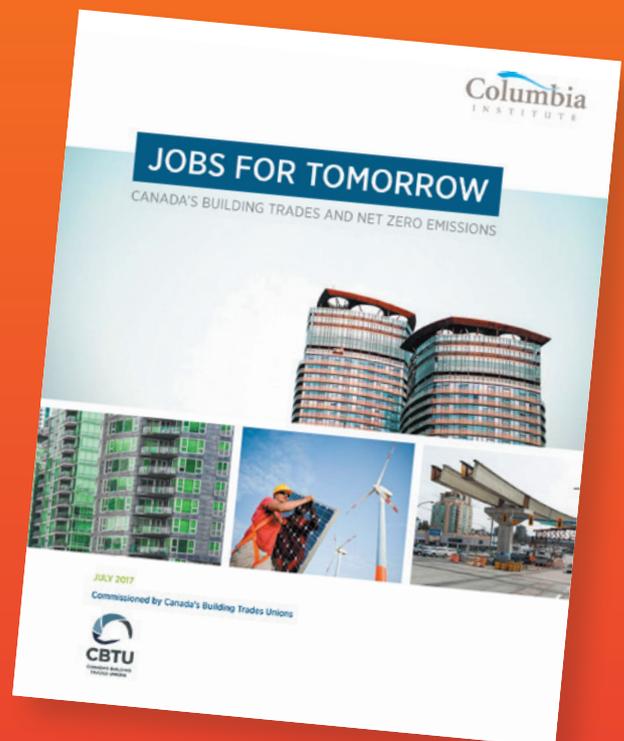
The study, *Jobs for Tomorrow - Canada's Building Trades and Net Zero Emissions*, looked at what would happen if the country met its obligations under the Paris Agreement.

Those building jobs would in turn generate 20 million roles in flow-on employment.

Bob Blakely, Canadian Operating Officer for Canada's Building Trades Unions, which commissioned the report<sup>13</sup>, said members' role in the shift to a low-carbon economy, “neither means nor implies the sudden end of the use of fossil fuels, but it does mean a shift in how fossil fuels are used and in what quantities.”

Among the other findings:

- **Green Buildings and Net-Zero Retrofits:** Based on current construction employment figures in the green building sector, with eco-friendly standards, the green building sector as we approach a 2050 net zero scenario amounts to 1,997,640 direct non-residential building construction jobs.
- **District Energy Systems:** Building small district energy systems in half of Canada's municipalities with populations over 100,000 would create over 547,000 construction jobs by 2050.



- **Renewable Energy:** Moving to an electrical supply grid composed primarily of hydroelectric (40 per cent) new wind, solar, geothermal and tidal power generation (43 per cent combined), and legacy nuclear (5 per cent), would result in over 1,177,055 direct construction jobs by 2050.
- **Transportation:** Building out USD 150 billion of urban transit infrastructure – including rapid transit tracks and bridges, subway tunnels, and dedicated bus lanes – between now and 2050 would create about 245,000 direct construction jobs.

Universal access and democratisation of energy is needed if we are to achieve ambitious climate action. Energy, along with other common goods that belong to humanity (like air and water), must be guaranteed for all. Stringent public oversight and administration are matters of public debate. Energy companies need to be restructured to allow for democratic involvement of those affected by their decisions, including workers.

We need new models of renewable energy driving decentralised systems of power generation and distribution. Some already exist. Cooperatives established to meet community energy needs are increasingly seen as a viable option and often assisted by municipalities. Energy transition plans must be developed to serve the public good, meet science-based emissions reduction targets, reduce energy poverty and facilitate cross-border cooperation in research and development. These plans should involve communities in decision making while ensuring that the energy transformation is equitable and sustainable according to the principles of a Just Transition and participatory democracy.

The transition to a sustainable, zero-carbon society must provide a means to pivot decisively away from ecologically and socially destructive methods of fossil fuel extraction (as in the case of “fracking” for shale gas and tar oil exploitation) towards renewable energy under public and democratic control. It also means prioritising the common good against the profits of large fossil fuel companies that continue to promote the use of ever greater quantities of coal, oil and gas.

Education is key to raising awareness about the climate emergency. Education for sustainable development (ESD) should be prioritised in plans to fight climate change.

### FAST FACT – Cost of climate

In the last two years, renewable energy jobs in solar and wind have increased by **3.3 per cent**.<sup>15</sup>

### FAST FACT – Cost of climate

Energy efficiency investment rose by **nine per cent in 2016**. For the first time, there is more investment in the electricity sector than in oil and gas.<sup>16</sup>

### Case Study

# A Just Transition in Scotland

The Scottish Trade Union Congress, Communication Workers Union Scotland, Public and Commercial Services Union Scotland, Unite Scotland, Unison Scotland, University and College Union Scotland, and WWF Scotland prepared a Joint Statement calling for a Just Transition in Scotland. The Joint Statement voices shared concerns that plans to tackle climate change have been too slow and not ambitious enough, and presses the Scottish government for bold measures, particularly in the Climate Plan, the new Energy Strategy and the new Climate Bill.

### FAST FACT – Cost of climate

The Spanish developer Solarpack Corp. Tecnológica won contracts to sell power from a 120-megawatt solar plant for USD 29.10 a megawatt-hour at an energy auction. That's the lowest price on record for electricity from sunshine, surpassing a deal in Dubai in May. It's the cheapest to date for any kind of renewable energy, and was almost half the price of coal power sold in the same event. According to Solarpack General Director Iñigo Malo de Molina, it's one of the lowest rates ever for any kind of electricity, anywhere. Bloomberg. September 2016.<sup>14</sup>



## No one left behind – We can do this with justice or without justice

Despite the opportunities for jobs, there will be significant challenges for many workers and their communities. The ITUC is determined that no one be left behind and that the energy revolution be supported by effective Just Transition measures.

In addition to sustainable industrial transformation, we must ensure that the energy costs for private households and companies remain affordable. The burden must be distributed fairly, taking into account pressures on low-income and vulnerable households, as well as energy-intensive industries and communities where transitional change will be felt most.

**"73% of people want governments to do more to limit pollution causing climate change. ITUC Global Poll."**

Unions want a clear vision of future industrial and energy options and the impact on workers. In sectors where job losses are unavoidable, unions and employers need to develop binding transition strategies that offer new opportunities to employees and actively shape structural change.

While companies make the necessary changes to compete in an environmentally sustainable economy, we must recognise the fears of people who believe they will lose their jobs. These workers are the backbone of many communities and must be guaranteed a future. Redeployment, the chance to further develop their skills and make a contribution in new or transitioned jobs, along with secure pensions, must be guaranteed.

An economic and social conversion of this magnitude will require robust research, innovation and training policies to help labour markets adapt. Vocational training and the package of transition policies should not be limited to a few wealthy countries, and decisions should be made in coordination with workers and trade union representatives. Trade unions demand financial support be made available so that developing countries can also deploy Just Transition measures.



## A Just Transition for all workers – all sectors

This transformation of sectors and industries must be supported by the Just Transition measures enshrined in the Paris Agreement. Carbon-dependent communities and workers must not be forced to bear the costs of change, and plans for industrial transformation in all sectors must be developed.

The challenge for unions is to be part of the dialogue that drives investment (both public and private), shapes industries for sustainability and ensures decent work. Through social dialogue, consultation and collective bargaining, workers have a right to be involved in designing their future.

Particularly in developing countries, workers and communities are on the frontline of climate change. They need to see concrete plans for a future that offers security and opportunity.

Transformation is not only about phasing out polluting sectors. It is about creating new clean industries, new jobs, new investment and the opportunity for a more equal and just economy. It is about community revitalisation and development so that, for example, the closing of a mine brings new investment, jobs and infrastructure, rather than leaving workers and their families jobless and stranded.

The Just Transition Centre, established by the ITUC and its partners, will be a vital part of this.

### Just Transition Roundtable Oslo, Norway

The Just Transition Centre is working together with LO Norway, the Norwegian Confederation of Enterprise, Oslo City Council and the public transport authority Ruter, to host a roundtable in early 2018, aimed at ensuring that workers and jobs are included in planning for the banning of vehicles from Oslo's centre by 2019 – part of the measures being taken by the city to cut emissions by 50 per cent by 2020.



### Just Transition Roundtable Vancouver, Canada

The Just Transition Centre is working with unions, city government, and other local stakeholders to hold a roundtable on Just Transition early 2018, with a focus on transport and the building industries in the City of Vancouver and lower mainland.



# 2020 Milestones<sup>17</sup>

Milestones for six sectors have been identified that must be met by 2020 in order to send global greenhouse-gas emissions on a downward trajectory for the good of everyone.

## Energy

In the power sector, to deliver the 2020 turning point, renewables will make up at least 30 per cent of the world's electricity supply – up from 23.7 per cent in 2015. This would also require that no new coal capacities be built, and that all existing coal-fired power plants be in the process of being retired.

## Infrastructure

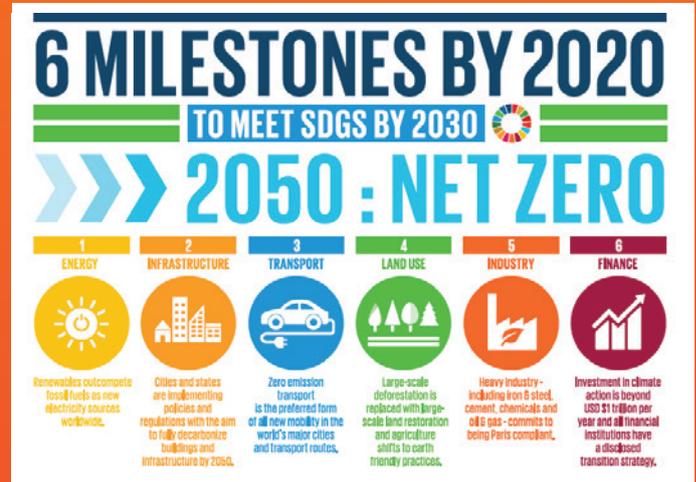
For the built environment, cities and states will, by 2020, initiate clear action plans to fully decarbonise edifices and infrastructures by mid-century, and be funding these plans to the tune of USD 300 billion annually. More immediately, cities should be updating and upgrading three per cent of their building stock to zero- or near-zero emissions structures every year, starting no later than 2020.

## Transport

For the mobility sector, we need to see electric vehicles making up at least 15 per cent of new car sales globally by 2020, a major uptick from the one per cent market share that battery powered and plug-in hybrid vehicles now claim. It would also require a doubling of mass-transit utilisation in cities, a 20 per cent increase in heavy duty vehicle fuel efficiencies, and a 20 per cent decrease in greenhouse gas emissions from aviation per kilometer travelled.

## Land Use

Because emissions from deforestation and land-use changes represent a full 11 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, land-use policies will be enacted to drastically reduce forest destruction and begin to shift to reforestation and afforestation efforts. If emissions from deforestation can be zeroed out next decade, then the forest sector can become a growing carbon sink by 2030, helping achieve global net-zero emissions within two decades after. Meanwhile, sustainable agricultural practices can reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and even increase CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration in healthy, well-managed soils.



## Industry

Heavy, carbon intensive industries – such as iron and steel, cement, chemicals, oil and gas production – emit more than one-fifth of the world's CO<sub>2</sub>, and that's not including the electricity and heat demands of these processes. By 2020, these industries will develop and publish plans for increasing their efficiencies and cutting emissions, with a goal of halving emissions by 2050.

## Finance

The financial sector needs to rethink how it deploys capital, and will by the 2020 turning point be mobilising at least USD 1 trillion every year for climate action, most of which will come from the private sector that finally seizes the tremendous opportunities of the low-carbon transition. Meanwhile, governments, private banks, and global lenders like the World Bank need to increase their issuance of green bonds, which finance climate mitigation efforts, to a USD 1 trillion market by 2020, a more than tenfold increase above the roughly USD 80 billion issued in 2016.

## Adaptation must not be forgotten

Adaptation policies can increase resilience while protecting livelihoods and quality of life. Measures aimed at improving social protection and working conditions will reduce social vulnerability and climate change impacts while improving resilience and workers' adaptive capacity. Yet adaptation measures can also have unintended consequences, increasing inequalities and aggravating communities' vulnerabilities. This is why adaptation must be understood as a package of planned and collectively designed measures, which must take into account individual and sectoral needs and capacities, with the labour dimension at its heart. The formalisation of disaster response jobs, for first responders,

emergency service workers and those who take on cleaning up after disasters is important for governments to ensure investments in decent jobs. Preparing coastal cities and regions for higher sea levels, and constructing tidal barriers and floodwalls, will take major investments in the future to "climate proof" vulnerable areas in developing and developed countries.<sup>18</sup>

## A rights-based climate response

People will support measures that improve the overall quality of life and their chance to live with dignity. Integrating rights in climate policies is essential if communities are to contribute to broader social progress. Respect for indigenous peoples' rights, gender equality, workers' rights, and migrants' rights are fundamental aspects of effective climate policies.

### Case Study

## Adaptation Policy: Seasonal Forecasting Senegal

Climate change will continue to have far-reaching consequences for agriculture that will disproportionately affect poor and marginalised groups who depend on agriculture for their livelihoods and have a lower capacity to adapt.

Rain-fed agriculture will remain vital for food security in sub-Saharan Africa, where nearly 90 per cent of staple food production will continue to come from rain-fed farming systems.

Farmers need climate-smart planning, management and recovery approaches that will assist them to reduce their vulnerability to climate induced risks and shocks.

Seasonal climate forecasts, communicated in accessible and meaningful ways to farmers, can provide invaluable knowledge for local agricultural decisions and livelihoods.

In Senegal local knowledge and scientific knowledge has come together – both informing one another and reducing climate risk for farmers<sup>19</sup>.

### Case Study

## Adaptation Policy: Campaigning for Social Protection, Dominican Republic

**Massiel Figuereo CNUS, the National Confederation of Trade Union Unity, Dominican Republic**

"I say that in my country the future was yesterday, because we are already suffering the effects of global warming, with a dreadful drought since last February. We are 20 weeks older than the usual annual average, to the point that hurricanes are missing! There are only 35 days left of water reserves in the two main cities..."

The only positive point of this situation is that this entails a unification of the Haitian and Dominican farmers. The situation is worse in Haiti, because there is no irrigation system there. We signed the

programs of the Government and the ILO. But that is not enough. Challenging the social protection system aggravates the situation.

In my country, only 30 per cent of the population is covered by social security. Until fifteen years ago, however, all Dominicans had free access to the hospital, but since the 2001 reform it is necessary to be covered by social security. This is an extremely important issue in the fight against global warming because it is public health when drinking water is lacking and diseases are transmitted more easily."

# Spotlight on Public Transport



## Mobilise for public transport action

To meet the Paris climate goals, we need the ambitious expansion of public transport around the world. The environmental benefits of mass public transport are enormous, but so too are the social and economic benefits of improving access to mobility, reducing congestion and air pollution in cities and creating millions of new, decent jobs.

Public transport interventions were contained in approximately 30 of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) submitted before the COP 21 in Paris. Given the urgency of avoiding a climate catastrophe, the level of detail behind these pledges is grossly inadequate. Increasing urbanisation also means public transport is not expanding fast enough to meet the needs of cities. The majority of public transport services in developing countries are still informal, and in some cities, informal services amount to a staggering 85 per cent of public transport. Millions of people, especially women, are still unable to adequately access the services and goods needed for a decent quality of life.

## Organise and campaign for millions of new, decent jobs

High-quality public transport investments that reduce emissions will also create millions of jobs. A Global Climate Jobs report concluded that most of these roles will work on better public transport networks in poor and middle-income countries<sup>20</sup>. However, it is not only these countries which will benefit. A study by the Transportation Equity Network found that 20 US metropolitan areas shifting 50 per cent of their highway funds to transit would generate 1,123,674

new transit jobs over a five-year period. In New York City, this shift would create 155,824 new transit jobs. Plus, jobs created through transport investments are about 40 per cent more likely to be unionised<sup>20</sup>.

Investment in public transport infrastructure and services also helps create jobs in the supply chain. According to the International Association of Public Transport (UITP), every direct job in public transport in Europe creates four jobs in other sectors of the economy<sup>22</sup>.

Expanding public transport is a vital opportunity to promote gender equity by creating decent jobs which attract and retain women, as well as challenging occupational segregation in the sector which could be worsened by automation.

Trade unions will also take the necessary action to ensure that ILO Recommendation 204 on the transition from the informal to the formal economy is implemented.

## Transport commitments<sup>23</sup>

The ITF and ITUC will mobilise and build alliances for a Just Transition which includes:

- Ambitious public transport commitments by national governments;
- Public ownership, to guarantee the benefits of new projects are equally shared;
- Democratic participation by trade unions and community organisations in decision making about public transport policy; and
- Integration of informal transport workers, with guaranteed access to financing, skills development, decent income and social security.



# 3. Strengthening climate governance

Regulations, timelines, shared objectives and common rules are fundamental for ensuring that there are no free riders in climate action, and that the most vulnerable are protected.

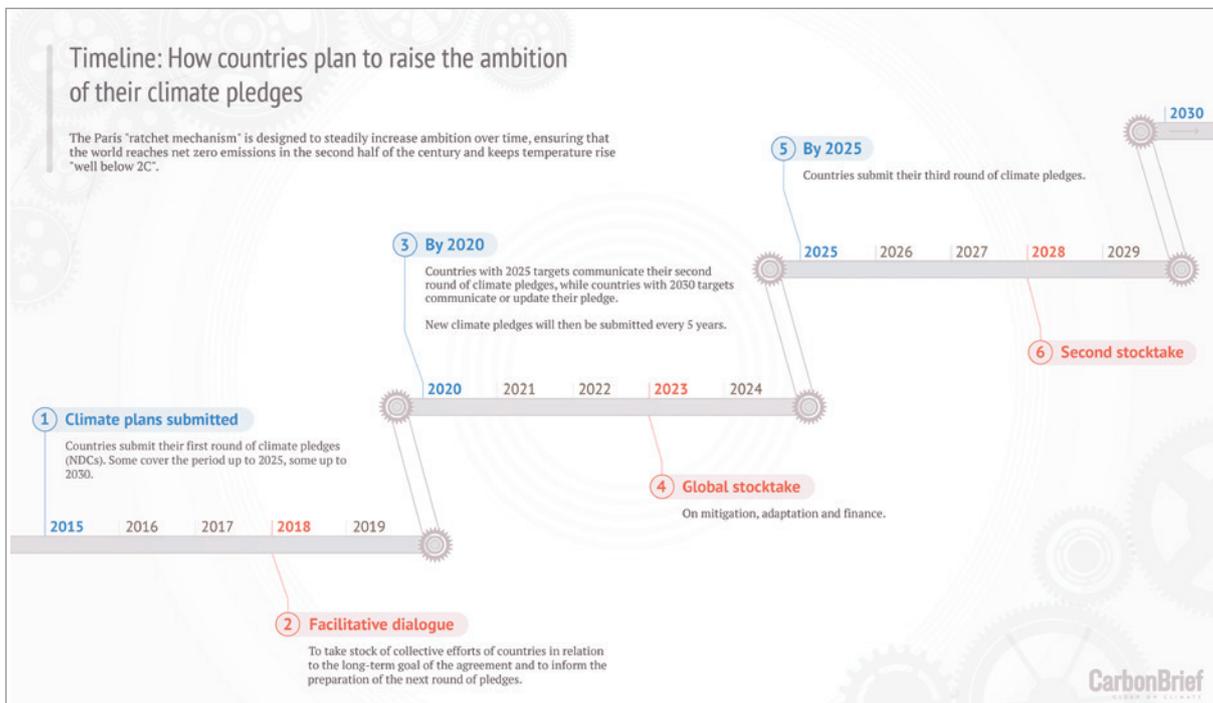
In the lead up to the Paris Agreement, unions mobilised for an agreement that would give us a chance to deliver a fair world. Achieving this required that:

- Governments raise their ambition on emissions-reduction targets before and after the Paris Agreement comes into force;
- Developed countries provide clarity on the delivery of their climate finance commitments; and
- A binding UN agreement recognises for the first time that there is a need to protect workers and communities in the biggest policy-driven transition of our history by committing to putting in place Just Transition strategies.

The Paris Agreement was a diplomatic success, but the goal it set for the international community is not accompanied by clear targets nor the means to make it achievable any time soon. Significant work is needed both nationally and internationally to fill the gaps.

We must ensure that:

- National contributions are comprehensive and incorporate aspects related to employment and a Just Transition.
- The five-year review cycles agreed in Paris are well designed, allowing national contributions to be measured against each countries' responsibilities and capacities, with input from civil society.
- There are clear standards for measuring progress, ensuring promises are kept.
- Climate finance commitments are delivered, including the mobilisation by developed-country governments of USD 100 billion by 2020. That amount should be built on to reach new, more ambitious commitments, which are critical to supporting developing countries in their development objectives.
- Funds are committed for financing Just Transition measures at the national, sectoral and regional level.
- Technology and knowledge transfer becomes a reality. Support for research and innovation in developing countries, including a substantial increase for research and development budgets, is needed to ensure ownership and appropriateness of innovations, as well as preventing new forms of dependency.



# 4. Honouring the Just Transition commitment

## UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement:

The commitment from governments to secure a Just Transition for workers appears in the Preamble of the Paris Agreement, along with other references to the need to protect human rights and achieve gender equality. Unions believe Just Transition policies taken to protect workers and communities should feature as a permanent item on government agendas, with regular progress reports.

Here's how to ensure momentum for a Just Transition is matched with political action.

- **Incorporate Just Transition commitments into the Nationally-Determined Contributions (NDCs):** In this way governments could explain how they have assessed the employment impacts of their decisions, and most important, the measures they will take to support workers. (Some governments, such as South Africa, have already incorporated this in their first NDC.)
- **Maintain Just Transition for workers as a permanent theme within the forum on Response Measures under the Paris Agreement:** Another stream of work relates to the future work program on Response Measures under the Paris Agreement, which could build on previous work done under the subsidiary bodies – where Just Transition featured for two years as a key part of the Forum on Response Measures. Having a dedicated, technical space, where good practice or challenging situations could be presented and debated, would contribute to further educating climate negotiators on these issues and build a bridge to progress happening on the ground. The creation of an ad-hoc group of experts had been decided in 2016, although after one meeting there is no indication this work will be continued. It is important to ensure that strong support and calls for more in-depth technical work and experience-sharing expressed in the Forum find a reflection in the work programme.
- **Launch a “Katowice initiative for a Just Transition” under the COP, providing a high-level political space to maintain the commitment to Just Transition:** With COP 24 (2018) to be organised in Katowice, the main city of the Polish coal country, we need a message of empathy and commitment to

communities which might be hard hit by the zero-carbon transition. The UNFCCC should explore the possibility of organising a high-level meeting between environment and labour ministers to launch the “Katowice initiative for a Just Transition” under the COP, which could provide a space for honouring the commitment to protect these communities, gather experiences from parties in supporting workers in the transition, and encourage climate donors to support projects aiming at creating sustainable jobs.

- **Secure funding commitments for Just Transition projects under the Green Climate Fund (GCF):** Climate-governance progress could also be made at the Green Climate Fund (GCF), where projects aimed at supporting communities and workers in their diversification efforts should be funded. The idea of a “Just Transition Fund”, which has been promoted in Europe by trade unions and civil society allies, should be supported for projects in developing countries.

Inclusion of Just Transition in the 2018 Facilitative Dialogue: In Paris, governments agreed on 2018 as the first time they would take stock of their efforts, and then use that assessment to inform more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by 2020. The Facilitative Dialogue (FD) 2018 will be followed with a global stock-take every five years, starting in 2023. This process is important for trade unions to engage their governments to introduce Just Transition aspects into their NDCs.

## International Labour Organization (ILO):

The ILO should play a more ambitious role in supporting the transition towards a zero-carbon world. Until now, most of its work has focused on helping governments create green jobs. But a more forward-looking approach is needed in which the ILO develops its own international Labour Standard for managing the Just Transition and supporting governments, employers and trade unions in facing transition challenges. It should also test the impact of its own economic and social recommendations on the environment, as these tend to legitimise investments in unsustainable infrastructures.

## Case Study

# Repowering Port Augusta

When two coal-fired power stations closed, hundreds of jobs and the lifeblood of Port Augusta, a remote community of 14,000 in South Australia, were put at risk.

For five years, power station workers and their union took a plan for solar thermal power to state and federal government, as well as global energy giants in France and the United States. Their demand was simple: A Just Transition for the remote community and a zero-carbon future for people everywhere. A feasibility study and three companies interested in building a renewable alternative added further cause for optimism.

Finally, after some false dawns, in August 2017, the state government announced work on the AUD 650 million facility would start the following year. The construction phase would create 650 jobs, with 50 ongoing positions in Port Augusta requiring similar skills to those required at the previous coal station that closed in May 2016.

“Building solar thermal with storage in Port Augusta will create new jobs, on-demand solar power, reduce emissions and put downward pressure on power bills,” said Gary Rowbottom, a former coal-fired power station worker and chairperson of Repower Port Augusta.

What it means:

- **24-hour solar power:** Solar thermal uses a field of mirrors to shine the sun’s light to the top of a

tower, heating molten salt which is stored and used to power a steam turbine delivering solar energy when we need it, day and night.

- **Action on climate change:** Building solar thermal in Port Augusta will make South Australia less reliant on dirty, polluting gas-fired generators. The project will remove as much pollution as taking 20,000 cars off SA’s roads.
- **Cheaper power for South Australia:** Building solar thermal in Port Augusta will make SA less reliant on gas generation – and it’s gas that is to blame for skyrocketing power prices in our state. Solar thermal will increase competition in the electricity market and help make South Australia’s electricity cheaper over time, wiping 90 million dollars off bills across the state<sup>24</sup>.



- **An ILO standard on Just Transition:** While the Paris Agreement sets the standard for climate action, there is no equivalent giving governments binding guidance on how to transition to a zero-carbon economy in a socially fair manner. In the same way the ILO has developed standards on other workplace issues (child labour, health and safety, the transition from informal to formal economy, etc.), the organisation and its tripartite constituencies have the legitimacy and capacity to develop a standard on Just Transition. After two attempts in 2013 and 2016, the next possible moment for negotiating a standard is 2021. It should not be missed.

- **Implementation of the Guidelines on Just Transition:** In 2013, the International Labour Conference formally discussed for the first time the need to define the concept of Just Transition. A negotiation followed in 2015, which led to the adoption of the ILO

Guidelines<sup>25</sup>. These must now be implemented, and a piloting phase in a sufficient number of countries should be organised to test the comprehensiveness of the tool, and guide the process of the standard development, as described above.

- **The “Green” strategy and the World Employment and Social Outlook 2018 (WESO):** On the occasion of its centenary in 2019, the ILO will launch initiatives to shape the organisation’s work in the next century. One of them, dubbed “Green”, covers its intention to incorporate more environmental challenges in its work. That includes adding an assessment of the employment impacts of climate change and other environmental challenges in its annual report (WESO). The release of this report in 2018 should influence the UNFCCC Facilitative Dialogue and further encourage the inclusion of employment and Just Transition aspects in the NDCs.

## The G20 and OECD

With the focus of climate policies now turning to the implementation phase, as well as G20 Chair Argentina's focus on employment, the group could play a more active role in coordinating policy responses to climate change.

In 2017, the OECD made recommendations on how the Just Transition concept could be incorporated in future G-20 work<sup>26</sup>, such as by countries sharing policy experience in planning economic diversification. These recommendations offer one way forward.

## Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030

Just Transition sits between SDG 8 on Decent Work for All and SDG 13 on Climate Action. Even if Just Transition is not listed in the indicators being negotiated for these two goals, trade unions must continue emphasising the linkages between them.

The SDGs also allow us to measure progress on prosperity in countries which have expressed high ambitions on the climate front, and might need support on other social aspects.



**COP23 | FIJI**  
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE  
**BONN 2017**

## Where to find the Trade unions @ COP23

### Inside the UNFCCC conference halls:

- Every day, 9:00 – 10:00 Trade union meeting  
(check screens under TUNGO)

**- ITUC booth**

**- TUNGO office**

(within the “constituency offices” space)

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> [https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/shareholder\\_resolution\\_principles.pdf](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/shareholder_resolution_principles.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup> <http://www.sustainlabour.org/documentos/Resolution.Assembly.EN.pdf>
- <sup>3</sup> [http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc\\_constitution.pdf](http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc_constitution.pdf)
- <sup>4</sup> [http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/CONGRESS\\_Decisions\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/CONGRESS_Decisions_EN.pdf) Page 65
- <sup>5</sup> <http://www.sustainlabour.org/documentos/Trade%20Union%20Resolution%20on%20Labour%20and%20Environment.pdf>
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- <sup>7</sup> <https://www.ituc-csi.org/growing-green-and-decent-jobs,11011?lang=en>
- <sup>8</sup> <http://www.irena.org/menu/index.aspx?mnu=Subcat&PriMenuID=36&CatID=141&SubcatID=3852>
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- <sup>11</sup> <http://www.civicgovernance.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Columbia-Jobs-for-Tomorrow-web-revised-August-14-2017-final.pdf>
- <sup>12</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/CE\\_EE\\_Jobs\\_main%2018Nov2015.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/CE_EE_Jobs_main%2018Nov2015.pdf)
- <sup>13</sup> [http://www.civicgovernance.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Jobs-Tomorrow-Final-Media-Release-August\\_10\\_17.pdf](http://www.civicgovernance.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Jobs-Tomorrow-Final-Media-Release-August_10_17.pdf)
- <sup>14</sup> [http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc\\_frontlines\\_briefing\\_cop22\\_en.pdf](http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc_frontlines_briefing_cop22_en.pdf)
- <sup>15</sup> [http://www.ren21.net/gsr-2017/chapters/chapter\\_01/chapter\\_01/#sidebar-1-jobs-in-renewable-energy](http://www.ren21.net/gsr-2017/chapters/chapter_01/chapter_01/#sidebar-1-jobs-in-renewable-energy).
- <sup>16</sup> <https://www.iea.org/publications/wei2017/>
- <sup>17</sup> <https://www.nature.com/news/three-years-to-safeguard-our-climate-1.22201>
- <sup>18</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-climate-newyork-plan/new-york-lays-out-20-billion-plan-to-adapt-to-climate-change-idUSBRE95A10120130612>
- <sup>19</sup> <https://www.mrfcj.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2013-04-16-Senegal.pdf>
- <sup>20</sup> Global Climate Jobs, Global Climate Jobs Campaign, September 2015.
- <sup>21</sup> Reversing inequality, combating climate change: A climate jobs programme for New York State, June 2017, Worker Institute, Cornell University.
- <sup>22</sup> Public transport: The smart green solution, UITP.
- <sup>23</sup> For more information on trade unions, climate change and public transport, please contact the International Transport Federation (ITF) Alana Dave: [Dave\\_Alana@itf.org.uk](mailto:Dave_Alana@itf.org.uk).
- <sup>24</sup> <https://repowerportaugusta.org>
- <sup>25</sup> [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/documents/publication/wcms\\_432859.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_432859.pdf)
- <sup>26</sup> OECD, Investing in Climate, Investing in Growth, 2017.





Publisher responsible in law:  
**Sharan Burrow**, General Secretary

**ITUC**  
5 Bld du Roi Albert II, Bte 1, 1210-Brussels, Belgium  
Tel : +32 2 224 0211 Fax : +32 2 201 5815  
Email : [press@ituc-csi.org](mailto:press@ituc-csi.org) Web : [www.ituc-csi.org](http://www.ituc-csi.org)