

RAISE CLIMATE AMBITION BY DELIVERING A JUST TRANSITION

Scientists are again raising the alarm. A domino-like cascade of melting ice, warming seas, dying forests, etc. could tilt the earth into a “hothouse” state beyond which human efforts to reduce emissions will be increasingly futile. Unions want decent jobs on a living planet. Building trust through the guarantees of Just Transition measures will make it possible for governments to increase the necessary climate ambition and address the impact of climate change on workers and their communities. We cannot save the planet without ensuring employment and effectively addressing poverty are a part of the zero-carbon world.

THE WORLD IS NOT ON TRACK TO LIMIT TEMPERATURE RISE TO 1.5°C.

While it is still technically feasible to avoid a 1.5°C rise in temperature, behavior and technologies will need to shift across the board in order to achieve these emissions reductions. Bold climate action can deliver USD 26 trillion in economic benefits through to 2030 (compared with business-as-usual) while generating more than 65 million jobs and avoiding more than 700,000 premature deaths from air pollution in 2030.

Through coordinated actions, unions have put a “Just Transition” approach to climate change in the Paris Climate Agreement and on the political agenda. This has led to the involvement of unions in national and sectoral climate policies. In the Australia, Canada, Ghana, Germany, New Zealand, the Philippines, Scotland, South Africa, Uruguay and others, unions are at the table with their governments on Just Transition climate policies. In Spain, the government recently signed a Just Transition agreement with the unions on the phase-out of coal in a way that respects the interests of the workers and their communities.

The UN climate conference COP24 in Katowice in Poland in December has to step up the commitments by governments. Unions want decent jobs on a living planet. Building trust through the guarantees of Just Transition measures will make it possible for governments to raise ambition at the national level and involve unions and communities in the development of transition plans in cities, municipalities, provinces, states

and across all industries and sectors. Every job needs to become greener.

At COP24, unions want their governments to commit to the Polish government initiative – the “Silesia Declaration” – to drive agreement on a Just Transition for workers and the creation of decent work and quality jobs. More unions, in all regions and in all economic sectors need to push their governments and companies to take up a Just Transition and contribute to a low-carbon future. Solidarity will be central to support less wealthy countries and their unions in their bid to build just transitions that leave no one behind.

- » In 2017, climate-related disasters were responsible for thousands of deaths and USD 320 billion dollars in economic losses.
- » The last 19 years included 18 of the warmest years on record.
- » Even in a scenario of effective climate change mitigation, temperature increases resulting from climate change will lead to the loss of the equivalent of 72 million full-time jobs by 2030 due to heat stress.
- » The renewable energy sector employs 10.3 million people, with most jobs in Asia.