



Adding a labour and social dimension to the global climate change regime:

European trade union recommendations for COP 11

We need a labour and social dimension to the Convention, covering quality jobs, information and consultation, and union engagement

Climate change already has an impact on workers and their families. Indeed extreme climatic events often result in workers losing their jobs, for some of them only temporary, but for the others the loss can be irreversible. The recent hurricanes in the United-States have resulted in a net loss in employment of 40.000.

The European trade unions support the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and further reduction of the GHG emissions. They are convinced that it is an historical opportunity for social progress and quality job creation in a low carbon economy. But these needs must be taken into account in the design of the mitigating policies and “employment transition programmes” must put in place.

The overall sustainability of climate policies must be ensured. This requires an equitable energy transition which : a) improves the quality of life for all, especially the poorest of the planet b) improves access to affordable energy for all c) secures income and creates *decent work* (ILO decent work agenda covers : employment, social protection, standards and rights at work and social dialogue). These principles are recognised by Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation as key means to reconcile the necessity and demand for energy with the protection of human health, the atmosphere, and the natural environment.

Union and workers engagement can make the difference in the battle against climate change. Complying with the Kyoto Protocol without causing social problems is possible, provided that the unions are given adequate means and rights for information and consultation on climate and energy issues.

Mainstreaming labour and social in all UNFCCC negotiating items

Employment-related objectives should be mainstreamed in all the negotiation items under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, especially in the negotiations items related to :

- **COP/MOP**

- **Flexible mechanisms** : CDM and JI projects should tally, as a priority, with actual investment delivering decent work meeting the internationally recognised labour standards. Free and democratic trade unions should be systematically consulted during the process of adopting and implementing CDM initiatives, and their opinion should be a formal requirement for approval of projects by the CDM Executive Committee.
- **Art 3.9 of the Kyoto protocol**: the discussions on commitments for annex I parties after the 1st implementation period of the Kyoto protocol should be initiated at the COP11. We need a long term signal to trigger the required public and private investments and provide sufficient time to manage properly the employment and skills transition for affected workers.

- **SBSTA** :

- **Adaptation** : The 5 years work programme should acknowledge the need to involve all relevant stakeholders in the design of adaptation strategies, including independent trade unions and improve the understanding of the employment aspects of impacts of, and vulnerability and adaptation to, climate change;
- **Mitigation** : A common understanding of the implications of climate change mitigation for employment is needed. The issues to be addressed for each relevant sector should cover employment aspects of climate change mitigation. The employment potential of available and future measures and technologies should be assessed, and socio- economic scenarios of pathways for long term emissions reduction, with employment as a key element, should be worked out. The impact of the liberalisation of electricity and gas markets on emission reductions should also be assessed.
- **Technology transfer**: the annex I Parties should promote Research and Development and technology transfer of clean technologies and renewable energies, and provide appropriate training, to the developing countries. Such programmes should promote sustainable development and social equity.

- **SBI** :

- **National communications**: In their national reports to the UNFCCC, Annex I countries should provide information on the social and employment aspects of climate change impacts and mitigation measures. This should include estimates of job creation and losses and the implementation of employment transition programmes.
- **Art 6 of the Convention** : The unions call on the European union and the member states to develop a strategy for the education and training pillars of article 6 of the Convention, and to make full use of the existing trade unions' capacities for training and education.

Positive advances towards these ends at COP11 would provide trade unions with the concrete tools they need to convince the workers that support for UNFCCC will translate into positive employment impacts in the long term.

The European trade union delegation in Montreal

ETUC has 77 member organisations in 35 European countries, and represents 60 millions workers.

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