
Trade Union Recommendations to COP13

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - UNFCCC
Bali, Indonesia (3 -14 December, 2007)

This Document is available at:

http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/LobbySheetRecommendation1_P_12Bd.EN.pdf

The world's trade unions greet country delegates attending this thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC. It is essential that COP 13 call on industrialised economies (Annex I countries) to respect the Kyoto Protocol and to sign a mandate for a new period with stronger commitments, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, bearing in mind the differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities of developing countries and their need for international assistance. On this basis, all countries need to play a part in the next Kyoto agreement.

COP13 must lead governments to action for preventing climate change impacts on communities and the environment. Practical, urgent and far-reaching commitments are also required to ensure sustainable adaptation, especially in vulnerable countries, particularly through directing long-term investment flows, undertaking just transition policies and engaging with the working people in meeting the challenges of climate change.

Workers and trade unions must participate in these strategies. We therefore urge COP13 to move forward on the following policies and actions that are further developed in the Trade Union statement for COP13: http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpP_12Bc.EN.pdf

Trade Unions support an ambitious Kyoto II agreement

Trade Unions support continued negotiations to extend Kyoto Protocol beyond current commitment years. We therefore call on Parties to:

→ **Work towards a long term agreement for equitable sharing of the burden of emission reduction between developed and developing countries.** Trade unions urge Governments at the UNFCCC in Bali to establish a safe and sustainable pathway for global emissions reductions, and to accept the IPCC scenario for keeping the global temperature increase to within 2°C and reducing 85% greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Annex I countries must respect Kyoto Protocol commitments. In addition, and following the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities', all countries need to play a part in the next Kyoto agreement, based on each country's stage of economic and social development.

- Developed countries should agree to further significant cuts in CO₂ emissions in the near term: the outcome of the European Union's commitment for a 30% cut (1990 basis) in CO₂ by 2020, (subject to a new international treaty) can be a valuable benchmark for developed countries in making commitments, as a global emissions trading scheme will form the cornerstone of this strategy.
- The most advanced developing countries can progressively adopt GHG prevention, reduction, stabilisation or controlled increases, e.g. through targets on renewable energy use, carbon capture, addressing deforestation, and developing public transport systems.

→ **Address employment, social cohesion and just transition in the new agreement.** The following needs to be included in the next agreement:

- effects on employment from climate-induced disruptions, i.e. displacement, migrations, unemployment in climate-sensitive sectors and climate refugees,
- effects on employment from the implementation of adaptation measures (i.e. investments in infrastructure or transformations in production), and
- effects on employment from the impacts due to mitigation efforts.

Employment transitions should be studied and anticipated so as to guarantee social justice. Accompanying measures (including the promotion of decent and green jobs and social protection systems) need to be designed along with mitigation and adaptation measures.

→ **Place employment, income and pro-poor measures at the centre of the discussions**

→ **Establish tripartite social dialogue processes in each country and at sectoral levels** to anticipate effects and the transitional measures needed, after taking into account social protection coverage. A good example of this is the Spanish establishment of social dialogue tables for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and the National Allocation Plan.

→ **Integrate sustainable development principles.** Trade unions warn about the continuing danger for addressing problems in isolation, ignoring those that are not considered as directly 'climate change related', or indeed avoiding the complexity of interrelationships within the climate change framework.

Going green: challenges & opportunities for mitigation

Employment effects of climate change policies. Emerging evidence indicates that climate change mitigation represents a potentially positive opportunity to create jobs on the basis of a sustainable and fair society. We call on Parties to:

→ Promote research on the short and long-term employment effects through sector-by-sector and regional employment studies

It's time for Green Jobs. Green Jobs are 'decent jobs', with high labour standards and working conditions but also with high eco-efficiency and low emissions. Trade Unions support and call on Parties to:

→ Promote such employment opportunities, as they hold the promise of providing good conditions and incomes that can stimulate growth and help safeguarding our climate.

Trade Unions will remain committed to fostering the living conditions of workers, be it in current or new sectors.

Some sectors will face huge challenges. Trade unions are aware that certain sectors will suffer from the efforts aimed at mitigating climate change. We call on Parties to:

→ Orient transition policies towards energy-intensive sectors and accompany the relocation of the workforce with training and education.

→ Provide special attention to the economic diversification of areas where plants are expected to close.

At COP13: Call for social-oriented follow up to SBSTA workshop, ref. 10/CP9 on Scientific, technical and socio-economic aspects of mitigation of climate change.

Adaptation: Addressing poverty, creating decent jobs, launching solidarity

Building global, national & local solidarity. While everybody experiences negative climate impacts, the most vulnerable will experience them more severely. Poor people often lack the resources, information or access to services which allow them to anticipate the effects of climate change. Trade unions call on governments and society to show solidarity with those who are most vulnerable. At the national level, we call on governments to:

→ Increase investment for securing the livelihoods of the poorest, through the development of social protection, poverty reduction strategies, and decent jobs programmes.

As a global problem, climate change requires that the international community prioritise global solidarity. We call then on developed countries to:

→ Exercise solidarity with developing countries by cutting their emissions in order to limit further suffering and irreversible changes, and by creating the means for other countries to participate in reduction efforts.

→ Deliver commitments to develop and transfer climate-friendly technology. This must ensure the development of research and innovation and improve installed capacity in developing countries, as these are sources of sustainable growth and jobs.

→ Direct long-term investment flows for adaptation: Water, health and infrastructure have been identified as the most vulnerable sectors and those where investments urgently need to be made. These investments should reverse the destructive trend of privatisation and deregulation.

Positive impacts on economy, poverty reduction & employment. By improving societies' and economies' capacity to react and adapt to climate change, do not in essence have a negative impact on livelihoods or employment. While climate change will negatively affect agriculture, forestry, ecosystems, health and human settlements, accompanying adaptation measures yield positive effects on employment, or, at least reduce the severity of the negative ones. Gender equity must be respected at all stages of climate strategies.

At COP13: Further participate in the information exchange about socio-economic information under the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, and call for the inclusion of an employment-related item in the next workshop, scheduled for early 2008.

To enter the transition, AND TO DO IT FAIRLY

Protecting workers' livelihoods. Accompanying measures are needed for safeguarding the livelihoods of workers and their families, as well as economic activity in urban and rural areas. Such measures, regrouped under the concept of 'Just Transition', are essential to fuel mass support for climate change policies, as employment concerns have regularly been put forward as a reason for not undertaking climate change policies. We call on Parties to:

- Enhance training (vocational training in new sectors & re-training for workers in declining sectors).
- Establish or improve social protection systems, which must run in parallel to adaptation efforts as they can diminish vulnerability to climate change and, strengthen the social security systems, especially in developing countries.
- Institutionalise social dialogue for climate change decision-making. Successful social dialogue structures and processes – which depend upon the existence of democratic workers' and employers' organisations – can potentially resolve economic and social conflicts, encourage democratic governance, advance social and industrial peace and stability, and boost economic progress.

Protecting the economic life of communities. Other transitional measures are needed for the continuity of economic activity in given regions, affected by climate change or by climate change policies. In order to address economic diversification, we call on Parties to support:

- Co-governing change. Create and institutionalise information exchange and dialogue with actors from the sectors that will be affected by climate change or measures to deal with it.
- "Fuelling" change. Provide incentives for new activities. In the adaptation side, solidarity is needed from developed countries through the provision of funds but also through the creation of frameworks to channel new outputs from developing countries.
- Targeting change. Focus on targeting economic activities (technology transfer, training for the workforce & entrepreneurs, research and development, etc). A focus on green job creation will multiply benefits for the economy and the environment.

At COP 13:

- Broaden discussions on 'Minimising adverse effects, including adverse effects of climate change, effects on international trade, and social, environmental and economic impacts, especially in developing countries', in order to cover transitional issues in different productive sectors.
- Follow up on the trade union submission about Economic Diversification under the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.
http://unfccc.int/adaptation/sbsta_agenda_item_adaptation/items/3994.php
- Participate in the discussions on Article 6 (Education, training and public awareness) for better implement the New Delhi Programme of work.

Opening dialogue, reinforcing social partners' capacities

The involvement of trade unions in decision making and implementation is essential to the success and sustainability of climate change policies. We call on Parties to:

- Create and strengthen laws or regulations that ensure labour and employment rights on the basis of the conventions safeguarded by the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles & Rights at Work, as a precondition for successful climate change adaptation and mitigation responses.
- Promote worker and trade union participation in decision-making at the workplace, sector, national and international levels.
- Encourage and share good practices involving workers and trade unions.
- Encourage and support awareness-raising and capacity-building for workers and their representatives through training and education programmes, recognising the role of trade unions as a significant provider of adult education.

At COP13:

- Incorporate the role of trade unions in training, education and public awareness about climate change into the New Delhi programme of work.

- Encourage Parties to discuss the inclusion of institutionalised forms of dialogue on climate change decision-making in the next commitment period.

Financing climate policies

Attention should be given to the need for promoting long-term and non-speculative investment flows, e.g. low-carbon technologies need a long-term horizon for investment recovery.

Trade unions are concerned about financial and investment needs in adaptation. We also highlight the role of public services in areas such as education, public health and transportation, and access to energy to cover basic needs, among others. All these are essential for contributing to fair and efficient climate policies. A fair and redistributive tax system is a principle source of funding. Governments are able to share costs of services between rich and poor and to develop infrastructure to build a country's wealth and capacity. Privatisation of public services limits government choices and denies their right to invest in the long term. Trade unions call on Parties to:

→ Undertake proactive policies to direct long-term investment flows to these sectors. Democratic governance, the reinforcement of domestic fiscal systems, and adequate public spending, all show promising pathways for achieving sustainable investment flows in these sectors.

At COP13: Follow up to the conclusions of the last UNFCCC Dialogue session and subsequent COP recommendations.

The workplace: a field for action on climate change

Clear workplace targets for energy efficiency and waste minimisation should be linked to sectoral and national carbon and waste reduction strategies. We call on Parties to:

→ Contribute to the creation of a new workplace culture that will ensure reduction of greenhouse gases in production and the life-cycle of products as well as make substantial changes to personal and community consumption patterns of workers.

At COP13: Promote such initiatives as "Greening Workplaces" in the UK.

→ Promote mobility plans (providing public or semi-public forms of transport for workers to get to their workplaces or to undertake professional displacements), which provide good examples to achieve sustainable mobility through cooperative labour-business initiatives.

→ Call for governments to legislate for improved labour rights, i.e., time off and training for environmental representatives, recognition of environmental duties, right to participate, right-to-know (e.g., about workplace emissions, technological choices, plans for energy saving, use and efficiency), whistleblower protection, right to refuse unsafe or environmentally-harmful work. To facilitate the implementation of such principles, to examine a broad range of industrial relations issues.

→ Promote a preventive approach in relation with workplaces' preparedness for climate change, backed up by clear government policy and regulation and workplace negotiation.

Technology options and social responsibilities

Technological choices and social responsibilities are mutually-dependent elements. Governments need to address them in the long term policy shift towards sustainable and labour-intensive energy solutions. We call on Parties to:

→ Address social, employment and environmental impacts of technology transfer as a precondition to their promotion.

→ Take stock of available technologies to foster a zero-carbon future. Advance policies that promote energy saving through demand side management, energy efficiency, investments in a mix of clean, green and sustainable energy sources.

→ Encourage research and analysis prior to development and implementation of new and emerging technological solutions for climate change. Make environmental soundness the basic criteria for dissemination of such solutions as CO₂ capture and storage and carbon sequestration.

Trade unions are committed to working with governments and all social partners, and invite any questions or proposals concerning our position. Please contact us at: royer@tuac.org or cell +33 6 77699429