



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION SUBMISSION TO THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON THE DURBAN PLATFORM FOR ENHANCED ACTION

– More and better jobs and a just transition for all through ambitious climate action –

In response to the invitation from the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) to provide information on the following: “Information from Parties and admitted observer organizations on the opportunities for actions with high mitigation potential, including those with adaptation and sustainable development co-benefits, as referred to in decision 1/CP.19 “Further advancing the Durban Platform”, paragraph 5(a)”

The International Labour Organization (ILO) congratulates UNFCCC Parties on the progress achieved under the ADP process.

Addressing climate change is still viewed by some as hampering economic growth and threatening jobs. Evidence yet demonstrates that this is not the case if properly managed, through a just transition. Climate change action can on the contrary lead to more and better jobs, poverty reduction and social inclusion. In fact, the transition to low-carbon economies could generate up to 60 million additional jobs over the next two decades.

However, this will need to be accompanied by appropriate climate policies and actions promoting decent work opportunities arising from a low-emission society, as well as strategies aimed at ensuring just transition for workers, providing social protection, strengthening social dialogue, securing workers’ rights, and promoting prosperity and sustainable development.

Introduction

The actors in the world of work – governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations – are key agents of change. Through social dialogue, they can develop new ways of working that safeguard the environment for present and future generations, eradicate poverty and promote social justice by fostering sustainable enterprises and creating decent work for all.

Inaction is not an option. Unabated climate change will exacerbate climate-related damage to infrastructure, disrupt business activity, and destroy jobs and livelihoods on an unprecedented scale.

For example, in the United States, hurricane Sandy left 150,000 workers displaced and employment was overall reduced by over 11,000 workers only in New Jersey in 2012 (USA Department of Commerce, 2013).

In Bangladesh, Cyclone Sidr disrupted several hundred thousand small businesses and adversely affected 567,000 jobs in 2007.¹

¹ ILO (2013) *Sustainable development, decent work and green jobs*, Report V, International Labour Conference, 102nd Session (ILO, Geneva).



Typhoon Hagupit that hit the Philippines in December 2014 affected around 800,000 workers, with their source of livelihood damaged or disrupted overnight. Similar extreme weather events are only expected to intensify in the future with major consequences for workers, businesses and communities.

Modelling undertaken by the International Institute for Labour Studies indicates that higher concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere will increasingly curb economic output and aggregate productivity levels by 2.4 per cent in 2030 and 7.2 per cent by 2050 in a business-as-usual (BAU) case.²

Key messages to the ADP

The ILO encourages Parties to consider ways to address employment dimensions in a future climate agreement and in countries' intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) to **advance climate action with decent job creation and a just transition for all**.

The ILO is calling for the next global climate agreement to include a clear acknowledgement by Parties on the strong linkages between climate change and actions to combat climate change with the world of work. Policies and measures proven to be valuable to protect jobs from climate impacts and promote decent work creation in low-carbon and climate resilient sectors should form part of the climate solution. The International Labour Conference 2013 just transition framework can contribute in many ways to help countries better understand and manage the shift to low-carbon economies ([see resolution concerning sustainable development, decent work and green jobs](#)).

The ILO would like to highlight the following actions to enhance mitigation and adaptation, with co-benefits for employment and sustainable development:

Enhancing the understanding of climate change impacts on labour markets

- Since 2007, the ILO has been analysing the links between climate change impacts and policies, on the one hand, and social and labour market outcomes, on the other. As a result, fears about job losses have been allayed and focus has shifted to the opportunities for more and better jobs. The need to anticipate and attenuate negative employment and social impacts is more widely recognized.
- This applies to workers affected by structural change from shifts towards greener economic activities, to countries suffering major impacts from climate change (Caribbean and other small island states, South Asia, parts of Sub-Saharan Africa) and to poor segments of society. The latter are disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change but also by tax measures aiming at internalizing costs of fossil fuel, such as

² ILO (2012) *Working towards sustainable development: opportunities for decent work and social inclusion in a green economy* (ILO, Geneva).



carbon pricing and abolition of fuel subsidies. A careful assessment of how these measures may impact low-income households and mechanisms should be put in place to ensure they are not worse-off as a result. The ILO is also supporting countries to assess the employment impact of a shift towards low-carbon development strategies.

- Working with research partners around the world, analytical tools to estimate the reduction of CO₂ emissions along with employment creation of greening policies and measures through Input-Output Tables and Dynamic Social Accounting Matrixes (DySAM) have been developed and applied at the national level in many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin American. The identification of employment impacts through labour market and [green jobs assessments](#) of low-carbon and climate resilient policies could support the formulation of INDCs. These employment assessments facilitate decision-making to prioritize economic activities with greater labour impacts and better climate results. By generating information on employment and labour market implications of climate response measures, assessments offer an important means to help shape policy-making.

Facilitating consensus building through social dialogue

- Social dialogue is instrumental for effective decision-making in the area of climate change. The ILO's tripartite structure has been useful to promote and facilitate awareness raising, dialogue and proactive engagement at national, regional and global levels. Environmental and sustainable development related policies – when discussed and implemented with the participation and agreement of social partners, the government, and civil society actors - are better informed, easier to implement, and more beneficial for workers, businesses of all sizes, and a larger proportion of the society.
- It is found that social dialogue enables consensus, partnerships building and is effective for the implementation of governmental policies (see publication [*Social dialogue for sustainable development. A selection of national and regional experiences*](#), for examples of pro-active climate policies in Europe, but also Brazil and South Africa). The ILO is building the capacity of its constituents to be able to fulfil their role in tackling climate change.
- Social dialogue has also been a key dimension of different ILO projects around the world aiming at increasing energy, water and material efficiency and therefore enabling low-carbon development to happen at the workplace-level too.
- Dialogue between workers and employers as well as training on environmental and decent work issues are common elements of some projects. Indeed, the case of the [Greener Business Asia project](#) in both Thailand and the Philippines developed tools and



provided capacity building among tripartite constituents to green workplace practices by improving environmental impact, working conditions and thus the overall enterprise competitiveness and productivity. Likewise, the ILO provided support to the [Chilean forestry sector social dialogue process](#) to develop sustainable strategies for the forestry sector.

- The ILO is mobilizing its constituents to address climate change by providing avenues for tripartite dialogue, exchange of experiences and capacity building. In this respect, a [tripartite meeting](#) on the challenges and opportunities posed by climate change to decent work in the Caribbean region took place at the recent ILO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean in October 2014. Workers, employers and governments agreed on the importance of mainstreaming climate change into labour policies in the framework of sustainable development, in particular on employment creation for young workers.

Supporting adaptation measures

- Climate change has direct impacts on workers and employers. Thus, specific measures to meet their needs in the face of increased risks and help the preparedness of the most vulnerable workers and enterprises should form part of adaptation to climate change. Programmes on **social protection, micro-insurance and public employment programmes** all play a vital role in climate change adaptation strategies.
- For instance, after the typhoon Haiyan tore the Philippines in 2013, the ILO helped put in place [emergency employment programs](#) in the hardest hit areas. Such programs brought much-needed immediate income and guaranteed minimum wage, social protection and safety and health to thousands of workers who had lost their livelihoods, while also ensuring better opportunities for affected communities in the longer term.
- Moreover, access to **micro-insurance and innovative financial programmes for farmers** and other workers active in highly climate dependent sectors have helped increase incomes, climate resilience and avoided job losses. The [ILO-led Climate Change Adaptation Demonstration Project \(CCAP\)](#) in southern Philippines, aimed at providing micro-insurance to farmers, specific information about expected impacts of climate on their agricultural production and knowledge about adaptation options helped increase their savings, incomes and become more climate resilient.
- Very often **labour migration** becomes a necessity for those highly affected by climate change. Creating decent work opportunities in construction, agriculture or food production through among other actions, the provision of skills in alternative settlements is part of the work done by the ILO in [Fiji and Tuvalu](#) in the context of adaptation efforts.



- Innovations in **public employment programmes** to create **green works** in water management, forestry and other infrastructure-related works have demonstrated to be efficient in promoting climate resilient development, but also essential in providing employment and additional income opportunities to those most affected and vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Countries such as South Africa ("Working For" programmes), Ethiopia (Productive Safety Net Programme) or India ([Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act](#)) have illustrated the key role such programmes can play as part of social protection floors and how they can assist exposed populations to cope with the impacts of climate change and to adapt successfully.

Facilitating mitigation actions

- Human capacity gaps and skills shortages are major barriers to advance climate change mitigation in key sectors such as energy, buildings, manufacturing and agriculture. ILO's [research](#) on **skills** gaps and needs for green jobs, assistance to technical and vocational education and training institutions and sectoral interventions have been instrumental in enhancing the capacity of countries to adapt skills and job qualifications in line with needs for climate mitigation.
- In Bangladesh, [training of solar technicians](#) provides employment and income opportunities for young men and women, contributing to creating a skilled work force for the deployment of clean energy systems in the country. The solar home system and entrepreneur skills training programme implemented between 2010 and 2012 was successfully integrated in national programmes with: (1) the institutionalisation of training curricula (assembling, installation and maintenance) in the National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework; (2) the provision of sustainable employment opportunities by linking trainees with renewable energy service providers (27 additional service providers) for job placements as solar technicians; and (3) promoting solar entrepreneurship by providing skills for entrepreneurs and access to finance.
- In Central America and the Dominican Republic, the [FOIL project](#) has provided technical support to the regional network of **technical and vocational education and training (TVET)** institutions. To date learning standards and curricula for eight [green occupations](#) have been developed and included into the vocational training portfolio of all countries.
- In Zambia a One-UN programme on the promotion of **green building** under the [Zambia Green Jobs Programme](#) contributes to enhancing the capacity of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to effectively participate in the green building goods and services markets, a key segment for low-carbon housing.