



Submission by the International Trade Union Confederation

Subject: Ad-Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWGLCA)

Introduction

Decision 1/CP.13 invited Parties to provide their views regarding the work programme of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWGLCA). In AWG-LCA2, the Chair invited parties and observers to submit concrete proposals on each of the elements of the Bali Action Plan.

Trade unions provide in this submission some initial thoughts on what should be considered as key parts of the long-term cooperative action.

1. A shared vision

The global trade union movement will support and share a vision where a long term process:

- Puts the world on a path towards limiting the global temperature rise to no more than 2°C
- Consistent with this fundamental objective, follows the corresponding IPCC scenario and reduces greenhouse gas emissions to 85% lower than their 1990 levels by the year 2050.
- Sets medium term targets; in that regard, trade unions agree on the need for developed countries to take the lead in emission reductions. The IPCC indicates that a reduction of at least 25%-40% by 2020 below 1990 levels would be necessary in Annex I countries if we still want to have a chance of not exceeding the 2°C increase.
- Mobilizes resources and technology to enable developing countries, in particular major emitters, to achieve GHG emission reduction, stabilisation or agreed and controlled increases through a range of policies including targets on renewable energy, energy efficiency and avoided deforestation, among others.
- Integrates a “social driver” in the process leading to a low carbon economy, aiming at distributing fairly the costs and the benefits of the transition. The Convention must promote analysis, consultation and protection when a risk has been identified for workers and communities as a consequence of climate change policies. It should also build on synergies between climate policies and poverty reduction strategies, by encouraging investments to be directed towards those who need them the most. For this to be made possible linkages have to be made between the environment and labour agenda (how climate measures will affect the labour market and how labour market measures can enhance the fight against climate change).

2. A fair vision

Trade unions specifically ask Parties to introduce in the shared vision for long-term cooperative action¹ a “Just Transition Framework” which includes:

- A commitment towards equity, which will ensure that the new agreement will share in an equitable manner the benefits as well as the negative impacts of climate change and climate change response measures among and inside countries.
- Institutionalised information exchange and dialogue with actors (trade unions, employers’ organisations, NGO, indigenous peoples, among others) from the communities and sectors that would be affected by climate change or by measures implemented to deal with it
- Systematic country, region and sector-specific studies assessing the impacts of emission reduction efforts and adaptation policies on communities (financial, social, cultural),

¹ Ref: AWG-LCA #3 Enabling the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action now, up to and beyond 2012, by addressing inter alia: a) shared vision for long-term cooperative action.

production systems, employment, income, etc. This needs to include an assessment of training needs in sectors where adjustments are going to take place, leading to adequate government investment in “green jobs” strategies (see #6 below).

- Upgrading of social protection systems, which have to be adapted to the challenges posed by climate change and its policies. This must include insurance coverage, decent living conditions, access to safe drinking water and health services, and for those whose job might be at risk, setting up policies for assisting in the reintegration into the labour market, vocational training, creation of alternative income-earning opportunities, and local economic diversification.

3. Work Programme for 2009

The inclusion of a “Social Workshop” is key in ensuring the inclusion of social provisions in the next agreement. Its aim would be to develop further the mandate of the Bali Action Plan, when it mentions the need for “taking into account social and economic conditions and other relevant factors”. This workshop should deal with the social aspects of mitigation and its corresponding technological and investment needs, with the social aspects of adaptation and its corresponding technological and investment needs, and with the social elements and consequences of the future institutional framework.

The coverage of social aspects needs to include issues such as income, employment, food sovereignty, access to water, human, gender and labour rights, among others. The discussion should mainstream the need for training the workforce, in particular workers in sectors which will face restructuring because of emission reductions, as well as for those sectors facing adaptation needs.

The institutional framework which could help in addressing these issues needs to be discussed, as well as the financial means for ensuring the fairness of the transition, e.g. through a “just transition” fund.

4. Issues relating to REDD in developing countries

The emission reduction from deforestation and degradation (REDD) scheme must include provisions for a Just Transition to sustainable forest protection. It must fulfil highest standards of social and environmental integrity.

Direct as well as indirect drivers of deforestation and forest degradation on the national and local levels have to be tackled. Extra-sectoral causes like agriculture (for food, fibre or energy), or infrastructure development, have to be considered as they generally contribute more to the problem than timber extraction.

International collaboration is needed in order to ensure a just protection regime. The right price tag for forest resources and eco-system services has to be established. A forest protection scheme needs to ensure co-benefits in respect to poverty alleviation, decent job creation and rural development.

5. Development and transfer of technologies

Trade unions highlight the need for ensuring local stakeholders’ participation in the decisions regarding the development and transfer of technologies, as well as the importance of training them in the use of these technologies.

Dynamic programmes aiming at “green” enterprise creation by women, unemployed or youth and “green jobs” creation, for example through micro-credits, could represent a win-win solution for poverty reduction and clean growth.

6. Economic and social consequences of response measures

Trade unions have insistently called for a better analysis of the social and economic effects of mitigation measures and we see with satisfaction the development of this discussion.

This must lead us to an international methodology that will enable Parties and stakeholders to measure and analyse impacts of mitigation policies in jobs, income, competitiveness and poverty as well as in other social, environmental and economic issues. This methodology should provide relevant actors with the tools to assess in an objective manner the impacts, as well as the appropriate criteria and the means for tackling problems inside Annex I countries and of course, with regards to the developing countries.

The methodology, which could be developed as an UNFCCC guidance for Parties, needs to facilitate the assessment in a differentiated manner the impacts of the different mitigation measures, inter alia:

- Emission trading, project-based mechanisms
- Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)
- GHG, sectors and sources categories
- Sectoral Approaches

As some of these measures have already been put in place, the analysis on the social impacts could be started without delay.

Unions also agree with the EU and others on the need to better understand positive spill over effects which could counterbalance the negative spill over. Trade unions have released a report on green jobs, jointly with UNEP and the ILO in which it is made clear that the climate change challenge and the decent jobs challenge can and have to be tackled together, and that this can also bring important opportunities for workers in developed and developing countries.