WHERE ARE WE?

The world has already reached 1°C of global average temperature rise, with significant impacts being felt around the world. Workers and communities are on the frontlines of those impacts. Millions of climate refugees from Africa (agricultural workers forced to leave their lands), people on small island states losing their homes, livelihoods and even their lives due to devastating storms, workers in fossil fuel industries losing their jobs in Canada, Australia, Indonesia, South Africa and others.

In order to achieve the goal of the Paris Climate Agreement, to keep global temperature rise well below 2°C, while pursuing 1.5°C, much greater ambition is needed. Ambition is lacking today because climate policies do not take into account economic and social realities in a coherent way. Just Transition policies connect employment, macro-economic, social, fiscal and industry policies; this is needed to connect climate goals with the social consequences.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

In addition to the 1.5°C goal, the Paris Agreement made a commitment to a Just Transition*.* Unions want decent jobs on a living planet. We envisage a world in which the promise and the ambition of the Paris Agreement is achieved, with all governments taking into account the needs of, and opportunities and challenges for workers in all workplaces, industries and that of vulnerable communities.

The need to develop Just transition strategies is understood by governments and unions and employers, as outlined in the ‘ILO Guidelines for a Just Transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all’: *“managed well, transitions to environmentally and sustainable economies can become a strong driver of job creation, job upgrading, social justice and poverty eradication. Greening all enterprises and jobs by introducing more energy and resource efficient practices, avoiding pollution and managing natural resources sustainably leads to innovation, enhances resilience and generates savings which drive new investment and employment.”*

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

In order to achieve the goal of the Paris Climate Agreement we need a much better foundation of climate policies on social justice and broad public acceptance and participation. This means more appropriate low-carbon development strategies, NDCs and climate plans that take into account the imperatives of a Just Transition of the workforce, human and labour rights and the creation of decent work and quality jobs, at the appropriate governmental level (national, regional and sub-regional). Labour and employment aspects need to be taken into account in the preparation, implementation and reporting of NDCs, National Adaptation Plans and National Communications and SDGs. Unions have proven experiences with providing support in society to tackle complex challenges, such as climate change. This should be developed through a representative process of social dialogue involving the social partners, to ensure the rights, employment impacts and wellbeing of workers and their communities.