

Just Transition – experience so far

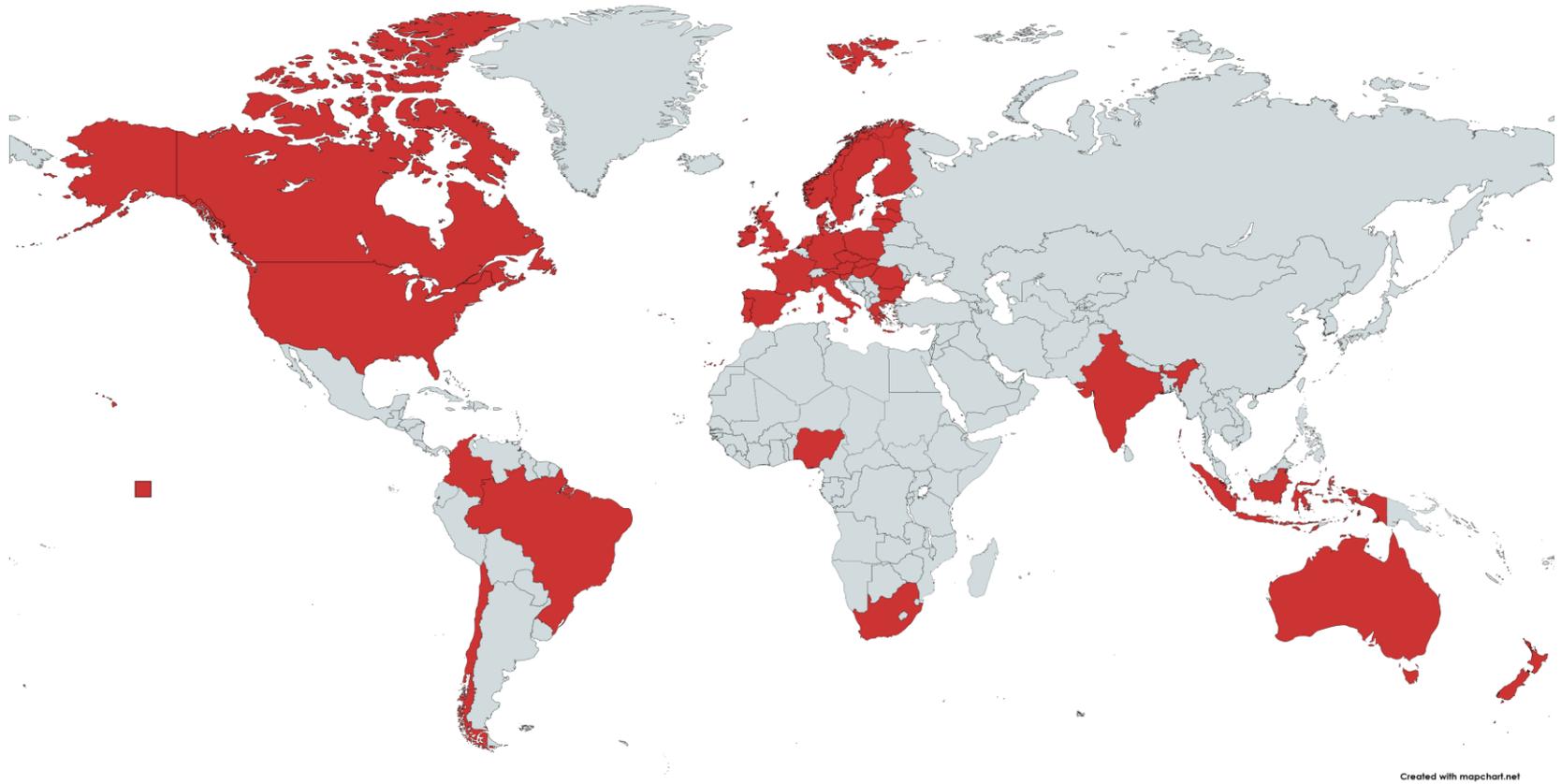
ITUC and the Just Transition Centre

The International Trade Union Confederation represents more than 200 million organized workers, formal and informal, in 162 countries.

ITUC established the Just Transition Centre in 2016 to help implement the Paris Agreement, the SDGs, and the ILO Guidelines on Just Transition.

The JTC supports unions and their allies in getting good plans for Just Transition at different levels: National; city and state/province; company and sector; and with investors. Most of our work focuses on high emitting sectors in high emitting countries. Key sectors include the power sector, mining, oil and gas, heavy industry and manufacturing, transportation, construction, and to a lesser extent agriculture.

Where the Just Transition Centre works, 2021



UN policy architecture on Just Transition



International
Labour
Organization

**Guidelines for a just transition
towards environmentally sustainable economies and
societies for all**

- I. Macroeconomic and growth policies
- II. Industrial and sectoral policies
- III. Enterprise policies
- IV. Skills development
- V. Occupational safety and health
- VI. Social protection
- VII. Active labour market policies
- VIII. Rights
- IX. Social dialogue and tripartism

UN policy architecture on Just Transition



Paris Agreement

Emphasizing the intrinsic relationship that climate change actions, responses and impacts have with equitable access to sustainable development and eradication of poverty,

Recognizing the fundamental priority of safeguarding food security and ending hunger, and the particular vulnerabilities of food production systems to the adverse impacts of climate change,

Taking into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities,

Acknowledging that climate change is a common concern of humankind, Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity,

Recognizing the importance of the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of the greenhouse gases referred to in the Convention,

Noting the importance of ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, and the protection of biodiversity, recognized by some cultures as Mother Earth, and noting the importance for some of the concept of “climate justice”, when taking action to address climate change,

What is a Just Transition?

A sector, region or economy-wide process that produces the plans, policies and investments so that:

- Everyone has social protection;
- All jobs are decent;
- Emissions are low or at zero;
- Poverty is eliminated; and
- Communities are thriving and resilient.

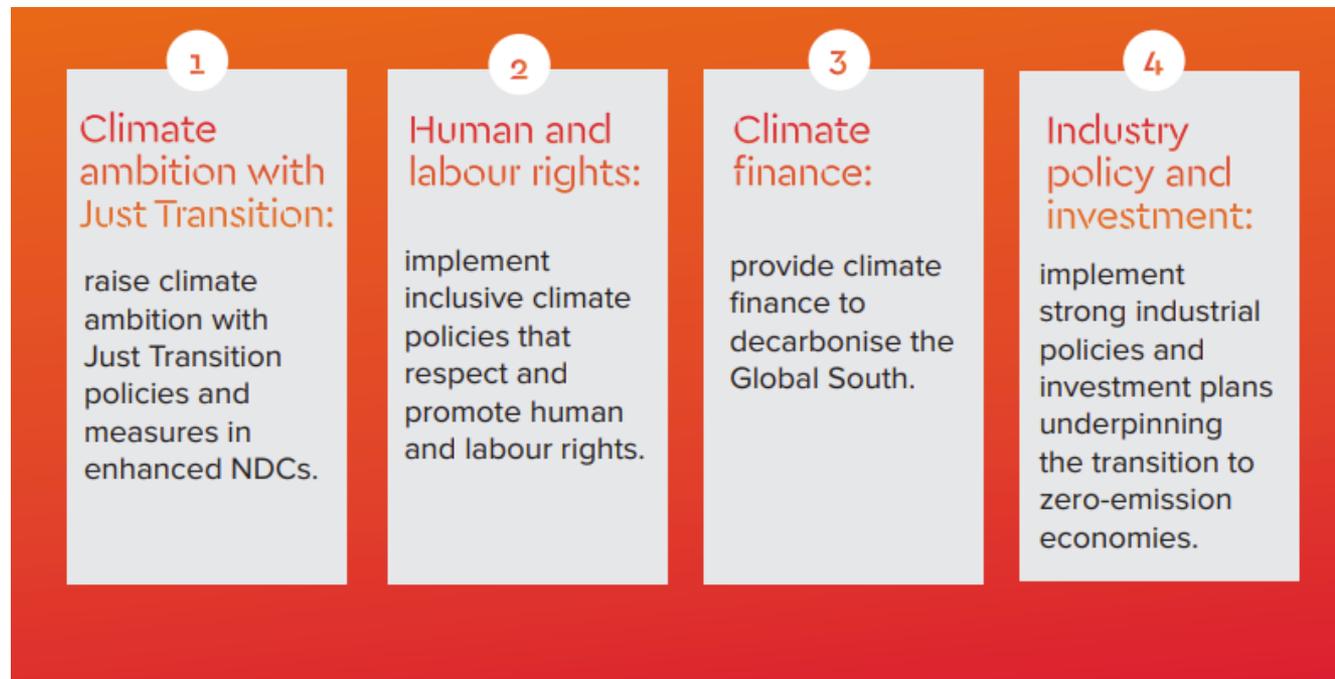
Just Transition includes both measures to reduce the impact of job and livelihood losses and industry phase-out on workers and communities, and measures to produce new, low emissions and decent jobs and livelihoods as well as healthy communities.

Just Transition is based on social dialogue between workers and employers, and often governments.

It also requires adequate, informed and ongoing consultation with stakeholders – in addition to social dialogue.

The UN Secretary General has said that all countries should adopt the ILO Just Transition Guidelines as a minimum standard.

Union demands for COP 26



What have we learned?

Just Transition works.

In Canada, Spain, Germany and other countries, Just Transition delivers results – good plans for climate action, decent jobs, and less inequality, along with support from unions, employers, and the broader society.

Just Transition is for all countries and all sectors.

Most of the JTC's work in 2021 was with unions in the Global South – Brazil, Chile, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, South Africa. That work is getting results in union mobilization, policy agreements, and collective bargaining.

We also work on Just Transition in the auto sector, construction, public transport, agriculture, and now service and hospitality.

Social protection is key.

From enhanced unemployment insurance and sick leave to healthcare, pension, and quality public services including education, social protection gives workers and communities security during economic and social transition.

What have we learned?

It's all about jobs.

Making the new jobs good jobs is at least as important as making sure affected workers are not left behind.

Affected workers need decent new jobs to go to or a bridge to pension and security for a decent old age. New jobs should be of equivalent quality to the ones that are disappearing, or better. No worker wants to go from a formal job with a contract to an informal job in agriculture, or an insecure job in a warehouse.

Improving or creating decent jobs in sectors such as care, public services, and education stimulates local economies and creates more opportunities to raise household incomes.

Use a multisector approach to job creation.

Renewable energy can supply a lot of quality jobs but it can't supply all the new jobs that are needed in an energy transition. Nor are renewable energy jobs always a good match for workers exiting a job in fossil fuels.

For example, on a skills basis the best new job for a coal miner is mining something else. The second best new job is coal mine remediation. And the third best new job is skilled construction. Coal mining has very high skill transfer to all of these jobs and these are all jobs that may be available in coal mining regions.

What have we learned?

There's a gap between what governments say and what they do.

49 countries mention the words “just transition” in their NDCs. The majority are EU member states that refer to the Just Transition Mechanism and Fund.

Of these 49 countries, many do not have a Just Transition process that is consistent with the ILO Guidelines as they have not engaged with the unions. This includes some countries in the EU.

A regional approach is good, but national action is essential.

Approaches to Just Transition that work best involve both regional, bottom up social dialogue and national, top down industrial policy and investment. On the regional or community level, social partners and stakeholders know what is needed to revitalize communities. But national governments sit with the ability to create industrial policy, invest at scale, set strong labor standards, and navigate trade and FDI issues.