



► Climate action with jobs and a just transition for all

ILO message brief for COP27

This year again, through intensified heat waves, forest fires and floods, desertification and drought, the impacts of climate change on the world of work have been devastating, affecting workers, enterprises, and communities. The threats from climate change are particularly severe for those already facing socio-economic challenges, including women, persons with disabilities, youth, indigenous and tribal peoples, and migrant workers, among others. The UN climate change conference (COP27) taking place at Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022, is a critical moment to advance ambitious and urgent global action against climate, in a context marked by wars, a food and energy crisis, and inflation and a rapidly closing window for the 1.5-degree target.

Earlier analysis by the ILO suggested that continued global warming leading to heat stress could result in losses of 2.2 per cent of total working time by 2030, the equivalent of 80 million full time jobs. Climate impacts could exacerbate existing inequalities and decent work deficits, become an additional driver of the displacement of people, and reverse gains in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Conversely, taking action to address climate change and moving towards a circular economy could yield a hundred million more jobs by 2030.

The COP27 Presidency has set priority objectives around climate mitigation, adaptation, finance, loss and damage, and collaboration. A just transition is key across the four thematic priority areas of the COP27 Presidency. The ILO and its tripartite constituents are actively engaged in the COP process to maintain a continuous focus on the social dimension of climate change.

The ILO calls on countries to accord primary importance to the social dimensions of the ecological transitions through concrete results, and to:

- Integrate clear and concrete measures to promote decent work and advance a just transition for all in both the NDCs, NAPs, and the long-term plans towards net zero, drawing on ILO “Guidelines for a Just Transition towards Sustainable Economies and Societies for all”.
- Effectively reflect the objectives of decent work and a just transition in all aspects of the implementation of the Paris Agreement, including climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience, discussions on Article 6 and the impact of the implementation of response measures.
- Join the coalition of 49 countries that have committed to formulate national policies for a just transition, ensuring that decent work and livelihoods are at the centre of global and national climate action.

1. Mitigation: Deliver decent work and a just transition to net zero by mid-century

- The latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stressed that “equity and just transitions can enable deeper ambitions for accelerated mitigation”.
- The ILO notes that an increasing number of countries are making an effort to include specific measures to promote decent work creation and a just transition of their economies and the workforce in their climate policies, including measures relating to social dialogue, job transitions, public investment, skills development, labour migration and social protection. These are important and encouraging developments.
- The ILO calls on Parties and Observers to fully operationalize decent work and just transition objectives in NDC implementation, including through clear monitoring, verification and reporting modalities.

2. Adaptation and just transition

- Adaptation plays a key role in reducing exposure and vulnerability to climate change, not only in terms of environmental damage but also the economic and social impacts of climate change. Therefore, a just transition for adaptation is crucial in ensuring peoples' livelihoods and economic as well as environmental sustainability.
- As with mitigation, adaptation can lead to unequal or unjust outcomes if it is not managed well. For example, the most climate vulnerable groups such as women, indigenous peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities, must be considered when designing adaptation policies, especially given that they tend to face a disproportionate loss of life and livelihoods from climate related disaster events.
- The ILO calls on Parties and Observers to consider gender-responsive adaptation; facilitate labour mobility and decent work as indicated in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration; develop pre-emptive adaptation measures to increase resilience; avoid loss of assets and livelihoods; and employ labour-based approaches, green works and Nature-based Solutions (NbS).

3. Mobilising finance: Financing for a just transition

- Delivering a just transition requires both public and private finance. Public investment in climate-sensitive social protection, employment-intensive climate infrastructure, skills, and sustainable enterprise development are at the heart of climate action that delivers decent work and leaves no one behind. Designated just transition funds contribute to integrated approaches and can help crowding in private investment.
- International development and climate finance need to be scaled up to address the needs of developing countries and emerging economies. There is a largely untapped potential for international climate financing mechanisms, including the Green Climate Fund, to support a just transition, for example by factoring social and employment impacts into their financing decisions; by creating incentive structures that reward projects with social dividends; by including designated just transition components across projects; and by establishing targeted funding windows for a just transition.
- Aligning private finance flows to a just transition logic is also key if we are to leverage the contributions of green investments to positive employment and social outcomes while avoiding and addressing potential negative impacts of their decarbonisation pathways. There is an increasing interest in just transition among financial sector actors, but implementation is still nascent and uneven.

4. Loss and damage

- A number of state-led workstreams and expert groups have been established under the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) on Loss and Damage that have implications for decent work and just transition. For example, the Task Force on Displacement (TFD), established in 2015 at COP21, on which ILO serves as an expert, has developed recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change, linking to the Global Compact on safe, orderly and regular migration, including through enhancing opportunities for regular migration pathways, such as through labour mobility consistent with international labour standards, as appropriate.
- Other thematic workstreams are relevant to decent work and just transitions, such as the expert group on Slow Onset Events (e.g., increasing temperature, desertification, loss of biodiversity, land and forest degradation, glacial retreat, sea level rise, ocean acidification and salinization), enhanced cooperation on non-economic losses, comprehensive risk management, and finance and technology. These groups aim to enhance cooperation by both strengthening the understanding and enhancing capacity to address key issues, in particular at regional and national levels.

5. ILO action, initiatives and programmes contributing to COP27

The ILO brings to COP27 policy frameworks, knowledge tools, and operational programmes to advance ambitious climate action with more and better jobs, and a just transition for all.

▶ A comprehensive policy guidance framework for a just transition

The ILO *Guidelines for a Just Transition towards Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies for All* (hereafter the Guidelines), adopted by representatives of governments, employers' and workers' organizations in 2015, provide a policy framework and an operational tool to address environmental change in a way that advances social justice and promotes decent work creation.

▶ Just transition policy briefs

This unique and [comprehensive series of thematic briefs](#) covers a range of policy areas and processes for a just transition, from social dialogue to enterprise development, social protection, macroeconomic and industrial policies. The briefs provide practical guidance on how to operationalize the ILO Guidelines for a just transition through concrete policies and measures, taking into account national contexts and circumstances.

▶ COP27 Just Transition Pavilion

For the first time, the ILO in partnership with the European Union, is establishing a COP [Just Transition Pavilion](#). The Pavilion is a venue for delegates to carry informal consultations, to convene thematic events, and to network. A Just Transition Knowledge Hub is designed to enable the sharing of knowledge and experience by leading practitioners from governments, business leaders, research and academia.

▶ Work in Nature-based Solutions

The ILO, in partnership with UN Environment Programme and the International Union for Conservation of Nature, will provide insights on employment creation through nature-based solutions. The new flagship report demonstrates the potential of employment creation through adaptation to climate, filling a key gap as most analysis so far has focused on mitigation-related job creation.

▶ Just Transition Finance Tool

To contribute to addressing a growing need, the ILO and the London School of Economics Grantham Institute partnered to develop a practical guide for financial institutions on a just transition in banking and investment. The guide provides entry points to integrate just transition considerations in strategies and operations, illustrated by examples and emerging experiences.

▶ Practical guidance tool for greening TVET and skills development

The new tool on greening technical and vocational education and training supports TVET stakeholders to mainstream skills for the green transition in TVET and skills development in a systemic and holistic manner. The tool provides "how-to" guidance on designing competency standards and curricula for greener jobs, adapting training delivery and assessments to support greener learning, adapting practices to maintain a greener campus, building the capacity of teachers and trainers, and sensitizing enterprises.

▶ Gender-responsive climate action and just transition

This technical paper explores linkages between gender-responsive climate action and just transition to promote inclusive opportunities for all in a low-emission economy, including women and men experiencing intersectional forms of discrimination. The paper articulates possible approaches to integrate just transition policies, and their gender-transformative dimension, into national climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, with best practices, country examples and lessons learned.

► **Green Jobs for Youth Pact**

The Green Jobs for Youth Pact is a unique new partnership for action by ILO, UNICEF's Generation Unlimited, and UNEP to engage with young people, employers' and workers' organizations, educators, private sector companies, and governments, to accelerate commitments to secure green jobs and create green skills in key countries. The Pact combines the comparative strengths of each of the three UN agencies to bring the skills and jobs, environment, and youth mandates under one integrated umbrella.