

AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON LONG-TERM COOPERATIVE ACTION UNDER THE CONVENTION (AWG-LCA)

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. Resources, technological capacities and historic responsibilities provide the basis for our position. The IPCC concludes that a reduction by them of at least 25%-40% by 2020 below 1990 levels is necessary in order to attain the global 85% reduction by 2050. The ITUC recognises the urgency of taking action and supports these 2050 and 2020 targets. It also recognises that specific circumstances in developed countries may dictate targets that are more or less ambitious, provided that the net emission reduction of Annex I countries is within the targets advocated by the IPCC.
- 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, clean coal technology and avoided deforestation, among others, while providing access to decent livelihoods for their citizens. Funds for adaptation and mitigation must be new and additional to existing Official Development Aid (ODA) commitments, adequate and predictable. Funds under the UNFCCC must be democratically-governed.
- 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, to ensure that the new agreement shares in an equitable manner the benefits as well as the negative impacts of climate change and climate change response measures among and within countries.
- Institutionalised information exchange and dialogue with actors (trade unions, employers’ organisations, NGOs, and 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 (social, economic, cultural) of emission reduction efforts and adaptation policies on communities, 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.
- Creation and upgrading of social protection schemes, which have to be adapted to the challenges posed by climate change and its policies, especially in countries highly vulnerable to climate change. This must include insurance coverage, decent living conditions, access to safe drinking water and health services, and for those whose jobs might be at risk, setting up of policies for assisting in the reintegration into the labour market, vocational training, creation of alternative income-earning opportunities and local economic diversification.

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.

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

UNFCCC parties must agree on strong commitments to reduce emissions from deforestation and eventually bring deforestation to a halt. Any such agreement must:

- Assist forest-dependent communities by providing the necessary financial support and guidance to monitor and measure deforestation in a transparent manner,
- Include the highest environmental and social standards, including democratic participation and benefit-sharing for forest workers and forest dependent communities. Coherence with efforts under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity will be key for international success with a just balance.
- Refer to other guidelines and international fora, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), which could help in assessing the benefits for indigenous and local peoples.

Social policies are a pre-requisite for success in forest conservation as well as in forest industry. Establishing sustainable forest management in commercial forests is needed to protect their climate function and ensure the livelihood of millions of people on a long term basis. Adequate training for workers and rangers, poverty alleviation, decent job creation and rural development must be part of the policy package. Not least, attention should be given to indirect drivers of deforestation and forest degradation at the national and local levels, including illegal logging and extra-sectoral causes like agriculture (for food, fibre or energy), or infrastructure development.

5. Development and transfer of technologies

Trade unions highlight the need for ensuring local stakeholders’ participation in 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.

AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON FURTHER COMMITMENTS FOR ANNEX I PARTIES UNDER THE KYOTO PROTOCOL (AWG –KP)

Trade Unions support current developments under the AWG-KP for ambitious emission reduction objectives in the next commitment period.

Trade unions call on Parties to make use of social tools for enhancing the effectiveness of emission reduction targets. Existing models of social dialogue need to be a cornerstone of effective social and economically-friendly implementation of emission reductions. Understood as a process where Governments, employers and trade unions jointly analyse, engage, discuss and make decisions, ‘social dialogue’ has proven its long term effectiveness.

Trade unions consider that some of the reforms discussed² could be crucial in achieving the objective of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. However, in particular in the case of land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) and on sectoral approaches, few advances have been made for ensuring the inclusion of social, and in particular employment, impacts of emission reduction measures.

² Item #5 “Analysis of means to reach emission reduction targets and identification of ways to enhance their effectiveness and contribution to sustainable development”

Trade unions highlight the need for addressing employment issues, not only as a co-benefit, but as an indispensable element for making mitigation policies economically and socially viable. Mitigation policies should be evaluated regarding their impact on employment creation (where, when, how) and destruction (where, when, how and which sector will absorb the loss).

6. Emissions trading and project-based mechanisms

Trade unions highlight their support for some of the possible improvements suggested in the last draft proposal³, in particular those concerning the inclusion of co-benefits⁴ as criteria for the registration of projects. We welcome the inclusion of social benefits and poverty alleviation. In the case of the clean development mechanism (CDM), trade unions call for adding to this list of “co-benefits” positive social outcomes, such as the amount of jobs created; or if jobs are created in a sector with high unemployment, the number of people who will acquire new skills and make possible a real transfer of technology; or if these benefits are going to an especially vulnerable community, such as women and youth.

Trade unions call for a reform of CDM to secure its environmental integrity and their contribution to sustainable development, through the inclusion of social or other proxy indicators for broad societal values and norms and where a role will be established for the host country’s civil society, including the trade unions regarding the approval and possible amendment of the projects.

7. Possible approaches targeting sectoral emissions

While trade unions highlight their interest in a sectoral approach to emission reductions, we emphasise the need for any sectoral approach to ensure:

- Governance & decisions on emission reduction targets to be made by governmental authorities, with transparency in decisions regarding the best available technologies as well as the sectoral distribution of reduction efforts.
- Analysis of consequences for the enterprises (including SMEs) from the sectors involved, including employment and competitiveness, as well as the establishment of sectoral dialogue mechanisms with the relevant social partners and identification of protective measures.

Trade unions caution governments about the risks of privatising climate change regulation, and diluting national commitments in unregulated compromises by enterprises. Trade unions call for governments to maintain the responsibility for managing their emission reduction commitments. Regarding the importance of a sectoral approach for scaling-up technology transfer, trade unions emphasize the need for setting clear guidelines for intra-sectoral transfer, and to avoid its use as frameworks for reducing companies’ costs for transferring machinery with no additionality⁵.

8. Potential environmental, economic and social consequences, including spillover effects (of tools, policies, measures and methodologies available to Annex I Parties)

Trade unions have consistently called for a better analysis of the social and economic effects of mitigation measures, and we welcome 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 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 regard to developing countries.

The methodology, which could be developed as UNFCCC guidance for Parties, needs to facilitate the assessment in a differentiated manner of the impacts of the different mitigation measures and approaches, 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, analysis of the social impacts could be started without delay.

³ FCCC/KP/AWG/2008/L.12

⁴ Cobenefit: An additional benefit of an offset project on top of the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions, e.g. providing employment.

⁵ Additionality: This principle ensures that the project for which a country is applying for would not have happened anyway.

Unions also agree with the EU and others on the need to better understand positive spillover effects which could compensate for the negative spillover. Trade unions have released a report on green jobs, jointly with UNEP and the ILO which made it 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.

29TH SESSION OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE (SBSTA)

9. Nairobi Work Programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change

Trade unions support further work on vulnerability and adaptation through the Nairobi Work Programme and consider that important conclusions have been reached in the workshops. For example, the conclusions of the workshop on socio-economic information recognised the importance of employment and income for realising resilience, coping strategies and economic diversification.

Some areas, such as economic diversification and social and economic information need further development. This is the case because, after the first assessment of the situation, it is necessary now to work on the integration of these issues into adaptation policies.

In accordance with some Parties, trade unions consider it necessary to focus more on sectors and on livelihoods. Transportation, infrastructure and industry need to be considered for further adaptation analysis. We stress the need to identify the impacts of climate change on social systems and economies, including for example on employment, health, income, migration and production.

10. Reducing emissions from deforestation (see #4)

11. Matters relating to Article 2, paragraph 3, of the Kyoto Protocol

Trade unions call on Parties to address potential social problems in sectors targeted by current legislation for emission reduction. While such legislation is vital, it is now urgent to properly assess and address economic and social impacts, especially employment related ones in power generation, energy intensive, and fossil-based industries, aviation and road transport. Such analyses should serve to clearly identify how to provide just employment transition policies that encompass retraining, economic diversification and support for displaced workers and reinforce social protection systems. The role of government and public services should not be undermined in any way. In addition, trade unions highlight the aim of widening the discussion and analyzing the social and economic consequences of emission reduction within different areas of the economy. In order to support and not undermine efforts to achieve sustainable development for developing countries, it is necessary to assess their consequences as applied to different zones and sectors. By providing solutions to negative impacts such as just transition policies and by promoting green employment, Parties have the possibility to raise the profile of climate change mitigation and adaptation in national policy. Therefore, working on these areas will remove barriers and obstacles to climate-friendly policies.

29TH SESSION OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR IMPLEMENTATION (SBI)

12. Implementation of Article 4, paragraphs 8 and 9, of the Convention - progress on the implementation of decision 1/CP.10

Trade unions consider it essential to provide practical follow-up to the work done under the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP). It is key to maintain NWP policy areas and to elaborate on previous work, in particular as regards social and economic information and economic diversification policies. These two areas need to ensure that a more important role is provided to employment policies in the implementation framework.

In addition, trade unions consider it essential to replicate in the SBI the important experience of stakeholder participation taking place under the NWP.

13. Matters relating to Article 3, paragraph 14, of the Kyoto Protocol (see #11)