



UN Side event 4 - Climate justice

Just transition for all and a human rights-based approach to climate action

Date/Time: Wednesday 8 November 2017, 13:15 – 14:45

Venue: Blue Zone Meeting Room 7 (170 theatre)

Lead contact: ILO; **Co-lead:** OHCHR

Contributors: IOM, UNESCO, WHO, WFP, UN WOMEN

BACKGROUND

A transition towards low-carbon and climate-resilient economies will impact societies and communities in several ways, with potentially positive and negative effects. The Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change recognized the need to address all these effects so that no one is left behind in the fight against climate change. It explicitly notes “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” and calls for states to respect, promote and take into consideration their human rights obligations when taking climate action.

Well managed, a just transition to climate-resilient development pathways can become a strong driver for the economic growth, job creation, job upgrading, and poverty eradication, needed to support climate and social justice and the effective enjoyment of all human rights for all including those most vulnerable to climate change. Conversely, failing to address social impacts from economic and industrial restructuring could contribute to job losses, social exclusion and disruption on a massive scale.

OBJECTIVE OF SESSION

The session will examine the nature and scale of expected and ongoing structural transformations impacting enterprises, workers and communities, with significant implications for inclusive growth, employment and human rights. Participants will share country experiences, draw lessons and provide insights on successful pathways toward inclusive and sustainable economies and societies, as a means to realise climate and social justice taking into account rights, gender dimensions, and social dialogue. They will discuss practical means to achieve a just transition including just transition funds, just transition planning, and the role of all actors in society. They will consider the potential of global policy frameworks such as the Guidelines for a just transition for all, the guidelines for implementation of the Paris Agreement (currently under negotiation) and other international and national policy frameworks.



KEY MESSAGES

- Climate change and the policy responses to it raise new challenges for social justice, human rights, jobs and livelihoods that must be addressed at all levels. The absence of dedicated social policies and measures to protect workers, enterprises and communities from the adverse effects of climate change threaten significant potential improvements in human well-being
- Climate justice and just transitions will not happen by default: rather they require careful planning, policies, funding, and social dialogue among all key actors.
- The 2018 global stocktake of implementation of the Paris Agreement and the negotiations of the guidelines for implementation of the agreement itself must be taken as a unique opportunity to integrate policies and measures on just transition in nationally-determined contributions, including the core human rights principles of participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What policies and initiatives are needed at the country level to ensure a just transition for workers, enterprises and communities?
- Which participatory processes are required in the implementation of climate commitments to secure rights for all actors to play their part?
- What successful experiences exist to draw upon for advancing ambitious climate action leading no one behind?
- How can the current negotiations at the UNFCCC contribute to ensuring climate action that respects, protects and fulfils human rights and promotes a just transition?

FORMAT OF SESSION

Opening: opening remarks and a brief outline of the overall context and objectives of the session.

Panel discussion: An interactive discussion composed of panellists comprising leading experts (senior officials, practitioners, researchers).

Open Discussion: moderated discussions among panellists and participants.

SPEAKERS

- Minister for Women and Children, Fiji COP23 presidency (invited)
- Emmanuel M. de Guzman, Secretary, Philippines Climate Change Commission
- Representative, International Trade Union Confederation
- Peter J Glynn, Bond University Australia (private sector perspective)
- Alan Miller, Special Envoy of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions
- Professor Jean-Pascal van Ypersele, University Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

Moderation: Moustapha Kamal Gueye, Coordinator, Green Jobs Programme, ILO