

Katowice Climate Change Conference – December 2018

UN Side event - SDG 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth

A just transition towards an inclusive green economy

Date/Time: Wed, 12 Dec 2018, 18:30-20:00 (Room Bieszczady)

Contributing agencies: FAO, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, PAGE, UNICEF, UNITAR, UN Environment, UN WOMEN, WHO, WFP, World Bank Group

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 on climate change recognize the need to address all these effects so that no one is left behind in the fight against climate change, noting “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”.

Well managed, a just transition to climate-resilient development pathways can become a strong driver for economic growth, job creation, job upgrading, and poverty eradication, allowing climate and social justice for all and promoting, protecting and fulfilling human rights for all including those most vulnerable to climate change. Inversely, 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

This event will demonstrate that climate action can be a driver for inclusive growth, job creation, rights and social justice, showcasing country experiences on just transition planning and policies with the engagement of governments and social partners and opportunities for international cooperation. Participants 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. They will discuss practical means to achieve a just transition for all and consider the global and national policy frameworks that countries can employ to pursue climate-resilient economies. The event will promote the idea of a common and “positive narrative” on just transition as corollary of ambition climate action, NOT a justification for low ambition.

KEY MESSAGES

- Climate change and the policy responses to it raise new challenges as well as opportunities for social justice, human rights, jobs and livelihoods that must be addressed at all levels. The absence of dedicated social protection policies and measures for workers, enterprises and communities 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 to fully take advantage of the opportunities for decent work creation.
- The review of SGD8 and 13 at the 2019 High-level Political Forum must be taken as a unique opportunity to integrate policies and measures on just transition in nationally-determined contributions, and reporting on progress on SDG 8 and 13.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What policies and initiatives are needed at the global and national levels 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 leaving no one behind?
- How can the negotiations at the UNFCCC contribute to ensuring climate action that respects, protects and fulfils human rights and promotes job creation and a just transition for all?

FORMAT OF SESSION

The session will be divided into three parts:

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

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

Open Discussion: moderated discussions among panellists and participants.

DRAFT AGENDA and Invited Speakers

18.30 – 18.35 Welcome note by the moderator and introduction of speakers

18.35 – 19.15 Interactive panel discussion

- H.E. Ms **Svenja Schulze** Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
- H.E. Ms **Nomvula Mokonyane**, Minister of Environmental Affairs, South Africa
- Ms **Michelle Bachelet**, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Mr **Ian Walker**, Acting Manager and Lead Economist, Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice, The World Bank
- Ms **Sharan Burrow**, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation
- Ms **Norine Kennedy**, Vice President, Strategic International Engagement, Energy and Environment, United States Council for International Business
- Ms **Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim**, Co-chair of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC)

19.15 – 19.45 Open discussion with participants

19.45 – 19.55 Round of closing statements

19.55 – 20.00 Closing by session moderator

Moderator: **Ms Claire Harasty**, Special Advisor to the Deputy Director-General on Economic and Social Issues, International Labour Organization