

**SPECIAL
REPORT**



INFLUENCING THE CLIMATE DEBATE

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Cutting emissions, transforming jobs
For more information about IMF action on climate change go to:
www.imfmetal.org/climatechange

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Cutting emissions transforming jobs
Working in green jobs for a secure future



Industrial trade union federations representing workers in the metal, chemical, energy and mining sectors in Europe and globally will be in Copenhagen in December 2009 demanding a strong legally-binding, comprehensive global agreement ensuring ambitious reduction of green house gas emissions. **The federations will argue that social justice and long-term employment policies are an integral element of climate policy.**

We live at a pivotal time in human history. This year will be a defining one for the climate. In December, governments will meet in Copenhagen to agree a new treaty to replace the Kyoto Protocol. Climate change is the great transformational issue of our time. Industrial unions believe that by cutting emissions and transforming jobs we can meet this challenge. We must set out a new green economy which addresses workers' concerns, but in order to do so it is vitally important that we get our message across and understood by governments, policy makers, businesses and communities.

Climate change is an issue that is moving up the political agenda in the majority of countries. Both the politics and policy are incredibly difficult. Whether you believe in the science of climate change or not, the fact is that the will of the majority of people seems to be for some global action on this issue. This means trade unions face a choice: we can try to argue against change, to fight against the majority view; or, we can influence the debate and the outcome to the benefit of ordinary working people. The simple fact is that the best people to represent industrial workers in a fair and balanced way are industrial workers themselves through trade unions.

For the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF), our journey began at the IMF Congress in May 2009 where a resolution was passed calling on the IMF to develop a

common position and represent the views of metalworkers in Copenhagen. The resolution also called for the IMF to seek discussions with other Global Union Federations in order to facilitate coordination of climate change policy across industrial sectors. On October 15 and 16 in Germany the IMF, the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers Unions (ICEM), the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) and the European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation (EMCEF) held a joint meeting to develop common demands that could be presented in Copenhagen.

HOW IT ALL STARTED

In 1979, the inception of today's modern day climate programme began, and the first world climate conference was held in Geneva, Switzerland. This conference was the first to recognize climate change as a serious problem. The mainly scientific gathering explored how climate change might affect human activities in the future. It also endorsed plans to establish a World Climate Programme (WCP) under the joint responsibility of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU). It also led to the creation, by WMO and UNEP, of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988.



In October 2009, the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF), International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM), European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) and the European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation (EMCEF) organized a conference in Germany entitled "Cutting Emissions, Transforming Jobs". The meeting discussed the position industrial workers will take at the upcoming United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change conference in Copenhagen Denmark.

Photo: Anita Gardner/IMF



During the late 1980s and early 1990s awareness of the issue of climate change was beginning to develop and a number of intergovernmental conferences took place and, together with increasing scientific evidence, these conferences helped to raise concern about the issue. Gradually the issue of global warming and its potential impact on life on earth began to move up the political agenda.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its first Assessment Report in 1990. Approved after a painstaking peer review process, the Report confirmed the scientific evidence for climate change. This had a powerful effect on both policy makers and the general public at its release and provided the basis for negotiations on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which was adopted at the "Rio Earth Summit" in 1992, and entered into force on March 21, 1994.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the foundation of global efforts to combat global warming. The Convention on Climate Change attempts to set an overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle the challenge posed by climate change. It recognizes that the climate system is a shared resource whose stability can be affected by industrial and other emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. The ultimate objective of the treaty is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent human interference with the climate system. The Convention enjoys near universal membership, with 192 countries (the parties)

having ratified but contains no enforcement mechanisms and in that sense is considered non-legally binding. In reality the fact that it was not binding probably helped its universal membership.

Since the UNFCCC entered into force, the parties have been meeting annually in the Conference of the Parties (COP) to assess progress in dealing with climate change, and beginning in the mid-1990s to negotiate the Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol, which was adopted in 1997 and entered into force in 2005, has 184 Parties of the Convention having ratified its Protocol. The major feature of this Protocol is that it sets binding targets for 37 industrialized countries and the European Community to reducing their emissions by an average of five per cent by 2012 against 1990 levels. The major distinction between the Protocol and the Convention is that while the Convention encouraged industrialized countries to stabilize Green House Gas emissions (GHG), the Protocol commits them to do so.

The Protocol also recognizes that industrialized countries are principally responsible for the current high level of GHG in the atmosphere due to 150 years of industrial activity and is based on a cap and trade mechanism. So the Protocol also places a heavier burden on developed nations under the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities", which were listed and identified in Annex 1 of the UNFCCC and thereafter referred to as Annex 1 countries.

Signatories to the UNFCCC are split into three groups, Annex 1 (Industrialized countries) Annex 2 (countries that have a special obligation to provide financial resources and facilitate technology transfer to developing countries, these include the 24 original OECD members plus the European Union) and Annex 3 (developing countries not expected to de-carbonize their economies unless developed countries supply enough funding and technology). So far 137 developing countries (including India and China) have ratified the Protocol but none of these nations are obliged to reduce emissions.

Under the treaty, countries must meet their targets through national measures. However the Kyoto Protocol offers them an additional means of meeting their targets by way of three market-based mechanisms. They are:

Emissions trading schemes (ETS)

Known as "the carbon market", emissions trading is a market-based scheme for environmental improvement that allows parties to buy and sell permits for emissions or credits for reductions in emissions of certain pollutants.

Clean development mechanism (CDM)

A Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) allows Annex 1 countries to buy carbon credits by investing in sustainable projects in developing countries, such as energy from waste power plants or wind farms, which will reduce GHG emissions in those countries. These credits can then be counted towards an industrialized country's emissions targets. Understandably the CDM has proved to be highly controversial as an easy way out for industrialized countries without tackling the problems at home.

Joint implementation (JI)

Any Annex I country can invest in emission reduction projects (referred to as "Joint Implementation Projects") in any other Annex I country as an alternative to reducing emissions domestically. In this way countries can lower the costs of complying with their Kyoto targets by investing in



United Steelworkers joined with other unions and environmental groups in a nationwide Made in America jobs tour in 2009, highlighting the benefits to American workers and businesses of transitioning to a clean energy economy that will create millions of jobs.

Photo: Steven Dietz/USW

greenhouse gas reductions in an Annex I country where reductions are cheaper, and then applying the credit for those reductions towards their commitment goal.

The aim is for these mechanisms to help stimulate green investment and help parties meet their targets in a cost effective way.

However, the Kyoto Protocol was not without problems as the United States, at the time the world's largest emitter, would have been required to reduce its total emissions by an average of seven per cent below 1990 levels, however neither the Clinton nor the Bush administration sent the Protocol to Congress for ratification. The Bush administration explicitly rejected the Protocol in 2001.

While the Kyoto agreement accomplished little in terms of slowing emissions it has however been successful in making the heads of 90 per cent of the world's governments acknowledge that climate change is a real problem. The Kyoto Protocol is set to expire in 2012 and in Denmark the COP 15 will attempt to hammer out the details and construct a final agreement for the period 2012 to 2020 to be signed in Copenhagen. This needs to be done by December in order to allow national governments time to prepare for implementation beyond 2012. The signs of achieving this however do not look positive.

WHAT IS COP 15

COP 15 refers to the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP), which this year takes place in Copenhagen. The negotiating process on climate change revolves around the sessions of the UNFCCC, which meets every year to review the implementation of the convention. The COP adopts decisions and resolutions, published in reports of the COP.

The COP also serves as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) which also adopts decisions and resolutions on the implementation of its provisions. Participation in COP15 and CMP 5 is restricted to duly nominated representatives of the parties, observer states, accredited observer organisations and accredited press/media.

Thousands of participants including government representatives and observer organizations have attended previous climate change conferences. The sessions in Bali, Indonesia (COP13) attracted over 10,000 participants, including 3,500 government officials, over 5,800 representatives of UN bodies and agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and nearly 1,500 accredited members of the media. This year in Copenhagen the figure may be even higher with 20,000 people expected and at least half of them will be from civil society.

More than 180 trade unionists have already registered to attend the meeting and the union delegation is being coordinated by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) in close cooperation with LO-Denmark. In addition to the negotiations, a number of major trade union activities have been planned, the largest of which is the World of Work Pavilion (WOW) in the LO-Denmark building on December 14 to 16. During this activity a whole series of events will take place to promote the views of trade unions and what we believe any future agreement should contain.

In a series of fact sheets about the COP 15, the UNFCCC states that the following four issues on the table at Copenhagen are essential to reaching a deal.

1. Emission reduction targets for developed countries

Developed countries must accept the need to continue to take the lead in reducing global GHG emissions. In order to do so an agreement must be reached on an ambitious mid-term target for the group of developed countries as a whole, with each one making an effort of comparable scale in line with their historical responsibility and current capabilities.

To date most developed countries have announced their mid-term target for emission reductions for 2020. However despite the fact that key developed country forums such as the G8 have recognized a 2°C limit, pledges for mid-term woefully short of the IPCC range (25 to 40 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020). Negotiations could raise the current level of ambition.

What are our key demands and what would we like to see included?

- A strong legally-binding, comprehensive global agreement ensuring ambitious reduction of greenhouse gas emissions;
- Social justice and long-term employment policies as an integral element of climate policy;
- Environmental protection through reduced emissions (a social cost) whilst increasing employment (a social benefit) and largest emitters should lead;
- Sectoral concerns addressed, including a fair global carbon trading regime - climate change legislation should ensure a level playing field and eliminate the possibility of carbon leakage; and
- Insurance that any agreement includes international competitiveness provisions that do not disadvantage those companies and nations that are first to adopt carbon pricing schemes.

2. Nationally appropriate mitigation actions of developing countries.

The biggest contribution to the global emissions increase over the next decades is projected to come from developing countries; though their per capita CO₂ emissions will remain substantially lower than those in developed country regions. In previous meetings developing countries have indicated a willingness to undertake nationally appropriate mitigation actions, provided that they receive support for such actions.

A major concern for developing countries is that mitigation could distract resources away from their overriding policies, which are poverty eradication and economic growth. The Copenhagen deal could build on domestic mitigation actions underway or planned in developing countries, and identify how they can be enhanced with international support.

What are our key demands and what would we like to see included?

- Sustainability which integrates environmental, social and economic concerns. For labour the social dimension is crucial and must promote trade union

JARGON BUSTING FOR COPENHAGEN:

Green house gases

The atmospheric gases responsible for causing global warming and climate change. The major GHGs are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O). Less prevalent, but very powerful, greenhouse gases are hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆).

Climate change

The United Nations Convention on Climate Change defines climate change as "a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods."

Carbon Footprint

A Carbon Footprint is a measure of the amount of greenhouse gases produced as a result of particular human activities.

Carbon Leakage

Carbon leakage refers to the part of emissions reductions that are made in one of the countries bound to reduce emissions, which are offset by an increase in emissions in a country that is not bound to reduce emissions. For example this can occur through relocation of energy-intensive production from a country that controls emissions to a country that does not.

Carbon Offsetting

The idea is to reduce the impact of carbon dioxide emissions from everyday activities such as driving cars, heating homes and flying. The emissions from such activity are calculated by a carbon offsetting provider and then paid for through a donation to a project that reduces carbon by the equivalent amount.

values of economic development, a fair distribution of wealth, social welfare, equity, peace and human rights, thereby creating a complete framework for sustainability;

- Technology transfer that allows for a fair regime for the transfer of advanced technologies for materials and processes, and use of an international fund for research and development and largest emitters should lead; and
- Developing programmes which ensure a requirement that companies and corporations use best available technologies when they move production.

3. Scaling up financial and technological support for both adaptation and mitigation

Adequate financial, technological and capacity-building support is the engine for advancing international cooperation on climate change as well as national action. An essential part of a comprehensive deal at Copenhagen is identifying how to generate new, additional and predictable financial resources and technology. Resources that are needed for both adaptation and mitigation have been estimated to up to USD250 billion per annum in 2020.

Start up funding is essential and the financial challenge is unique and stark. At the moment adaptation costs are primarily borne by the affected countries, including poor vulnerable communities which have no responsibility for emissions. Kick starting the action initiated in Copenhagen requires start up funding in the order of USD10 billion.

What are our key demands and what would we like to see included?

- Modification of WTO rules to ensure that trade rules including those governing intellectual property do not undermine environmental objectives;
- Sharing science which allows developing countries to effectively measure emissions;
- Ensuring significant public and private investment in education and training, as well as research and development innovation; and
- Worker participation in the formulation and implementation of these programmes, as well as information and consultation rights on the sustainable development of companies.

4. An effective institutional framework with governance structures that address the needs of developing countries

Copenhagen needs to deliver on an efficient mix of financial instruments with effective means for disbursement and for measurement, reporting and verification. Much of the available funding has not reached developing countries in a way that is regarded as efficient or beneficial. It is critical that the funds are agreed as part of the Copenhagen outcome. In addition, governance principles must be founded on equity, respecting the interests and needs of developing countries, and that includes them as equal decision-making partners.

What are our key demands and what would we like to see included?

- Recognition that although all countries have a responsibility to mitigate climate change, it is clear that the greatest responsibility lies with the largest industrial nations;
- Financial and environmental crisis must not be used as an excuse for cost and job cutting or delaying action on environmental protection. The so-called "free market" will not create solutions by itself; and
- Emissions-trading is insufficient in isolation from other policies.

SUSTAINABLE JOB CREATION

Unions recognize that industrial change is happening. Workers must be prepared and protected. However, clear distinctions between the 'green' and traditional economy are impossible. There are vital economic and industrial links between sectors. 'Greening' skills in all sectors and worker participation are key. To be sustainable, future 'greener' jobs must be decent and unionized.

The IMF supports the International Trade Union Confederation's position on Just Transition. Our present jobs can, in many cases, be sustainable, but changes will come. We believe that the costs and benefits of protecting the environment should be shared fairly. Just Transition is a message of hope: decent work and social justice can co-exist with environmental protection. However, this will only happen if the world plans for it, and makes it happen through public policies that are in the public interest.

AFTER COPENHAGEN?

Whatever happens in Copenhagen climate change will remain at the top of the political agenda. If an agreement is concluded, which looks unlikely, then unions will have a key role to ensure that the burden of such an agreement does not fall on the shoulders of workers. We will also have a key role to play in the implementation of any agreement. Education of workers on climate issues is also a significant challenge in the future for unions, one that we can not ignore if we want to play an active role.

If an agreement is not reached or agreed only in principle then we must continue to demand action in order to save our planet. As the debate on how best to respond to climate change continues, we must ensure that we present our views to the highest levels of government for an alternative world economy: A green economy which is based on the principles of social justice for all.

The following websites offer additional information about climate change and trade union responses to this issue:

www.unfccc.int

www.climate.ituc-csi.org

www.imfmetal.org/climatechange

www.hazards.org/greenjobs

www.sustainlabour.org

JARGON BUSTING FOR COPENHAGEN:

Emissions trading scheme (ETS)

The ETS is a "cap and trade system". Countries are given a national allocation of how much carbon dioxide they can emit, which is then divided up among the companies covered by the scheme. If companies emit more than they are allowed they must purchase permits to make up for the excess. If they emit less, they can sell their unused allocations.

Border adjustment

Border adjustments, also known as Border Tax Adjustments or Border Tax Assessments, are import fees levied by carbon-taxing countries on goods manufactured in non-carbon-taxing countries. For example a product manufactured in a country that adopts an ETS scheme should not be cheaper in a non-ETS country as a result of the extra costs for emissions trading. A tax would be applied to level the playing field.

Green Jobs

According to the International Labour Organization green jobs reduce the environmental impact of enterprises and economic sectors, ultimately to levels that are sustainable. However many traditional jobs such as steelworkers could also be considered green as alternative energy sources such as wind, solar and wave all have major steel components.



How can unions contribute to the goal of cutting green house gas emissions?



Paul Howes

AUSTRALIAN WORKERS' UNION

"We know in our key industries of steel, aluminium, metals and manufacturing that the processes engaged in by our members are emissions intensive, that being said many of the products made by our members also contribute significantly to the reduction of emissions for example the steel used in making wind power generators. The key for unions in these industries is to support our existing members by supporting the new and emerging technologies which will "green" our industries."



Gianni Alioti

FIM-CISL

"Our contribution is to extend to the environment the responsibility and authority of workers' representatives on occupational health and safety and to negotiate pay increases in enterprises tied to achieving shared objectives of eco-efficiency, such as energy efficiency, saving water resources and raw materials, recovery and recycling of products at the end of their life cycle."



Rajendra Prasad Singh

SMEFI

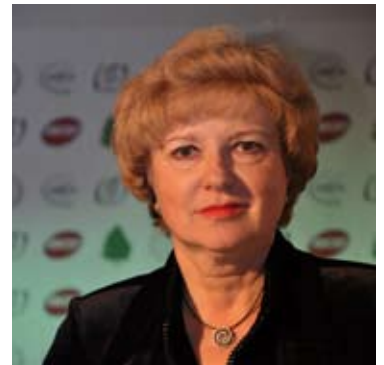
"Unions can organize seminars, workshops and meetings to make the people and their elected representatives conscious of this issue. Putting pressure on the employer and the government to use eco-friendly technology, renewable sources of energy, such as solar energy, for industry to arrest and reduce carbon emissions. Mobilizing the civil society, people at large, employers and the governments to stop deforestation and start massive plantation."



Kenji Takizawa

IMF-JC

"Unions should support sustainable industrial development based on technology development to achieve or maintain long-term stable employment and decent work. Moreover, unions should be involved in making realistic and balanced cutting emissions policy through social dialogue with government and management."



Irina Ledeneva

MMWU

"MMWU actively participates in the elaboration of legislative acts regarding ecological safety. According to Russian laws trade unions are performing public ecological control through the institute of the union labour inspectorate. Our labour inspectors participate in commissions issuing certificates, entering into exploiting industrial places. They also make control of the dust, gas and water cleaning equipment at enterprises."