

Confronting
Climate Change

A just transition to green jobs

What can you do?

Call your Municipal Councillor

Your municipal councillor has a part to play in bringing together workers, employers and other community leaders to strategize a just transition into green jobs.

Write your Premier

Your premier has an active role to play in regulating GHG emissions and adapting to climate change impacts within your province. Write to your premier or provincial representative to urge them to adopt a just transition strategy that avoids simply reacting to crises.

Contact your Member of Parliament

Your MP needs to take a message to Ottawa that workers cannot be left out of any climate change strategy. Green jobs are the answer to healthy communities and a secure economic future!

Share this leaflet

Make sure your co-workers, family and neighbours know the importance of a just transition for workers and their communities. To order more flyers or our "Climate Change IQ: Just Transition" contact **national@nupge.ca.**

Visit our website for a paper-free version of this or any of our publications, **www.nupge.ca/current_pub.html#Environment.**

national union

NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES

- B. C. Government and Service Employees' Union
- Health Sciences Association of British Columbia
- Health Sciences Association of Alberta
- Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union
- Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union
- Ontario Public Service Employees Union
- Canadian Union of Brewery and General Workers
- New Brunswick Union of Public and Private Employees
- Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union
- PEI Union of Public Sector Employees
- Newfoundland & Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees

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The National Union of Public and General Employees is an affiliate of the Canadian Labour Congress and a member of the Public Services International.

our
green
future

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We need to act now!

Climate Change is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity today. Canadians want our governments and industries to act NOW to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move to a low-carbon economy.

What strategies must governments implement to tackle climate change?

The National Union is calling for all levels of government to adopt a comprehensive plan that folds together five important actions.

Four of those actions are based on "the numbers":

- tough efficiency standards;
- a strong commitment to renewable energy sources;
- slowing oil sand development; and
- hard caps on carbon emissions.

Each of these actions will work to strengthen the effectiveness of the next. Only in this way can we meet the emission reduction targets proclaimed by politicians and be well prepared to go beyond.

The fifth action is the human element. Designing and implementing a shift in the labour market from polluting jobs to "green jobs" will require a ***Just Transition Strategy***; a plan that can be implemented to build a sustainable economy and a healthy environment in each and every Canadian community.

What impacts will these actions have on workers and communities?

Our economy is driven by fossil fuels, so in that sense a move to a low-carbon economy will affect all sectors to some degree. Some sectors will grow and flourish and others may face severe limitations. Various studies calculate job losses and gains but there is agreement that there will be large net gains in jobs over the first decade of regulation.

The largest greenhouse gas (GHG) emitters are primarily the oil and gas, electricity, mining and manufacturing sectors. The several hundred thousand workers in these sectors will see changes and some will see layoffs. Each plant's prescription for emission reductions will be different.

Strategic plans may have to be made for each case to secure both a healthier environment, and a just deal for workers and the community.

Safeguards need to be in place to protect workers in these vulnerable sectors so, as their jobs are displaced, they are not forgotten.

GREEN JOBS



What does a just transition strategy look like?

A just transition strategy implies a proactive plan that takes a variety of factors into consideration. Canadians want to avoid a series of crises, where workers are left to fend for themselves, ghost towns replace thriving communities, and where our social safety net is overburdened and inadequate.

Different types of transition programs will be required for different industries and different communities. Our governments should bring together workers, employers, and community leaders to develop plans according to unique circumstances. Workers and communities must be part of the development of a transition strategy as these participants would be the best at defining problems and finding solutions.

A just transition strategy should include:

- income maintenance when moving from a higher paying position in a plant that has been shut down to a lower paying position elsewhere;
- an industrial strategy that creates green jobs and sustainable communities;
- income support while new green jobs are being created or re-training is occurring;
- training to suit new jobs;
- career planning advice;
- maintenance of benefits and pensions; and
- financial bridging for older workers who choose to retire so that they receive full pension credits.

Our governments must take an active role in strengthening Canada's ability to move swiftly to a low carbon economy. They have the ability to implement an industrial strategy and labour market programs to protect communities and ease the burden on workers and their families. This is how our government can maximize environmental and economic benefits for all Canadians.