

**September 2023
ITF & SLOCAT SUBMISSION**

Views on different elements of the work programme on just transition pathways referred to in paragraph 52 of decision 1/CMA.4

Introduction

Unprecedented heatwaves have had a major impact across all continents, breaking heat records in Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe. Since mid-March 2023, ocean temperatures have risen to levels previously unseen over 40 years of satellite monitoring, and September 2023 has been marked by catastrophic cyclones and floods from Libya to Brazil.

Transport workers keep our communities, economies and supply chains moving through emergencies, putting their lives, health and safety at risk. They are increasingly exposed to extreme temperatures and other climate harms, within transport systems which are not fit for new climate realities. Many are forced to migrate when they are displaced from their traditional livelihoods or when decent work is undermined. Climate action in the transport sector can also have ramifications for the number and type of jobs available, who has access to jobs, and for working conditions and rights.

The concept of the 'just transition' arose from the global labour movement, to deal in a comprehensive way with the social impact of the climate crisis. It is crucial that it is incorporated into industrial policies, to ensure that a policy framework is developed for sectors like transport which takes due account of the workers on whom the sector depends, while stepping up mitigation and adaptation ambition in line with the scientific recommendations of the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC AR6).

The JTWP must put labour issues at the centre

At the UNFCCC COP27 climate negotiations in Sharm El-Sheikh in November 2022, governments decided to establish a work programme on just transition (JTWP) to discuss pathways to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. At COP28, a decision on the implementation of the JTWP must be adopted. We urge parties to respect the mandate of the Paris Agreement that makes the importance of the labour focus of a just transition clear: *"Taking into account 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"*.

We also highlight the International Labour Organization's (ILO) recently renewed commitment to a just transition and its formal endorsement of the ILO Guidelines as 'the central reference' for the implementation of just transition policies and measures that offer the international normative framework for just transition – inclusive of all its elements.¹ The ILO is the UN agency bringing together governments, employers and workers of 187 Member States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.

We support the use of the following definition of a just transition to guide the work at UNFCCC:

A **just transition** secures the future and livelihoods of workers and their communities during the transition to a low-carbon economy, effectively limiting global temperature rises to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels.

Just Transition plans should be co-created with workers and their trade unions to provide and guarantee decent work, social protection, training opportunities and job security for all workers affected by global warming and climate change policies.

Plans must be underpinned by the fundamental labour rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining and facilitated through social dialogue between workers and their unions, employers and governments as established by the ILO.

A just transition requires guarantees for intra-, intergenerational and gender equity, racial justice, respect for the rights of indigenous peoples, impacted communities and migrants and promotes and protects human rights and ILO fundamental labour rights.

Scope of the JTWP

The CMA.4 decision is clear on the broad scope that is needed to set-up and implement just transition policies: "*Just Transition pathways that include energy, socioeconomic, workforce and other dimensions, all of which must be based on nationally defined development priorities and include social protection.*"

The scope should **explicitly cover transport and other relevant sectors and industries**, and all dimensions of the climate crisis and response, and its impact on workers and communities. Of the other areas that the IPCC has identified as critical to secure 1.5 pathways, it is important to recognise the significance of the transport sector to the following: 1) energy system transitions; 2) urban system and infrastructure transitions; and 3) industrial system transitions. Shifts in technology associated with climate change and action also have significant

¹ ILO (2015). "Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all." https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_432859.pdf, ILO (2023). "Proposed resolution and conclusion on a Just Transition." https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/111/committees/just-transition/WCMS_885375/lang--en/index.htm/ and ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities – ACTRAV (2021) *User's manual to the ILO's Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all.* https://www.ilo.org/actrav/pubs/WCMS_826060/lang--en/index.htm

implications for sectors like transport, including with regard to jobs and working conditions. It is important that the scope should **encompass these intersections**.

The scope must cover **both mitigation and adaptation/resilience** so as to contribute to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement and build on and complement all relevant workstreams under the Convention and the Paris Agreement. There has, to date, been a major gap in terms of adaptation and resilience in the transport sector, with knock-on effects for workers and for communities and businesses. Given how exposed transport workers and systems are to climate harms, this must change if we are to achieve a just transition for the sector.

There must be a strong focus on the gender dimension and on young workers, recognising that, in sectors like transport, these groups are disproportionately concentrated in jobs which are less secure and more exposed to climate hazards. At the same time, it must encompass wider affected communities, including Indigenous Peoples, recognising that just transition involves protected the rights of affected communities both **within and beyond the workplace**.

The CMA.4 decision also explicitly states that just transition pathways should include 'social protection' and 'instruments related to social solidarity and protection'. The right to **social protection** is of crucial importance to protect people from economic and social distress caused by the absence or a substantial reduction of income from work due to various eventualities which increasingly include impacts of the climate emergency.² The JTWP should build on the work done in the context of the **Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions**, launched in September 2021 by the UN Secretary-General.³ The aim of the Accelerator is to direct investments to help create at least 400 million decent jobs, primarily in the green, digital and care economies, and to extend social protection coverage to the over 4 billion people currently excluded.

Climate policy solutions must be founded on meaningful and effective **social dialogue** with social partners at all policy levels enabled by freedom of association and collective bargaining, as established by ILO fundamental rights. Engaging in social dialogue to produce just transition plans with organised workers from all economic sectors (formal and informal), at all policy levels (company, sector, national and global) representing all workers (including documented and undocumented migrants, refugees and migrant workers) will enable governments to design better and more ambitious climate policies supported by workers, their families, and communities. Fully integrating attention to social dialogue is important for the scope of the JTWP as well as for its modalities (see further).

In order to deliver a just transition, the approach to climate financing is key. We note that the recent ILO resolution emphasises the importance of explicitly **aligning climate finance with just transition standards**, stating that it is the role of governments, employers and workers' organisations to "mobilize sustainable, affordable, predictable and long-term finance from public

² <https://www.ilo.org/secsoc/lang--en/index.htm>

³ <https://unglobalaccelerator.org/>

and private, domestic and international sources, and aligning public and private financial flows and public procurement to the objectives of a just transition.”⁴

Objectives of the JTWP

The role of workers and their organisations (the trade unions) has been undervalued in the UNFCCC process till now. The JTWP is an important opportunity to strengthen and foster the engagement with workers and their organisations. They play a crucial role in facilitating and implementing urgently needed more ambitious climate policies.

The JTWP should:

- Enhance a collective understanding by Parties and observers of just transition pathways and actions to facilitate implementation;
- Share and synthesize knowledge, best practices, lessons learned and experience relevant to just transition pathways; This includes reporting on progress made on voluntary initiatives (i.e. JETPs), and providing recommendations for developing future partnerships to access support for Just Transition covering all socio-economic dimensions;
- Address gaps, barriers and challenges faced by those promoting Just Transition strategies with a view to unlocking or facilitating enhanced ambition.
- Recommend ways in which just transition pathways can be pursued in an inclusive, affordable and sustainable manner, particularly for workers and their organisations through meaningful and effective social dialogue, including with potentially marginalised groups such as women and young workers. Provide recommendations to engage with local communities, women and gender workers and groups and Indigenous Peoples based on stakeholder engagement. Integrate these recommendations in the modalities of the JTWP itself.
- Serve as a space for accountability and peer-to-peer evaluation of just transition initiatives.
- Recommend decisions to constituted bodies (on recommended processes, criteria, policy package) in order to ensure Just Transition principles are integrated coherently in all UNFCCC processes/workstreams.
- Provide guidance for developing national JT strategies and how to incorporate them in the NDCs.
- Develop aspirational pathways to support actions at the sectoral, company, country, regional and global levels.
- Identify indicators that could be used for monitoring and reporting back, including to worker stakeholders, on progress on JT.
- Identify areas where international cooperation (financial, technical/technological, capacity) would be beneficial to align with and accelerate action on JT, unlocking appropriate and available opportunities, resources and means of implementation support (finance, technology and capacity-building).

⁴ ILO (2023). “Proposed resolution and conclusion on a Just Transition.”
https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/111/committees/just-transition/WCMS_885375/lang--en/index.htm/

Modalities and institutional arrangements of the JTWP

The need to organise a Just Transition to deliver on the Paris Agreement will be with us on a permanent basis, this work programme should therefore be thought of as long term. Reflecting the importance of the social dimension of climate policies means that the JTWP should have a **standalone mandate** with a central focus on the **workforce dimension of just transition**. The JTWP should be open-ended, with decisions on a regular basis based on work to be developed in between SB sessions. In order to ensure the structure and process are fit for purpose in a rapidly evolving context, regular review is suggested with for example a first review of the functioning and deliverables in CMA7 (2025).

Climate policy solutions must be founded on meaningful and effective **social dialogue** with social partners at all policy levels enabled by freedom of association and collective bargaining, as established by ILO fundamental rights.⁵ These principles should be reflected in the scope, modalities and institutional arrangements of the JTWP.

An **expert committee or advisory body to the work programme with representatives of social partners and relevant stakeholders** should be established to provide the parties with independent information, advise and input on measures and policies for just transition. Workers' representatives must be recognised and have a seat at the table in all discussion bodies overseeing just transition issues at the expert level. This includes their representation in the KCI (Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures).⁶

A system of annual **monitoring and reporting to the COP**, with participation from party and non-party stakeholders should be implemented. Active engagement of trade unions, as workers' representatives, should be included, along with a recognition of their role in just transition policy as a means of delivering climate justice. All relevant stakeholders should be engaged.

The **annual high-level ministerial round tables on just transition** should give guidance on the implementation of the JTWP and its coordination with other work streams at the UNFCCC. The ministerials should ensure that decisions of the JTWP have sufficient levels of commitment and urgency from involved parties. The round tables should be organised with appropriate observer participation.

The JTWP should provide and receive input to and from all relevant work streams inside the UNFCCC, including the Mitigation Work Programme, the Forum on Response Measures (including the KCI) and the climate finance processes, including the work of the Standing Committee on Finance and the NCQG, the Gender Action Plan and the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' Platform.

Recognise the mandate of UN processes outside the UNFCCC on just transition, most importantly the role of **the ILO as the recognised tripartite body and the ILO guidelines**

⁵ ILO (1998). "ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work."
<https://www.ilo.org/declaration/lang--en/index.htm>

⁶ A good example of observer participation is the Facilitative Working Group (FWG) that activates and supports the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP). This Working Group consists of 14 representatives: seven country representatives and seven Indigenous representatives (one from each of the seven world regions).

on Just Transition, which provide the foundational UN definition for just transition, as well as an elaborate framework for implementing just transition.

Actively engage with and learn from the wide range of initiatives and processes taking place outside the UNFCCC, including national-level tripartite bodies, such as the Scottish Just Transition commission, the Spanish Just Transition agreements, the German Coal Commission, Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETPs), and global sector-level initiatives, such as the Maritime Just Transition Task Force.

About the International Transport Workers' Federation

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is the global umbrella body for trade unions in transport, representing seafarers, dockers, inland navigation, civil aviation, road transport, rail, urban transport, tourism and fisheries. We are a democratic, affiliate-led federation and we fight passionately to improve working lives, connecting 740 affiliated unions from over 150 countries to secure rights, equality and justice. We are the voice for nearly 18.5 million working men and women across the world.

About SLOCAT

SLOCAT is the international, multi-stakeholder partnership powering systemic transformations and a just transition towards equitable, healthy, green and resilient transport and mobility systems for the people and the planet. We deliver on our mission through co-creation, co-leadership and co-delivery across knowledge, advocacy and dialogue activities in the intersection between transport, climate change and sustainability. Our multi-sectoral Partnership engages a vibrant and inclusive ecosystem across transport associations, NGOs, academia, governments, multilateral organisations, philanthropy and business; and a large community of world-class experts and change-makers. Going where others do not or cannot go individually, our Partnership is leveraged to set ambitious global agendas and catalyse progressive thinking and solutions for the urgent transformation of transport and mobility systems worldwide.

Since 2016, SLOCAT has been the official Focal Point for the transport sector in the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action and in that role facilitates the engagement of transport stakeholders.

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