THE FUTURE OF WORK IN A LOW CARBON ECONOMY

WHAT ROLE DO WORKERS AND UNIONS PLAY?

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Employment in fossil fuel industry varies by country and by the way they are counted.

Renewable energy advocates make claims that the number of jobs in this sector are growing faster and greater than fossil fuel.
COMPARISONS OF RENEWABLE AND FOSSIL FUEL IN EMPLOYMENT IN THE UNITED STATES... BUT ARE THESE COMPARISONS REALISTIC?
• MANY OF THE JOBS IN SOLAR AND WIND ARE IN CONSTRUCTION, NOT LONGTERM JOBS AS IN THE FOSSIL FUEL INDUSTRY

WHAT KINDS OF GOOD BLUE COLLAR JOBS WILL BE DEVELOPED HERE IN NORWAY?
HISTORY OF DISPLACEMENT

Workers in many industrialized countries suffered from the closing of plants with the shift to manufacturing in China and the Global South.

A number of European countries have kept their industrial edge... not so true in the UK and the US.
FROM MY OWN JOB EXPERIENCE

- Building fiberglass boats,
- In a steel mill dipping steel girders in galvanizing vats,
- As a welder on the Ford Motor Co automobile assembly line,
- As a maintenance electrician in an oil refinery and
- As an electrician working on industrial and commercial construction.

I have seen the boat building, the steel mill, the auto factories all disappear. In Los Angeles, where I live, we lost about 800,000 good union jobs within a decade in the 1980’s. Many new jobs are non-union.
INVOLVE UNIONS AND WORKERS IN THE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE
THERE ARE INTERNATIONAL GROUPS OF UNIONS ORGANIZING AROUND WORKING FOR AN EQUITABLE LOW CARBON SOCIETY
A trade union strategy for energy democracy:

• Resist the agenda of the fossil fuels corporations;
• Reclaim to the public sphere parts of the energy economy that have been privatized or marketized;
• Restructure the global energy system in order to massively scale up renewable energy and other safe low-carbon options, implement energy conservation, and ensure job-creation and true sustainability.

Norwegian Union of Electricians and IT Workers is one of the 54 members of this organization

http://unionsforenergydemocracy.org
WHAT IS A JUST TRANSITION?

• MAJOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT UNDER LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIAL POLICIES TO CREATE GREEN JOBS AND WORKPLACES.

• IDENTIFICATION IN ADVANCE OF THE EMPLOYMENT EFFECTS OF CLIMATE PROTECTION. SOCIAL PROTECTIONS, INCLUDING SOCIAL INSURANCE, INCOME MAINTENANCE, JOB PLACEMENT, AND SECURE ACCESS TO HEALTH, ENERGY, WATER, AND SANITATION.

• TRAINING AND EDUCATION FOR NEW CAREERS FOR THOSE AFFECTED.

• WIDE CONSULTATION AMONG STAKEHOLDERS.

• A “DIVERSIFICATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION PLAN” FOR EVERY REGION AND COMMUNITY AT RISK TO PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE TO A “FREE-MARKET ADAPTATION” THAT WILL ONLY LEAD TO SUFFERING AND OPPOSITION TO CLIMATE MEASURES.

• PROTECTION FOR THE ECONOMIC LIFE OF COMMUNITIES, INCLUDING NEW ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES AND ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION.

https://www.ituc-csi.org/just-transition-centre

International Trade Union Confederation (170 unions)
A HEALTHY PLANET REQUIRES NOT ONLY CLEAN ENERGY BUT POLICIES THAT PROMOTE EQUITY.

• “TRADE UNIONS PROPOSE THAT EMPLOYMENT, INCOME, WEALTH DISTRIBUTION, PURCHASING POWER, GENDER EQUITY AND MEASURES TO TACKLE POVERTY SHOULD BE PLACED “AT THE CENTER OF DISCUSSIONS.” (ITUC)