



CLIMATE CHANGE

Background

The current production and consumption model is unsustainable (negative for workers, inequitable when it comes to wealth distribution, damaging to health and the environment, among others). We need to move towards a just, efficient and sustainable economic model.

There is a need for urgent and ambitious action if we are to maintain average temperature increases below 2°C, taking into account the different responsibilities and capacities countries have in the climate crisis.

The current system generates also serious problems for health and environment related to mining and water pollution due to chemical substances use.

There is a need to highlight the particular vulnerability of Central America and the Caribbean to the impacts of climate change

Climate change has already impacts on different aspects of public services (health, water, energy, first respondent services, and infrastructures)

Overexploitation of natural resources has direct consequences on communities' livelihoods.

We acknowledge that the efforts undertaken in many countries of the Americas towards a socially just development model (improving health, working conditions, etc) have been done without the integration of environmental questions, and this lead to reducing the space for development of the most vulnerable countries. The inertia of the system might be difficult to combat, but as trade unions we can try to support alternatives and raise awareness on these issues

We need to fight the opacity of the fossil fuel industry, which is one of the main responsible of climate change. It should pay for its impacts.

Decisions on energy should not be left to corporations. These decisions should be taken taking into account the impacts of different energetic options on a variety of environmental dimensions.

As trade unions we have the responsibility to address this question. Doing it also gives us a chance to build a bridge with communities.

We need a cultural shift, in which education for sustainable development plays a key role.

Propuestas de trabajo futuro sobre medio ambiente y cambio climático

1. Demands to governments

- Raise the ambition of Climate policies, in order to limit average temperature increases to less than 2°C.
- Ensure that adaptation policies are defined to protect the most vulnerable and employment
- Support investment in employment creation in sectors that reduce the environmental impact of production and services (green/sustainable jobs) in the public sector.
- Respect and strengthen environmental regulations, and secure public resources for environmental protection agencies
- Secure a just transition for workers in sectors which will face transformation
- Stop the privatisation of common goods (water, forests, energy)
- Support sustainable and regionally-wide energy policies. Public control over the new, renewable energy mix should be promoted.
- Environmental protection should be promoted in relation with social justice objectives (including the rights of indigenous communities facing environmental policies which will deprive them from their livelihoods)
- Integrate environmental issues and climate change to school curricula
- regulate extractive industries so that there is more transparency and control; the benefits from these industries should be reinvested in alternative industries
- facilitate access of households to renewable energy micro-generation
- the increase in energy prices should be fairly translated in the prices paid by big consumers (mining, industry) and those paid by households, as the latter tend to be the only ones to face price increases.

2. Demands to PSI/AMRECON

- Mobilise towards an ambitious public sector union presence in COP21 and beyond, in cooperation with the ITUC and other Global Union Federations. A strong union voice, linking Climate change to other social struggles should be brought there.
- strengthen awareness raising and training tools on environmental issues
- promote solidarity between unions on these issues
- Create a network of unions interested in supporting and coordinating first responses to disasters
- develop a union-owned reflection on emission reduction mechanisms, including market mechanisms
- promote a more active PSI role in the framework of the ILO Green Jobs Initiative
- develop a campaign with other international trade unions on this issue, showing union commitments to the environment and climate, such as a global day of action (which this year could coincide with the public service day) with materials to accompany the unions which would like to highlight this issue.
- Evaluate the implementation of these commitments in the next AMRECOM as well as in the subregional meetings
- Create a union coordination on environmental issues at the global level in order to share information
- Advocate for further implementation of the global strategy on education for sustainable development in cooperation with EI

3. Commitments from affiliates

- Integrate environmental issues to collective agreements
- promote public procurement
- promote alliances with other trade unions as other sectors of civil society, social movements, environmentalists, women, indigenous, independent researchers
- Support public policies going in the sense of changing production and consumption patterns, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy saving objectives, and translate them into workplaces
- integrate disaster response to union work and promote solidarity between unions on this issue
- call for more transparent information on the environmental impacts and benefits of extractive industries, as well as on the taxes they pay
- educate union members on the linkages between energy, environment and sustainability
- promote actions aimed at reducing workplaces' environmental impact

- promote the integration of environmental issues in union studies on the application of labour legislation, the compilation of data on these issues and awareness raising of members on the results
- identify a person in the union to promote environmental debates
- aim at further influencing local governments strategies
- Engage with governments on environmental issues and raise proposals