

# CLIMATE- AND EMPLOYMENT- PROOF OUR WORK

22 September 2021  
Global Day of Action  
#CEPOW

## Campaign Guide

ITUC Frontline Campaign –  
Just Transition for Climate Ambition

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# 1. Introduction

## We're in a race against time

These are difficult times for many workers as the COVID-19 pandemic disrupts lives and livelihoods. Many of us have seen changes to our workplaces and our daily routines and are facing a convergence of crises – a pandemic with no known end date, the devastation of inequality and climate devastation with extreme weather events and changing seasons.

**Irreversible global warming** - Global surface temperature will continue to increase up to 4°C, where adaptation may not be possible. We need to cut CO2 emissions by 55% by 2030.

We know that the health, social and economic consequences of Covid-19 will require new levels of care, of social protection and of economic stimulus in all countries. It will take a new social contract.

And we're in a race against time to respond to climate change, which left unchecked threatens everyone and will leave whole regions uninhabitable. Extreme weather events with lasting devastation are already destroying jobs and livelihoods.

**Hothouse earth** - Glaciers are retreating almost everywhere around the world, and they will continue to lose mass at least for several decades even if global temperature is stabilised.

The ITUC is asking for your support to help Climate- and Employment-Proof Our Work #CEPOW.

You can join us by taking part in the biggest global conversation about our future with your employer, small businesses that you support, and local and national governments.

**Workers around the world will invite their employers to share a conversation to discuss the plans for resilience and sustainable business — safety, jobs, emissions, a secure pathway for the future. That's the strength of leadership needed from all of us.**

Climate change and the deteriorating capacity of our planet to sustain life cannot be ignored, and pandemics represent a threat to our health and economies — a threat that is now too big to ignore.

**Rising sea levels threaten cities** - Global sea levels will rise up to 6 meters if warming is limited to 2°C and it will remain irreversible for centuries.

Governments have largely looked the other way while scientists have called for action on both fronts. This is a failure of leadership, and the urgency to reverse the economic, social and environmental consequences requires more courageous leaders than we have seen to date.

- This year, hundreds of governments updated their climate plans (Nationally Determined Contributions - NDCs), yet many fall short of what is needed.
- We have only ten years to cut carbon dioxide emissions by at least 50% and stabilise the planet at a 1.5-degree temperature rise.
- We have just thirty years to reach net zero by 2050.

## Why we need your help to Climate- and Employment-Proof Our Work

Every government must raise its ambition with updated NDCs, including Just Transition measures to protect workers, their families and their communities. Every employer must have a plan for climate- and employment-proofing their operations, and Just Transition measures must be at the heart of such plans.

Workers and their unions must be part of the dialogue that shapes our future to ensure that the Just Transition measures agreed are adequate to build people's trust in a process that they understand is urgent.

Without Just Transition, the ambition we need will be blocked by fear that is often fuelled by corporate greed, extremist politicians and violation of rights.

Together, we can start those conversations with **big employers and the small businesses that are vital to our economies, and local and national governments about how to Climate- and Employment-Proof Our Work. It will take all of us.**

**Refugees and displaced people - 20 million climate refugees have fled from disaster and have lost livelihoods.**

We have a chance to coordinate all our efforts to maintain and grow good jobs in a healthy, sustainable and more balanced economic future. This is what a Just Transition looks like.

This campaign guide sets out how to take part in the 22 September Global Day of Action to Climate- and Employment-Proof Our Work.

All workers and their unions are invited to take part virtually or face-to-face to discuss plans for climate-proofing employment and work, and this guide gives you the tools to take part.

**Climate change and public health – At 1.5C degrees of warming in Europe alone around 30,000 will die annually due to heat.**

## The time to act is now

This year we know that jobs and employment are serious concerns for people. That's why we need to have the conversation about both climate and employment. Our economies are undergoing fundamental transformations, and we need to be part of the team designing our future with Just Transition plans.

All governments need to include Just Transition plans and measures in their updated NDCs in accordance with the Paris Climate Agreement. The time to act is now – science tells us this is not something that can be delayed or postponed.

You can track your country's climate commitments, and NDCs, .

**ITUC Global Poll 2020 - 79% of people think employees should have a right to know what measures their company is planning to climate-proof jobs and workplaces.**

In the run up to COP 26 this year we will continue to monitor NDCs and how governments are complying with their Paris Agreement obligations and we will continue to mobilise virtually and in person. To start with we need to make sure employers have a plan for safety, jobs, reducing emissions and a secure pathway for the future.

Let's work together and design a future with secure jobs, sustainable economies and a safe and healthy living planet.

A future that starts now.

**Sharan Burrow, General Secretary,  
International Trade Union Confederation**  
@SharanBurrow

# 2. About the CEPOW Global Day of Action

The 2021 Global Day of Action to Climate- and Employment-Proof Our Work takes place on 22 September.

We have a convergence of crises – a global pandemic, devastating inequality and a climate emergency.

Working together, we can turn this around. We must protect jobs, stabilise economies and reduce emissions in every job and workplace with Just Transition measures.

Employers, small businesses, and local and national governments all need to have a plan for that future – and workers and their unions are here to support and develop those plans. We can all play our part to support small businesses during this time of change by supporting them as customers, friends and workers.

We are running out of time. Without ambitious action on climate change now, we will pass the **tipping points** for irreversible damage to our planet.

### Workers demand a say in our future.

We want to start a global conversation with employers – big and small, or in local and national governments – about how, together, we can plan to climate- and employment-proof work.

The frontlines of these global crises are found in our jobs and at work. That’s why workers and their unions want to be part of the conversation on how we will climate- and employment-proof work.

### Take part in the biggest global conversation about our future #CEPOW.



# How to take part?

## 1 Sign up

Sign up to show your interest in climate- and employment-proofing your work and get updates about the Global Day of Action.

## 2 Ask to talk to your employer, a local business or someone from your local or national government on 22 September

Let us know if you ask for a meeting, and we'll keep a tally of all places around the world taking part in the Global Day of Action.

Your meeting can be in person or a virtual meeting using an online platform like Skype, Teams, WhatsApp, Zoom etc.

Share a poster on social media, or stick a poster in your window at home or in your workplace, to show that you're taking part in the Global Day of Action.

## 3 Tell us how it went

Share a photo of yourself at the in-person or virtual meeting and the highlights of what was discussed.

## Who can take part?

The ITUC is inviting its affiliates and the Global Union Federations to work with union representatives to ask all employers to meet with workers and their unions to discuss plans for climate- and employment-proofing work. You can also have conversations with local businesses that you support or local and national governments. Use this guide to give your members information about how to get involved in the day of action.

Our friends in NGOs and civil society can use this guide to encourage their supporters to take part in the Global Day of Action.

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# Contacting your employer

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## Who should I send the letter to?

The CEPOW Global Day of Action is about starting a conversation. All workers have a right to know what the plans are to climate-proof our jobs and work.

You can ask the company CEO, your manager, or even start the conversation with your colleagues and fellow workers, local businesses that you support, or local and national government representatives.

It doesn't matter if you work in the public sector or private sector or are self-employed or on a contract – we all have a say in our future. You may work for a big company or a small family business; all our jobs are different, but all the work we do and our workplaces will have to reduce emissions.

## When should I send the letter?

Give as much notice as possible so that the meeting can take place in person – or virtually – on or around the 22 September. Let us know if you have asked for a meeting, and we will keep a tally of all the places taking part so that you can let your employer know about all the other countries taking part in the day of action.

## Who is the letter from?

The letter can come from a group of workers or workers and their union, depending on how you organise yourselves to take part in the CEPOW Global Day of Action.

## Do we have to meet on the 22 September? What if my employer wants to meet on a different day?

If you can't meet on the 22 September, have the conversation as near to the date as possible. By all taking part in the action on the same day, we can show that this is the biggest global conversation on climate- and employment-proofing our work and all workers are asking the same questions.

## What do we do after the meeting?

The meeting is the start of a conversation to find out what the plan is to reduce emissions. You can continue it with follow-up meetings.

You or your union can ask for support from the Just Transition Centre of the ITUC if you think your employer wants to have a Just Transition plan. The Just Transition Centre can help set up a round table and advise on the social dialogue process so that workers have a say in their future.

Next year, we'll be asking you and unions to take part in the next Global Day of Action to see what progress has been made.

# Model letter

**Subject:** Let's talk about making our future safe and sustainable

**Dear** <<Insert Name>>,

These are difficult times for many workers and businesses as the Covid-19 pandemic disrupts lives and livelihoods. Many of us have seen changes to our workplaces and our daily routines and are facing a convergence of crises – a pandemic with no known end date, the devastation of inequality and climate devastation with extreme weather events and changing seasons.

But climate change and the deteriorating capacity of our planet to sustain life cannot be ignored, and pandemics represent a threat to our health and economies — a threat that is now too big to ignore. We know that the devastation from Covid-19 will require new levels of care, of social protection and of economic stimulus in all countries. The world is already experiencing severe impacts of climate change from extreme heatwaves, sea level rises, to crop failures. IPCC climate scientists tell us we must act quickly to stabilise global warming below 1.5 degrees to avoid massive threats.

While there has been progress by some organisations and workplaces towards preparing the zero-carbon economies of the future, we need to see more ambition as we reshape our economies and societies in the post-pandemic world.

It is our duty to make sure we don't pass the debt of climate change on to our children and grandchildren. That's why we as workers want to work with you to plan how we are going to reduce emissions and have a sustainable future.

We would like to meet with you as part of the International Trade Union Confederation Global Day of Action on 22 September to discuss how we can climate- and employment-proof our work. Acting together can only be good for business, good for employment and good for climate.

Now more than ever in our recent history, workers, just like employers, want a sense of security, and climate change is a driver of a more uncertain future for us and our families.

The ITUC campaigns to make all jobs green and decent – and achieved a global commitment for Just Transition in the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. A Just Transition secures the future and livelihoods of workers and their communities in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

To get there, we need to have a plan. Here are five questions for discussion:

1. How can we make our jobs and workplaces safer?
2. How can we secure jobs and employment and make them more sustainable?
3. Do you measure CO2 emissions?
  - If yes, can we develop a plan for reducing emissions?
  - If no, can we agree to a process to measure our emissions?
4. Are we prepared to reduce emissions by 50% by 2030 and to net zero by 2050?
5. What can we do together to get there?

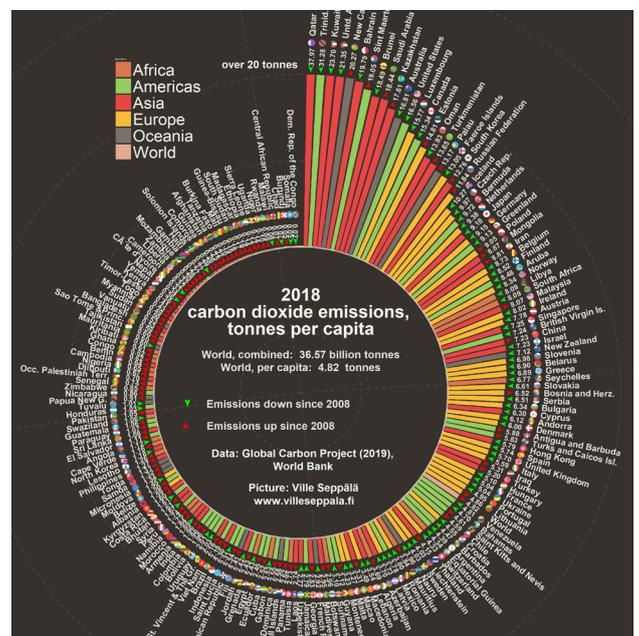
Yours sincerely,

[Name and/or union]

# 3. Key Dates for Climate Action in 2021

20-26 September	UNGA/Climate Week
31 October – 12 November	COP26 Glasgow

**Climate change is affecting everyone, including all workers, their families and communities, all over the world. Everyone has a part to play.**



Data: Global Carbon Project (2019) World Bank; Picture:

## 4. Campaign Resources

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### Digital and print posters

**Digital and print poster 1** – Help spread the word and get friends, colleagues and unions involved in the Global Day of Action with this poster/sharegraphic, which you can share with people on email, social media – or in real life.

**Digital and print poster 2** – Show that you're taking part in the Global Day of Action with this poster/sharegraphic, which can be used in your home, workplace or on social media.

### Social media

Follow @ituc and use #CEPOW

Social media graphics will be posted on Trello <https://trello.com/b/q2I5lfD3/ituc-social-media>.

**The World is Getting Hotter –this video shows past and future climate change in 191 countries**

[https://vimeo.com/318046497?fbclid=IwAR22v1p2GryQJmUcbjnLiowbAwz-sPwDI7u5JGKvZr\\_LMa8gWDOuRDWg6o](https://vimeo.com/318046497?fbclid=IwAR22v1p2GryQJmUcbjnLiowbAwz-sPwDI7u5JGKvZr_LMa8gWDOuRDWg6o)

Credit: Antti Lipponen

**What is Just Transition? (English)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVReaELr3yo>

Credit: FNV Mondiaal

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# 5. Further Reading and Support

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## Just Transition Centre

[www.justtransitioncentre.org](http://www.justtransitioncentre.org)  
[info@justtransitioncentre.org](mailto:info@justtransitioncentre.org)



Many workplaces and industries face significant changes to reduce emissions. The Just Transition Centre was established in 2016 by the ITUC and partners. The centre brings together workers and their unions, communities, businesses and governments in social dialogue to ensure that workers have a seat at the table when planning for a Just Transition to a low-carbon world.

A plan for a Just Transition provides and guarantees better and decent jobs, social protection, more training opportunities and greater job security for all workers affected by global warming and climate change policies.

If you or your union need assistance setting up a Just Transition process with your employer, contact the Just Transition Centre or look on their webpage for examples of Just Transition plans.

## International Trade Union Confederation

[www.ituc-csi.org](http://www.ituc-csi.org)



The ITUC Economic and Social Policy Department can provide advocacy and policy support and advice in negotiations with your government or employer. Our team represent unions in global negotiations with the UNFCCC on climate action and are responsible for global policy on climate and environmental issues together with occupational health and safety.

[esp@ituc-csi.org](mailto:esp@ituc-csi.org)

The ITUC Global Organising Academy develops leadership skills for organisers and supports trade union organising work through extensive training and mentoring of organisers. Our team is providing training for workplace activists taking part in CEPOW.

[goa@ituc-csi.org](mailto:goa@ituc-csi.org)

## Case studies: Companies reducing emissions

Hundreds of businesses have joined the business pledge for [Just Transition and Decent Green Jobs](#).

**Orsted** and **Enel** have committed to four key labour standards across their business including social dialogue, workers' rights, social protection and wage guarantees.

**Ingka Group (IKEA)** advanced towards its 100% renewable electricity commitment by securing 25% of Germany's second-biggest offshore wind farm.

In transport, the world's largest shipping company **Maersk** committed to [set a science-based target](#) as part of its bold net-zero 2050 vision.

**Volkswagen** says its new electric car will be [carbon neutral](#) through its entire lifecycle if recharged with renewable energy.

Two major Japanese construction and engineering companies committed to set [science-based targets](#) – **Daito Trust Construction** and **Taisei Corporation**. Daito Trust committed to switch to 100% renewable electricity.

**Dalmia Cement** has committed to being carbon neutral by 2040.