

**Climate Emergency conference - Raising Ambition**  
**14<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

# **The need for a Just Transition**

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# AND A GREEN NEW DEAL



Thousands of young people in the UK have been striking and many hundreds of others have been protesting to demand more concerted action on climate change.

No issue is more urgent or pressing than tackling climate change and wider environmental breakdown.

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# CLIMATE EMERGENCY

- Green Party campaign for every local authority in England and Wales to declare a climate emergency
- July – 205 of the UK's 408 Principal Authorities (County, Unitary, Metropolitan, London Boroughs, District), have declared a climate emergency.
- December 2018 – GLA declares
- 28 April – SNP declares; Scottish Government placing climate change at the heart of everything we do.
- 29<sup>th</sup> April – Welsh government declares
- 1<sup>st</sup> May UK Parliament declared an Environment & Climate Emergency

# PCS – 25 June 2019

The National Executive Committee (NEC) of the Public and Commercial Services union (PCS) is formally declaring a climate emergency on behalf of its members. This declaration is in accordance with the resolution (A312) passed at annual delegate conference in May 2019.

This declaration is made in recognition of the 2018 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which calls for a rapid and radical transformation of our economies by 2030 if we are to stabilise the climate; the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) report of May 2019 that warns of accelerating species extinction; the environment and climate emergency declaration of the UK Parliament, the Welsh Government, political parties, a growing number of local authorities, and cultural institutions; the demands of Extinction Rebellion; the UK wide student protests as part of the global student climate strikes.

**PCS believes it is incumbent on trade unions to lead in making the case for radical action in support of a zero carbon emissions target by 2030. As a trade union our primary objective will always be to protect members' jobs. In a climate emergency we assert the best way to do that is to create or repurpose jobs to combat the environmental and climate crisis.**

**PCS asserts this requires a 'whole economy' approach that restructures every aspect of social and economic life towards protection and restoration of the planet and its resources. PCS is also clear that this cannot be realised if left to the markets and a private sector-dominated economy. Public ownership and democratic control of public goods – energy, transport, health, education, housing, forestry and other sectors - is an essential prerequisite to combat climate change at the scale and pace required.**

In achieving these aims, PCS calls for the establishment of a National Climate Service as part of the wider one million climate jobs initiative, and as set out in the PCS Energy Democracy and Just Transition pamphlet; and to ensure a fully funded and staffed civil service and wider public service able to coordinate and deliver the action required.

Further the NEC through its Climate Change and Environment Committee (CCEC) will consult with groups, branches, PMA and equality groups to elaborate a practical plan to take forward these aims. This will include encouraging the appointment of green reps and to request facility time to support their role; to demand that Green Forums are set up in workplaces with Trade Union representation to discuss and agree urgent measures to reduce workplace carbon emissions; to develop model motions for use in branches, groups, regions, nations and other forums to support the demands for all PCS employers to declare a climate emergency.

The NEC agree to report back to members in six months of this declaration.



# **WORKERS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE**

- i) PCS work on environment & climate change
- ii) PCS Green Workplaces
- iii) PCS Campaigning

Climate change may seem far removed from the struggles against privatisation, poverty pay, zero hours contracts, universal credit, foodbanks and all the things we are fighting as trade unionists. But these are inextricably linked.

Climate change is a result of human activity releasing harmful greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. But its largely the activity of the rich and relentless pursuit of profits by global corporations. This aided by our governments through privatisation, deregulation and liberalisation policies.

This means more emissions, more pollution, and life threatening impacts on human, animal and plant life.

# Just Transition

- **Paris Climate Agreement**

"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,..."

- **COP 24 –Just Transition and Solidarity Silesia Declaration**

[https://cop24.gov.pl/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Solidarity\\_and\\_Just\\_Transition\\_Silesia\\_Declaration\\_2\\_.pdf](https://cop24.gov.pl/fileadmin/user_upload/Solidarity_and_Just_Transition_Silesia_Declaration_2_.pdf)

*Stress that just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs are crucial to ensure an effective and inclusive transition to low greenhouse gas emission and climate resilient development, and to enhance the public support for achieving the-long term goals of the Paris Agreement.*

- **TUC -A just transition to a greener, fairer economy**

*The voices of workers who are at the forefront of dealing with the challenge of climate change must be at the centre of achieving a successful transition to the economy we will need.*

# Just Transition –Basic principles

- Green jobs – sustainable, decent work and terms and conditions
- Worker representation and consultation
- Social protections – income support, re-training and redeployment opportunities, and pension security
- Support for innovation and technology sharing to enable a rapid transformation of energy and manufacturing opportunities
- Fair distribution of costs and recognition of social and human rights
- Social dialogue with all relevant parties including collective bargaining with workers and unions for workplace change

# Just Transition PLUS



## Transformative transition

Addressing the inherent inequality and injustice of the capitalist system

Creating unionised climate jobs that lower greenhouse gas emissions and pay a real living wage

Socialising ownership and democratising productive processes and energy generation as part of a wider transition to different forms of energy production

Putting workers and their communities at its heart based on social needs including domestic and health care sectors

Rebuilding the strength of organised labour and redefining the relationship between labour and nature

# Just Transition in a climate emergency

- Climate emergency has to be rooted in concrete demands
- Understand the impacts on workers and communities
- It's more than energy transition – it's everyone
- It's an opportunity to rebuild and revision public services
- It's an opportunity to rethink work – who does it, who defines it, what is it for
- Ecologically and Socially useful work
- Proactive not reactive!

# GREEN NEW DEAL – IPPR

- **IPPR:** Building on its pioneering work on environmental breakdown and its landmark Commission for Economic Justice, IPPR has launched a major new **Environmental Justice Commission** to help develop the ideas and policies to bring about a rapid green transition that is fair and just. <https://www.ippr.org/environment-and-justice/>
- IPPR's Environment and Justice Commission will respond to the challenges facing the UK by setting out an ambitious programme of reform, capable of tackling the dual problems of climate change and wider economic and social injustice.
- Set out the bold policy action required for the UK to deliver its contribution to tackle climate change and wider environmental breakdown, cutting emissions to net zero in an economically and socially just way.
- Demonstrate how bold action can provide enormous benefits for communities, through the creation of green jobs, spreading prosperity and ensuring a just transition in the UK.
- Help build the public and political support required to deliver this ambitious programme of reform.
- Provide the UK with a platform to demonstrate real leadership on the issues of climate change & just transition ready for the next Conference of the Parties (COP26) in 2020.
- The commission will look at how in practice the UK can deliver its contribution to tackling climate change and cutting emissions to net zero in an economically and socially just way. It will consider how to ensure a rapid and just transition for all through a green transformation of the entire economy, creating hundreds of thousands of good quality jobs and giving people real ownership of their futures in the process. The commission will consider the economic and social injustices associated with the issue including the disproportionate impact by, for example, gender, class and ethnicity. It will also examine the UK's international responsibilities in tackling the accelerating climate crisis.
- The commission will seek to engage with politicians and policymakers of all political parties, experts and academics, civil society, workers and trade unions, businesses and business groups, local government and communities, and climate activists. The commission will also seek the views of the public, using a participative model of engagement including the possible use of 'citizens juries'.

# GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

- Need to ensure wider social policies to promote greater workforce diversification and inclusion
- Equity in fair distribution of costs and benefits of transition commensurate with the historical impacts on different groups in the economy which have been sidelined or exploited in the old carbon economy – women, immigrants and people of colour, disabled, young and old.
- GND – a proactive or offensive approach to Just Transition that seeks to maximise the potential benefits of a zero carbon economy for workers and communities.