

## Digest of Green Reports and Studies

<b>Title</b>	Climate Change Avenues for Trade Union Action
<b>Author</b>	Dupressoir, Sophie; van der Hijden, Sebastiaan
<b>Organization</b>	European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
<b>Author Contact</b>	European Trade Union Confederation Boulevard Roi Albert II, 5 B-1210 Brussels Belgium Phone: +32 (0)2-224 04 11 Fax: +32 (0)2-224 04 54 or +32 (0)2-224 04 55 E-mail: <a href="mailto:etuc@etuc.org">etuc@etuc.org</a>
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<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/GuideKyoto-Text-ENG.pdf">http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/GuideKyoto-Text-ENG.pdf</a>
<b>Summary</b>	<p>This report, issued by the European Trade Union Confederation in July 2004, analyzes global and in more detail European Union climate change mitigation policies arising from the Kyoto Protocol and their impact on labor. The goal of the report is to inform trade unionists about the issues associated with climate change and to suggest courses of action and agendas so that an “equitable energy transition” can be achieved.</p> <p>Part one discusses climate change as an energy issue (energy security, technological developments) and reviews global climate negotiations history.</p> <p>Part two focuses on the opportunities for trade union action by industry that implementing the Kyoto Protocol opens in the European Union.</p>
<b>Key Findings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most energy consumption in developing countries takes highly inefficient forms involving biomass, resulting in serious deforestation in these countries and such methods are likely to continue for at least the next 30 years.</li> <li>• Fuel poverty, or the number of households having to spend 10 percent or more of their income on energy just to attain the normal level of heating, is growing in Europe.</li> <li>• The 25-Member State European Union faces increasing dependence on imported fossil fuels, the level of which looks set to rise from 50 percent today to 70 percent by 2030 (90 percent for oil and 66 percent for gas). The EU has substituted the goal of becoming independent of external energy suppliers for managing its dependency and has made the diversification of its energy sources, especially forms of renewable energy, one of its priorities.</li> <li>• Renewable energy sources could meet up to a third of all energy demands in coming decades according to reports commissioned by the European Commission. However, on the basis of current technologies, these sources are not efficient enough to replace fossil fuels. Other limitations to the penetration of renewable energy are: the limited land available, high population density, and the low intensity of natural phenomena – wind and sunlight.</li> <li>• In the longer run, nuclear fusion is arousing interest because the fuel is derived from sea water and produces very few emissions and very little radioactive waste. However, this technology will not be ready for commercialization until 2050.</li> <li>• Hydrogen production from coal, biomass or electrolysis is not expected to become economically viable until 2030 and the same applies to fuel cells for cars.</li> <li>• The process of setting the initial allocation is evidently one of the most contentious issues of the EU Trading scheme, in particular with regard to its distributional implications.</li> <li>• In EU countries where general consumption of electricity is continually on the increase, the speed with which renewable sources of electricity are integrated and the future of nuclear energy are two key factors if they are to achieve the objectives of reducing greenhouse gases in the short to medium term. In the long term, investment in research, within a truly European research and development policy, should give rise to technological innovation in the area of energy efficiency, clean technologies, renewable energies in a bid to guarantee diverse range of energy in terms of sustainable development and creation of jobs.</li> <li>• Agriculture is certainly the sector in Europe which is most vulnerable to the effects of global warming but the tourism, forestry and insurance sectors are also likely to be affected. The cost of the efforts needed to tackle these effects could prove extremely costly for the most vulnerable regions and farms and could have long-term effects on</li> </ul>

	<p>the jobs associated with them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to studies conducted by the OECD, the impact on overall employment in the EU of implementing the Kyoto Protocol could be slightly positive depending on the size and pace of the emission reduction, and on the methods used to implement it.</li> <li>• The main reason for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions increases in the EU between 1990 and 2002 was growing transport demand.</li> <li>• Employment in the EU electricity sector has sharply decreased (by around 300,000 jobs) since the 1990s, due primarily to the opening-up of electricity markets to competition. This is the reason why concern in respect of the impact of the Kyoto Protocol on employment is particularly great among European trade unions.</li> <li>• According to a study commissioned by the European Commission (1997), realizing 50% of the EU's renewable energy potential by 2020 could lead to the net creation of 515,000 jobs and reduce emissions by around 16%.</li> <li>• A very contentious issue is the extent to which the implementation of the Kyoto protocol in the EU could lead to a shift in fossil fuel production to other low-cost countries without emission targets or strict environmental rules.</li> <li>• The fact that, at this stage, Kyoto applies only to a limited geographical area leads to questions being raised as to the threat it poses to the competitiveness of these sectors.</li> <li>• The building sector offers the largest single potential for improvement of energy efficiency. Research shows that more than one fifth of current energy consumption could be saved by 2010 by applying more ambitious standards to new and refurbished buildings. This represents a considerable contribution to meeting the Kyoto targets.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The protection of the climate requires the establishment of joint mechanism for taking action on a global scale, including a rule governing the distribution of emission rights, a monitoring mechanism and penalties if regulations are breached.</li> <li>• Demand more efforts into equitable climate change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Fair allocation of emission rights to avoid awarding disproportionate ownership rights over the atmosphere to the industrialized world.</li> <li>✓ Help in dealing with the harmful consequences of climate change</li> <li>✓ Compensation for poor countries for the economic costs of any decline in the demand for a commodity, e.g. coal.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The fight against global warming involves the need to create high-quality and well paid jobs which will help reduce poverty and raise the standard of living, as well as giving the poorest people access to affordable energy services.</li> <li>• Additional policies and measures are required if the EU is to meet its Kyoto protocol commitments.</li> <li>• The climate change mitigation process, if globally coordinated and deep-rooted in a broad social consensus in Europe, constitutes a unique opportunity to make a social transition to improve the environment and to boost employment and well-being.</li> <li>• The trade unions press for a consensus to guarantee "equitable social transition" by taking account of the social impacts of climate change and prevention policies and their effects on employment.</li> <li>• European trade unions must be proactively involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ evaluating the policies and measures which are likely to channel energy demands and generation towards more sustainable trends while at the same time ensuring social progress;</li> <li>✓ analyzing the impact of climate change and measures to reduce emissions on jobs, job quality and qualifications in Europe, including intersectoral aspects;</li> <li>✓ defining objectives to be achieved in each sector depending on its technological potential and its social situation and which realistically be achieved in economic terms.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It is vital for the EU to become involved in drawing up a post-Kyoto plan that respects the principle of a diverse range of energy and development models and supports the integration of Southern countries. The scale of reductions needed will require a combination of the benefits inherent in energy efficiency and energy sources that are low in carbon.</li> <li>• An ambitious tax reform should be undertaken by the European Union to ensure that prices accurately reflect the environmental and social costs of different energy products and uses.</li> <li>• The qualifications needed to satisfy the potential demand for new jobs in sustainable activities will not necessarily be available in declining industries. Therefore, a part of the workforce will need professional training to meet the new requirements.</li> <li>• Unions are concerned with the question how to shape the emissions trading instrument in a way that leaves jobs untouched. They particularly discuss three key issues: how the phasing out of nuclear energy, a decision taken by some countries, should be taken into account when allocating allowances to coal based power plants, the need to ensure fair</li> </ul>

	<p>treatment of good quality cogeneration of heat and power (CHP), and the allocation of allowances in relation to new or closing power plants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The option of including social and environmental clauses in public procurement contracts (EU Public Procurement Legislation 2004) is viewed by the unions as a major opportunity to promote sustainable development, especially in the construction sector.</li> </ul>
<b>Definition of “Green”</b>	Renewable energy sources: wind energy, solar energy, hydroelectric power, biomass energy, landfill gas energy, biogas and sewage treatment, gas energy, geothermal energy, wave energy, tidal energy. (Source: Directive 2001/77/EC of the European Parliament and the Council on the promotion of the electricity produced from renewable energy sources in the international electricity market).
<b>Methodology</b>	Literature search, review, analysis
<b>Data Sources Cited</b>	United Nations Development Programme, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development; European Foundation for the Improvement of Working and Living Conditions
<b>Report Geography</b>	Focus on European Union
<b>Green Occupations Cited</b>	None
<b>Green Industries Cited</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewable energy generation: wind energy, biomass</li> <li>• Energy efficiency</li> <li>• Demand management</li> <li>• Building materials</li> <li>• Car manufacturing</li> <li>• Clean technologies</li> </ul>
<b>Keywords</b>	European climate change policy; equitable energy transition; opportunities for trade union action; hydrogen; solar; nuclear.
<b>Legislation Cited</b>	<p>EC Green Paper (2000) “Towards a European strategy for the security of energy supply”          Directive 2001/77/EC of the European Parliament and the Council on the Promotion of the Electricity Produced from Renewable Energy Sources in the International Electricity Market          Council Decision 2002/358/EC          Directive 2003/87/EC – Emission Trading Scheme          Directive 2002/91/EC – EU Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings          Directive 2003/96/EC – EU Directive on the Taxation of Energy Products</p>
<b>Bibliography (Y/N)</b>	Y
<b>Reviewer Name/Org</b>	Vesselka McAlarney, Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation

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