



Joint Declaration on Just Transition

19 September 2019

What is a Just Transition?

Developed as a concept by the global labour movement, a [Just Transition](#) aims to secure the future and livelihoods of workers and their communities in the transition to a low-carbon economy. It is based on social dialogue between workers and their unions, employers, government and communities. A plan for Just Transition will seek to provide decent jobs, social protection, more training opportunities and greater security for all workers and communities affected by climate change policies and the transition to a low-carbon economy. As experience from other countries shows, a well planned and managed Just Transition provides major opportunities for job creation in both the energy generation and conservation sectors, helping to boost regional and national growth.

How has a Just Transition been applied in Ireland?

The recent report of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Climate Action included a specific and clear recommendation to establish a National Just Transition Taskforce involving all stakeholders to deliver security and opportunities for those impacted by the move to a low-carbon economy. An immediate focus on the peat workers and the communities of the Midlands was also suggested. Unfortunately, the Government has long-fingered this recommendation, opting instead for “the establishment of a Just Transition Review Group”, situated in the NESC.

Moreover, the chapter on Just Transition in the Government’s Climate Action Plan 2019, while using the language of a Just Transition, does not include a single mention of trade unions or social dialogue and while referencing the [ILO guidelines](#) (agreed by the world’s Governments, Employers and Trade Unions) then goes on to ignore them in its approach.

The use of regional fora in their current guise (such as the Midlands Regional Enterprise forum) as vehicles for the delivery of a Just Transition is questionable. Up to now, they have no trade union or climate change expertise represented on them and they will need to be more representative if they are to play an effective role in delivering a Just Transition locally.

What needs to happen?

It is within this context that the signatory organisations are calling on the Irish Government at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York on Monday 23rd September 2019 to commit to engaging with working people and integrate concrete Just Transition measures in their climate action plans. We are asking them to sign up to the [commitments on Just Transition](#).

In Ireland, the Government needs to immediately set up a properly-resourced National Just Transition Task Force comprised of the relevant stakeholders and appropriate expert input that will drive this process of change. The current situation facing workers in Bord na Móna and the ESB demands such an urgent response.