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A photograph showing industrial workers in a factory setting, with large machinery and steam rising from the floor.

# Greening with jobs

# WORLD

A large background image of green plants, possibly a field of young crops, filling the lower half of the cover.A circular inset photograph showing a group of farmers working in a lush green field, likely a rice paddy, with a small hut in the background.

**WORLD  
EMPLOYMENT  
SOCIAL  
OUTLOOK**

**2018**

# WORLD EMPLOYMENT SOCIAL OUTLOOK 2018

Greening with jobs

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Top – *Shipbreaking #11, Chittagong, Bangladesh, 2000 (alternate)*,

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# Preface

The world of work is intrinsically linked to the natural environment. Jobs in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism and other industries including pharmaceuticals, textiles and food and beverage depend on a healthy environment. Temperature rises like those expected due to climate change will increase the number of days that are too hot to work, putting workers' health at risk and reducing productivity.

We may soon reach the point in which the jobs created or improved by economic development risk being destroyed or worsened by the resulting environmental degradation. The world of work needs environmental sustainability.

Social justice requires it, given the large inequalities in the impact of the negative effects of environmental degradation.

As I highlighted in my Report to the 106th Session of the International Labour Conference, there need be no tension or contradiction between economic growth and jobs on the one hand, and environmental sustainability on the other. This development path is embedded in the Paris Agreement, with its reference to the imperative of a just transition.

The present report shows that achieving environmental sustainability can create jobs. The green economy will be a major source of job growth in the future of work. Taking action in the energy sector to limit global warming to 2 degrees Celsius by the end of the century can create around 24 million jobs, largely offsetting any job losses. Embracing the circular economy to reduce material extraction and waste generation will also result in net job gains.

The job-creating potential of environmental sustainability is not a given: the right policies are needed to promote green industries while ensuring decent work within them. They are also needed to allow workers to transition to new sectors and to protect those who may lose out due to lower activity in industries that contribute to environmental degradation.

In 2013, the ILO launched the Green Initiative as one of the seven initiatives to mark the ILO's centenary in 2019. It aims to better equip the actors of the world of work to understand the challenges and opportunities of the transition and to take up the active role that they must play in managing this change. This report is one step towards this end, along with the *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* endorsed by the ILO Governing Body, and the ILO's Green Jobs Programme.

As this report shows, there is scope for policies in the world of work to advance environmental sustainability; and for environmental policies to ensure decent work. A coherent and integrated legal framework is a step in this direction. Labour regulations on occupational safety and health, for example, can contribute to the preservation of the environment. Advances have been made by including decent work issues in environmental regulations, such as climate action policies that take note of their skills implications. Providing workers with the right set of skills and recognizing workers' skills will help the transition to sectors with employment growth, and also to better jobs. Social protection systems can support workers' incomes against risks stemming from climate change and local environmental degradation. Social dialogue contributes to finding innovative ways to mitigate environmental impacts that are reducing or negatively affecting employment or working conditions.

It is too late for the world to grow now, and only clean up later. It is time to grow clean, to go green. The Sustainable Development Goals are clear in the desire to combine decent work for all with environmental sustainability. This report shows it is possible and allows us to plan, not just wish for, a sustainable future.



Guy Ryder  
ILO Director-General

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Tord Kjellstrom developed the methodology and calculated the impact of heat stress on working hours in *Chapter 1*. Kirsten Wiebe, Richard Wood and Moana Simas from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) developed the methodology and calculated the employment scenarios in *Chapter 2*. The national studies used in *Chapter 5* are the result of collaboration between the ILO and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop). Country studies were carried out by Cedefop (Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom) and national experts and research institutions from *Australia* (Huon Curtis, Nigel Douglas, Peter Fairbrother, Kate Grosser, Val Propokiv, Michael Rafferty, Philip Toner), *Bangladesh* (Abdul Hye Mondal), *Barbados* (Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies and the Department of Economics, The University of the West Indies), *Brazil* (Carlos Eduardo Frickmann Young, Maria Gabrielle Correa, Lucas de Almeida Nogueira da Costa, Marcos Pires Mendes), *China* (Ying Zhang from the Institute for Urban and Environmental Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), *Costa Rica* (Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas (INCAE) Business School), *Egypt* (Ghada Amin), *Guyana* (Rawle Andrew Small and Maria Witz), *India* (Vipan Kumar, Arpit Choudhary, Naresh Kumar, Kasturi Mandal in the National Institute of Science Technology and Development Studies (NISTADS)), *Indonesia* (Business Council for Sustainable Development (IBCS)), the Republic of Korea (Misug Jin), *Kyrgyzstan* (Kylychbek Djakupov, Anar Beishembaeva, Muktar Djumaliev, Elmira Ibraeva and Cholpon Kalmyrzaeva), *Mali* (Mali-Folkecenter Nyetaa), *Mauritius* (Riad Sultan), *Montenegro* (Dragan Djuric), *Philippines* (Mary Ann Fernández-Mendoza and Lucita S. Lazo), *South Africa* (OneWorld Sustainable Investments), *Tajikistan* (Lutfullo Saidmurodov and Tahmina Mahmud), *Thailand* (Ruttiya Bhula-or), *Uganda* (John David Kabasa, Sengooba Asuman, Bukirwa Jana and Hana Kisakye in the Countryside Innovations Network Ltd) and the *United States* (Heidi Garrett-Peltier in the Political Economy Research Institute (PERI), University of Massachusetts).

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