



JUST TRANSITION PARTNERSHIP 2021 MANIFESTO ASKS:

ACTION TO TURN JUST TRANSITION RHETORIC INTO REALITY

The Just Transition Partnership was formed by Friends of the Earth Scotland and the Scottish Trade Union Congress in 2016. Membership includes Unite Scotland, UNISON Scotland, UCU Scotland, CWU Scotland, PCS Scotland, and WWF Scotland. We advocate for action to protect workers' livelihoods, create new jobs, and deliver a fairer Scotland as part of the move to a low-carbon economy.

Ahead of the Holyrood 2021 elections, and in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we are calling for all parties to commit to policies which move beyond warm words and can deliver decent green jobs now while laying foundations for a sustainable, inclusive economy in the future.

1. Turn the tide for workers facing the crisis of unjust transition now

As a coalition of trade unions and environmental organisations, the Just Transition Partnership calls for action on the climate crisis and a just transition to a green economy. In the last few years we have seen the establishment of the Just Transition Commission, parties of all colours vocalise their support for the concept, and the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2019 enshrine just transition principles in law. However, despite the warm words, at the moment, an unjust transition is underway.

Hundreds of workers currently face redundancy at Alexander Dennis Ltd, the Falkirk-based manufacturer of high-performance hybrid buses. Scotland's offshore jacket construction company, Bifab in Fife, and wind tower manufacturer, CS Wind in Argyll, have both been mothballed. As manufacturers of essential components of the green economy, all of these companies should be thriving, at the forefront of the transition, not struggling for survival.

Despite past promises of 130,000 jobs by 2020 from increased renewable energy capacity, direct employment in the low-carbon economy was 23,100 in 2018, actually falling from 23,400 in 2014. A market-led approach has resulted in a sector dominated by private and overseas interests with little interest in building good quality jobs in Scotland's supply chain.

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of highly-skilled jobs in the North Sea are under threat, meaning skills highly transferable to the renewables sector - and crucial in the fight against climate change - risk being lost.

Promises of a green recovery are worthless unless the Government intervenes to secure green jobs currently under threat and which form a crucial plank in Scotland's fight against climate change. Parties must commit to:

- **Support green public transport:** bring forward orders for low emission buses, while making public funding conditional on companies retaining jobs and keeping work in the UK.
- **Invest in renewable energy infrastructure:** upgrades to Scottish ports and yards, intervention to support winning orders in Scotland's yards, and reform of planning and consents to ensure that renewable energy projects are conditional on securing jobs in Scotland's low-carbon supply chain.

- **Offer to workers:** set out a clear offer to workers in fossil fuel and other high-carbon sectors of opportunities to move to equivalent employment which can use their skills and experience in building a green economy, without erosion of pay or conditions.
- **Green public works programmes:** supplement the UK Kickstart and Scottish Youth Guarantee schemes with Green Public Works Programmes which apply Fair Work principles from the start. These should be nationally funded but local-authority led and involve building new, green infrastructure and directly supporting jobs for long-term unemployed and young people, paid at union-negotiated rates.

2. Set a new course through public funding and intervention

Protecting the existing workforce in high and low-carbon industries that are under threat is a crucial first step but to turn the tide of broken promises for our green economy, parties need to tackle the root causes. Too often the Scottish Government's reliance on the private sector to ensure quality work and emissions reductions has failed. The next Scottish Government must place itself at the heart of driving a just transition, rebalancing our green economy from its domination by private and overseas interests.

Political parties must commit to taking a more interventionist role in the economy to deliver a Just Transition and hold Scotland's renewable resources in common by committing to:

- **Establish a publicly owned energy company and a publicly owned infrastructure company** to drive forward green energy development and strategic infrastructure while supporting high quality employment, **providing an emergency green infrastructure stimulus through these public companies to support Scotland's economic recovery**, including:
 - affordable, green house-building and deep-retrofit energy efficiency programmes to drastically reduce building emissions and tackle fuel poverty;
 - new renewable generation projects;
 - support for public transport while usage recovers; and
 - New green construction and infrastructure.
- **Place the climate emergency at the heart of spending decisions:** public agencies and government departments should take a lead in their sectors. The duty on public bodies in the Climate Change Act should be strengthened to require that their delivery of emissions reduction targets must be in line with Just Transition principles and that they develop Just Transition Plans. All infrastructure projects should be required to address the need for reducing emissions in line with climate change targets.
- **Match the EU's spending on Just Transition:** boost of just transition funding programmes to at least the level which the EU's Just Transition Fund would have brought to Scotland.
- **Ensure local manufacturing jobs by requiring local content in all green energy leases and planning consents, building supply chains in Scotland.** Investment should be targeted to sectors and enterprises in the supply chain to complement requirements for a minimum proportion of local content.
- **Attach conditions to funding:** where public funds are used in support of the recovery from Covid-19, the Scottish Government should ensure that the action will align with a just transition to meet emission reduction targets. Clear obligations must be placed on all enterprises and projects which receive support from or are regulated by government agencies regarding emissions reductions, job quality, local jobs and participation in sectoral transition training initiatives.

- **Follow the Just Transition Commission's recommendations on immediate actions** including a fossil fuel decommissioning programme, public investment in renewable manufacturing facilities, funding for local authorities to purchase green buses and doubling energy efficiency budgets.

3. Chart the route to long-term transformation by planning and policy coherence

Planning the transformation of polluting industries alongside building decent work and a fairer green economy is a significant challenge - and our window of opportunity is closing. While the concept of just transition has climbed the political agenda, the onus is now on turning principles and advice into transformative plans for our economy. Parties should commit to:

- **A national Just Transition Action Plan** based on the Climate Change Plan and a rewritten Economic Strategy that prioritises just transition, wellbeing and a more circular economy. It should be drawn up with full participation of key stakeholders - impacted workers and communities, trade unions and environmentalists; and **should include regional and sectoral plans with targets and timescales** for reducing emissions, investment and job creation.
- **Sectoral Just Transition Agreements:** the national Just Transition Action Plan should incorporate industry-level plans drawn up between employers, trade unions and government with targets for emission reductions and timescales for electrification in all sectors of the economy. Agreements at enterprise and sectoral levels should have targets for investment and jobs created and clear offers to workers.
- **Assess and fill the Just Transition investment gap:** the Scottish Government and its agencies must assess the investment gap and create or ensure sufficient finance and funding for the investments needed for a just transition.
- **A Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan:** rapid growth of the workforce should be anticipated with plans for new recruitment into the relevant sectors among young people entering the labour market and new skills for unemployed workers. Training and skills, inclusive labour market programmes and career development support should be delivered as part of this.
- **Continuing oversight and guidance:** the Just Transition Commission should be established with a statutory remit and a representative membership, drawing on the key stakeholders in a just transition - i.e. affected workers and communities, trade unions and environmentalists. It should continue to work for the duration of legally binding emissions reductions targets, until the transition is complete.
- **Engagement of those most affected:** the Commission and the government should identify those groups which are likely to be most affected by the move to a low carbon economy and create opportunities for their voices to influence the planning of just transition programmes.

More Information: Matthew Crighton, Secretary, Just Transition Partnership

Contact: email secretary@jt.scot; phone 07851 348426