



INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION OF EMPLOYERS

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Attn ; Mr Michael Renner
Worldwatch Institute
1776 Massachusetts Ave., N:W.
Washington, DC 20036-1904

5 March 2008

Dear Mr Renner

Re; UNEP,ILO,ITUC Report, Green Jobs: Towards Sustainable Work in a Low-Carbon World

Firstly, let me complement the Institute on what is a useful report. It will no doubt make a valuable contribution to the understanding of the substance and scope of the issue, as well as the policy considerations.

The IOE is the secretariat of the employers, and like the ITUC is a constituent of the ILO. It would be usual for projects such as this Green Jobs Report to involve business as well as trade unions, however the genesis of this project has limited the opportunities for the IOE to make any earlier contribution or comment.

It is appreciated that to expect change at this late stage would be unreasonable. Even so, in the interests of the outcomes sought from the project, we ask that consideration be given to the following comments. You will note that our comments can be traced back to the Executive Summary. While not the Report, the Executive Summary precedes it in the presentation, is extensive and clearly sets the tone that underscores the editorial philosophy.

Comments;

1. Disclaimers; With respect, every organisation involved with the report seeks absolution in the disclaimer. There are opinions in the report, intended to influence, for which in the end no one is prepared to take responsibility. Someone or body must take responsibility. The only other option is to remove the opinions from the Report!

2. General; The Executive Summary at times changes focus. It begins as a commentary about what are green jobs, what creates them, how many there will be etc ie an objective review, with findings suitable for policy development; while jobs will be lost there will be job creation as the counterbalance with social wellbeing. It then shifts, the objective becomes about the creation of green jobs alone, irrespective of the cost, and at the expense of employment in other industries, such that green jobs becomes a social project where the grounds for support are ideological.

In our view, the report should be about one or the other. It should be either an objective judgement of the workplace impact from climate change, or a paper supporting a social program. It cannot be both

3. Defining Green Jobs; A majority of occupations, by definition will not be green jobs. Over time, all jobs could become green jobs, all will be impacted as their job profiles change in consequence of the climate sensitive market and workplace. It is understood that the terms of reference for the report and the research does not extend to “non” green jobs. However the report would benefit by acknowledging that Policy must be sensitive to all people in the workplace, and be able to ensure all are equally considered.

A finding of the report, to be consistent with the project objective as we understand it, would be that policy can be introduced to facilitates green jobs without detrimentally affecting others in the workforce.

3. Companies; the reference at paragraph 5, page x of the Executive Summary is in our view unsatisfactory and should be changed, or deleted. It is not supported by other comment in the report. It is unnecessary in the context of the paragraph, the page, the summary or the report.

Business has a significant role to play. Most climate change policies depend on business for effective implementation. Governments will want to use business as the tool to achieve the commitments that they have made. This report does not, other than through this statement provide any reason for governments to expect business will not be willing and professional in that cooperation.

It is suggested the sentence be deleted.

4. Agriculture and the Global Food System; This section blends the climate change impact with the range of issues confronting rural communities. The summary diverts from its climate change theme, to take up the case of rural economies. The result is that the commentary is about many things, but an essential resource on none.

There is also an element of social engineering in some of the text about which the audience for this report may have strong and diametrically opposed views.

5. Just transition; the commentary becomes exaggerated in places and a clinical edit would assist.

For instance, ideally all workers in transition would receive income protection, but it just may not be possible. Some workers in new jobs may earn less, but equally some may earn more. The issue for debate should be how to meet everyone’s reasonable needs and expectations. Workers should expect to be treated fairly, but the responsibility can not feasibly be shouldered entirely by the employer.

Absolute statements alone prove to be inflammatory, they will not change the outcome, and do nothing for the objectivity of the report.

Finally, the last paragraph would benefit by some moderation. Just as the author has made a statement about the universal and essential role of unions, I can provide statements from many workers who would not agree, I can submit facts about declining union membership, and the move to workplace negotiated agreements where the workers decided unions were not to be involved.

While my examples are not true for all situations, and I don’t pretend they are, neither is the authors.

As stated at the outset, the report is a useful text. We hope that the comments above are considered objective criticism intended to enhance the value and wider acceptance of the final Report.

There are many cases across the globe where business has, of its own initiative and without the requirement of statute, moved to address the problems being imposed on the environment. We can prepare some case studies for your use if it would assist.

I am happy to provide more explanation on any of the above comments and the Report generally at your request.

Regards.

Peter Glynn
Advisor

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