

# Global Crisis Fact Sheet 3

## Green Jobs

**Green Jobs** tackle global warming and the economic crash at the same time. They can help us move towards a low carbon economy and provide opportunities for millions of workers around the world to be part of a 'just transition' to a fair society and a sustainable economy.

Green Jobs are the building blocks of a 'green economy'. A green economy is ecologically sustainable and fair, and very different to the economy of today. We can achieve this through strong community action, and partnerships at local, national and global levels that challenge the current non-sustainable economy and the political and corporate interests who defend it.

Green Jobs must be socially just as well as ecologically sustainable. They must be part of a global movement towards secure, safe, well-paid employment. As the International Labour Organization puts it as part of its *Green Jobs Initiative*:

*Green jobs... need to comprise decent work. Decent, green jobs effectively link Millennium Development Goal 1 (poverty reduction) and Millennium Development Goal 7 (protecting the environment) and make them mutually supportive rather than conflicting.*

### Green Jobs could be:

- a metal worker at a wind turbine factory;
- a solar technology researcher;
- a tradesperson retrofitting a house, office or factory for maximum energy efficiency;
- an environmental auditor;
- an organic farmer;
- a bush regenerator;
- training, financing and managing green job initiatives

### Green Jobs are about:

- creating new industries in Australia (renewable energy, energy efficiency);
- expanding existing industries that meet the Green Jobs criteria (public transport, education, sustainable agriculture); and
- transforming, and in some cases phasing out, carbon-intensive industries (aluminium, coal, cement).

### Why do we need Green Jobs?

We are in a climate and economic emergency and both require an emergency response.

All the latest scientific evidence shows that global warming is accelerating and its effects threaten to devastate our environment, our livelihoods and our societies. To avoid and limit the worst effects of global warming we must drastically reduce our carbon emissions over the next couple of decades and radically transform our economy.

The world also faces a global recession that could become a depression. Add to that, the more than 2 billion people living on less than US\$2 per day and it is clear that dramatic change is needed.

#### **What can you do?**

**Form a local Climate Action Group in your locality, workplace or union** (see national, state, regional, local groups at [www.cana.net.au/index.php?site\\_var=11](http://www.cana.net.au/index.php?site_var=11)).

**Write to the papers, get on a blog, call up the radio and expose the Carbon Lobby and put the case for Green Jobs.**

**Write to your local member of parliament – or arrange a meeting - and ask what he or she is doing to promote Green Jobs and serious greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.**

**Talk to friends, colleagues and family about the importance of Green Jobs to creating a fairer, more sustainable world.**

**If possible, change to 100% Green Power for your electricity and try to get your workplace to do the same; install solar panels and solar hot water; find out if you're eligible for rebates on home insulation and water tanks.**

## Who wins? Who loses?

We'd all be winners if governments and communities around the world take the urgent action needed to reduce carbon emissions. Creating tens of millions of sustainable, good quality Green Jobs as part of this agenda would transform lives in rich and poor countries.

In Australia the potential for a Green Jobs revolution is huge. An Australian Conservation Foundation and Australian Council of Trade Unions study in 2008 found that 500,000 Green Jobs could be created in six key industries by 2030 - if the right government policies were put in place.

The Federal government could also create a Green Jobs Corps that provides opportunities for the growing number of unemployed Australians to work on sustainability and environmental repair projects, rather than going on the dole.

The losers would be the 'carbon lobby', the owners of the fossil fuel companies who have spent millions of dollars trying to prevent Australia from meeting its obligation to cut emissions.

A transition to a 'green economy' would negatively affect some people, at least in the short term, and all these workers need guarantees for the transition. But as a report by the Centre of Full Employment and Equity into the potential for Green Jobs in the Hunter Region of NSW found, there is cause for optimism because there would be more new 'green jobs' than existing coal mining jobs.

The report stated that:

*a shift from coal-fired power generation to a clean renewables 'Silicon Valley' in the Hunter/Wyong region would create between 7,500 and 14,300 new jobs: a net gain of between 3,900 and 10,700 jobs. These would be secure and well-paid jobs in the research, design, manufacture, installation, maintenance and export of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.*

There has been similar research done focusing on the Illawarra in NSW and 'just transitions' regional model has clear relevance for coal communities in Victoria and Queensland. Furthermore, according to CSIRO modelling on Australia's job outlook, employment in mining and energy commodities would actually grow by 24,300 by 2025 - if Australia sets course to become carbon neutral by 2050.

## How can I get a Green Job?

There needs to be an expansion of employee rights at work, and union rights to negotiate, to enable workers to 'green' existing jobs and create new 'green jobs'.

Useful websites include: [www.environmentaljobs.com.au](http://www.environmentaljobs.com.au); [www.envirojobs.com.au](http://www.envirojobs.com.au); [www.nrmjobs.com.au](http://www.nrmjobs.com.au); [www.envirolinkrecruitment.com.au](http://www.envirolinkrecruitment.com.au); [www.sjobs.com.au](http://www.sjobs.com.au)

Industry bodies or associations can provide information on training and skills required to work in specific areas such as [www.greenplumbers.com.au](http://www.greenplumbers.com.au) and [www.ecosmartelectricians.com.au](http://www.ecosmartelectricians.com.au)

## More info

### Australia:

#### **Australian Conservation Foundation: Green Collar Jobs**

[www.acfonline.org.au/default.asp?section\\_id=267](http://www.acfonline.org.au/default.asp?section_id=267)

#### **Australian Manufacturing Workers Union: Making Our Future: Just Transitions**

[http://www.amwu.org.au/content/upload/files/report/making-our-future\\_0708.pdf](http://www.amwu.org.au/content/upload/files/report/making-our-future_0708.pdf)

#### **Australian Youth Climate Coalition: Green Jobs Campaign**

[www.aycc.org.au/?page\\_id=23](http://www.aycc.org.au/?page_id=23)

### International:

**Apollo Alliance** <http://apolloalliance.org>

**Green For All** [www.greenforall.org/?gfa\\_splash=1](http://www.greenforall.org/?gfa_splash=1)

**Green Jobs Now** [www.greenjobsnow.com](http://www.greenjobsnow.com)

#### **International Labour Organization: Green Jobs Initiative**

[www.ilo.org/integration/themes/greenjobs/lang—en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/integration/themes/greenjobs/lang—en/index.htm)

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**Social Education and Research Concerning Humanity Foundation**  
Level 3, Suite 3B, 110 Kippax Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010  
Phone: 02 9211 4164 Fax: 02 9211 1407  
Email: [admin@search.org.au](mailto:admin@search.org.au) [www.search.org.au](http://www.search.org.au)