

22 May 2024

Centring environmental policy in PCS

Conference votes to put environmental issues at the centre of policy decisions and link the fight for workers' rights with the fight for climate action.

Proposed by Defra Northern and seconded by DWP Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham, motion A46, "Centring environmental policy in PCS" highlighted the need to connect environmental campaigning with wider social, economic and labour issues.

The motion said: "For too long environmental issues have been seen and portrayed as a niche standalone topic, a subject to think about when the real issues have been addressed..... This is particularly troubling in the current context where meaningful environmental policy is portrayed as conflicting with protecting worker's rights and reducing income inequality."

The motion instructed the NEC to produce a checklist of environmental issues that should be used in all bargaining units, ensure all branch and member briefings contain reference to those principles and place them in the context of the subject matter of the briefing, establish a committee within the NEC whose primary focus is environmental issues and develop and provide training for reps and members on how to develop the environmental agenda in workplaces.

System change needed

Moving the motion on behalf of DEFRA Northern branch, Terrance talked about how scientists stress the importance of everyone doing little things, but "what we need is a system change, a complete change to the way we do things."

He also pointed out how environmental issues a key for engaging and including existing members, particularly young members, and attracting new members.

Lynne, seconding the motion for DWP Barnsley, particularly stressed the need for training and guidance on what reps can and need to be doing in workplaces, covered in the motion.

Speaking in support of the motion for the NEC, Hannah David outlined some of the work already being done by PCS including the plans for National Climate Week later in the year.

The motion was carried unanimously.