

22 May 2024

National Climate Service and Just Transition

Conference motion A48 proposed a new branch of the civil service to take climate change seriously and move to a zero-carbon economy that is friendly to workers.

The Paris Climate Agreement committed to ensure a maximum 1.5 degrees centigrade global temperature increase. A 25% reduction of fossil fuel use by 2030 is essential, according to the International Energy Agency. However, the UK Government is actively weakening its commitment and failing to protect people and planet from the consequence so climate change. Trade unions and workers in all sectors are central to transition plans.

We need a rapid transition away from oil and gas to prevent catastrophic climate breakdown. At the same time, this can create opportunities for skilled jobs, protect against inequality and declining standards caused by the fossil-fuelled market economy. A National Climate Service to plan and implement a decarbonised economy with a trained workforce. Branches should engage with community and climate justice groups and PCS should propose this motion at TUC Congress in September 2024.

Proposing the motion, Cath from DfE North West and North Wales explained: "Climate change is a trade union issue. There are jobs at risk. PCS is doing a lot on climate change but we need to get other trade unions on board as well."

David from Defra Northwest and Cumbria seconded the motion, saying: "I come from Carlisle where in 2005 we had a once-in-a-hundred-years flooding event. We had another 10 years later. It's clear that this government and governments across the world are not providing."

Trevor from Home Office Midlands agreed that that climate change is a trade union issue: it's a health and safety issue.

"Our network of safety reps have powers to go into workplaces to carry out checks and we need to be picking up management on what their doing," he said.

Ros Hewitt spoke on behalf of the NEC stated: "The causes of the climate crisis and the cost-of-living crisis are the same: corporate greed and a lack of a coordinated state-led plan."

The motion was carried unanimously.