

Common Issues for Labor and Environmental Justice Groups

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“Environmental Justice”

- EJ movement broadened the definition of the “environment” to describe where we **“live, work and play.”**
- Historic tensions related to “jobs versus the environment” frame: logging issues, refineries. Issues are visceral. AFL-CIO opposed the Kyoto Protocol in '97.
- Historic and current comings together: refineries (CBE in LA), Clean and Safe Ports (EBASE, Alameda CLC, many others...)
- A lot depends on relationship building and knowing each other’s organizational forms and structures—and a social movement perspective and power analysis are key. More on this later...

Regulation for the common good

- Labor movement is familiar with laws that don't work---hence natural skepticism about cap and trade and market-based mechanisms (especially now). “Not our first choice.”
- Direct regulation and “complementary policies” are critical (80-20 in CA)
- We have a history of attaching conditions and standards to public funds (e.g. living wage, prevailing wage, RPS, procurement policies)

Cap and Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-No opportunities for speculation-100% Auction, with revenues toward transition assistance, green jobs
Offsets (Erin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Severely restrict use and limit number-Should not let polluters off the hook in terms of pollution burden on communities-Should not stifle innovation
Leakage (afternoon panel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Big issue around competitiveness-Want to avoid the “offshoring” of jobs-Need to identify right mechanism to address (int’ sectoral agreements, output based rebate, trade policy)

There's so much to say "**Yes!**" to
(challenge is to internalize these across labor movement)

CA Labor Principles on Climate Change and AB 32

- Building Alliances and Regional Partnerships
- Sustainability
- Green Jobs Must be Union Jobs with a Future*
- Just Transition*
- Equity for Communities*
- Worker Training and Coordination of Resources
- Global Warming is a Global Problem (sight competitiveness)

***California's Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006: A Background Paper for Labor Unions

<http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu>

Thoughts for EJ allies

- Central Labor Councils, Building Trades Councils, State Feds— political and legislative arms....meet with them on common issues, both policy issues and green jobs and transition issues (e.g. local climate action plans, solar and other renewable initiatives)
- Reach out to local unions (so many key sectoral interests) IBT and SEIU on ports, CWA on smart grid, building maintenance workers on efficiency, utility workers on water, solar, wind; health care workers on Katrina--Bob Bullard, Mercy Hospital in New Orleans...more
- Membership meetings/Democratic Structures/Policies: Fred Hirsch, Plumbers and Fitters and fighting Bush's foreign policy—national convention....Find people like Fred....
- Pitch a joint working group, or jointly join an existing one..

Thoughts for Labor Allies

- Do the internal education required to help unions see how both climate policy and our response to it in terms of redesigning our economy affects all unions (e.g., sectoral issues mentioned earlier). Highlight opportunities and also address transition issues.
- **CLC's and Building Trades Councils:** Reach out to our EJ allies to discuss both policy and economic and community development plans related to green jobs, economic stimulus and local climate action plans.
- **Example: State Federations of Labor in Western US and Canada** have been engaged in the **Western Climate Initiative**. We're holding a meeting in June that will bring in unions who, unless we address and work to resolve their concerns related to job loss, might be inclined to oppose—or at least not support—strong climate legislation.

Thoughts for Labor Allies

- Reach-out to EJ and environmental groups on larger policy issues, such as the WCI—WCI labor team working with enviros, joint demands re auction, offsets, etc; we're stronger together
- For both EJ and Labor: Workforce and Economic Development Conference...Green Jobs Track, May 27-28 in San Jose...www.calaborfed.org
- Role of labor in elections...key to climate. Fight of our lives in the labor movement...Call Feinstein today on Employee Free Choice Act: Fresno office: 559-485-7430.
- Form a joint working group or link-up with local groups doing so.

Expanding our base

- Who in Northern CA has ***not*** been in a dialogue with EJ and labor groups and how to work together, but would like to?
- Who in Southern CA has ***not*** been in such a dialogue, but would like to?
- Central CA?

Building unity across borders

“An Injury to One is An Injury to All”

“We cannot simply think of our survival; each new generation is responsible to ensure the survival of the seventh generation. The prophecy given to us, tells us that what we do today will affect the seventh generation and because of this we must bear in mind our responsibility to them today and always.”

Toward Copenhagen

- Who is calling for the largest cuts in emissions?
- Small island nations....are already dealing with “adaptation issues” (aka: floods, land-mass loss)
- Financial package for technology and adaptation and issue of Global Development Rights
- International environmental groups—developing country NGO’s and unions addressing these questions...and northern partners... (p.m. workshop on global issues)
- Bringing it home: the stronger our legislation and movement is at home, the better off everyone else is.....

Adelante/Onward

- We're stronger together
- We need to take active steps to better engage each other's movements, campaigns...like, soon
- Need to develop a global justice perspective and support it by building power at home