



TRADE UNION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
TO THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC  
COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION SYNDICALE CONSULTATIVE  
AUPRÈS DE L'ORGANISATION DE COOPÉRATION  
ET DE DÉVELOPPEMENT ÉCONOMIQUES

**« Innovation and sustainable development  
beyond the crisis – a Trade Union view »  
Paris, France – 22 June 2009**

# **« Innovation and sustainable development beyond the crisis – a Trade Union view »**

**Paris, France – 22 June 2009**



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- Innovation is key for achieving a fast transition towards a sustainable society. Consensus to be seek on the purpose and beneficiaries of innovation policies.
- Will eco-innovation, and innovation in general, provide with changes that will just reduce the environmental/social impact of our unsustainable production and consumption patterns?
- Or is eco-innovation expected to provide alternative and profound change to these?



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While they are not contradictory, a sense of timing is needed.

In the **short run**, eco-innovation can provide with tools and technologies which could put us on a cleaner economic recovery pathway

**“green and good” jobs**: eco-innovation enables environmentally-friendly and labour-intensive economy – vital for economic recovery...

**“transitional technologies”**

In the **long run**, we need a more **ambitious approach** to eco-innovation. How R&D will help us **putting our societies on a radically different track (different organisation of production and consumption, perception of wealth?, wealth distribution?)**

Short-term/long-term dimension should help prioritising innovation policies, avoiding support for “eco-innovative solutions” which could be seen as short term solutions, but might hamper our possibilities to achieve a “paradigm shift”.



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## **Green Jobs: key for recovery – key for the future**

USA - Mr. Van Jones nominated as special advisor for Green Jobs, enterprise and innovation...

**R&D and innovative solutions have a role to play in creating new and green jobs in the context of the economic crisis.**

Example: Renewable Energies

Globally 300,000 workers in wind power; more than 100,000 in solar photovoltaic. 600,000 are employed in solar thermal—most of them in China.

People employed in renewables is presently around 2.3 million.

The overall transition to energy efficient buildings world-wide could lead to 10 million of new jobs, and green employment for over 110 million currently employed.

**MAJOR GAP: vocational training – skills development**



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## **Preparing the long-term, ensuring a Just Transition: the role of social innovation**

Need to evaluate the means for transforming our societies in a truly sustainable manner – I.e. green & unfair society is not a sustainable outcome

***Technological solutions can not make change happen by themselves- require “social innovations”***

*Social innovation?*: changes in the way individuals or communities act to obtain results (i.e. to solve a problem or to generate new opportunities)

Several initiatives at the community, workplace, sectoral & country level show new paths for re-organizing our societies and show how innovation is not only to be looked at in laboratories, but at the local level.



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## **Preparing the long-term, ensuring a Just Transition: the role of social innovation**

These initiatives require an enabling environment and sufficient investments to be scaled up. Case-by-case intervention cannot be enough.

1. Focusing and giving visibility to promising cases
2. Building scenarios of potential futures
3. Developing enabling systems
4. Promoting creative contexts (new governance tools)

Contexts that facilitate creative attitudes give access to appropriate technologies, promote the diffusion of knowledge, skills and abilities, and enhance social and political tolerance.

**INNOVATE FOR A SUSTAINABLE OUTCOME => INNOVATE IN THE TRANSITION**



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## **Some questions**

**How will the OECD Innovation strategy and eco-innovation policies integrate social innovation?**

**How employment policies will assess the “transitional needs” of labour markets for becoming “greener” => just transition framework?**

**THANK YOU!**