Green Jobs: Mirage or Miracle?

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Overview

- Potential to Create Many Jobs in Transition to Low-Carbon, Sustainable, Green Economy

- Current approach to Green Economy Isn’t Working:
  - Energy and climate crisis = civilizational crisis
  - Energy transition we need is NOT happening
  - Private sector, market based solutions have failed workers, communities and climate

- What’s Next? Trade Unions at International Climate Negotiations
Green Jobs/Climate Jobs

- Energy efficient buildings
- Renewable energy – solar & wind
- Public transit / energy & fuel efficiency autos
- Sustainable food & waste systems
- Resilient infrastructure – telecommunications, smart grid, roads & bridges, hospitals
Instead of 
Growing 
Green Economy, We have:

1. A Climate & Energy Emergency = Civilizational Crisis

2. The Energy Transition We Need is **NOT** Happening
Emissions Should Be Decreasing...
BAU = 4-6 Degrees Celsius Increase by 2100
Fossil Fuels Are NOT Running Out
The ‘Extreme Energy’ Agenda

Tar Sands Oil

Shale gas “fracking”

Mountaintop removal and surface coal mining

Deep sea / Artic oil drilling
Fossil fuel investment is calculated from EIA and IEA data. Renewable energy investment includes asset finance and small-scale projects, but excludes large hydro. Sources: EIA, IEA, Bloomberg New Energy Finance
Energy Expansion, NOT Transition

Railcars loaded with coal line up to fill ships in Norfolk, Virginia. World coal consumption increased 54% from 2000 to 2011.
Under Attack – Workers and Communities

> Workers lack rights & union representation

> Health & safety issues

> Production up, Employment down

> Companies close union operations, reopen non-union

Black Thunder Mine, Wyoming, US. Produces 90 million tons coal/year. 90% Non-Union.
Under Attack – Workers and Communities

7 million people died globally as a result of air pollution in 2012.
More Fossil Fuels, More Emissions ≠ Energy Equity
Renewable Energy is Below 5% of Electricity Production Nearly Everywhere

Figure 1: G20 Renewable Electricity Production

Numbers represent G20 country rankings. Renewable energy in this figure includes wind, solar, geothermal, tidal, and wave.

RE Expanding But Still Small Portion of Global Energy Consumption

Figure 1. Estimated Renewable Energy Share of Global Final Energy Consumption, 2011

- Modern Renewables: 9.7%
- Traditional Biomass: 9.3%
- Nuclear Power: 2.8%
- Fossil Fuels: 78.2%
- Biomass/solar/geothermal heat and hot water: 4.1%
- Hydropower: 3.7%
- Wind/solar/biomass/geothermal power generation: 1.1%
- Biofuels: 0.8%
But PV installations up dramatically....why?
Gas prices in U.S. low – incentive to export

Key point: Geographical price differences in natural gas have increased in recent years, following the revolution in unconventional gas extraction.
Investments in Solar and Wind Drop in 2011 – Overproduction & Policies and Subsidies to Support RE Disappear
Energy Privatization has failed....

- Workers
- Communities
- The Environment

Big six energy firms accused of 'cold-blooded profiteering'
Doubling of retail profit margins prompts call for radical overhaul of regulation

Price rises across Europe spark protests and spark calls to re-nationalize and re-regulate power generation
What’s Next for Green Economy?

Trade Union Strategy and Interventions at International Climate Meetings

- UN Climate Summit, September 23, 2014
- Lima, Peru UNFCCC COP 20 Negotiations
- Paris, France UNFCCC COP 21 Negotiations
Thank you!

Questions/Comments
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