

# Climate Change & Climate Jobs

Easy Answers To  
56 Important  
Questions



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*Towards the World We Want*

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## INTRODUCTION

On May 10th 2013, a danger sign on the road to climate change catastrophe was passed. This event resulted in many leading scientists and climate change spokespeople around the world warning about the world's 'last chance'. Like all the many other similar warnings, dating back to the 1980s, these warnings caused a momentary stir and then vanished from public consciousness.

Why should this be the case, when climate change threatens everyone? Why, moreover, should climate change be so unimportant to most people even though it offers work opportunities to millions of the unemployed and cheaper and better services to the millions still waiting for 'the better life' promised by post-apartheid South Africa?

There are two immediate answers to these questions. The 10th May milestone refers to the first ever recording of 400 ppm of atmospheric carbon dioxide. Most people don't know what this means or why it is so important. Moreover, the popular view is that one has to be very clever to understand whatever it might mean. This is the first of the two answers. The second answer is that, for people who measure success by being able to survive each day, both the threat and promise of climate change are too remote to be of any real concern.

This booklet seeks to challenge both these answers. It seeks to show that science is simple, at least at the level required for non-scientists to take an active part in determining their lives and the lives of their children and grandchildren. It also seeks to show that climate jobs and the better and cheaper services they bring are there to be had – but only if people are aware of them and are ready to campaign for them.

The big questions this booklet seeks to answer are:

- What is climate change?
  - Can it be stopped?
  - How can it be stopped?
  - Why is so little being done to stop it?
  - What are climate jobs and how do they help provide better and cheaper services?
  - How are climate jobs different from green jobs?
- These questions all lead to the most important ones:
- What needs to be done to both stop climate change and provide millions of climate jobs? And
  - How is this to be achieved?

**NOTE:** Many technical terms are used in climate change. Many of the questions are about these terms. When not part of the question, technical terms are indicated by use of quotation marks. 'Non-renewable' is the first example and is found in Question 5. Should you require more information than what is provided in this booklet, please refer to the Climate Jobs website <http://climatejobs.org.za> or phone **AIDC 021 447 5770**



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## A THE SCIENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

### 1. WHAT IS CLIMATE?

Climate is the weather over a large area and for a long time. The climate that concerns us is about the whole world and covers a period between 1 year and many hundreds of years.

### 2. WHAT IS WEATHER AND HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM CLIMATE CHANGE?

Weather tells us whether it is hot or cold, dry or wet, windy or still, sunny or cloudy over a small area and, when compared to climate, for a very short period. Weather forecasts cover whole cities – Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg – or parts of the city – Khyalitsha, Cato Manor, Soweto – and for a day or, at most, several days. Temperature (heat), which is central to climate change, is measured in degrees centigrade (°C). Temperature changes enormously during 24 hours and from place to place. It can be well below freezing (minus 0°C) or very hot (+40°C). These changes are perfectly normal. The global climate, on the other hand, is – and needs to be – very stable, unchanging. In more than 250 years, for instance, it has increased only 0.8°C. Climate Change is heating the world and doing so at a rate that threatens the survival of human kind and many other life forms, even though the temperature increase is only a few degrees centigrade.

### 3. WHY IS THE WORLD GETTING HOTTER?

A layer of air, called the atmosphere, sits immediately above the earth and covers the whole world to a height of some 17 kilometres. Without the atmosphere, there would be no life on earth, for the atmosphere protects the earth from harmful rays and emissions from the sun, while keeping the climate stable and sufficiently warm for people and most other life forms.

Fossil fuels have begun to interfere with the way the atmosphere normally functions. [See Question 6]

### 4. WHAT IS A FOSSIL?

At its easiest, a fossil is anything that once lived and has been buried for at least 10,000 years. Some of these fossils from about 300 million years ago are now major sources of energy.

### 5. WHAT ARE FOSSIL FUELS?

Fossil fuels provide the energy that drives the modern world for the past two hundred and fifty or so years; fossil fuels have made the world different from the pre-industrial age. Coal, oil and gas (of the type we use in industry and for heating and cooking) are all fossil fuels. They are 'non-renewable' because they have to be buried under a huge amount of earth for such a long time that, for practical purposes, they cannot be renewed once all supplies have been used. Fossil fuels also produce greenhouse gases; the gasses directly responsible for climate change.



## 6. WHAT ARE GREENHOUSE GASES?

For present purposes, all we need to know is that greenhouse gases allow heat from the sun to pass through the atmosphere – a passage which is essential for all life – but then act as a roof or blanket around the world. Like a car in the sun with all windows closed, the greenhouse gases cause the temperature to build up thereby producing 'global warming'.

## 7. WHY ARE THEY CALLED 'GREENHOUSE'?

The name comes from Britain and refers to buildings with glass walls and a glass roof. Glass allows the sunrays to pass through but not to escape. In this way, the build up of temperature allows for plants that require heat to grow in Europe and even survive European winters. The greenhouse gases work in the same way as glass.



## 8. IS THERE MORE THAN ONE GAS AND IS THIS WHY THEY ARE CALLED GASSES?

There are several different greenhouse gases. For us, the most important is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) that fossil fuels automatically give off when used. CO<sub>2</sub> is the main cause of climate change.



## 9. WHAT DOES CLIMATE CHANGE DO OR CAUSE?

Climate change greatly increases the frequency of what are called 'extreme weather events'. Floods, droughts, heat waves, tornadoes and hurricanes are all examples of extreme weather; climate change is making them occur much more often than normal.

## 10. ARE ALL EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS CAUSED BY CLIMATE CHANGE?

No. But the number of times they are now occurring is making it possible for scientists to say which ones are most probably caused by climate change.

## 11. WHAT WILL SMALL TEMPERATURE INCREASES DO?

### Even a 1°C rise would

- Cause the disappearance of large land-based bodies of ice, known as glaciers, in some mountains
- Threaten 50 million people's water supply
- Cause the death of 300,000 people from malaria, diarrhoea, or starvation
- Begin the extinction or disappearance of 10% of all species, amongst animals, birds, insects and fish

### A 2°C rise would

- Reduce water in already water-scarce South Africa by 30%
- Expose 60 million more people to malaria in Africa
- Cause the extinction of polar bears and a large deer that lives in the snow and ice, known as caribou
- Begin melting land-based ice which could cause sea levels around the world to rise by 7 metres



### A 3°C rise would cause

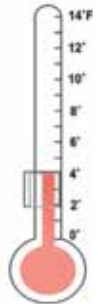
- Serious drought in Southern Europe
- Three million more people to die from hunger
- The extinction of up to 40% of all species

### A 4°C rise would

- End agriculture in Australia
- Cause the disappearance of half of the permanently frozen sub-soil of the arctic, the top of the world that is amongst the coldest regions on earth
- Reduce African agriculture by 35%

### A 5°C rise would

- Cause the disappearance of glaciers in the Himalayas, the highest mountain range in the world and home to Mount Everest
- Melt so much ice that sea levels would rise by 7 meters
- Threaten London, New York and Tokyo by rising sea levels
- Result in the massive movement of entire populations seeking to avoid floods, or droughts, or famines



## 12. ARE PEOPLE ALREADY THREATENED BY RISING SEA LEVELS?

Yes. The present sea level rise of a mere 18 centimetres (compared to the just mentioned 7 metres) has, for example, already caused the evacuation of the entire population – 2,500 people of the Carteret Island. But hardly anyone has ever heard of this island, so it's warning of the disaster waiting to befall hundreds and millions of us has gone virtually unnoticed.

### 13. HOW DOES GLOBAL WARMING PRODUCE SUCH CATASTROPHES?

The answer is complex because temperature interacts and reacts with so many different things. For instance, much of the world is covered in ice. An increase in temperature causes (some of) this ice to melt. This then causes sea levels to rise. But the melting ice also destroys the giant white 'mirror' of snow and ice that sends ('reflects') heat back into space. Without this 'mirror', the earth heats up and this then melts even more ice, and so on. The hotter sea, to give another example, makes more water available for rainmaking. Floods are the result of this extra water. Moreover, temperature – in both the atmosphere and sea and at different heights or depths – interacts with mountain ranges and the constantly changing wind, sea currents, and different weights of air (air pressure) found all over the world. These various interactions loop back to react with each other thereby setting off another cycle of interactions amongst the many factors all linked together in this long climate chain. This is why it is sometimes called a 'chain reaction'.

### 14. DOES EXTREME WEATHER OCCUR IN THE SAME WAY ALL OVER THE WORLD?

No. Climate change makes worse 'natural' extreme weathers, so that, for instance, already wet places become even wetter and hot places become hotter. Already hot Africa will therefore become even hotter.

### 15. HOW MUCH HOTTER IS CLIMATE CHANGE MAKING AFRICA?

A rough guide is that the global average temperature increase is doubled in Africa. Thus, a 2°C increase in the average global temperature would be 4°C in Africa.

### 16. WHY SHOULD GLOBAL WARMING BE WORSE IN AFRICA?

There are two main reasons

- Imagine the world as a completely round ball. It therefore has a top and bottom. Now imagine a line around the ball that is in the exact middle of the ball. This line is the equator. A region (of some 2,602 km) directly above the equator and a region of the same size directly below the equator is called the equatorial region of the world. This region has the highest average annual temperature in the world. These temperatures get less the further one is from the equator. This is why it is coldest at the 'poles', the top and bottom of the earth.
- Africa is different from all other continents in that all of it is closest to the equator when compared with the other continents. (See map) Any global temperature increases due to climate change therefore heats up already hot Africa more than anywhere else

**EQUATOR**





**17. IS CLIMATE CHANGE NEW IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD?**

The earth has experienced many extreme climate changes throughout its very long history. What has never happened before is that we, humankind, are now causing climate change. But not all of us equally, as we will see. The climate change of the modern industrial world is called 'anthropogenic' (caused by humans) to distinguish it from all the other pre-industrial and, hence, naturally caused climate changes.

**18. ARE THERE LESSONS TO BE LEARNT FROM PREVIOUS (NATURALLY CAUSED) CLIMATE CHANGES?**

Yes, for instance, when the earth's climate was previously similar to ours, which was some 130,000 years ago, its temperature increased by a maximum of only 1°C. Yet this small increase (small when compared to the 6°C that we now talk about) resulted in a huge rise in the sea level. Indeed, the sea level was then a massive 25 metres higher than now; that's higher than an 8-storied building. .

**B STOPPING OR SLOWING DOWN CLIMATE CHANGE****19. CAN CLIMATE CHANGE BE STOPPED OR SLOWED DOWN?**

The good news is that the answer is a double 'yes'. But this requires major changes. Moreover, some of these changes must take place immediately.

**20. WHEN WILL CLIMATE CHANGE REALLY CHANGE THE WORLD?**

Climate change is already doing that but the worst of it won't happen until later. There is uncertainty precisely when this will be but it is likely to happen between the next 50 to 75 years or so.

**21. WHY SHOULD WE WORRY NOW, WHEN MOST OF US WILL BE DEAD BEFORE THE WORST OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE?**

Climate change already causes floods and droughts and hurricanes and hunger and ill health and the forced movement of people. Those of us lucky enough not to be affected by these things and selfish enough not to care about others might be concerned about their children and their children's children over many generations. All of us however ought to be concerned about the probable extinction of all people. This will be inevitable once the 'tipping point' is reached.

**22. WHAT IS THE 'TIPPING POINT'?**

The climate 'chain reaction' [Question 13] means that a point will be reached when the reaction can no longer be stopped. At this point, climate change spins out of control and becomes irreversible. And life as we know it will eventually come to an end.

**23. WHAT IS REQUIRED TO STOP CLIMATE CHANGE? WHAT IS MITIGATION?**

The giving off or release or – to use the technical term – the 'emission' of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere has to be enormously reduced. This reduction is known as 'mitigation'.



#### **24. HOW DOES ADAPTATION DIFFER FROM MITIGATION?**

Mitigation deals with the cause of climate change. Adaptation is the technical term given to the adjustments and preparations needed to live with climate change until it is stopped. For instance,, we know that already scarce fresh water will become even scarcer s a result of climate change. Measures now being taken to save fresh water illustrate what is meant by adaptation.

#### **25. IS THERE A CONNECTION BETWEEN MITIGATION AND TEMPERATURE INCREASE?**

Yes. The two are closely interrelated: the amount of emissions determines the eventual temperature, as the global greenhouse gas blanket created by the emissions eventually causes global warming [Question 6].

#### **26. IS THERE A SAFE EMISSIONS LEVEL?**

Yes. Although still subject to further scientific study, it is generally held that, to be safe rather than sorry, the emissions should be no more than 350 ppm, that is, 350 units of greenhouse gas per million units of atmospheric air in order not to exceed the agreed temperature [See Question 27]. The precise number – or even meaning – is not that important. What we need to know is that the world has now exceeded 400 ppm [See Introduction].

#### **27. IS THERE A SAFE TEMPERATURE?**

Most governments worldwide accept a 2°C increase (above levels from the 1750s) as being safe. However, we have already seen what a 1°C increase will do [Question 11). So, 2°C is far from safe, even though it is the agreed temperature.

#### **28. HOW MUCH GREENHOUSE GAS NEEDS TO BE CUT IN ORDER TO MEET THE 2°C LIMIT?**

Again, like Question 26, the answer is not completely certain. However, most governments now accept that the amount of greenhouse gas needs to be cut very heavily. If 100 represents current usage, the emissions must be reduced all the way down to 20. This 80% cut is enormous but essential.

#### **29. DO ALL COUNTRIES HAVE TO MAKE THIS HUGE CUT IN THEIR GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND DO THEY NEED TO DO SO EQUALLY?**

Most countries produce little greenhouse gas so it would make little difference if they were to make this 80% cut. The main producers are the small number of economically advanced countries who use most of the fossil fuels – the coal, gas, and oil – responsible for climate change.

#### **30. HOW MUCH GREENHOUSE GAS DOES SOUTH AFRICA PRODUCE?**

Although the largest economy in Africa, South Africa is a small economy compared to those of other countries. Its share of global greenhouse gas is therefore small, only about 1.5%.

Nonetheless, we are the 12th largest polluter in the world. Worst

still, we are the largest polluter in Africa.

Indeed, when we compare the size of our total population with the amount of greenhouse gas we emit, and when we further divide this number by the size of our economy, we are then probably the worst polluter on earth. This final measurement is also known as greenhouse gas emissions per capita per GDP.



### 31. WHY DOES SOUTH AFRICA PRODUCE SO MUCH GREENHOUSE GAS?

The simple answer is: coal. Coal is the main source of carbon dioxide, with CO<sub>2</sub> being the main greenhouse gas [Question 5]. Some 92% of our electricity comes from coal (with 100 representing our total supply of electricity). Eskom, virtually the only supplier of electricity, is responsible for almost half of South Africa's greenhouse gas – some 45%.

### 32. ARE THERE OTHER WAYS OF PRODUCING ELECTRICITY, BESIDES COAL?

Yes! We could be using what is called renewable energy (RE). RE makes possible what is called a 'low-carbon economy' because the energy it produces has no CO<sub>2</sub>.

### 33. WHAT IS RENEWABLE ENERGY (RE)

Energy that is likely to be available for as long as the earth exists is called Renewable Energy. RE is therefore very different from fossil fuels [Question 5].

### 34. ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OR SOURCES OF RENEWABLE ENERGY?

Yes, there are several different sources of RE. The main ones at present are the sun and wind.

Wind has been used for many hundreds of years to draw water. It is now being used on 'wind farms' to create electricity. 'Solar panels' are being used in the same way to convert sunlight into electricity by using what are called 'photovoltaic' (PV) systems. Rather than use any electricity at all, the sun is now also being used directly to heat water in what are called 'solar water heaters' (SWH)



### 35. IS CLIMATE CHANGE SLOWING DOWN AS A RESULT OF RE?

The answer is both yes and no! The world has now passed the 400ppm emission of greenhouse gases [See Introduction and Question 26]. This means that global warming is getting worse. However, without RE, this number would have been reached even sooner. At this speed, temperature increases of 3 or 4 or 5 and more degrees centigrade would be reached before the proper 'transition to a low-carbon economy' has been reached. So, the answer is much more 'no' than 'yes'.

South Africa, for instance, is promoting RE but we are doing so more slowly than we are increasing the use of coal. Besides opening many new coal mines, we are also building two of the largest electricity producing plants in the world that use coal. Moreover, the government has declared coal to be a 'strategic resource', which means that, unlike RE, coal has been given the highest possible priority.

### 36. BUT ISN'T SOUTH AFRICA IDEALLY SUITED FOR RE?

We are ideally suited for RE from the sun, wind and waves. We boast, for instance, having amongst the best potential for solar energy in the world. Indeed, only 1% (one part out of 100) of the suitable land could use the sun to make enough electricity for tens of millions of households. This 1% on its own could generate much more electricity than the total used by Eskom; this mere 1% could generate 14 times more power than Kusile, which will be the world's largest 'dry cooled' coal-fired power station when it is completed.

### **37. BY WHEN COULD RENEWABLE ENERGY PROVIDE ALL OF SOUTH AFRICA'S ELECTRICITY?**

It is technically possible to achieve this by 2035. The problem is that fossil fuels have the priority that should be given to RE.

### **38. WHY IS OUR GOVERNMENT DOING THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT IS NEEDED?**

This question brings us to the next section.

## **C THE POLITICAL-ECONOMY OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

### **39. WHAT IS POLITICAL ECONOMY?**



A short answer is that one cannot understand politics without economics anymore than economics can be understood without politics. Fossil fuels illustrate this connection. [Questions 35-36]

### **40. WHY DOES THE GOVERNMENT STILL FAVOUR FOSSIL FUELS?**

The answer is complicated but its main points include

- A huge amount of money is invested in the coal mines and oil and gas plants all of which make a lot of money for the investors. Investors are people from all over the world – not just South Africa – who buy a part of the mines or plants. These parts – called 'shares' – can vary from very small to very big but even small parts cost lots of money. All the owners of these shares would lose a fortune if RE took over from fossil fuels.
- The loss would not only be the abandoned mines or plants that would produce less than what was intended. The loss would also be in reduced output. This reduction would also mean reduced profit. Investors would not like this and investors are powerful people.
- Politicians also own many of these shares, so they have a 'vested interest' in preserving fossil fuels and they, especially if they are in government, exercise much political power
- Black Economic Empowerment means that some important black people are also owners of the mines and gas and oil plants and pipelines and they, too, therefore want to protect their investments. Crucially, many of them have close political connections.
- Some jobs will be lost in the transition to the low carbon economy. However, this problem is greatly exaggerated by the owners who suddenly pretend to be concerned about workers and protecting jobs.
- Finally, the government is fearful that, if it promotes RE too quickly and enthusiastically and without compensating the very rich fossil fuel owners for their losses, South Africa will be seen to be unfriendly to investors. This could result in all investors and not just those in the mines and plants investing in other countries where their profits are seen to be safer.

#### 41. IS IT A PROBLEM IF INVESTORS DON'T INVEST?

Again, it is a case of both yes and no. It is a problem because, in a 'capitalist' economy like ours, capitalists invest in order to make as much profit as possible but often only in countries where their investments and profits are most safe. South African investments are very profitable but if South Africa is seen to be an unsafe place in which to invest, there will be reduced investment. This will mean less economic activity with even fewer jobs. The basic needs of workers and the poor will remain the same but neither those needs nor even the simple need for any job will be met because investment is mainly to maximise profit.

The answer is "no" in the case of foreign investments because the foreigners take more money out of South Africa – in profit – than they bring in. More importantly, the answer is "no" if the government chooses to use our country's enormous wealth to meet people's basic needs rather than make more money for the already rich.

These answers apply not only to South Africa but to the whole capitalist world.

#### 42. BUT WHAT ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE? WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT PROFIT WHEN RENEWABLE ENERGY IS NEEDED TO STOP CLIMATE CHANGE?

A very good question! Capitalist governments say we can have capitalism while also stopping climate change. They call this the Green Economy.

#### 43. WHAT IS THE GREEN ECONOMY?

The "economy" part of the Green Economy is capitalism. The "green" part is anything to do with the natural world and the environment; climate change is part of this green world. Putting these two parts together turns the Green Economy into an opportunity for investors to consider making enough profit from renewable energy and anything else that reduces greenhouse gas (or is part of adaptation [Question 24]). Making cars go further on the same tank of petrol is thus part of the Green Economy.

#### 44. WHAT, THEN, IS WRONG WITH THE GREEN ECONOMY?

It doesn't work is the short answer. Moreover, it can't work. Climate change is getting worse, despite the Green Economy. (Questions 26 & 35) As the response to climate change, the Green Economy is a fairy tale told by governments who won't say that making profit is more important than stopping the catastrophe they know is happening. Worse still, climate change is seen as little more than a 'business opportunity'. As no more than an opportunity to make money, business is free to decide for itself about matters that have nothing directly to do with stopping climate change. Business alone decides if and when and how much to invest in whatever they think will maximise their profit, in the shortest possible time and with the least 'risk' to their investments. If they invest in the Green Economy it is only because they think it is a good investment. If they don't think this, they don't invest, even though investment to stop climate change is essential and most urgent.

#### 45. WHAT SHOULD GOVERNMENTS DO IF THE GREEN ECONOMY IS A FAILURE?

Give top importance to climate change, rather than profit making, is the answer. This also takes us to the next and final section.



## **D GOVERNMENT ACTION AND CLIMATE JOBS**

### **46. WHAT PROPER ACTION SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT TAKE?**

Climate change is so serious that our government ought to do whatever is required. It knows what needs doing but has so far left this to 'the market', to capitalist enterprises, to decide what, if anything, to do. We already know that this is far too little and too late. Our government must therefore do what the market fails to do. Governments must do what they do in war time: they tell business precisely what to do, what to build or make; how much to build or make; and, if need be, where to do so.

Our government has another very special reason for taking away or restricting 'market freedom' – they have the not so small problem of unemployment that will not go away.

### **47. WHAT HAS UNEMPLOYMENT GOT TO DO WITH CLIMATE CHANGE?**

Treating climate change with the seriousness it deserves also creates a large number of jobs, when about half of South Africa's population of working age is either not working or working for a few hours only. The transition to a low carbon economy, along with the many ways in which we can use energy much more efficiently [Question 24], all create lots of jobs. Just think:

- Besides all the work required in the building of the required RE, there are jobs needed to build and provide a cheap, fast, regular and safe public transport system to reduce the use of private cars, a major source of greenhouse gas.
- Another example is 'retrofitting' existing houses. This means things like installing ceilings and SWHs, along with the ability to collect and store rainwater ('rainwater harvesting') and converting human waste into energy that replaces electricity (bio-gas digesters).
- As well as retrofitting existing houses, all new houses could be built to be so energy efficient that they have little, if any need, to buy electricity or gas or paraffin.



These are just some of the ways in which climate change and jobs come together to become one.

### **48. WHAT ARE CLIMATE JOBS?**

Climate change demands that many things **MUST** be done [Questions 46-7]. These things all require workers. The work of these workers creates climate jobs. Climate jobs exist whether or not a profit is made. The government rather than the market creates climate jobs.

### **49. ARE ALL CLIMATE JOBS THEREFORE PUBLIC SECTOR JOBS?**

No. Climate Jobs include

- All forms of climate-related work that are not primarily driven by profit maximisation, like co-operatives, for example
- Jobs from the profit-making private sector. However, in this case, it would be the government that tells the private sector what it **MUST** do and how much profit it can make, if it wants this public sector led business.

**50. WHAT ARE GREEN JOBS  
AND HOW DO THEY DIFFER FROM  
CLIMATE JOBS ?**

Green jobs are jobs of the Green Economy. The Green Economy treats climate change as no more than a business opportunity [Question 43]. This means that green jobs are created and maintained, not by what MUST be done to stop climate change, but rather by the plans of individual profit-making businesses and its investors. Climate jobs, by contrast, are created entirely by the DEMANDS of climate change itself [Question 48].

**51. PEOPLE WANT WORK; DOES THE NAME MATTER?**

Again, it's both 'yes' and 'no'. It's a big 'Yes' because the difference between Green and Climate Jobs are part of two very different economies: one gives the greatest importance to both climate change and job creation, while the other makes profit maximising its driving necessity.

'No' because the desperate need for work is immediate and for the people lucky enough to find work – any work – an immediate job is more important than the differences between the names and the different political economies they represent.

**52. DO BOTH CLIMATE JOBS AND GREEN JOBS PROVIDE DECENT WORK?**

Green jobs are no better or worse than any other private sector work. This is because green jobs are a part of the profit maximising sector. Climate jobs, by contrast, are public jobs or jobs not directly connected to profit maximisation. This doesn't guarantee that they are decent but only that they stand a better chance of being decent – if the workers involved are organised in effective trade unions.

**53. HOW DO WE GET THE GOVERNMENT TO DO WHAT THE GOVERNMENT KNOWS IT MUST DO ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE AND UNEMPLOYMENT BUT DOESN'T DO?**

Join the One Million Climate Jobs Campaign!

## One Million Climate Jobs

A just transition to a low carbon economy  
to combat unemployment and climate change



#### **54. WHAT IS THE ONE MILLION CLIMATE JOBS CAMPAIGN?**

It is a national campaign that had its first meeting in March 2011, when some 40 organisations met to consider both climate change and unemployment and how to unite both.

#### **55. WHY IS IT A “ONE MILLION” CAMPAIGN?**

One million indicates that a large number of climate jobs can be created. The Campaign's first task was to do research to see whether one million was just symbolic, a wish, or whether it was a target that could be achieved. The research showed that, with the required political will from the government, a million climate jobs could easily be created.

#### **56. WHAT IS THE CAMPAIGN'S STRATEGY?**

The Campaign knows that no matter how good its research and how good it is at presenting its case to government, the government will not act, even if it listens [Question 37-8]. However, if the unemployed and the workers who can't afford electricity or water and the homeless are mobilised and if they join forces with the many different organisations and individuals who are active on climate change issues, then there is a chance that the government might be forced to do something. This is why the organisations that attended the Campaign's first meeting in 2011 came from a wide section of society: from trade unions, the unemployed, community groups, the faith communities, the universities, NGO's and other bodies within civil society. South Africa is now a democracy of a type in which politicians listen only at election time. There is a general election next year. The Campaign hopes to be able to present the government with a petition of at least 100,000 signatures before then. The Campaign further hopes that the people will organise themselves to demand the million climate jobs by retrofitting their homes, for instance, not only to provide jobs but greatly to reduce what they have to pay for electricity and water.

The future is happening right now and it is hot. South Africa presently has some 5 million people unemployed or under-employed. Climate jobs to tackle both climate change and unemployment is the strategy.

***Amandla!***

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