

Hemispheric workshop

# Just Transition, green and blue jobs in the Americas:

Contributions from the world of work to environmentally sustainable economies and societies



NASSAU,  
THE BAHAMAS

February 26 to 27, 2026

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## BASE DOCUMENT

(Updated agenda as of Feb.25)

### CONTENT

1. Background.....	1
2. Conceptual framework .....	3
3. Description and objectives .....	6
4. Updated Agenda as of February 25.....	8

## 1. Background

The Organization of American States (OAS) promotes political dialogue, consensus-building, and results-oriented cooperation among the governments of the region on key sectoral areas. It serves as the Technical Secretariat of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML), the Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development and the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development (CIDS). As such, the OAS is uniquely positioned to foster inter-sectoral dialogue and concerted action between labor and sustainable development authorities across the Americas.

In the framework of the XXII IACML, held in October 2024, the Ministers of Labor of the region addressed for the first time in the 60-year history of the Conference the issues of climate change, the decarbonization agenda and the role of the Ministries of Labor in the transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies. Their commitment is reflected in the following mandate:

*“We recognize that the climate and environmental crisis, as a result of climate change, is one of the most pressing challenges in the region, along with the interconnection between the enjoyment of human rights and the care and the protection of the environment. We affirm the need for urgent and decisive intervention by governments, through tripartite social dialogue, to transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies. We emphasize the ongoing work of the OAS in implementing the Inter-American Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2030 and the contributions of our Ministries of Labor for creating labor strategies to achieve just transitions in improving and adapting professional training, and in protecting health and safety at work and economic activity.” (Art. 8, Declaration of Bogotá, adopted at the XXII IACML in 2024)*

Parallely, the Inter-American Climate Action Plan 2023-2030, approved by the Ministers of Sustainable Development, includes among its objectives to strengthen cooperation; prioritize sustainability through a holistic approach that considers the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development; support adaptation to climate change and climate resilience; respond to the impacts of climate change; and strengthen multilateral climate efforts.

Under the OAS Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI), the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment (DHDEE) and the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) serve, respectively, as the technical units responsible for coordinating the implementation of the 2025–2027 Work Plan of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) and the Inter-American Climate Change Action Plan 2023–2030. In this capacity, both departments have been advancing initiatives that promote workforce and skills development, climate resilience, low-emission development, and just transition policies across the region.

On the part of DHDEE, these initiatives include technical cooperation among Ministries of Labor to strengthen training, skilling, and reskilling strategies; modernize labor inspection systems; and address emerging labor trends and new forms of employment, including digital platform work, among other. For its part, DSD provides technical assistance to integrate climate adaptation and mitigation strategies into national development plans; promotes the circular economy and sustainable job creation aligned with the transition toward green and blue economies; and supports institutional capacity building and the development of climate-smart skills to enhance workforce readiness for emerging opportunities in sustainable and low-carbon sectors.

The OAS also maintains a long-standing partnership with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the United Nations agency responsible for promoting the economic and social development of the region through coordinated regional action, economic cooperation, research, advisory services, and technical assistance to governments. ECLAC is currently implementing, under its United Nations Development Account, the project *“Labour Inclusion to Address Climate Change and Its Impacts on the Future of Work in Latin America and the Caribbean”*, which provides an ideal framework and mandate for collaboration with the OAS on this issue.

Recognizing the opportunity for inter-sectoral and intergovernmental cooperation that this context presents, the Ministers of Labor of the OAS have designated “just transition, green and blue jobs, and contributions from the world of work to environmentally sustainable economies and societies” as a priority theme in the IACML 2025–2027 Work Plan. This Work Plan foresees the organization of the workshop outlined in this document, which will be co-organized by the OAS—through the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL)—, the Ministries of Labour and Public Service and of Economic Affairs of The Bahamas, and ECLAC under the aforementioned project. The Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) will also provide financial support.

## 2. Conceptual framework

Climate change and environmental degradation represent profound and multifaceted challenges for the world of work in the Americas. The increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events have direct consequences for productivity, occupational safety and health, and the sustainability of enterprises. At the same time, the global effort to achieve net-zero emissions and to build environmentally sustainable economies creates new and diverse opportunities for employment, innovation, and growth. This reality positions labor policies at the center of the climate agenda, and underscore the key role of Ministries of Labor and social actors in shaping transitions that are not only green and blue, but also fair, inclusive, and decent.

The notion of a just transition, as articulated by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and embraced by the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) of the OAS, stresses that the impact of climate action in the world of work must be addressed in an integrated and participatory manner. A just transition requires systemic, multidimensional, and multi-stakeholder approaches that optimize the social and economic opportunities of climate action while minimizing risks and managing challenges for workers, enterprises, and communities<sup>1</sup>. This framework allows climate strategies to contribute not only to environmental protection but also to social justice, poverty reduction, and inclusive development. Within this context, three key themes stand out as central to the debate: (i) aligning labor and environmental agendas for a sustainable future; (ii) training, reskilling, and upskilling for green and blue jobs<sup>2</sup>; and (iii) social protection and labor inclusion in green transitions.

The following sections build on this conceptual framework to explore the main thematic areas of the just transition in the Americas, which will be addressed in the RIAL/OAS Hemispheric Workshop “Just Transition, green and blue jobs in the Americas: Contributions from the world of work to environmentally sustainable economies and societies”, outlined in this document.

### ***Aligning labor and environmental agendas for a sustainable future***

In 2024, at the RIAL/OAS Hemispheric Workshop “Future of Work and New Employment Dynamics in the Americas”<sup>3</sup>, the Ministries of Labor agreed that climate change must not be addressed from a single perspective. They underscored that responses must also take into account the implications for the world of work, since climate change not only poses risks to occupational safety, productivity, and enterprises, but also creates opportunities for new occupations, industries, and productive sectors. This recognition reframed climate action as a multidimensional challenge with social, economic, and labor dimensions, rather than an environmental issue alone, it is also consistent with the Declaration of Nassau, adopted by the Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development of the Americas in their 4<sup>th</sup> OAS meeting in 2023.

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<sup>1</sup> ILO (2023). [Green Jobs, an Opportunity for Women in Latin America](#).

<sup>2</sup> For definitions on green and blue jobs, consult: ILO (2023) [Green jobs, green economy, just transition and related concepts](#); ECLAC (2025). [Empleos verdes y sistemas de protección social](#)

<sup>3</sup> RIAL/OAS (2024). [Future of work and new employment dynamics in the Americas](#).

Building on this consensus, authorities stressed that environmentally sustainable economies and societies can only be achieved through a strategic vision and intersectoral action. Ministries of Labor, working alongside environmental, energy, and development institutions, have a pivotal role in ensuring that employment and inclusion are placed at the center of transition strategies. In the said workshop, delegations agreed that while there are opportunities for labor market policies within climate change actions, significant challenges persist. These include the disconnect between labor market policies and the climate change agenda; as well as insufficient strategies, financing, and inter-institutional governance mechanisms needed to meet the demands of the green agenda. Delegates emphasized that just transition must be comprehensive, encompassing social, economic, and industrial dimensions.

For this reason, and in line with the Declaration and Plan of Action of Bogotá, it becomes essential to strengthen inter-institutional agendas and reinforce linkages between Ministries of Labor and other relevant authorities to address the climate and environmental crisis in the world of work. The present workshop provides a space to move forward in that commitment, exchange national experiences, and advance coherent regional strategies that align labor and environmental agendas in pursuit of sustainable, inclusive, and resilient economies.

### **Training, reskilling and upskilling for green and blue jobs**

The alignment of labor and environmental agendas also makes clear that preparing workers for the transformations of the green and blue transitions is essential. As economies decarbonize and adopt sustainable production models, labor markets will undergo significant restructuring: some occupations will decline, others will be redefined, and entirely new roles will appear. Estimates by the ILO and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) suggest that moving towards a low-carbon economy could generate a net gain of more than 15 million jobs in Latin America and the Caribbean by 2030, and over 22 million by achieving the two-degree target of the Paris Agreement<sup>4</sup>. However, these gains will not materialize automatically; they depend on timely investments in skills development to equip workers with the capacities required in expanding green and blue sectors.

A large share of these potential new jobs, around 13.5 million, would be concentrated in medium-skill occupations, highlighting the critical role of technical, vocational, and professional training systems. Strengthening technical and vocational education and training, expanding lifelong learning opportunities, and embedding skills anticipation methodologies are crucial to ensure that training aligns with labor market demand. Lifelong learning programs, apprenticeships, and public-private partnerships can facilitate these transitions, providing workers with opportunities to acquire the competencies needed for sustainable, future-oriented employment. In this context, it is also crucial to understand and address the needs of youth, as well as to harness their entrepreneurial and growth potential.

Active labor market policies such as employment services, reskilling, hiring incentives, and entrepreneurship support, complemented by measures like unemployment insurance, have been identified as critical tools to both harness the opportunities of green and blue transitions, while reducing inequality and vulnerability in the labor market. Achieving these objectives requires strengthening and modernizing training systems, a need explicitly recognized by the Ministers of Labor in the Plan of Action

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<sup>4</sup> ILO & IDB (2020). [Jobs in a Net-Zero Emissions Future in Latin America and the Caribbean](#).

of Bogotá. The Plan calls for developing skills relevant to a rapidly changing world of work –such as digital, socio-emotional, and business management skills– alongside technical competencies in high-growth sectors like technology and renewable energy, as well as training in fundamental labor rights. It also emphasizes reinforcing social dialogue and the effective participation of social partners, while promoting intersectoral coordination mechanisms that integrate local, regional, and sectoral perspectives to improve job training policies and enhance reskilling and upskilling programs.

### **Social Protection and Labor Inclusion in Green Transitions**

To address the impacts of climate change on workers, occupational safety and health (OSH) is a central concern. Rising temperatures, heat stress, exposure to hazardous substances, and extreme weather events pose direct risks to workers' health, particularly for those in outdoor, informal, or high-risk sectors<sup>5</sup>. Recognizing OSH as a key theme ensures that workers' health and well-being are safeguarded as a foundational element of a just transition, highlighting that a safe and healthy workforce is essential for the success of green and blue economy transformations.

In addition to occupational safety and health concerns, broader dimensions of social protection and inclusion are also key to ensuring that no worker is left behind in the green transition. These broader dimensions recognize that climate change and the restructuring of labor markets will affect workers differently depending on age, gender, geographic location, disability, and access to financial and social resources<sup>6</sup>. For the green and blue transitions, social protection goes beyond traditional mechanisms and requires tailored responses from Ministries of Labor. This includes not only unemployment protection, health coverage, pensions, and cash or in-kind benefits, but also active labor market policies such as public employment programs and incentives for the inclusion of women, youth, and workers in informal economies. By designing inclusive social protection strategies, countries can address the unequal impacts of climate change, support resilience, and enable all workers to participate in sustainable economic growth.

Ensuring inclusion is central to the green and blue transitions. Without deliberate measures, vulnerable groups –particularly women, youth, indigenous populations, and workers in informal or rural economies– risk being excluded from new opportunities in sectors such as energy, construction, and transport. For example, the aforementioned ILO and IDB study projects that more than 80% of the new jobs generated in the decarbonization process will be in sectors traditionally dominated by men, such as energy, highlighting how existing gender disparities in the world of work may be exacerbated in the agenda of decarbonization and climate change response<sup>7</sup>. Inclusive strategies therefore require targeted access to social protection, training, and financial support, as well as measures to reduce barriers created by discrimination, geographic isolation, or lack of technological resources. By prioritizing inclusion, Ministries of Labor can help ensure that the transition to sustainable economies promotes equity, reduces social disparities, and leaves no worker behind.

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<sup>5</sup> ILO (2023). [Occupational safety and health in a just transition](#)

<sup>6</sup> ECLAC (2025). Op.cit.

<sup>7</sup> ILO & IDB (2020). Op.Cit.

Social dialogue plays a key role in advancing these objectives. Through coordinated engagement among governments, employers, and workers' organizations, dialogue can help identify priority groups, define inclusive policies, and monitor the implementation of social protection measures. This collaborative approach ensures that the transition toward green and blue economies is participatory, equitable, and responsive to the needs of all stakeholders.

The transition toward low-carbon and sustainable production models –particularly through the development of green and blue jobs– presents both opportunities and challenges for designing effective, inclusive, and rights-based labor policies. In this context, dialogue between Ministries of Labor, Ministries of Sustainable Development and Environment, employers, and workers is essential to identify strategies that promote decent work, ensure equitable access to emerging sectors, and strengthen the resilience of workers. The exchange of good practices on these topics enhances Ministries' capacity to respond to environmental and economic transformations and promotes an inclusive, just, and sustainable transition for the Americas.

### 3. Description and objectives

The Workshop **“Just Transition, green and blue jobs in the Americas: Contributions from the world of work to environmentally sustainable economies and societies”** will convene representatives of Ministries of Labor, Ministries of Sustainable Development, workers' and employers' organizations - grouped in COSATE and CEATAL-, as well as international organizations, to share experiences and develop policy recommendations on these priority issues, in line with the objectives outlined below.

This is an activity of the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL), co-organized by the OAS, the Ministries of Labour and Public Service and of Economic Affairs of The Bahamas, and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) will also provide financial support. The workshop is part of the Work Plan 2025-2027 of the IACML, and the United Nations Development Account project "Labor Inclusion to Address Climate Change and Its Impacts on the Future of Work in Latin America and the Caribbean," implemented by ECLAC.

#### General Objective

- To enhance the knowledge and strengthen the capacities of the region's Ministries of Labor and social actors to promote just transition processes that generate green and blue jobs, promote labor inclusion, protect labor rights, and contribute to environmentally sustainable economies and societies.

#### Specific Objectives

- To identify, exchange, and analyze initiatives and proposed solutions from Ministries of Labor to address and mitigate the negative impacts of climate change on the world of work -including strategies for occupational safety and health, social protection, and labor inclusion- as well as to promote the creation of green and blue jobs through training, reskilling, and upskilling efforts.

- To strengthen the linkages between the Ministries of Labor and the Ministries of Sustainable Development and the Environment, in order to facilitate interinstitutional coordination of public policies that comprehensively and coherently address the challenges of the climate and environmental crisis, as a result of climate change, in the world of work.
- To develop policy recommendations that guide Ministries of Labor in designing and implementing public policies to promote just transition processes that generate green and blue jobs, promote labor inclusion, protect labor rights, and contribute to environmentally sustainable economies and societies.

### **Participants**

- Officials from the OAS Ministries of Labor responsible for or involved with the topics addressed in the Workshop.
- Officials from the OAS Ministries of Sustainable Development and the Environment that lead the process of the CIDS.
- Representatives of workers and employers, grouped in the consultative bodies of the IACML - COSATE and CEATAL-.
- Representatives of international organizations and other interested stakeholders.

#### 4. Agenda updated as of February 25

##### February 26

9:00 – 9:50

##### Welcome and opening remarks

- Jesus Schucry Giacomán, Director of the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment, Organization of American States
- Alberto Arenas, Director of the Social Development Division, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
- Oscar Avalué, Representative for El Salvador and the Northern Caribbean of the Development Bank for Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF)
- Hon. Pia Takita Glover-Rolle, Minister of Labour and Public Service of The Bahamas and Chair of Working Group 1 of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML)
- Hon. Glenys Hanna Martin, Minister of Education, Technical and Vocational Training of The Bahamas

9:50

*Official Photo of the event*

10:00 – 13:00

##### 1st Session – Aligning labor and environmental agendas for a sustainable future (\*Inter-Sectoral session)

##### **Guiding question for presentations and dialogue:**

1. How is your country integrating labor and environmental agendas to promote a just transition and address the impacts of climate change on the world of work?

*Please consider institutional coordination mechanisms; joint policies; concrete strategies or actions developed jointly between the Ministry of Labor and Ministry (or authority) of Environment/Sustainable Development; and participation of the Ministry of Labor in regional or global climate or sustainable development agendas, among others.*

- 10:00 – 10:30      Introductory and contextual presentations
- **Organization of American States** – Hemispheric labor and environmental agendas: political dialogue and technical action within the OAS – Joint presentation from Jesús Schucry Giacoman, Director of the Department of Human Development, Education, and Employment, and Mark Lambrides, Director of the Department of Sustainable Development, SEDI of the OAS
  - **Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)** – The role of the Ministries of Labor in the environmental agenda, Andres Espejo, Economic Officer, Division of Social Development
- 10:30 – 11:40      Intersectoral Dialogue (Coffee Break at 11:00)
- **The Bahamas** – Minister Michael Halkitis, Minister of Economic Affairs and Chair of the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development (CIDS)
  - **Colombia** - Minister Antonio Sanguino, Minister of Labor and Chair of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor
  - **Canada** – Cori Anderson, Director, and Jodi Browne, Deputy Director, Sustainable Jobs, Energy Policy Branch, Natural Resources Canada
  - **Ecuador** - Vice-Minister Gabriela Lara, Vice Minister of Labor
- 11:40 – 13:00      Open dialogue among all delegations
- 13:00 – 14:30      Lunch** – Offered by the Government of The Bahamas to all participants
- 14:30 – 17:00      2<sup>nd</sup> Session – Social Protection and Labor Inclusion in Green Transitions**

**Guiding question for presentations and dialogue:**

2. What strategies is your country—particularly through the Ministry of Labour—implementing to address the negative impacts of climate change on the world of work and ensure a green transition that is inclusive and equitable? What have been the main achievements, challenges, and lessons learned from these efforts?

*Please consider occupational health and safety, social protection and labor inclusion strategies, among others.*

- 14:30 – 15:00      Introductory/contextual presentation
- **International Labor Organization** – Blanca Patiño, Regional Specialist on Green Jobs and Just Transition, ILO Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, and John Bliet, Specialist in Sustainable Enterprise Development and Job Creation, ILO Office for the Caribbean
  - **ECLAC** – Brief comment from Andres Espejo, Economic Officer, Division of Social Development
- 15:00 – 15:40      National experiences – Demonstrative presentations to start the dialogue (10 minutes each)
- **Bolivia** – Minister Edgar Morales Mamani, Minister of Labor, Employment and Social Welfare
  - **Brazil** – Vice Minister Luciana Nakamura, Deputy Executive Secretary, Ministry of Labor and Employment
  - **El Salvador** – Leticia Ayala, General Director of Employment, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare
  - **Barbados** – Imran Best, Programme Officer, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Third Sector
- 15:40 – 16:00      *Coffee Break*
- 16:00 – 16:20      Contributions from workers and employers, grouped under COSATE and CEATAL
- Workers’ representative – Marta Pujadas, Chair of the Trade Union Technical Advisory Council (COSATE)
  - Employers’ representative – Sheena Mayers-Granville, Executive Director of the Barbados Employers Confederation and Spokesperson of the Business Technical Advisory Committee on Labor Matters (CEATAL)
- 16:20 – 17:00      Open dialogue among all delegations
- 18:00 – 20:00**      **WELCOME RECEPTION** offered by the Government of The Bahamas to all international participants – By invitation only
- Venue: One Particular Harbour Lawn - Margaritaville Hotel

**February 27**

**9:00 – 12:30**     **3<sup>rd</sup> Session – Training, reskilling and upskilling for green and blue jobs**

**Guiding question for presentations and dialogue:**

3. What strategies is your country—particularly through the Ministry of Labour—implementing to equip the workforce, including youth, with the skills required to participate in and benefit from green and blue economy jobs? What have been the main achievements, challenges, and lessons learned from these efforts?

*Please consider skills anticipation, training, reskilling and upskilling strategies, among others.*

9:00 – 9:40

Introductory and contextual presentations

- **NewClimate Institute** – Rory Geary, Senior Policy Analyst
- **Development Bank for Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF)** – Lian Allub, Principal Economist, Directorate of Socioeconomic Research
- **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** – Dulce Baptista, Senior Specialist, Social Protection and Labor Markets Division
- **Youth representative** – Shante Hanna, 2025-2026 Bahamian Youth Sustainable Development Goals Ambassador and representative of the Young Americas Forum of the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT)

9:40 – 10:40

National experiences – Demonstrative presentations to start the dialogue (10 minutes each)

- **St. Lucia** - Minister Emma Hippolyte, Minister of Equity, Labour, Gender and Elderly Affairs, Social Justice and Consumer Affairs
- **Guyana** - Minister Keoma Griffith, Minister of Labor and Manpower Planning
- **Chile** – Nicolás Ratto, Director of the Employment Policies Division, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare
- **Costa Rica** - Gindra Brenes Poveda, Director of the Employment Generation Department, Ministry of Labor and Social Security
- **Paraguay** – Fernando Ovando, Director of Professional Training, Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security

10:40 – 11:00

*Coffee Break*

- 11:00 – 11:20 Contributions from workers and employers
- Employers’ representative – Alfonso Palacios, Vice-President of Legal Affairs, National Business Association of Colombia (ANDI) and Spokesperson of CEATAL
  - Workers’ representative – Nahuel Placanica, General Workers Confederation of Argentina and representative of the Chair of COSATE
- 11:20 – 12:30 Open dialogue among all delegations
- 12:30 – 14:00 **Lunch** – Offered by the Government of The Bahamas to all participants
- 14:00 – 16:00 **4<sup>th</sup> Session – Sub-groups exercise, focused on drafting policy recommendations**

**Guiding questions for sub-groups:**

4. What policy recommendations can be made to better integrate labor and environmental agendas and strengthen inter-institutional coordination between Ministries of Labor and Ministries (authorities) of Sustainable Development? What should be the priority areas for this coordination?
5. What policy recommendations can be proposed to guide the efforts of Ministries of Labor in:
  - (i) Developing the skills needed to create and fully benefit from green and blue jobs;
  - (ii) Strengthening social protection, occupational health and safety and other strategies to respond to the impacts of climate change on the world of work while ensuring equity and inclusion.

- 16:00 – 16:30 Coffee break (Moderators of subgroups refine conclusions)
- 16:30 – 17:15 Presentation of sub-group conclusions
- 17:15 – 17:30 **Closing remarks** (Ministry of Labour of The Bahamas, OAS, and ECLAC)