

COP27 High-Level Roundtable on Just Transitions: Business, Human Rights, and Climate Action

SATURDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 2022 • 18:30-20:00 CET • ROOM: AKHENATEN (150)



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The concept of “just transition” has come increasingly centre stage in national and international discussions on finance, energy, agriculture, and other key industrial transitions to net-zero. In the last few years, the just transition (JT) agenda has grown from being a hard-won concession by the trade union movement to a mainstream buzzword by governments and the private sector.

Its inclusion in the Paris Agreement and 2015 ILO Guidelines provide high-level reference points for national policy makers grappling with how to catalyse the local transitions required to meet collective climate goals. International support for several new national “Just Energy Transition Partnerships” (JETP) are potentially promising examples of developing country investment momentum. Since COP26 there has been a huge uptick in financial institution, business, and industry association commitments to the concept. **But this growth in recognition is also coloured by wide ranging definitions and interpretations of what “just” really means and how to go about achieving it in transition processes and outcomes.**

Wide uptake of the just transition concept is not only welcome but essential to managing the social disruption that is inevitable in such wide-scale systems changes. But there is also a growing and serious risk that the term is increasingly misused and misapplied without sufficient clarity or accountability. There is a danger that the “justice” element becomes little more than a box-ticking exercise, with different definitions depending on location, sector, and actor, or none at all.

If “JT” and “JETP” are to avoid going the way of “CSR” and “ESG”, then it is urgent that some form of quality control over the “J” element emerges soon. At risk is the transformational potential of this visionary concept, and the agenda being dismissed as delay-ism by those that view social complexity as a drag on the pace of meeting global climate targets. Just as there is an urgent need for clear standards governing what constitutes a “legitimate” net-zero claim, so too is the need for clearer standards over transition processes, to ensure they operationalise respect for human rights and meaningfully lead to outcomes that achieve not only a greener global economy but a more equitable one too.

This roundtable will explore this state of play in a **conversational and interactive dialogue** in which discussants will:

- highlight the holistic approach required to minimise the risks and maximise the opportunities for **all potentially affected stakeholders**, with a particular focus on indigenous peoples and gender as two illustrations of the impacts to be managed within and beyond the workforce;
- elevate the interconnected **supply and demand drivers** that must be understood and leveraged across all sectors to effectively implement mitigation and adaptation measures in a people-centred manner;
- explore the **cross-cutting role of finance** and the imperative for public, private, and philanthropic capital to structurally embed respect for human rights and better leverage decarbonisation as an unprecedented development opportunity.

Background Reading

- ILO, [Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#) (2015)
- IHRB-Wilton Park Dialogue, [Outcome Report: Exploring the Need for International Rules Based on Local Realities](#) (forthcoming)
- IHRB, [Just Transitions for All: Business, Human Rights, and Climate Action](#) (2020)
- CPI, [Public Financial Institutions' Climate Commitments](#) (2022)
- CPI, [Global Landscape of Climate Finance: A Decade of Data](#) (2022)

Logistics Information

Physical participation:

- No invitation needed but Blue Zone accreditation is required to access the building.
- Light refreshments will be provided.

Virtual participation:

- The discussion will be livestreamed on UNFCCC YouTube channel (COP27 accreditation required)
- A recording will also be published with closed captions in all official languages.

About the Hosts



The Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB) works to make human rights part of everyday business by shaping policy, advancing practice, and strengthening accountability. IHRB deploys a mix of human rights-based research, engagement, and collaborative action with businesses, governments, financial actors, and representatives of civil society, and has developed a track record of independent analysis, constructive intervention, and collaborative engagement, earning a reputation as a trusted and independent partner committed to working with all actors on the practical approaches needed to effect positive change. www.ihrb.org



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