

5 June 2007

---

## **AKAVA's Energy and Climate Policy**

Climate change poses a serious threat to the whole world, to the environment and to welfare. Decisive action to combat climate change must be taken now to keep the price paid by future generations for the effects of our emissions from being exponentially high. Climate change affects everyone and should involve everyone from individual citizens and workers to global operators.

Climate change and preventive measures related to it will unavoidably affect the structure and operating methods of the production industry and the labour market. At the same time it generates opportunities for creating new and different jobs and for reforming how we work. Changes are also needed in education and innovation policies.

### **Climate Change: a Global and Individual Issue**

Measures to combat climate change must be taken at all possible levels, ranging from individual employees and workplaces to the Finnish national decisions, and further to the EU and global levels.

#### *Individual employees and workplaces*

1. All decisions made in the workplace – from single purchases to production methods – can affect climate change. A model of sustainable production and consumption must be integrated into the workplace, as part of employees' and employers' operations. Every workplace should discuss these matters in depth. For example regular employee-employer negotiations might offer a suitable platform for such a dialogue.

#### *Finnish national level*

2. Finland and the other industrialised nations must be pioneers in the fight against climate change. The challenge must be tackled by the new government and by labour market organisations. Cross-departmental cooperation between ministries and the responsibilities for energy and environmental policies should be clarified. The Finnish government must prioritise energy and climate change policies as key issues. This also involves broad tripartite cooperation in discussions on employment, innovation and competence.
3. Finnish companies must assume equally strict responsibility for the environment and for climate change abroad as they do in Finland. Moving functions to developing countries must not become a way to compromise on corporate social responsibility in fighting climate change.

### European Union level

4. In parallel with Finland, the EU as a whole must be a leader in acting against climate change. The energy and climate-related decisions of the March 2007 EU summit must be implemented. The country-specific targets for increasing alternative forms of energy must take into account the different conditions and achievements of each country.
5. The EU must continue to deal with climate change as a matter of pre-eminent concern in coming years. In future the EU should evaluate all of its decisions also from the point of view of climate change, make initiatives directly in relation to it and be a world-leading player in the issue. It must also make determined efforts to get non-EU countries to commit to shared climate targets.
6. In reducing emissions, the EU must ensure that the burden is shared equitably between member states. In preparing a continuation to the Kyoto protocol, the EU must ensure that the special characteristics of each member state – such as a cold climate, long distances and the extent to which renewable energy sources are already used – are properly taken into account in sharing the burden.
7. The EU should establish a tripartite forum for energy and climate change matters in accordance with the Sustainable Development Strategy revised in 2006. The forum would create reports for labour market organisations on the climate change issues that most directly affect employees.
8. The EU should make more of an effort to inform citizens of climate change and of the possibilities and responsibilities all stakeholders – including individual employees and consumers – have in fighting it.

### Global level

9. Climate change is a global phenomenon. Therefore it is essential for the major industrialised and developing countries to play a bigger and more balanced part in taking measures and sharing the burden in fighting it.
10. Aid to developing countries should also take into account the effects of climate change and the fight against it. Characteristically, it is the countries that suffer the most from the effects of climate change that have the least opportunities to take action against it. The opportunities of industrialised countries and, particularly, developing countries to respond to the challenges of climate change can be improved by exporting know-how and high technology. Finnish competence in environmental technology and other fields must be promoted through development aid.
11. Trade and commercial policy have diverse effects on climate change. More global needed are needed in terms of environmental policy. The World Trade Organisation must take into account climate change and the threats it poses to economic development. Climate change is another viable reason for establishing a World Environment Organisation (WEO), which is needed to coordinate measures and help weaker countries. At the same time, cooperation between WTO and environmental organisations should be increased in terms of trade policy and environmental issues.

## **Energy Questions Essential in Fighting Climate Change**

12. The EU's energy policy must be based on sustainable development and fulfilling climate agreements while safeguarding competitiveness and increasing welfare. The reliability and supply of energy must be guaranteed while persistently and systematically reducing our dependence on energy imports.
13. Securing Finland's energy supply in all conditions also implies maximising our independence of other countries' energy production and political decision-making. Increasing the self-sufficiency of Finland's power production must be a long-term objective, while also ensuring that energy prices do not become an obstacle to business in Finland.
14. In addition to essential basic energy decisions, Finland must significantly improve its use of national renewable resources. Simultaneously, energy efficiency must be increased notably. It must be remembered, however, that from the point of view of the environment, climate change is just one of many threats. Energy production methods that have other long-term detrimental effects on the environment must not be adopted in the name of climate change. Therefore it is essential to make thorough surveys of the overall, long-term economic and environmental efficiency of various, for instance, bioenergy forms before increasing their use.
15. In terms of Finnish energy consumption, the guiding role of society must be increased and market-based steering must be strengthened. Various long-term incentives, sanctions and restrictions can be used to control energy consumption and increase the development, application and adoption of energy-efficient solutions.
16. Individual employees and citizens can also affect energy consumption. The public authorities should provide citizens with more effective information on concrete energy-saving measures.
17. In addition to the existing Climate and Energy Strategy, Finland must formulate a national, long-sighted energy programme that defines concrete measures for all sectors, from transport to energy solutions. The programme should contain a cohesive plan for measuring environmental data and applying them to industry and consumers alike.

## **Opportunities for Employees and Competence and Research Challenges**

18. Slowing down climate change is not just about restricting emissions but also an innovation and employment-related challenge. According to a study by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), climate change will have a positive effect on the number of jobs, as well as on their quality, by increasing the level of competence and technology. Countries and economic areas that have had the sense to invest more than others in cost-efficient energy innovations and related competence will cope better with global competition.

19. The business opportunities latent in Finnish product development – particularly in the development and export of new and renewable resources, emission-free solutions and high-quality energy technologies – must be fully exploited.
20. At the same time, investments must be channelled towards education and professional competence in order to maintain the excellent level of Finnish know-how in environmental technology and innovations. A sizeable public investment must be directed towards energy and climate innovations, as well as towards research in the field and to developing, commercialising and promoting the export of top-level expertise.
21. Climate change also brings with it a need for education and communication, discussing the matter broadly at all schooling levels while implementing a curriculum of sustainable development. By looking after the promotion of sustainable development we can also help to make sensible energy solutions and combat climate change. Communications must only contain evidence-based fact.

### **AKAVA's Role in Climate Change**

22. The broad and diverse know-how, competence and roles of AKAVA members holding managerial, entrepreneurial, expert and educational roles are essential in the innovation and education activities related to environmental technology and slowing down climate change.
23. At the same time, the actions of individual AKAVA members are significant. Members can set an example and be leaders in the communication of energy and climate change issues. They can also lead the way in adopting sustainable consumption habits and changing citizens' attitudes and behaviours.
24. AKAVA and its members promote and lead the adoption of energy-saving production and consumption methods in the workplace. AKAVA provides information and a discussion forum on climate and energy issues and in managing sustainable consumption and production to its members and its major stakeholders.
25. AKAVA actively participates in national climate change task forces and forums, and is involved in EU-level and global discussions on the challenges of climate change.