










Some UK Trade Unions and Climate Change

Name Membership (roughly)	Remit/type of members	Climate Actions/Position
<p>Communication Workers Union</p>  <p>250,000 www.cwu.org</p>	<p>The Communication Workers Union (CWU) is the main trade union in the UK for people working for telephone, cable and postal delivery companies</p>	<p>CWU National Health, Safety & Environment Officer Dave Joyce Said "TUC surveys of attitudes to environmental issues in the workplace have found that there's overwhelming support from union members for unions themselves to do more to promote good environmental practice at work. Members also felt that many employers needed to do more to improve their environmental performance."</p> <p>"Environmental initiatives can bring benefits to an organisation and its employees. The Advisory Committee on Business and the Environment (ACBE) and the Trade Union Sustainable Development Advisory Committee (TUSDAC) believe that for these to be real and sustained they need the support of employers, managers and workers. Sustainable development -uniting environmental, social and economic interests - lies at the heart of successful initiatives."</p> <p>www.cwu.org/default.asp?step=4&pid=983 <u>Environmental Policy</u></p> <p>The CWU and LRD have produced a booklet to support the strong desire within our Union to change our workplaces to make them more sustainable and environmentally friendly. www.cwu.org/default.asp?step=4&pid=540</p>
 <p>Trades Union Congress</p> <p>6.5million www.tuc.org.uk</p>	<p>With member unions representing over six and a half million working people, we campaign for a fair deal at work and for social justice at home and abroad.</p>	<p>Tolpuddle Camp</p> <p>Greening the Workplace Booklet which can be downloaded from www.tuc.org.uk/economy/tuc-11528-f0.cfm</p>
 <p>600,000 www.gmb.org.uk</p>	<p>GMB is a campaigning trade union focused on protecting GMB members in their workplaces and growing the number of GMB members in order to strength the Union's power. GMB is a general union - which means that anyone can join us. GMB has almost 600,000 members working in every part of the economy. One in every 32 people at work in the UK is a member of GMB and GMB is organised in 34 of the UK's biggest 50 companies.</p>	<p>"Employers And Unions Call For Urgent Government Action Over Clean Coal GMB represented of Clean Coal Task Force which says delays to backing the emerging technologies behind clean coal and carbon capture and storage are causing uncertainty and delaying vital investment, increasing risks to the UK's security of electricity supplies."</p>

 <p>35,000 http://www.nuj.org.uk/</p>	<p>The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) is a trade union for journalists in the UK and Republic of Ireland.. It was founded in 1907 and has 35,000 members. It is a member of the International Federation of Journalists(IFJ).</p>	<p>“The NUJ has today (08/08) hit out at the treatment of journalists by police at the Climate Camp in Kent.” “NUJ General Secretary, Jeremy Dear today signed a commitment to promote greener, more environmentally friendly workplaces and to encourage employers to take climate change issues seriously. The NUJ is calling on employers to act to reduce their carbon footprint and will be urging members to take a lead in 'greening' over the next 12 months. The NUJ will also be working to develop Union Environmental Reps and urging the government to give Environmental Reps the same rights as other union workplace representatives.” 19 December 2007</p>
<p>National Union of Teachers</p>  <p>Over 290,000 members www.teachers.org.uk</p>	<p>The National Union of Teachers (NUT) is a trade union for school teachers in England and Wales. The Union only recruits qualified teachers and those training to be qualified teachers into membership and currently has over 292,000 members, making it the largest teachers' union in Europe.</p>	<p>“Young Teachers Go Green” conference in 2007 “The NUT has campaigned to persuade Ed Balls to provide advice on teaching about climate change. As a result, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has agreed to work with the NUT and other teacher organisations to publish such guidance.” Reliable sources state it also has a good position on greening the “Building Schools for the Future” programme, but we've not had time to find a web link.</p>
<p>The Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS)</p>  <p>Over 320,000 members www.pcs.org.uk</p>	<p>The Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) is the sixth largest trade union in the UK. Most of its members work in positions in government departments and public bodies, although some work in information technology for private companies. The union was founded in 1998 by the merger of the Public Service, Tax and Commerce Union (which mostly represented the executive 'managerial' grades of the Civil Service) and the Civil and Public Services Association (mostly representing the administrative grades). The Union's national executive committee, and group committees, still reserve seats based on the old split between the two unions. The union is the largest active trade union representing Civil Servants in the UK. PCS is the fastest growing union in the UK, at a time when union membership is generally on the decline. Its current general secretary is Mark Serwotka.</p>	<p>“We support Friends of the Earth’s ‘The Big Ask’ campaign, launched in May 2005, that demands that the UK government introduce a strong climate change law.” The PCS Union (see www.pcs.org.uk/green) is hosting two courses on climate change, created specially for trade unionists by the Climate Outreach and Information Network (COIN), working with Ruskin College. COIN is the leader in the field of communicating climate change and Ruskin College is recognised nationally for its track record of education for trade unionists over many years. 'How to win the climate change argument in a 15 minute tea break': Monday 22nd September 4:30 - 8:00pm Climate Change Condensed: Monday 15th September 4:30 – 8:00pm Venue: PCS learning centre, Douglas Houghton House, 231 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EH Tel: 020 7801 2700 These courses are open to any trade union member. The courses are free and are available on a ‘first-come-first-served’ basis.</p>

 <p>Over 80,000 members www.rmt.org.uk</p>	<p>The National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) unionises transport workers. Its current general secretary is Bob Crow.</p>	<p>Let the TUC do the talking for them on the Climate Bill consultation, which is fair enough really! There have been links in the past, with environmentalists, but there doesn't seem to be anything going on at the moment.</p>
<p>Unison- the Public Service Union</p>  <p>1.3million members www.unison.org.uk</p>	<p>UNISON — the Public Service Union is the second largest trade union in the United Kingdom.</p> <p>It was formed in 1993 when three previous public sector trade unions, the National and Local Government Officers Association (NALGO), the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE) and the Confederation of Health Service Employees (COHSE) merged</p>	<p>With more than 1.3 million members across the public services and utilities, we believe UNISON has a major role to play in helping to tackle global warming, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greening our workplace • using our experience and expertise to contribute to environmental campaigns • providing information to members <p>We are a member led, organisation with a strong commitment to campaigning for measures to tackle climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We support an energy policy based on renewables, such as wind, solar and wave power and clean coal and carbon sequestration. • We believe that greater energy efficiency at work and at home can help tackle climate change and that trade unions should be at the centre of efforts to green the workplace. • UNISON does not believe that new nuclear build is the right solution to our need for secure, low carbon energy. • Tackling climate change will require a sustainable, integrated transport policy. This should include a new environmentally friendly fleet of buses, quality bus contracts for urban and rural areas and revitalisation of our inland waterways for freight and passenger transport. We also support measures to reduce emissions from the aviation sector. • www.unison.org.uk/green
 <p>2 million plus www.unitetheunion.org.uk</p>	<p>Formed on 1 May 2007, by the merger of Amicus and the Transport and General Workers' Union “Unite is the largest union in the United Kingdom, with over two million members in the public and private sectors.”</p>	<p>No results on entering “climate change” in their search engine</p> <p>However, they have produced an a5 booklet (48 pages) called:”The environment & climate change, a guide for union reps” and a Manchester activist has contacted them to prod them into putting on t’Interweb.</p> <p>Unite now has a full time environment researcher who would be delighted to hear from Unite members who have examples of where the union has been involved in improving the environmental impact of the workplace, or reps who have questions on environmental issues or who just want to be kept informed of what Unite is doing.</p> <p>Her email is Caroline.Molloy@unitetheunion.com</p>

National Union of Mineworkers www.num.org.uk/	The National Union of Mineworkers is alive and kicking, and is still representing miners, their families and their communities. The NUM is still very active industrially and politically. It is over twenty four years since the start of the Great Miners' Strike of 1984/85. We warned then that if our arguments for a role for coal in our energy requirements were not heeded then the country would pay a heavy price. Twenty four years on we have been proved absolutely correct.	Fond (!) of the whole “clean coal” thing, for understandable reasons... Clean Coal Task Group- A Framework for Coal www.tuc.org.uk/extras/coal.doc
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And if you still haven't lost the will to live, then there's always-

TUSDAC : The Trade Union Sustainable Development Advisory Committee, TUSDAC, was set up in 1998 as the main forum for consultation between Government and Trade Unions on sustainable development and environmental issues.

TUSDAC is co-chaired by Hilary Benn, Minister for Climate Change & Environment, and Paul Noon, General Secretary of Prospect. Secretariat is provided by Defra. The membership is composed of the General Secretaries of the major TUC-affiliated unions in the UK. For some meetings, Committee members are represented by a substitute with more specialist knowledge.
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/tusdac/index.htm>

And there's Campaign against Climate Change's Trades Union group http://cacctu.wordpress.com	And there's the Green Party's Trades Union Group http://gptu.net/pssess4X/3c/hpage.shtml
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Limits to Unions

As the song goes, “there’s power in a union”. Organised workers are one of the few things that can scare the bosses. They can generally cope with a few marches, petitions and carnivals. A general strike is another matter. The people who run the country spend a great deal of energy to keep workers divided and depressed.

Trouble-makers are spotted, blacklists drawn up. “Industrial psychology” was invented in the 1920s to figure out the precise levels of sustainable exploitation. Making unions corrupt (by smear, rigged elections etc.- a major CIA specialty from the 1950s on). Walmart, which owns ASDA, is ferociously anti-union (“Always low wages”) and uses thug outfits like Wackenhut to do its dirty work.

But unions aren’t heroic anti-capitalist/consumerist organisations just waiting to be recruited, once they’ve received the Good News about ecological sustainability. Unions depend on their members paying dues. Members are usually keen on paying their dues if they are in a job. Unions are tied into the growth economy and full employment (these two are not identical, but that’s another story).

Is **ANYTHING** happening in Manchester???? Not that I've heard of...

7/ Occasionally unions can do radical things- Australian dockers once refused to unload rainforest timber, in the 1970s a radical plan for sensible technology (the Vickers plan) was produced. But on the whole, union hierarchies want to play nice with government, and to a lesser extent business.

Robert Michels' "Iron Law of Oligarchy", that predicted that any organising body would gradually stop representing/supporting its paying members and pursue its own interests (of **status, money and power**). Corrupt unions, idiotic bureaucracies etc. are an example of this. Gunter Grass's novel "The Flounder" has Michels in a cameo role.

Zygmunt Bauman's book **Work, Consumerism and the New Poor** is excellent.

The books of anarcho-syndicalists like Rudolph Rocker and Anton Pannekoek is worth a look



The practical work of Judi Bari in the United States, who tried to bring environmentalists and timber workers together, inspires many. She was considered so dangerous that the FBI tried, via a subcontractor, to kill her. Gone but not forgotten.

www.judibari.org

A revolutionary ecology movement must also organize among poor and working people. With the exception of the toxics movement and the native land rights movement most U.S. environmentalists are white and privileged. This group is too invested in the system to pose it much of a threat. A revolutionary ideology in the hands of privileged people can indeed bring about some disruption and change in the system. But a revolutionary ideology in the hands of working people can bring that system to a halt. For it is the working people who have their hands on the machinery. And only by stopping the machinery of destruction can we ever hope to stop this madness.

Judi Bari



At first I thought I was fighting to save rubber trees, then I thought I was fighting to save the Amazon rainforest. Now I realise I am fighting for humanity -

Chico Mendes, Rubber tappers' leader
(murdered by ranchers in 1988)