



European Foundation  
for the Improvement of Living and  
Working Conditions

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**INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND THE ENVIRONMENT**  
**United Kingdom**

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Working Paper No.: WP/93/09/EN

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By  
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## UK REPORT

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## **1. Introduction**

Concern over environmental issues began to turn to action in the United Kingdom in the early 1970's. Public awareness about the effects of pollution on the environment increased, and environmental pressure groups including Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth were formed.

Since this time, a series of major disasters both in the UK and abroad, including the explosion at a chemical plant in Flixborough, UK, the poisonous gas leak at the Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India and the nuclear accident at Chernobyl have brought into focus the industry's potential for ecological devastation.

The late 1980's saw a fundamental shift in British public opinion in favour of issues such as conservation, waste recycling, energy efficiency and sustainability. This was prompted by evidence of international environmental degradation including ozone depletion, an increase in world temperature, and destruction of the rainforests, which attracted widespread media attention. Closer to home there was a series of food scandals which brought widespread criticism of agricultural practices including the use of pesticides and fertilizers which resulted in contamination of food and water supplies by pesticide residues and nitrates.

And a series of well publicised clashes between the UK government and the European Commission authorities over environmental issues -in particular drinking and bathing water quality - increased the perception that the UK was lagging behind other states in tackling these issues.

Public awareness on environmental issues has lead to demands for environmentally friendly products from "green consumers"; and hostility to development by industries perceived as bad polluters by local communities.

British industry has largely been forced into reacting to new environmental pressures from consumers and from new and more stringent environmental legislation. Surveys carried out for the Financial Times and the Economist in 1989 and 1990 concluded that the pressures on industry to take action to protect the environment are increasing.

Highly publicised pollution incidents including the Exxon Valdez oil spill, a major Shell pipeline leakage into the Mersey, the public outcry over the attempted import of PCBs from Canada for incineration in Britain have had serious consequences for the companies involved both in terms of cost of cleaning up and the damage to their reputation.

The shift in consumer tastes has been very influential in the United Kingdom in persuading companies to "go green". However, although not contesting its influence in the short term, many believe that it is a target for exploitation and consumers have become disillusioned with the false environmental claims made by companies marketing their products. There is a more widely held view that the green voter will be more influential in the long term as more and more communities have shown that they are not willing to have industries they perceive as polluters developing next to them.

Pressure is also coming from government as legislation introducing tightening restrictions on pollution is introduced. Controls on emissions of harmful substances, the disposal of toxic waste by incineration and the dumping of chemical and industrial waste in the sea have resulted in increased costs of pollution, which is persuading industry to research and implement clean technology and waste minimisation.

Legal limits on pollutants, tax incentives for cleaner technology and levies on emissions have promoted growth in the green sector: ranging from producing pollution control equipment on cars to recycling rubbish, as has the public's perceived refusal to buy environmentally damaging goods. The British environmental market is estimated to be worth around £4 billion.

However, despite the various pressures, the proportion of UK companies with a corporate environmental policy; or a policy of carrying out environmental auditing remains low. And employers are generally reluctant to involve unions in what has traditionally been considered as a management area as a survey carried out by the Labour Research Department in 1991 shows - only 7% of employers had involved unions in auditing.

Perhaps in part due to the dominant political philosophy during the recent period, and the hostility to trade union organisation, the concern expressed by individuals

has not been translated into collective action as far as industrial relations is concerned.

Whilst trade unions have been involved in action to protect the environment since this time, early examples were confined to a number of significant but isolated single issue campaigns which were related to health and safety concerns of the membership of those unions. These included campaigns against the use of hazardous and environmentally damaging substances including pesticides and asbestos, and the refusal by seamen and transport workers to handle nuclear waste destined for disposal in the North Sea.

In the last two years, the TUC Environmental Action Group, which was only formed in 1989 and reported for the first time in 1990, has called for environmental rights for workers, and national unions have mounted high profile campaigns demanding that employers recognise that workers and their representatives have a right to be involved in environmental issues at their workplace.

The second wave of union representation is all embracing, with a shift in emphasis to the collective green agreement which address environmental issues at work in a comprehensive and structured way. This approach is in the early stages and there are very few negotiated agreements giving trade unions rights of involvement in environmental issues so far.

The UK trade union movement is conscious that in order to play a more active role in environmental protection, they must challenge the individual and consumerist response and develop it into one of collective action.

## **2. The Legal Framework**

### **2.1. Introduction**

There is very limited provision within the formalised legal framework of industrial relations in terms of employee/employer consultation in the UK. There are no legal bodies representing a company's workforce and protective legislation on working conditions is very selective and undergoing revision. Regulatory legislation is concerned with areas including collective action, health and safety at work, and contracts of employment.

Legislation on employee involvement is very underdeveloped in the UK compared to countries such as Germany. There are no rights for the workforce to be consulted and informed about training issues or personnel issues for example. Limited rights of consultation regarding changes in operations at a plant which have health and safety implications are provided within the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Further limited rights to information and consultation are provided in the Transfer of Undertakings regulations, The Employment Protection Act 1975 which both enable unions to receive information on changes planned at the workplace particularly where job losses are envisaged. More recently, the Companies Act of 1985 and the Employment Act of 1982 requires companies with more than 250 employees to include in their annual reports a statement describing particular arrangements made to encourage employee involvement.

It is fair to say, however, that in the field of environmental protection no comparable rights to consultation or participation have been extended to representatives of the workforce.

### **2.2 Environmental legislation**

#### **2.2.1 Environmental Protection Act 1990**

In line with this the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which began to take effect at the beginning of 1991 and is the most comprehensive piece of environmental legislation introduced in the UK so far, has nothing to say with regard to the role of employees or trade unions.

In considering the impact of industries most polluting processes on land, air and sea, it overhauled the existing system of previous piecemeal legislation. However, whereas the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, which similarly overhauled health and safety legislation, created the Health and Safety Commission, (HSC) there is no equivalent body created by the EPA.

The HSC is the national authority responsible for policy making and the formulation of new legislation related to occupational, health and safety in industry and commerce.



It includes employer and trade union representation. In comparison there is no national body responsible for environmental protection on which trade unions have representation.

The main sections of the Act extend and strengthen pollution legislation through a new regime of Integrated Pollution Control (IPC). This requires that the "best practicable environmental option" be applied to the control of solid, liquid or gaseous wastes.

The Act also introduces a new system for waste control on land that operates alongside existing hazardous waste legislation. Other sections of the Act cover a multitude of issues, including statutory nuisance and clean air, litter, radioactive waste, genetically modified organisms, dumping at sea, stubble burning, hazardous chemicals and nature conservancy.

IPC is the responsibility of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution (HMIP). It is limited to around 32 main process categories. A second tier of control created by the Act, Air Pollution Control (APC), falls within the remit of local authority environmental health departments. This will ultimately cover in the region of 25 000 types of installations.

The Environmental Protection (Prescribed Processes and Substances) Regulations 1991 sets out a list of the processes capable of causing pollution which relate to IPC and APC. This covers fuel and power production, metal working, the mineral and chemical industries, waste disposal and a number of other commercial activities.

In carrying on a prescribed process the best available techniques not entailing excessive cost (BATNEEC) must be used to minimise releases into the environment, and to render harmless those substances that are released.

Applications for authorisations are required to implement a combination of processes, pollution controls and treatment techniques that together constitute the best practicable environmental option. This involves adopting techniques that are the most effective in preventing pollution.

All new and substantially varied processes will now be subject to IPC. Existing processes are to be phased in from April 1991 to the end of 1996. In the meantime process operators will continue to operate under their existing authorisations although large combustion plant is already subject to IPC, implementing the requirements of a European directive.

Applications for authorisations from the enforcing authority require the provision of information on various aspects of the operations, and a scheme of charges is applied. There are similar provisions under APC.

Applications for authorisations for the first batch of processes had to be submitted between 1 April to 30 September 1991.

Although the EPA does not require employers to carry out environmental audits, the information which has to be supplied for the authorisations, it has been argued, will require an assessment of environmental impact to be made. Employers will also have to show that they can operate the processes and comply with any regulations made limiting emissions and discharges.

Applications to HMIP for authorisations require the provision of information amounting to some ten sheets and describing the process involved, the procedures for dealing with operational breakdowns, staffing, techniques, substances released and concentrations of releases.

Authorisations can only be given where HMIP is satisfied that the conditions it imposes will actually be complied with. These conditions must be suitable for ensuring BATNEEC will be used in carrying out the process: compliance with international law as directed by the Secretary of State for the Environment (SSE); compliance with any quality standards and objectives set by SSE; and compliance with any requirements of the SSE.

Similarly, there is no obligation on employers to appoint environmental co-ordinators or officials responsible for environmental issues; but the introduction of new environmental protection legislation is forcing many large companies to establish such a post.

However, concern has been expressed that there are insufficient numbers of pollution inspectors to be able to effectively enforce the Act. A recent National Audit Office (NAO) report found that polluters in Britain are going unpunished, factories are not being inspected and progress towards integrated pollution control has stalled because the HMIP is seriously understaffed.

The NAO said that the inspectorate needs twice its current staff by 1994 to fulfil its role of monitoring compliance with the EPA. The report also found inconsistencies in decisions to prosecute for air pollution.

### **2.2.2 Environmental liability**

The EPA introduces a new legal duty to exercise "reasonable care" on enterprises which produce waste or transport, dispose or process it. The deposit of controlled waste must be covered by a waste management licence issued by a Waste Regulation Authority. Breaches of the duty of care can lead to imprisonment. Holders and producers of waste must provide details of the waste and take steps to prevent any illegal dumping.

Greenpeace Business a magazine published by the environmental pressure group aimed at industry, reported that twelve families who have children with respiratory problems are to bring an action for alleged nuisance and negligence against ICI and British Steel in the Teeside area. The solicitor representing the families said that the cases will be seen as a test case for a claim for damages for personal injury caused by environmental pollution from chemical and steel production.

Greenpeace Business said that these are the first in a series of cases to be launched by claimants who believe that exposure to atmospheric pollution over long periods has damaged their health or livelihoods. Environmental protection law also places duties and responsibilities on employees. These concern duties of "care" reporting, and the duty to ensure that instructions given are legal.

### **2.2.3 Access to environmental information**

There is no legal obligation on employers to publish any yearly report on the environmental performance at company or national level. Similarly, companies are under no legal obligations to discuss environmental issues with the workforce, unions, or the local community.

However the EPA requires enforcing authorities to hold public registers of information including documents relating to applications, authorisations, and convictions. Waste Regulation Authorities, for example must provide publicly accessible registers of all relevant documentation.

Inspection of a register by the public must be free of charge and only limited restrictions apply to information deemed commercially confidential. But in practice it is difficult to gain access to information on emissions.

The method by which the data is collected requires the public to visit the local offices of regulatory agencies to obtain pollution details; the National Rivers Authority for discharges into water; the Radiochemical Inspectorate of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution (HMIP) for radioactive discharges; the local Environmental Health Department and HMIP for discharges into the atmosphere, and the local waste authority for dumping into landfills.

It is expected to take ten years before HMIP have all this information from certain types of processes stored on data bases in its regional offices. And this will only provide monitoring data for a limited range of chemicals through a small number of samples. It will not give total emissions into the environment of toxic chemicals from industry as is required, for example in the United States.

The TUC argue that legal protection against dismissal for "whistleblowing" employees is necessary. There is currently no such protection and an employee who passes on information about a company's poor environmental practice could be dismissed on grounds of a breach of contract. There are implied obligations on the part of employers and employees regarding confidentiality.

## **2.3 Legislation on the working environment**

### **2.3.1 The Health and Safety at Work Act**

The Health and Safety at Work (HSW) Act came into force in 1975. It provides comprehensive, integrated system of law dealing with the health, safety and welfare of people at work, and of people affected by work activities.

Under the Act employers have a general duty to ensure the safety health, and welfare of their employees, to consult them concerning arrangements for joint action on health and safety matters. These consultation and information rights are through the unions not through any separately elected body.

In 1978, the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations came into effect and gave recognised unions the legal right to appoint workplace safety representatives who have the right to represent their members' interests in relation to any matter affecting their health and safety, make representations to their employer on health, safety and welfare matters and obtain necessary information from their employer to enable them to carry out their functions.

Where two safety representatives request the employer to set up a safety committee, health and safety, the employer is obliged to do this and most health and safety negotiations take place at workplace level through the safety committee. This consists of management representatives, and safety representatives, although there are examples of safety committees at national level.

Safety representatives are entitled to carry out periodic inspections, investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences, and receive time off with pay to carry out their job as safety representatives and to undergo TUC or union approved training.

In comparison, there are no clearly definable and enforceable environmental rights available to workers and their representatives.

For example, there are no legal rights to paid time off for environmental training. Whilst union education courses covering environmental issues are being developed, often as part of health and safety courses; an employer can refuse a safety representative training

leave if the course does not exclusively address health and safety matters as prescribed under the 1977 Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations.

### **2.3.2 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations**

Legislation covering hazardous substances has been introduced within the legal framework on health and safety. The COSHH regulations cover substances classified as very toxic, toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant; substances which have been assigned a maximum exposure level or an occupational exposure standard, microorganisms arising from work activities which are harmful, substantial concentrations of dust and other substances which create a comparable hazard.

The regulations require employers to carry out an assessment of the health risks presented by exposure to hazardous substances at work. This involves identifying what hazardous substances are used in the workplace, the risk presented by the use of such substances, how workers may be exposed to them, and what control measures are necessary in order to reduce the risks.

The regulations introduced a hierarchy of controls through which an employer should work in order to prevent, or where prevention is not practicable, adequately control exposure to hazardous substances. Where practicable, exposure should be prevented by elimination, or substitution by a less hazardous substance, or by the same substance in a less hazardous form.

Only where prevention cannot reasonably be achieved should exposure be controlled through measures such as local exhaust ventilation or enclosure of the process. Controlling exposure using personal protective clothing should be a last resort where other methods of control are not practicable.

The regulations require employers to provide information, instruction and training to employees who may be exposed to hazardous substances on the "risks to health created by such exposure and the precautions which should be taken".

Workers are also entitled to know the results of monitoring of the work environment and the collective results of any health surveillance. In contrast, there are no rights for workers to be informed of the results of monitoring of emissions and discharges into the environment. The regulations have resulted in increased access to information on hazardous substances. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance to the regulations states that "employees or their representatives at the place of work should be informed of the results of the assessment". Again, there is no such guidance with regard

to informing employees or their representatives of any environmental impact assessments under the EPA.

#### **2.4 International and European guidelines**

At international level there have been developments on industrial relations and the environment. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) conference took place in Bergen in May 1990. Representatives of governments in Western and Eastern Europe and the US and Canada, and representatives from industry, labour, environmental, scientific and youth organisations took part.

The result was a "Joint Agenda for Action" to which the British Government is a signatory. This aims to promote sustainable development and covers a variety of issues relevant to industrial relations.

These include the promotion of environmental awareness which includes promoting public participation in decision making and the "active involvement of people in the processes and decisions affecting their lives and environments;

The achievement of clean production including "mechanisms for consultation and co-operation between management and labour" to prevent industrial accidents and hazards;

Drawing up environmental audits on which employers should consult workers and their trade union representatives and;

The provision of full training to workers, their trade union representatives and managers on the environmental aspects of their work.

The 1990 International Labour Organisation passed a resolution on "environment, development, employment and the role of the ILO" which spoke of the need for tripartite co-operation at national and international level to create links between environmental protection and employment creation.

This stressed that the working environment formed an important and integral part of the general environment as a whole and called for integrated policies based on "full collaboration" between, amongst others, employers and trade unions. The resolution also stated that the restructuring of enterprises to take account of the need for better environmental performance should be promoted while maintaining or increasing, as far as possible the number of jobs.

The European Community (EC) has been the main influence on the introduction of pollution control in the UK, with the UK government being slow to implement many of the measures, and opposing many of the measures during debate

of proposals. Over 280 environmental laws have been introduced since the Community's environmental action programme was adopted in 1973.

In the area of major industrial hazards, the focus on occupational health and safety is being broadened to cover environmental issues. Legislation has been introduced in the UK to implement EC directives to control risks to workers and the wider public from major industrial hazards from, for example, large scale fires and explosions.

Although this legislation was introduced under the health and safety at work framework, it is currently being developed by the EC to address the wider environmental consequences of major industrial accidents as well as disaster counter-measures.

Recently the EC has started to link the issues of industrial relations and the environment. The Commission's 1990 annual report on Employment in Europe contained for the first time a chapter on environment and employment. This is seen as confirmation that there is a "social dimension" to environmental control.

The EC's Structural Funds were identified as being suitable instruments for bringing about change. The distribution of these funds is undertaken on the basis of formal consultation with a number of bodies including trade unions and employers. Participation is a key component of the EC social charter.

The Commission is currently considering the possibility of a draft directive requiring environmental audits to be undertaken and the ETUC is lobbying for any directive to give unions the right to involvement in compulsory audits.

## **2.5 Proposals for future legislation**

The government's environment white paper was published in September 1990 and although it was claimed to be "Britain's first comprehensive survey of all aspects of environmental concern", and contained 350 proposals to tackle a range of issues, it was widely criticised by unions and green groups for being little more than a review of existing policies. It contained few new proposals and only vague commitments with no clear timetable. (An annual report reviewing progress achieved has subsequently been produced.)

It made no mention of environmental protection at the workplace, of partnership between workers and employers; or to the social and employment aspects of achieving sustainable development.

The new measures announced in the White Paper include:

- \* appointment of "green" ministers in each Government Department;
- \* making HMIP an executive agency under the "Next Steps" initiative
- \* new measures to combat noise pollution
- \* development of new air quality standards
- \* increased emphasis on improving energy efficiency, including more funds for the Energy Efficiency Office
- \* plans to promote Combined Heat and Power and renewable energy resources
- \* higher fines for water pollution
- \* tighter local planning controls
- \* extension of vehicle MOT to include tuning and emission tests
- \* improve speed limit enforcement
- \* Government help for historic cathedrals and new woodlands
- \* establishment of official eco-labelling scheme
- \* publish more statistical data on environmental topics

Although the white paper briefly refers to support for "staff involvement" in company green policies, no explanation or detail is provided on the contribution citizens can make as employees and members of trade unions. A reference is made to the need for more environmental linked training and its importance, but no new proposals are included.

The TUC pointed to omissions in the white paper including failure to identify the link between the working and living environment; total disregard of the interface between environmental protection and health and safety; and the lack of an attempt to promote worker/unions involvement or to envisage joint union/employer action.

It is unlikely that the current government will introduce legislation which will lead to greater participation of unions in workplace environmental issues; particularly as they are seeking to restrict all other areas of union activity. However, a general election must be held before June 1992 with the possibility of a new government, and the Labour Party's proposals are therefore examined.

The Labour Party's proposals are outlined in "An earthly chance", Labour's programme on environmental issues. This commits a Labour government to extending environmental rights at work as proposed by the TUC, and to establishing an environment commission.

The Trade Union Congress (TUC) have proposed that unions should be involved in environmental issues at the workplace, and says it will campaign for a change in the law if companies are unresponsive to the proposals, which include rights to consultation and training as is currently the case for health and safety. and rights to



information based on a process of joint union/employer environmental auditing.

The Environment Commission would be established on a similar basis to the Health and Safety Commission (HSC), which is the main policy making body on health and safety in the UK and enforces health and safety through its executive (HSE). It would deal with research and policy, and would have an independent chair and membership drawn from government, industry, trade unions and representatives of the environmental movement.

An Environmental Protection Agency would be established which will be independent of government. This would set new pollution standards, timetables for achieving standards and operate under a new freedom of information regime.

The Labour Party says that a Freedom of Information Act will be an early priority for the next Labour government. This will set up and maintain registers of environmental information, presented in an understandable form, covering water and land contamination, pollution permits, food quality and air pollution and providing raw data rather than smoothed out averages. Registers would also be available on on-line electronic form for ease of access by campaign groups, voluntary bodies and research groups.

The Labour Party has also endorsed proposals for a new set of regulations to control environmentally - damaging substances (COEDS) put forward by the Communications Union, NCU. The proposed regulations would be made under the Health and Safety at Work Act and work on a similar basis to the existing Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations.

The regulations would oblige manufacturers and suppliers of substances deemed to be environmentally damaging to declare what these substances were comprised of, how they should be used, and how they should be disposed of in an environmentally sensitive manner. Breaches of the regulations would expose the guilty parties to punitive fines along the lines of the "polluter pays principle."

The proposal also include the convening of a tri-partite body by the Health and Safety Executive's Policy Division to make recommendations to the Commission on what substances are covered by the Regulations and which are not.

A code of practice would be issued under the regulations which would require the disclosure of key information by manufacturers and suppliers of designated environmentally damaging substances to anyone who requests them but also, as a matter of obligation, to anyone who could reasonably expect to come into contact with the substance by means

of purchase, transportation or use at work or in the workplace.

The information to be disclosed would include what the environmentally damaging substance is, what its chemical, biological or physical composition is, what facilities for safe handling and storage are required, what the hazards of the substance are likely to be if misused or corrupted, what remedial action would be necessary to make safe and keep safe the substance, what the approved uses of the substance are, and how the substance should be disposed of. This information would be provided in comprehensive data sheets.

### **3. Voluntary agreements between the industrial actors**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The United Kingdom has no written constitution, and therefore no entrenchment of fundamental rights and freedoms. This applies in the industrial relations field as well as elsewhere. There is no automatic right of recognition of trade unions in the UK. A trade union is "recognised" for statutory purposes if it is recognised to any extent by the employer for the purposes of collective bargaining. The Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1974 sets out the matters which the law considers may be the subject of collective bargaining.

Collective bargaining is carried out on a voluntarist basis. Collective agreements are at present not legally binding on either side, although there is a presumption that those items which are capable of being incorporated into an individual contract are legally enforceable. Procedure type agreements are not legally binding and are therefore legally unenforceable.

Collective agreements are the end product of collective bargaining which may be conducted between an individual employer and a union, a number of employers and a union, or a number of employers and a group of unions. It is common for more than one union to be recognized for the purposes of collective bargaining within a company, or factory and so on.

The collective agreement is the key factor determining wages and other conditions. Company agreements or agreements by occupational groups are of most importance. There is a continuing trend towards company agreements, although there are still 200 permanent industry-wide negotiating bodies in the UK known under a variety of names such as NJCs, JICs and NJICs. Half the members are appointed by the trade unions and the other half by management.

There are some employer federations which negotiate with appropriate unions at industry wide level, but national bargaining has broken down recently in a number of sectors, notably banking and food retailing, so national bargaining is now the exception rather than the rule. The majority of agreements in the private sector are concluded at company level.

#### **3.2 Agreements on participation in environmental issues**

The involvement of the trade unions with environmental issues has developed over the last twenty years or so. Early action tended to be very reactive and concentrated into significant, but isolated areas of industrial action and campaigning. Environmental bargaining has tended to be ad hoc and subject specific, reflected in a series of

successful union campaigns promoting the use of non-toxic chemicals, recycling, and the use of lead free fuel.

The collective green agreement has only recently been sought by unions with the second wave of union representation which began with the first report of the TUC environmental action group presented to Congress in September 1990. In this approach the emphasis has shifted towards all embracing bargaining and green agreements which address environmental issues at work in a comprehensive and structured way.

The "model green agreement" outlined by the TUC is typical of green agreements which unions, including the general union, GMB, and Manufacturing, Science, Finance Union (MSF) are attempting to negotiate with employers.

### **Green agreement**

The union and (employer) recognise the increasing impact of environmental issues on (employer)'s operations.

They agree that the need to meet higher environmental standards also presents an opportunity to achieve better levels of environmental quality and business efficiency.

The responsibility to achieve higher environmental standards rests with the employer. This requires the employer to make significant improvements in the quality of its environmental management and to develop new skills in the workforce. This is best achieved by the active cooperation of the union.

Such an approach can only succeed if there is a clear, joint strategy that spells out both the challenges for (Employer) and the ways in which workers and managers will respond to these challenges.

The union's input into this strategy will be via the joint Health and Safety Committees (or any other joint body if agreed by both parties).

This agreement lays down the framework within which the strategy will be developed.

### **Joint environmental policy**

Any environmental strategy will need to be flexible enough to cover different challenges within all parts of the organisation. However, the signatories believe that the following issues will need to be addressed:

- a) the environmental impact of (employer)'s current and proposed activities, ranging from the workplace and its immediate surroundings to the

international level. Consideration will need to be given to:

- i) waste or by-products (liquid, solid or gaseous) from (employer)'s operations.
- ii) products and raw materials used by (employer) in the course of its activities.
- iii) disposal, re-use and recycling of products when they have ended their initial "working life".
- b) challenges and threats to (employer)'s activities from legal, social, commercial, economic and other similar developments.
- c) opportunities for (employer) to develop new products processes and services, as well as competitors' efforts to exploit similar opportunities.
- d) action by (employer) or the union to influence and anticipate public debate on environmental issues.

#### **Joint examination of the Issues**

The signatories agree that regular, structured communications and discussions between management and union representatives are essential to the success of a joint environmental strategy.

These discussions will reassure and inspire employees and provide management and union representatives are essential to the success of a joint environmental strategy.

They should take place through the official joint Health and Safety Committee, or any other joint body as agreed by both signatories.

Both signatories can place any relevant issue on the agenda and have that issue fully discussed, without in any way committing either side to support a particular idea.

In order to gain the most from these discussions it will be necessary to make use of a range of expert advice, for example, employer or trade union federations, environmental consultants, academics and public agencies, both local and national.

Some aspects of (employer)'s activities may be commercially or otherwise sensitive and therefore the discussion of issue or the supply of data will sometimes need to be governed by principles of confidentiality.

However, both parties believe that the test applied to any question of disclosure should not be "the need to know" but "the need not to know". Disclosure of information is a good thing and information should not be withheld simply because of possible "embarrassment".

### **Environmental audits and impact assessments**

The parties agree that decisions about environmental action must be made on the basis of hard facts, not emotion.

They agree that both internal and external audits of existing operations and impact assessments of proposed operations are an essential tool in strategic planning.

Both sides accept that such studies, although sometimes involving the commitment of considerable short term resources, tend to more than pay for themselves in the medium or long term. They also accept that independent verification and expertise may sometimes benefit these exercises.

The parties believe that audits and assessments will encourage managers and union representatives to take a longer term view of all aspects of (employer)'s activities, leading to significantly improved all-round performance.

They also agree that audits and impact assessments will benefit from the maximum possible input from and openness to, local authorities, community and environmental groups and regulators.

### **Training and education**

It is vital that union and (employer) representatives have a good working knowledge of environmental issues.

(employer) therefore agrees to cooperate with attempts by union representatives to gain knowledge and receive training about the complex issues under discussion, and to ensure that its managers also receive appropriate training.

Such cooperation may include:

- \* paid time off for union representatives to attend educational courses
- \* funding of training for both sides representatives
- \* working with experts to advise both signatories representatives and to inform the workforce
- \* producing material for employees which

outlines "green" challenges and opportunities for (employer)

\* developing an information campaign aimed at persuading the local community, the media and regulatory authorities that (employer) is taking seriously its environmental responsibilities.

This agreement will run until amended by the agreement of both signatories or revoked in writing by one signatory with six months written notice.

Bargaining initiatives have been launched by three of the large UK unions. The general union, GMB, which represents around 900 000 members across a wide range of industries, and whose general secretary chairs the TUC environmental action group, launched its "Green Works" initiative in 1991. Twenty five companies have been identified, including local authorities, and chemical companies, which the union wants to sign its model environmental agreement.

The agreement contains provisions for joint union/employer environmental auditing, training for union representatives on environmental issues, and the provision of information to employees, the local community and the media.

As part of the initiative, negotiators in all the union's industrial sectors will be issued with checklists providing a step by step guide to "greening" the workplace. Union representatives are encouraged to raise environmental issues with the membership.

The initiative recognises that although people are generally more aware of environmental issues, and many are involved in campaigns to protect the environment, trade unionists do not necessarily see the union as a vehicle for their concerns.

MSF, which has 650,000 members in manufacturing and the public sector and which represents workers in the chemicals industry has approached chemical companies asking for initial talks on involvement of the unions in environmental affairs, whilst producing an information pack for negotiators. This year the union's annual pay claim to ICI, which is negotiated at national level with the company, included a request for the setting up on an environmental committee.

Again a model environmental agreement has been produced which includes the setting up of an "environmental committee" to act as a forum for discussion between the company and MSF on environmental matters. This contains provisions for the environment committee to be informed on environmental protection investment, development of clean technologies, pollution and emissions, health and

safety issues, environmental auditing activity, compliance with environmental legislation, storage and transport of hazardous materials, waste management and environmental education.

The communication union, NCU, which represents some 150,000 communication workers, has launched a green code for its union officials. This green code includes the discussion of environmental issues at meetings, rudimentary environmental audits as part of safety inspections, measures for ensuring enforcement of environmentally sound measures, programmes for boosting awareness amongst members, and suggestions on how environmental work can be made more effective by linking up with local pressure groups. This is intended to provide a framework for more detailed negotiations at local level.

The union has also reached an agreement with British Telecom (BT) for the joint monitoring and discussion of environmental initiatives launched by the company. This includes a joint forum for the union and the company to give impetus to the initiatives being put forward by both organisations.

However, there are major difficulties facing unions attempting to play an active role in environmental protection and it is clear that national policies and initiatives have not yet been translated into collective action at local level.

There is currently no requirement for companies to carry out environmental auditing, which has been identified by the TUC as the main area where unions can be involved in environmental protection at the workplace. Many organisations in the UK have yet to assess their environmental performance, or have not yet developed an environmental policy.

And even where companies do carry out auditing the tendency so far has been to do this without the involvement of the unions. A survey by the Labour Research Department in 1991 which looked at the involvement of unions in environmental issues at workplace level found that only 17% of employers in the survey had carried out an audit, and only 7% had carried out joint management/union audits. A survey carried out by Ruth Hillery in November 1991 looking at corporate environmental management attitudes found that 12% of companies undertaking environmental audits include and similarly, the lack of legal rights of union consultation and negotiation is a serious difficulty since it is unlikely that employers will enter into negotiations on environmental issues, often seen as being sensitive whilst they are under no legal obligation to do so.



Although the Labour Research Department survey found that almost half the employers negotiate with unions on environmental issues, the survey was fairly heavily weighted towards the public sector practice as 74% of responses came from union representatives in the public sector and 26% from the private sector. Also, the survey only covered unionised workplaces and as such is likely to reflect best practice rather than give an overall picture of industrial relations and environmental issues.

The survey found that over half the negotiations took place at the safety committee, which suggests that the negotiations were mainly on health and safety issues where there are legal rights for union involvement. Only a very small number of employers had set up an environmental committee where negotiations with the unions on environmental issues took place, less than 2%.

Lack of access to information is also a serious difficulty. Employers are currently under no obligation to give workers or unions representatives access to information on any aspect of the environmental impact of the workplace, apart from information on hazardous substances under the COSHH regulations.

The Labour Research Department survey showed that as well as a very low number of employers carrying out joint environmental auditing, only 3% had provided training on environmental issues. This suggests that employers are reluctant to give information to trade unionists on the environmental impact of the company, or provide training and education to encourage workers to become involved in environmental issues at the workplace.

However, in spite of the difficulties outlined, there are examples of joint action and co-operation between employers and unions on environmental issues. The Labour Research Department survey found six examples of environmental committees set up in workplaces where management and unions discussed environmental issues. These were all in public sector workplaces. The survey also found 23 workplaces in the private and public sectors where joint management/union environmental auditing is carried out and 12 employers providing training and education on environmental issues.

A number of examples of joint action and co-operation are outlined below:

West Wiltshire District Council (a local authority) discusses environmental issues at the local joint consultative committee, along with equal opportunities, leave and health issues. An environmental strategy was drawn up in February 1991, after consultation with the

unions, and as a result recycling schemes have been set up in the area.

At Dunlop Ltd, which manufactures rubber products, environmental issues not related to safety are discussed along with safety-related issues at the safety committee. Recycling of waste has been discussed with GMB representatives and a scheme has been implemented.

Energy efficiency initiatives, including insulation and improved heating systems were initially raised at the safety committee by Institute of Professionals, Managers, and Specialists (IPMS) safety representatives at the Natural Environmental Research Council. These issues were then discussed at the local Whitley committee (joint consultative committee) before being taken up by management.

A waste recycling working group was set up as a sub committee of the joint consultative committee at Sheffield Polytechnic to examine the implementation of a higher grade paper collection and recycling scheme.

There are also examples of workplaces where green groups and community group had been involved in the implementation of environmental improvements.

At SCM Chemicals in Humberside, a chemicals plant producing titanium dioxide pigments for paint, the joint shop stewards committee, comprising of representatives including the Transport and General Workers Union and general union GMB successfully negotiated an improvement in the company's waste disposal methods. During the negotiations the unions contacted Greenpeace and arranged a meeting with senior managers, the green group and the unions to discuss solutions to the problem of discharge of chemical waste into the Humber Estuary.

And at another company, Amerlite diagnostics, local site liaison committees are held with local community groups.

#### 4. Policy statements, demands, and campaigns

##### 4.1 Employers' organisations

###### 4.1.1 Confederation of British Industry (CBI)

The CBI is the central organisation of employers in the UK and seeks to represent the interests of its members at national and international level. The CBI is not a negotiating body, but seeks to formulate and influence policy on industrial and economic matters.

In 1986, the CBI issued guidance under the slogan, "Clean up - its good for business", which outlined how good environmental practice could be profitable. Then, as environmental issues leapt to the top of the political and economic agenda in 1989, the CBI took a decision to take a greater leadership role and actively promote better understanding of the environment and more consistent high performances throughout British business. An Action Plan for the 1990's was drawn up, "Environment means Business" and an environmental management unit was established in March 1990.

The unit aims to take a more pro-active role and encourage business to make positive environmental improvements before being forced to do so by government legislation. Its main role is to promote good environmental practice through the provision of guidance and promotional material on key environmental issues and to establish links with other expert groups.

The CBI a long established environment policy unit, which has a number of specific panels and working parties on which CBI members sit and can help formulate policy on various environmental issues. The purpose of the panels is to monitor, review and shape the development of legislative proposals and enforcement of regulations. The CBI decided that the key issues for priority attention should be human-induced climatic change, ("the greenhouse effect"), waste management, recycling and the tidiness of the UK.

On these issues it has provided information explaining to business the significance of the greenhouse effect and what can be done to alleviate it, and in particular reporting on the role that energy conservation can play. It has also provided general guidance on waste management, in particular how business shall implement a "duty of care", on recycling and on appropriate action to tidy up Britain.

It advises that companies need a sound environmental management system, accompanied by a thorough review or audit of the company's activities which effect the environment, and a written statement showing the company's policy on the environment.

But it says that corporate environmental performance strategies will only be successful with the commitment and support of senior management from board level and the involvement of all employees. And in common with issues such as quality, it says that enhanced staff morale and higher productivity can be the direct results of environmental improvement measures within the workplace where employees are encouraged to become directly involved both during the execution and follow up and advocates suitable education and training schemes at work.

Action which the CBI say companies could be taking is summarised as follows:

- \* ensuring adequate communication with employees in all aspects of the environmental performance of the company, particularly those areas regarded as sensitive;
- \* making the environment one of the key issues for discussion at existing consultative meetings and if necessary setting up a specific committee to address environmental issues, with representatives drawn from all functions of business;
- \* initiating a suggestion scheme on environmental issues and where appropriate "reward" personnel whose ideas are adopted;
- \* ensuring that employees of all departments of the company are involved in the continuous process of environmental reviewing from the start. The commitment will contribute towards the successful outcome of improvement plans which the process is designed to generate.

It recommends a far reaching and voluntary review of operations and products from an internal point of view, backed up or "validated" where appropriate by an independent body and then published as an authoritative document for internal and external consumption. This, it says, should be a continuous internal process which measures performance against a set of objectives identified by the company.

However, the CBI is wholly opposed to mandatory environmental auditing and to the involvement of the unions in auditing on the grounds that auditing should be a management tool for assessment and control tailored to the circumstances of the company in question. This approach means that some companies may well believe that there should be a formal role for the trade union representatives in auditing whilst others would regard it as a management task. The CBI does not believe that legislation is appropriate to deal with the process of environmental reviewing.

The CBI recognises that there is a great deal of public pressure for more information on the environmental performance of companies as well as for greater openness of information. But sees the real question for companies is to what extent new information should lead to a distinctive new role for the trade unions in decision making.

It is opposed to trade unions playing a more active role in environmental solutions and hence enhancing their involvement in company decision making. It says that there is little doubt that if that role is gained, the trade unions will have achieved their long-standing industrial relations objective of a wider collective bargaining agenda as well as involvement in companies' investment decision.

The CBI also says that environmental issues should be tackled by groups, including businesses, environmental groups, government and the public working together. It believes that a non-adversarial method of working is necessary in order to identify problems and find solutions.

#### **4.1.2 Chemical Industries Association**

The CIA represents most UK chemical manufacturers. The chemical industry has been under much pressure since the new wave of environmental awareness. It has agreed a systematic programme of measuring companies' environmental performance and publishing the results. The environmental monitoring programme is an extension of the industry's responsible care programme which was relaunched in March 1991.

All but three of the association's 215 members accepted the programme. The performance indicators include an "environmental index" comprising the five most important parameters for each chemical plant; output of hazardous substances defined by the government as special wastes; output of pollutants which are especially harmful to the aquatic environment; incidents while transporting and distributing chemicals; energy consumed per tonne of product, and the number of complaints from the public.

However, the chemicals industry is opposing moves within the European Community to introduce compulsory environmental audits with the results made public. A "Green Charter" launched by the International Chamber of Commerce and signed by the CBI and the CIA is voluntary and relies on self policing.

#### 4.2 Management and employer response to environmental protection

Businesses are coming under increasing pressure to pursue environmentally sound practices and to ensure that this is publicised, as having a "green label" is increasingly important.

Environmental challenges to industry are coming from legislation, consumer pressure, investor pressure and employee pressure. Integrated pollution control has fundamentally changed the basis of pollution regulations, although there are doubts about its effective implementation. Whatever the British attitude to regulation, the European Community and under international community are set to be a continuing source of mandatory, harmonising legislation.

There is also consumer pressure, with recent polling evidence suggesting that the market for environmentally friendly products has remained fairly constant over the last year. There is pressure from investors, as those providing finance for business are increasingly questioning whether their investments are environmentally sound. And there is employee pressure as workers become more environmentally aware.

An increasing number of UK companies have produced corporate environmental policies and conducting environmental reviews of their performance. The consequences of environmental pollution can be disastrous for companies both from a financial and public relations viewpoint.

The recent prosecution and record fine of £1 million for Shell for its pollution of the River Mersey, and the accidents suffered by Union Carbide and Sandoz have been cited by the directors and managers of other companies as the main impetus for going beyond mere compliance.

However the proportion of companies with environmental policies remains low, and the policies are not always put into practice. This is confirmed in a number of surveys which have examined the response of managers and directors of UK companies to increasing pressures on environmental issues.

A survey carried out in 1990 by KPH Marketing of 107 managers from the UK's top companies showed that whilst interest in corporate environmental matters has increased sharply, some 36% of the companies surveyed had not introduced environmental policies.

The main inducement for companies to adopt green policies is said to come from consumers, with employees second and trade unions least influential. The survey also showed that employers are finding that their attitude to the

environment is fast becoming an important factor in the recruitment and retention of staff.

An Institute of Directors survey of 500 British directors showed that although directors are more environmentally aware than ever before, many are uninformed about their personal responsibility and legal liability for protecting the environment. The survey showed that few company directors are taking any action to improve environmental performance. Most are said to be paying only lip service to environmental protection.

This was also found to be the case amongst managers in a survey by the British Institute of Management, the results of which were published in 1991. This showed that 52% of organisations which responded to the survey did not have an environmental policy.

While more than three quarters had over the last five years introduced environmental initiatives such as energy conservation, recycling, there were few audits and little staff training. Some organisations believed they had no effect on the environment at all.

The Labour Research Department survey showed that there was a high proportion of employers taking some form of measures to improve environmental performance, reflecting a high degree of awareness. However an analysis of the types of measures taken by employers tended to be in areas related to health and safety, for example the substitution of hazardous substances, or in areas not requiring major changes, for example, purchasing environmentally friendly materials, providing recycling facilities and improving energy conservation. The survey found much less activity in areas involving major changes to the processes.

A CBI survey of 250 firms showed that environmental awareness is increasing, though less so amongst smaller firms. Thirty five percent of those surveyed regarded environmental issues as "very important", but half do not have specific management structures for dealing with environmental issues.

Just under half said they had or are planning to undertake major capital investment on green matters. Some 65% said that local authorities will have the greatest impact in driving their attempts to reduce air and water pollution and the disposal of hazardous wastes. The survey also suggests that management did not perceive the workforce as a major influence on organisational change.

Cranfield School of Management carried out a survey which indicated that small companies do not really regard environmental issues as their problem. Only 2% of small companies surveyed felt they produced a "lot of pollution" and nearly half said they took

almost no measures to protect the environment. Less than a third of non-manufacturing companies saw the environment as "very important", and only 14% of manufacturing companies had carried out environmental audits.

There appears to be a reluctance on the part of management to involve workers and their representatives in environmental issues.

The CBI published a paper on corporate environmental policies and environmental statements of 19 companies in May 1991. Of these, only two of the companies outline their environmental policies in relation to employees.

James Cropper plc, a paper manufacturing company based in Cumbria in the North of England, set up an environmental audit group in 1990 to survey its industrial site, and established an environmental policy in which it states that the company will inform suppliers, customers, the work force and the public about the measures taken to protect the environment and seek their co operation in meeting the company's objectives.

Proctor and Gamble's environmental policy includes assurances that the company will ensure that products, packaging and operations are safe for employers, consumers, and the environment, and that consumers, customers employees, communities and public interest groups and others with relevant and appropriate factual information about the environmental quality of Proctor and Gamble products, packaging and operations.

"Changing Corporate Values", a report on the social and environmental policy and practice in Britain's top companies points out that it is difficult to assess companies' environmental record in the UK because of the lack of independent information available to the public. It is therefore difficult to assess whether companies which have a corporate environmental policy are putting the policies into practice.

Information availability on a company's environmental record is further limited because the HMIP have a policy of constructive engagement with companies rather than fining them for pollution offences. Also inspection activity by the HMIP is low, with fewer than 500 visits by HMIP inspectors to registered works in 1988/89, which represents a small proportion of the total number of workplaces.

Although companies are claiming commitment to environmental protection in the corporate environmental policies, environmental pressure groups, and the companys prosecution record, have shown that this is not always the case. For example, Proctor and Gamble's example of a lifetime environmental impact assessment of one of the company's products is highlighted in the CBI paper.



The company claim "this was a cradle to grave assessment of products and processes from raw materials, production to disposal of the end product for the "Pampers" disposable nappy product. In studying the environmental impact of Pampers versus traditional towelling nappies, it was shown that there was nothing to choose between the two types in terms of overall environmental impact, when all factors were taken into account".

The research carried out for Proctor and Gamble was questioned by the Womens Environmental Network which also issued a formal complaint to the Advertising Standards Authority claiming regarding the claims made by the company in leaflets and adverts.

Cleanaway is signatory to the Chemical Industries Association "Responsible Care Programme" and has an environmental policy which is again outlined in the CBI paper; but is one of the companies whose polluting activities in the Mersey basin area are highlighted by Greenpeace for consistently dumping excess effluent into the sea.

Greenpeace launched "Greenpeace Business", a bimonthly newsletter in June 1991 which outlines that the organisation has a track record of exposing environmental abuse, and intends to expand such activities into the realm of company practice, making use of the legal system, shareholder and investor pressure. The newsletter says it will highlight sound industrial practice and expose activities of companies which harm the environment.

A survey of the top 1000 UK companies by a political consultancy specialising in environmental legislation and an engineering consultancy found that industry believes that "green campaigners" are having too much influence in drawing up EC environmental regulations. Forty nine percent of the companies said that forthcoming European legislation is biased too much towards the environmentalists' viewpoint.

## 4.3 Workers' Organisations and Representatives

### 4.3.1 Trade Union Congress

The TUC is the central co-ordinating body for the trade union movement and is composed of individually affiliated trade unions. Around 90% of all union members, representing around 45% of the working population in the UK, belong to TUC affiliated unions.

In 1972, the TUC organised a conference on "Workers and the Environment" when it acknowledged that "trade unions concern necessarily extends beyond the boundaries of the factory to the domestic and natural environments".

The TUC naturally has the difficulty of reconciling interests of all the different groups of workers it represents. This is reflected by debates within Congress on energy policy, with regard to the acceptability of nuclear energy.

Amongst the TUC's affiliates are unions representing workers in the nuclear power industry, and in the coal and oil sectors. Whilst the National Union of Mineworkers point to the poor safety record of the nuclear power industry, unions representing nuclear power workers point to the burning of fossil fuels as the cause of global warming. TUC policy is in favour of a phasing out of nuclear energy over 15 years by a future Labour government. An attempt to overturn this commitment at the 1991 Congress was defeated by 4.59 million votes to 3.213 million.

In recent years, particularly since the establishment of the environmental action group (EAG) in 1989, the TUC has concentrated on the involvement of unions at workplace level negotiations. In 1990, the first report by the group contained an overview of environmental issues faced by working people, the proposed role of trade unions, and made proposals for "Greening the Workplace". This included demands for trade unions to be consulted on environmental audits and for extended rights for trade union representatives.

The EAG report outlined that the working and living environment are linked and that most external environmental concerns originate in the workplace, therefore trade unions should have the right to participate in decision making.

It proposes that the role of safety representatives should extend to cover environmental issues, and outlines new environmental rights introduced under which workers would have the right to:

know the environmental impact of the products and processes they are using and producing

be informed and consulted on the environmental strategies of their company  
initiate and participate in environmental policies, audits and inspections, and legal entitlement to call in independent inspectors  
negotiate changes in production and work organisation

refuse, without recrimination, to undertake work with potentially harmful environmental effects.

paid time off to receive necessary education, training and retraining.

The TUC have identified auditing as the main area where unions can become involved in environmental issues at the workplace. It says that audits should cover the use of raw materials and energy consumption, harmful emissions during the production process, waste generation and disposal, the substances and materials used throughout the workplace, and the environmental impact of the product itself. The TUC believe that environmental auditing should be carried out in consultation with union representatives, and that information for this purpose should be made available.

The EAG submitted its views to the National Economic Development Council in 1991 acknowledging that both sides of industry must work together to achieve higher standards of environmental performance.

The EAG believes that government must play a more supportive role and work in partnership with industry, local government and unions. The group says that there should be an integration of environmental policy with industrial and employment policies in an open spirit of partnership and co-operation.

The group has called for a national environment education and training programme; but also considered that there was an urgent need for trade unions to be better informed of workplace environmental issues and given practical advice on what was required to raise standards.

The group therefore produced a "greening the workplace" guide which provides a "working kit" for unions wanting to build on their environmental activities. This outlines that it believes a consensual approach is necessary to deal with environmental issues and that the union response "extends to an awareness of the possible impact that environmental adjustments will have on wage negotiations, on training needs and workloads".

The guide aims to assist unions bring environmental issues on to the bargaining agenda. The TUC believe that

this can result in potential opportunities to discuss and establish union legitimacy in related issues, facilitate closer links with the local community and other outside groups, and make a contribution to the unions image and recruitment.

The TUC has called on all its affiliated members to:

- \* ensure that trade union policies and activities fully reflect environmental considerations and priorities
- \* seek to achieve higher environmental and health and safety standards at the place of work by way of co-operation and partnership with the employer and outside organisations.
- \* develop joint environmental strategies (by way of a "green agreement" or otherwise) that spell out both the challenges and responsibilities of the employer and trade union
- \* agree a framework for implementing an environmental strategy which provides for access to information and regular, structured communications and discussions between management and union representatives
- \* assess and evaluate the environmental performance and impact of workplace activities by undertaking jointly agreed environmental audits or reviews
- \* raise awareness of environmental issues and the implications both inside and outside the workplace
- \* promote the active participation of all employees in joint action to improve environmental performance
- \* publicise their activities on environmental issues to the workforce, media and local community
- \* ensure that the environmental education and training needs of the workforce are adequately met
- \* seek paid time off for union representatives to attend education and training courses on environmental issues.

It is worth noting that the TUC began running Environmental Education Courses as part of its National Education Programme in October 1992.

#### 4.2.2 National trade unions

There has recently been a period of political hostility to union activity on any level, which has resulted in a loss of power of the trade unions. New laws have been introduced on taking industrial action including restrictions on secondary picketing, and balloting members.

Perhaps not surprisingly, there has been a decline in membership of trade unions. According to the government's 1991 Labour Force Survey the proportion of British workers in trade unions and staff associations had declined to 37%, from 38% in 1990 and 39% in 1989. One of the reasons why unions are seeking to extend their role into the area of environmental protection is to re-establish their legitimacy and increase recruitment, and to extend their role into related issues such as investment and training.

Trade unions are increasingly taking the view that environmental issues are likely to remain on the political agenda and changes in the way industry operates are inevitable. The unions want to ensure that their members are involved in progressing the changes.

Recent years have seen trade union campaigns on the environment gain momentum. Most of the largest twelve unions in particular GMB, MSF, NCU, and NALGO have been particularly active in this area. These have launched initiatives to translate national policy into action at workplace level and put environmental issues firmly on the bargaining agenda.

These campaigns have tended to be run along two lines. High profile approaches have been made to employers demanding that the union's role in environmental issues is recognised, and that employers negotiate with unions, carry out joint environmental auditing, and provide access to information on the company's environmental impact. At the same time, training and information has been provided in order to educate the membership in order for them to be able to negotiate at workplace level.

There has been a change in emphasis from campaigning on particular environmental issues, towards demanding all embracing green agreements, reflecting TUC policy.

Within the last few years, following an increased level of awareness amongst the membership of unions which has resulted in the adoption of resolutions on environmental issues and unions are beginning to adopt comprehensive environmental policies.

Because of the reactive nature of early examples of industrial action taken by their members on environmental issues, national unions have found themselves in the dilemma of attempting to support workers on opposing sides of conflicts between environmental protection and job preservation.

An example of this occurred in 1989 when dock workers, members of the Transport and General Workers' Union, TGWU, refused to handle imported toxic waste destined for incineration at a waste incineration plant in Wales. The union also represented workers at the incineration plant, situated in an area of high unemployment, and were therefore caught in the classic conflict of representing workers taking action to protect the environment, and workers opposed to the action on the grounds of job preservation.

The TGWU have since made clear its position on toxic waste importation: "The TGWU says that positive immediate action is needed to eliminate this trade in which profits are being put above the safety of workers, communities and the environment. The TGWU says no to Britain being used as the world's toxic waste dump".

The TGWU has also formed an environmental policy group, ENACTS, to look at policy across its trade groups.

The NCU held a conference in April 1991 to launch a new code of practice for union members and to launch its campaign for new regulations to control environmentally damaging substances. The green code for union officials provides a framework for more detailed negotiations at local level. This covers discussion of environmental issues at meetings, rudimentary environmental audits as part of safety inspections, measures for enforcing environmentally safe measures, linking with local pressure groups and raising awareness of the membership.

The union believes that environmental issues are inseparable from health and safety issues. It sees that environmental issues are a natural extension of health and safety ones with regard to union activity, and points out that the Health and Safety at Work Act is one of the most powerful pieces of legislation regarding union involvement at the workplace.

The rights which safety legislation gives to union safety representatives are absent from all other areas of union activity. Because of this position in the UK, the NCU along with other unions therefore believes that "safety representatives should take on responsibility for environmental issues in the workplace".

It sees safety representatives well placed to deal with the issues because of experience of dealing with health and safety, where there is overlap with environmental problems to some extent. Also safety representatives have

rights to access to information on hazardous substances, for example, particularly vital in view of the lack of access to information to rights on environmental matters.

The union sees environmental issues as an area for co-operative rather than conflictual forms of industrial relations and says:

"Active trade union involvement in environmental protection requires a new approach based on cooperation, partnership and joint working between union and employer. That approach, strongly supported by the TUC in no sense undermines the collective bargaining and other representative functions of the union; on the contrary it can only complement and enhance them."

The Manufacturing, Science and Finance union, MSF, which represents around 650,000 workers, including workers employed in the chemicals industry produced a policy statement which recognises that in the short term, the introduction of more stringent environmental protection policies could have an adverse effect on its members' job security.

However, it believes that companies will need to alter their operations to comply with stricter environmental legislation and consumer demand, and invest in new product development, identify new markets, "clean up" processes and re-train employees in order to survive. MSF is also promoting the development of 'clean technologies' as a solution to environmental problems in industry. The union held a conference on clean technologies in the Summer of 1990.

It says that MSF has a crucial role to play in the process as it represents thousands of scientists, designers and technologists with particular expertise. The union campaigns for the establishment of a UK Environmental Protection Executive to oversee all aspects of the environment, directed at prevention of pollution, with an effective system of penalties for breaches of legislation.

NALGO, the union representing workers in local government, public services and recently privatised utilities has had a lengthy and varied involvement in raising environmental awareness and developing constructive initiatives. Doubtless this reflects the particular interests and competence of NALGO activists many of whom work in Environmental protection, either in local government or in utilities with critical environment links such as the water, gas and electricity industries. Hence, NALGO have been campaigning for some time for the establishment of an Environmental Protection Agency (they provided the funds for the Labour MP Ann Taylor, who at the time was the opposition 'Shadow'

Minister for the Environment, to produce her book 'Choosing our Future' which sets out her plan for an Environmental Protection Agency.) The union set up an Environment Action Group in 1990 to co-ordinate NALGO's environmental campaigns and to develop policy proposals. NALGO's education department was amongst the first to develop and implement environment training courses. Finally, it is worth noting that NALGO has undertaken an environmental audit of its own head office in London. ("An Environmental Review of the National and Local Government Officers' Association." April 1992.) They are believed to be the first British union to have taken such an initiative.

Unions including local government union, NALGO, the Inland Revenue Staff Federation, IRSF, and the Civil and Public Services Association, CPSA have all been affiliated for some time to environmental pressure groups at national level.

UK unions are drawing on comparisons in Europe, and using examples of gains made by unions particularly in Denmark and Germany to press companies for the same agreements in the UK. The NCU point to the agreement between its sister union in Germany, the DPG and the Ministry of Posts and Telecoms. And MSF are attempting to negotiate an agreement with ICI which has been negotiated with the German chemical union, IG Chemie.

#### **4.4 Attitudes of trade unionists to environmental issues**

It is clear that national union and TUC policy on the environment has not been translated into Collective action at workplace level; and debate at union conferences shows that there is still some reluctance on the part of trade union members to "take on" environmental issues.

The issue of job security is obviously a major concern. The debate on affiliation to Greenpeace at the Civil and Public Services Association conference in 1991 reflected opening views of delegates. Whilst the resolution to affiliate was carried, several delegates opposed it on the grounds that Greenpeace campaigns for the scrapping of nuclear energy and therefore "for jobs to be taken away from CPSA members".

Whilst there are fears that in the long term environmentally damaging industries may be forced out of business, there is also fear that in the short term, improving environmental performance is costly and could lead to closures.

At a recent conference, one National Union of Mineworkers delegate said that at the colliery where he worked, there was considerable community opposition to sea pollution



from colliery waste. But as union members, the workforce saw that other more costly methods of waste management would increase costs and could lead to closure, and felt unable to take any action on improving the situation.

The lack of access to information and lack of education and training on environmental issues are mitigating against union involvement. There has been a lack of guidance available to how to tackle issues; although practical advice information is starting to be produced by unions.

While the results of exposure to harmful substances are often evident because of the effects on workers, and health surveillance and monitoring requirements, the results of environmental pollution are not so immediately obvious to workers. This may mean that workers do not view the pollution outside of the workplace as an issue appropriate to industrial relations, particularly where access to information is severely restricted.

There may be conflicts between health and safety and environmental protection which may have limited union involvement on environmental issues at workplace level. The obvious example of this is the control of exposure of the workforce using extraction ventilation resulting in exposure of the local population instead.

This conflict has also been identified in attempting to use alternatives to environmentally products, such as chlorofluorocarbons which were used in the manufacture of some insulating materials. Alternatives given as examples by the environmental pressure group Friends of the Earth were more hazardous from a health and safety point of view for workers handling the materials.

Examples of industrial action by union members has highlighted the concern felt on environmental issues, particularly related to safety concerns. For example, successful campaigns have been mounted against the use of a number of pesticides, notably DDT; and the use of hazardous substances, including asbestos.

Seamen and transport workers have refused to handle nuclear waste destined for disposal in the North Sea; and trade unionists have refused to allow the importation of toxic waste destined for incineration in the UK.

However, it is unclear how trade unionists see trade unions as the vehicle to convey environmental concerns, and how far they see environmental issues as an issue for the bargaining agenda.

Whilst the LRD survey suggests that, at least in the public sector, trade unionists are raising environmental issues at bargaining forums, particularly safety

committees, the extent to which this is happening in general remains unclear.

A survey by Touche Ross suggests that employees feel less empowered to influence their firms environmental policy, though Touche Ross argue that this is changing and that under a Labour Government environmental matters will become a much more important aspect of industrial relations.

#### **4.5 Interaction with environmental activists and community organisations**

In the LRD survey, only 4% of respondents indicated that green groups had been involved in implementing environmental improvements at the workplace. Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth were the groups which had been involved. However, guidance from green groups was being used in the drawing up of environmental policies, particularly by local authority employees.

The relationship between green groups and industry tends to be adversarial, with company's poor environmental record being publicised, particularly by Greenpeace. However, the launch of "Greenpeace Business" claims that good practice as well as bad will be highlighted.

Traditionally, the relationship between unions and green groups has also tended to be adversarial, particularly because of the "jobs versus environment" conflict. However, unions and green groups are attempting to work together, and alliances have been formed.

At national level, a number of unions have affiliated, and therefore give financial support to Friends of the Earth: Fringe conferences have been organised at the TUC where union leaders and environmental pressure group members have shared a platform. It is perhaps worth mentioning that health and safety officers from the largest two unions, GMB and TGWU have taken up posts in environmental pressure groups, Friends of the Earth, and World Wide Fund for Nature.

At local level, a group financed by Greenpeace, Communities against Toxics (CATS) has been set up to co-ordinate action across the country where local communities are campaigning against industrial pollution. Local trade unionists are amongst the membership of CATs.

A 1989 report on trade unions and green groups by Greenpeace said that where political agreement does occur, it usually involves conflict rather than co-operation; although there are exceptions. The report highlighted areas where trade unions and green groups have been able to co-operate. The National Union of Seamen action against the sea dumping of radioactive waste had led to the development of personal contacts at the most senior level in the NUS and Greenpeace. In this

case, Greenpeace said that the absence of a significant job threat, and the growing awareness of a possible occupational risk combined to produce successful co-operation.

Green groups and unions also worked in co-operation in campaigns opposing the privatisation of water and electricity services. The campaigns on toxic waste, pesticides and asbestos also lead to trade union and green group co-operation.

However the report also outlines problem areas experienced where co-operation was not found to be possible. These included particular unions' policies on nuclear power because of job preservation; TUC opposition to the Titanium Dioxide Directive (1983) because of perceived job and competitiveness threat to UK plants polluting the North Sea; and the close relationship between the unions and employers in opposition to radical action on power station pollution control to prevent acid rain.

The report outlines difficulties mitigating against co-operation between the two groups, including the job preservation issue and mutual mistrust, but concludes that co-operation is mutually beneficial, and is possible in areas including co-funding of research; jointly campaigning on issues and sharing information.

## 5. Current environmental conflicts and the industrial actors

### 5.1 Toxic waste disposal

The issue of toxic waste disposal, particularly the disposal of waste by incineration has become an area of increasing conflict. The importation of toxic waste from Italy and Canada destined for incineration in the UK caused public outrage in 1988 and 1989, and attracted considerable opposition from unions, green groups and local communities. The TUC has called for a ban on the importation of toxic waste into the UK.

However, waste disposal, including toxic waste incineration, is increasingly being labelled as a "green" activity. Companies including Shanks and McEwan, which has waste incineration operations, and Leigh Interests, have developed corporate environmental policies, and are promoted as green investments.

Investment fund managers, and financial analysis argue that waste incineration is a green activity because it gets rid of dangerous toxic waste safely. They point out that one of Friends of the Earth's founder members is now a director of one waste incineration company. Several companies operating waste incineration processes have been identified by financial advisors as standing to benefit from increasing environmental legislation and the way the consumer spends money.

Shanks and McEwan and Leigh Interests have been identified as "companies demonstrating a positive commitment to preserving the environment" and have been successful in greening their image. "Cowboy contractors" for operating on the cheap have been blamed for the industry's past problems.

However, there has been sustained campaigns against operators of toxic waste incinerators by communities against toxics, consisting of people living in the vicinity of incinerators and concerned about the operations.

Local communities fear that there are adverse health and environmental effects from the incineration of hazardous chemicals, particularly dioxins produced when polychlorinated biphenyls are burned. Local councils and food manufacturers have opposed plans for the siting of new incinerators.

Union involvement has included dock workers refusing to unload imported waste, and six workers at Leigh Interests went on strike over health and safety problems in the company's laboratories, and inadequate testing of toxic wastes.

One local MSF branch in an area with toxic waste incineration operations says "the practice of incinerating large amounts of toxic cocktails" should be ended, and that "the method of toxic waste disposal should be reached democratically, fully taking into account the views of the waste disposal authorities and the local population".

At least one incinerator has been closed down, that operated by a company called Rechem in Bonnybridge in Scotland. There was massive opposition to the plant from the local community and findings of research carried out into the health effects on local people including a high incidence of twinning in the area. Although the Rechem workforce was unionised, local unions supported the closure of the plant in this instance.

The waste disposal industry claims that new legislation in the form of new partly enacted Environmental Protection Act and forthcoming European directives will force higher standards on the industry. But Greenpeace criticises the lack of enforcement officers to ensure that legislation is complied with.

In summary, waste disposal companies and their financiers argue that the process is safe and environmentally friendly in that it disposes of dangerous toxic waste; whilst unions and green groups, local communities, local authorities and food manufacturers argue that the safety of the process has not been proved, and that research and development in clean production methods is necessary.

#### **Disposal of toxic waste - Case Study**

A "Report on the controversy surrounding Leigh Environmental Services" (Part of Leigh Interests) was prepared for Greenpeace in 1988. The following outline is taken from this report, and is an example of a conflictual relationship between a waste disposal company and the community. (It is worth noting that this Case Study was used by NALGO in their Environmental Training Course Handbook: "Greenprint for Action" published in 1990.)

Leigh's operations in Walsall, in the West Midlands area of England uses a process called "Sealosafe" which involves solidifying waste after it has been pumped into mineshafts. Residents in the area formed a group, Community Action against Toxic waste. The aim of the campaign is to drive Leigh out of Walsall.

Initial complaints began in the late 1960's as a result of foul smells emanating from mineshafts where chemicals and other waste products were being dumped. The situation continued for several years and worsened with incidents including one in May 1987, when the area was enveloped in a dense gas and school children were sent home suffering from stomach upsets.

1,800 local people signed a petition against the company and complained of headaches, migraines, nausea, vomiting, stomach upsets, diarrhoea, asthma, bronchitis, allergic complaints and miscarriage (1 in 5 pregnancies in the area ends in miscarriage).

The petition and symptoms was sent to the local authority for investigation of Leigh's operations. The matter was also referred to the Secretary of State for the Environment. The residents group also carried out a survey and found high incidence of cancer and leukaemia. A local conservative councillor, commented on Walsall's reputation for being the unhealthiest place in Britain.

She referred to the high incidents of cancer and leukaemia in clusters around the waste disposal site and also spoke of an ex-waste disposal site employee who, after twelve years of work had developed throat cancer, and had three tumours and his larynx removed. She called for cross-party support for the closure of Leigh on health grounds (September 1988).

The major complaint against Leigh is negligence, and there is concern about the long-term stability of the Sealosafe system. The environmental health department of the local authority responded by carrying out tests and commissioning research into the increase in asthma deaths into the Walsall area.

The company has been prosecuted for breach of site license. The "outstanding number of prosecutions" and bad publicity surrounding Leigh lead the Caird Group to unload their shares abruptly. Leigh have been prosecuted for over-filling quarries and have taken out an injunction to prevent Environmental Resources Limited from making site inspections.

According to the report, Leigh maintain the attitude that there is no problem. The company hired a new public relations officer to improve the companies image.

"Residents find it ironic that the dot on the i of Leigh (on their logo) is a daisy, and that their lorries are painted environmentally-friendly greens and yellows".

There appears to have been no attempt during the years to meet with the protesters, picketers and residents to discuss their grievances. However, Leigh have sent out monthly neighbourhood newsletters to residents calling themselves "good neighbours", to which residents reacted with outrage.

The current situation is that Leigh continue to operate in Walsall as it is not proved that Leigh's activities are prejudicial to health. Unfortunately, the report does not outline the role of the unions in this instance; although the position of the local MSF branch in Walsall has been previously outlined.

## 5.2 Industrial polluters

Increased environmental awareness has resulted in hostility from local communities to the siting of industrial premises, particularly those thought likely to pollute. According to a survey in the Economist, companies that want to make potentially polluting investments invest large amounts of management time in building links with local people.

It points to the example of British Petroleum wanting to build an oil platform in Poole Harbour, a beauty spot in the South of England. The development director spent more than a third of his time trying to allay the worries of local people. The company carried out extensive environmental research, ran computer simulations to study the tidal flows and sand movements, and drew up six different options for public debate.

According to the Economist, "giving local people a feeling that they have some control over what happens to their environment is, astute companies realise, one way to win friends and planning permission".

The reaction to industrial polluters by communities depends on the relationship with the workforce. Workers do not necessarily live in the community around the workplace and the two groups may not share common interests.

An example of conflict in this area was the proposal to extend Stanstead Airport in the East of England. Local people opposed the development on the grounds of increased pollution; whilst local unions welcomed the developments of new jobs in the area. The amount of unemployment in an area is obviously an important factor.

### Industrial pollution - Case study

The following is an outline of a cooperative situation in which a chemical company and the unions represented there took joint action to secure improvements and reduce the amount of pollution caused by its operations.

SCM Chemicals Ltd is situated on the south bank of the River Humber and discharged its effluent into the river. The company produces titanium dioxide pigments for the paint industry. The problem at SCM was the discharge by pipe of byproducts of titanium dioxide pigment into the river. This had taken place in the Humber by SCM and another company, Tioxide UK, by legal consent since the 1980's.

As a result the coastline had turned a reddy brown colour due to the high acid levels in the water. Local fishermen had noticed that shrimps and crabs had been affected by

the pollution, and that fish were often deformed. Many of the workforce live in the area, so the unions were aware of the damage caused by waste to the local environment, but were in the difficult position of wanting to improve the environment while protecting jobs.

However, the concern was such that the workforce contacted the environmental pressure group, Greenpeace, and a meeting was arranged with senior management at SCM. Industrial relations at the company were generally good. The company admitted that pollution was a problem and agreed that the only real solution would be an acid-recycling plant, which would cost up to £20 million. The recycling system was developed on-site by SCM engineers and therefore the actual cost was less, £14 million.

The company paid for union officials to visit Brussels and Strasbourg to find out more about the subject at European level. Meetings were arranged with MEPs and environmental experts. New legislation in the form of EC directives which will be implemented in the UK by the end of 1992 added to pressures from the workforce for the company to take action.

SCM Chemicals is one of the companies that the GMB has approached with a view to signing the environmental agreement.

## **7. Summary and recommendations**

The shift in public opinion in the UK in favour of environmental issues has resulted in increased pressures on industry to improve environmental performance. This has augmented the increasingly stringent legislation on pollution control being initiated at European level, notably the recently introduced Environmental Protection Act 1990

But this general increase in environmental awareness has yet to be translated into collective action, and environmental issues do not appear to have yet pervaded the system of industrial relations to any considerable degree.

It is only relatively recently, within the last few years, that the unions have campaigned on the involvement of unions on all aspects of workplace environmental issues. Previously, campaigns tended to focus on specific issues, such as the banning of pesticides, or the disposal of nuclear waste at sea.

The second wave of union representation has been to campaign for collective green agreements which give unions rights of involvement in this area. However, workers and their trade union representatives have no legal rights of involvement in environmental issues at the workplace, and it appears that few, if any employers have signed collective green agreements and voluntarily



allowed union involvement in all areas of the company's environmental impact.

Clearly, this situation is likely to remain whilst there are no legal requirements on employers to involve unions in environmental issues. There is political hostility to the involvement of trade unions in environmental issues on the part of employers, as outlined by the CBI, who see that this would lead to a broadening of collective bargaining agenda and lead to union involvement in areas such as investment and other areas of company decision making.

Whilst employers and managers are more aware of environmental issues than ever, recent surveys have shown that many employers have not addressed environmental issues in their company, have not carried out audits and have not developed environmental policies.

Again, although there are more pressures on employers to examine the environmental impact of the company, there are no legal requirements for employers to carry out audits, with or without the involvement of unions.

Trade unions do not have any rights of representation on bodies responsible for developing policy and formulating new legislation on environmental protection, as is the case on health and safety, where the TUC nominate two representatives to the Health and Safety Commission.

Information availability on a company's environmental record is limited as only a small amount of information has to be kept in public register, there is low prosecution activity, and the information is not computerised at present which further restricts access. This means that whilst a company may claim to have a good environmental record, it is extremely difficult to find out, whether as an employee, or a member of the public whether this is in fact true.

It has generally been green groups who have exposed companys' polluting activities. Currently there is no legal protection for employees who "blow the whistle" on poor environmental practice, which means that they could be dismissed for breach of confidentiality.

These areas need to be addressed if greater freedom to information on environmental issue is to be achieved.

There is a serious lack of training and education on environmental issues provided to employees which needs to be addressed by both employers - the CBI says that a corporate environmental policy will only be successful with full employee commitment and involvement - and by unions who are urging their members to negotiate collective green agreements giving rights of involvement in all aspects of a company's environmental impact.

The issue of re-training for employees who may lose jobs in polluting industries due to the closure of "dirty" workplaces has not been seriously addressed despite a large potential market for environmental industries, for example the manufacture of pollution control equipment being identified.

It is perhaps surprising that in view of the lack of access to information and lack of training and education that more co-operation between trade unions and green groups is not in evidence. However, it appears that the main obstacle to building alliances in this area is the "job preservation v environmental protection issue".

It is difficult to assess the attitude of trade unionists to environmental issues as it appears there have not been extensive surveys carried out in this area. However, it seems likely that the lack of legal rights on involvement in environmental issues at the workplace, and lack of training, education and information are reasons why national union policy has not been translated into collective action at local level.

In conclusion, the integration of environmental issues into the system of industrial relations is in the very early stages in the UK. It is unclear at present how far employers will enter into voluntary agreements with unions, and indeed how far unions at workplace level are attempting to negotiate on these issues.

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May 1988

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Action on the environment

MSF

General Secretary designate: Roger Lyons

64-66 Wandsworth Common North Side

London SW18 2SH

Tel: 081 871 2100

Control of Environmentally Damaging Substances (COEDS)

A proposal from the NCU

NCU and the environment (conference papers)

General Secretary: Tony Young

Greystoke House

180 Brunswick Road

London W5 1AW

Tel: 081 998 2981

"Green Works"

GMB

General Secretary: John Edmonds

22-24 Worple Road

London SW19 4DD

Tel: 081 944 7129

### **Employer Organisations**

Chemicals Industries Association  
Kings Building  
Smith Square  
London SW1 3JJ  
Tel 071 834 3399

Confederation of British Industry  
Centre Point  
103 New Oxford Street  
London WC1A 1DU  
Tel 071 379 7400

Green groups  
Association for Conservation of Energy  
9 Sherlock Mews, London, W1M 3RH  
Tel 071 935 1495

Campaign for Lead Free Air  
3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1 ODD  
Tel 071 278 9686  
Pressure group campaigning against lead in petrol and elsewhere

Friends of the Earth  
26/28 Underwood Street, London, N1 7JU  
Tel 071 490 1555  
Founded 1971, Staff 60, Membership 150,000, Income  
£1,685,000

The organisation is keen to work with trade unions and individual trade unionists and has done so on many issues including pesticides, asbestos and toxic wastes.

NALGO and IRSF are among those unions which have affiliated and donated money to Friends of the Earth, David Gee, its director was formerly the national health and safety officer with the general union GMB and is therefore in a good position to help establish links with unions.

It has produced many publications, of which several, including The Environmental Charter for Local Government and Briefing Sheets on Environmental Auditing, would be very useful for unions planning negotiations on environmental issues. It also publishes a quarterly magazine, Earth Matters.

There are around 280 local groups around the country actively campaigning on a variety of environmental issues, including air and water pollution, countryside protection and agriculture, urban regeneration, transport, resources and recycling, toxic wastes, tropical rainforests, overseas aid and trade and, the greenhouse effect.

Greenpeace

30/31 Islington Green, London N1 8BR

Tel 071 354 5100

Founded 1971, Staff 50, Membership 265,000, Income £4 million.

Greenpeace describes itself as an international environmental pressure group which maintains complete independence from all political parties anywhere in the world.

It has a policy of non-affiliation with any groups, but individual trade unionists are encouraged to join and trade unions can subscribe and receive regular information on Greenpeace campaigns.

Greenpeace has worked with unions at local and national levels in the past, including the campaign against the sea dumping of radioactive waste and the transport of toxic waste. It provides speakers for union meetings, information and help with campaigns.

It has outlined future action which it believes can be taken by trade unions including:

- \* union members establishing links with green groups
- \* green group representatives being invited to attend conferences and provide information for trade unions;
- \* Safety representatives receiving training on environmental issues; and
- \* environmental policies and campaigns being given more attention and resources and support being given to green groups on national and international issues; and
- \* exchange of information with green groups on environmental concerns.

Socialist Environment and Resources Association

11 Goodwin Street, London N4 3HQ

Tel 071 263 7424

Founded in 1973 to campaign for "the socialist policies necessary to combat the fouling of the environment and the squandering of natural resources". It is smaller than FoE and Greenpeace but has done work on the "greening of unions" for many years.

It publishes New Ground magazine quarterly, to which trade unionists have contributed articles on environmental issues. It has many affiliated union branches and seeks more. It has produced surveys on trade unions and the environment and held conferences on the issue.

Transport 2000

Walkenden House 10 Melton Street, London, NW1 2EJ

Tel 071 388 8386



Transport 2000 was founded by unions and environmental groups to argue for more environmentally sensitive transport policies. It campaigns for better public transport, for pedestrians and cyclists and for transport in Europe. It welcomes union affiliation.

Womens Environmental Network  
287 City Road, London EC1V 1LA  
Tel 071 490 2511

NALGO's Women's Rights Committee agreed to affiliate to this organisation. Issues campaigned on include pollution from paper mills, dioxins and unnecessary packaging on goods.

Enforcement authorities Environmental Health Officers  
They are located in the environmental health departments of local authorities. They are responsible for air pollution control of industries and workplaces not covered by the HMIP.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution  
Department of the Environment  
Romney House  
Marsham Street  
London SW1 3PY  
Responsible for "integrated pollution control" of prescribed industries under the Environmental Protection Act.

National Rivers Authority  
Based in regional offices. It is responsible for the control of pollution in UK waterways.



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