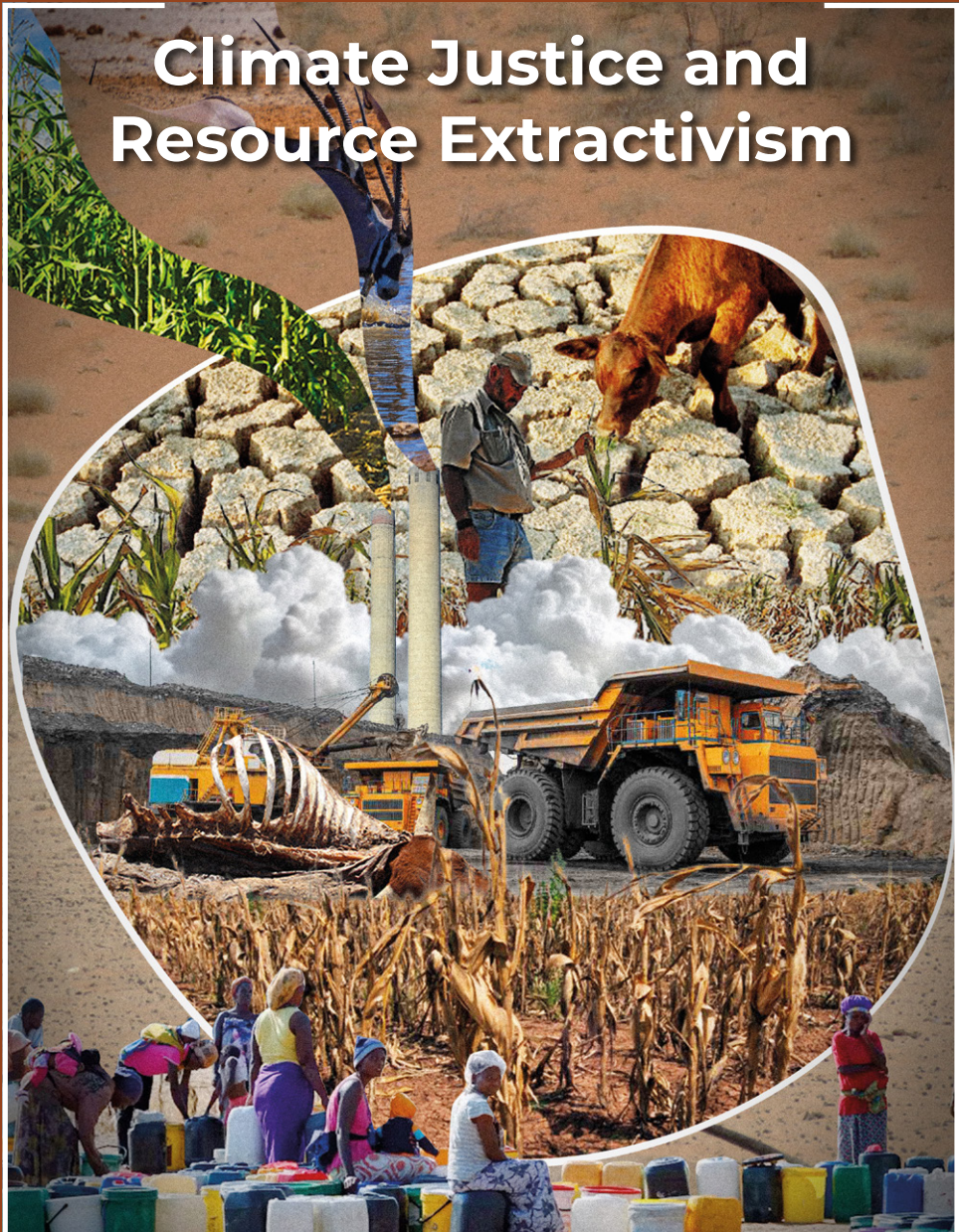


# Climate Justice and Resource Extractivism



# **Green Jobs: Pioneering Sustainable Growth and Environmental Stewardship**

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## **Introduction**

“The future will either be green or not at all.” This has become a widely known quote, notably repeated by the Australian environmentalist and politician Bob Brown, while addressing the Senate. Green jobs are crucial for addressing climate change, as they provide a sustainable route for both economic development and environmental conservation.

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, green jobs encompass any work that aids in preserving and improving environmental quality. This includes positions in agriculture, industry, services, or administration that aim to lower energy use, reduce pollution, safeguard ecosystems, and support communities in adapting to climate change (Worldwatch Institute, 2008). In Namibia, the importance of green jobs is heightened by the country’s distinct environmental challenges and opportunities. These jobs not only mitigate environmental impacts, but also encourage sustainable practices that are vital for the nation’s future.

## **Economic Benefits**

Endowed with abundant natural resources, Namibia is poised to be a leader in Africa’s shift towards a green economy, effectively balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability. The economic benefits of green jobs in Namibia are considerable. The country’s rich renewable energy sources, particularly solar and wind, create a robust foundation for job creation in the green sector. Namibia’s strategic advantages position it perfectly for sustainable development, receiving about 10 hours of strong sunlight daily for 300 days a year. This gives Namibia significant solar energy potential, further supported by a Memorandum of Intent with Botswana and the United States to tap into this renewable resource (World Economic Forum, 2021). It is evident that with its unique positioning and forward-thinking initiatives, Namibia could become a beacon of sustainable growth and environmental stewardship in Africa.

## **Environmental Impact and Social Benefits**

Green jobs are essential in the battle against climate change, playing a crucial role in reducing carbon footprints and fostering sustainable practices. Namibia's dedication to renewable energy, exemplified by initiatives like the Green Hydrogen Namibia Programme, underscores this commitment (World Economic Forum, 2021). By investing in green technologies and sustainable practices, Namibia can substantially lower its greenhouse gas emissions, making a significant contribution to global climate goals. This dedication to renewable energy is not just an environmental imperative but a national duty, ensuring that Namibia remains at the forefront of the fight against climate change.

Beyond environmental impacts, green jobs offer profound social and community benefits. They can vastly improve public health by reducing pollution and fostering cleaner environments. Moreover, green jobs have the potential to address social inequalities by providing much-needed employment opportunities in underserved communities, offering a vital solution to the country's youth unemployment crisis. This is not just about jobs; it's about creating meaningful, dignified work that uplifts entire communities.

Additionally, Namibia's communal conservancies, managed by local communities, stand as a beacon of success in wildlife conservation. These conservancies, which form part of the protected areas network, protect wildlife beyond formally designated national parks, contribute significantly to anti-poaching efforts, and generate income through ecotourism and the sustainable use of natural resources. This model not only promotes biodiversity but also enhances local livelihoods, proving that economic prosperity and environmental stewardship can indeed go hand in hand (World Wildlife Fund, n.d.). Moreover, Namibia has a unique opportunity to lead by example, demonstrating how green jobs can drive both environmental sustainability and social equity. By embracing this path, Namibia can inspire other nations to follow suit, proving that a greener future is not only possible but also essential for a prosperous and just world.

## **Challenges and Solutions**

Transitioning to a green economy presents several challenges. Namibia needs to develop new skills and training programmes to support the green job market, which is a significant hurdle. However, these challenges are surmountable. Proactive government policies, robust educational programmes, and incentives for

businesses to adopt green practices can greatly ease this transition. The Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia is pivotal in providing the necessary technical coordination and stakeholder engagement for green initiatives (“Creating Jobs through Green Economy”, 2013). Overcoming these challenges requires a collective effort and a shift in mindset. The government must prioritise green education and training, ensuring that the workforce is equipped with the skills needed for the green economy. This is not just about economic development but about securing a sustainable future for Namibia. Businesses, too, must be encouraged and incentivised to adopt green practices. These changes can drive economic growth while safeguarding the environment, proving that far from being mutually exclusive, economic progress and environmental sustainability are mutually reinforcing.

Namibia stands at a crossroads, with the opportunity to turn these challenges into stepping stones for a greener future. By investing in the necessary infrastructure, and advocating and fostering a culture of sustainability, Namibia can lead the way in creating a resilient, green economy. This is a call to action for all stakeholders to embrace this vision and work together towards a sustainable and prosperous future.

## **Future Outlook**

The future of green jobs in Namibia is promising. With continued investment in renewable energy and sustainable practices, the country is well-positioned to achieve its climate goals and foster economic growth (“Creating Jobs through Green Economy”, 2013).

## **Conclusion**

Namibia’s green transition holds immense promise. By embracing green jobs, conserving biodiversity, and adopting practices associated with a circular economy, Namibia can lead the way towards a sustainable future where economic development and environmental protection go hand in hand. Let us go green, and stay clean.

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