

What is a Green Job?

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To address climate change, we will need a new kind of economy with new kinds of jobs. These new “*green jobs*” should be good for people, the planet, and the economy. So what is a green job?

Green jobs are good jobs.

They pay a wage that a family could live on. They provide opportunities for advancement. They provide pathways out of poverty. They are good for people and the planet. Van Jones (see p. 36), director of Green for All, says, “The *green economy* cannot be built with solar sweat shops and Wal-Mart wind farms.”

Green jobs come with training.

Government must invest in training programs. People will learn new skills as well as adapt old skills for new technologies. Mechanics who know how to fix internal combustion engines will learn how to fix electric engines.

Green jobs are local jobs.

Much of the work we need to do to slow global warming is local. It cannot be done in offshore factories. For instance, you can’t pick up a house, send it to China to have solar panels installed, and have it shipped back.

Green jobs strengthen urban and rural communities.

Green jobs mean a reinvestment in the communities hardest hit in recent decades. For instance, new spending on mass transit would help inner-city residents. A new factory making windmills might revive a rural town.



Activists lobby in Washington, DC, for Green Jobs. See <www.1sky.org> for more information and to watch a short video of Van Jones talking about Green Jobs. Photo by Sam Hummel <www.aashe.net>.

Green jobs help make a sustainable economy.

They use *renewable energy* and they do not create a lot of pollution or waste. They create products that people truly need and that are well made. They are part of a plan to create long-term health and well-being for everyone – not just short-term gain for a few.

Green jobs protect our health and the health of the planet.

The “green” in green-collar means these jobs protect nature and people. They will limit *greenhouse-gas* emissions, reduce pollution, and make the planet a healthier place for all living things.

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Sources: The Canadian Labour Council <<http://canadianlabour.ca>> and Green for All <www.greenforall.org>.