

# NITO

## Climate and environment measures in the workplace

A guide for members and employee representatives





NITO

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“ *The climate crisis is the greatest challenge of our times.* ”



## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to inspire and provide you, as members and employee representatives, with knowledge and concrete suggestions on how you can contribute to implementing climate and environment measures in your workplace. Existing agreements on climate, environment and sustainability already provide scope for taking such measures. The climate crisis is the greatest challenge of our times. In the coming decades, the world will undergo major transformations on its way towards a low-emissions society. We will contribute to adapting our society and infrastructure to a changed climate.

Through the measures suggested in this guide, NITO encourages employee representatives and members to take an active role in proposing environmentally friendly solutions in the workplace and in putting climate and environment on the agenda. As well as reducing your enterprise's climate and environmental impacts, we believe this will generate engagement, greater competitiveness and a good spirit of cooperation at local level.

The demand for skills in sustainable technology and solutions, circular economy, climate change adaptation and other climate and environment measures is increasing. Employees who possess these skills represent a competitive advantage

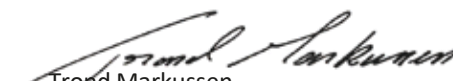
for employees themselves and for their enterprises.

### **This guide provides an introduction to:**

- ▶ how to put climate and environment higher up on the agenda in your enterprise
- ▶ suggestions for concrete measures that can be implemented
- ▶ existing agreements on climate, environment and sustainability

NITO has adopted concrete climate targets for reducing emissions by 55 per cent by 2030 and for being climate neutral by 2050. We will achieve this by, among other things, leveraging our purchasing power to set requirements for our suppliers.

We hope that the examples provided in this guide will inspire you as employees and employee representatives in workplaces around the country to take action. The skills of our engineers and technologists are invaluable.

  
Trond Markussen,  
President, NITO

## CHAPTER 1

# HOW TO PUT CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT MEASURES ON THE AGENDA IN YOUR WORKPLACE

NITO wants to promote employees' unique skills and knowledge of their enterprises and make them aware of how they can make an impact. Moreover, there are several examples of employers rewarding employees who contribute to proposing climate and environment measures, which undoubtedly will serve as an important source of motivation for many.

In this chapter we will take a closer look at what you as employees and employee representatives can do in practice. We will also suggest some concrete measures that can be implemented in your enterprise.

## It pays for enterprises to invest in climate, environment and sustainability.

Moving sustainability and environment higher up on the agenda will benefit not only our planet, but our economy too. Increasing requirements and expectations

are being set for business models and operations that are sustainable. The potential benefits for enterprises and companies that invest in sustainability are many: easier access to capital from investors, enhanced reputation and trust, a supply of talented employees who are attracted to sustainable enterprises, stronger customer loyalty, a high level of innovation, and the ability to reorganise and adapt.

### What can you as an employee do?

If we are to succeed with climate efforts in the workplace, we need cooperation between employers and employees. We can achieve more if everyone contributes with their professional know-how.

As an employee, you have the opportunity to raise and discuss issues and suggestions to do with operations, climate and environment, whether you work in an enterprise where these issues are already given priority or where they could be moved higher up on the agenda. If you have an idea or suggestion, you can bring it to the management on your own initiative. You can also contact your employee representative and, for example, propose a members' meeting for those interested in developing ideas, solutions and measures that could be brought to management.

Such efforts require not only the experience and skills of employees, but also the ability to think innovatively and acquire new skills. This means that raising these issues can also create new opportunities that can advance careers in the form of new problem solving and career development opportunities.

### What can you as an employee representative do?

As an employee representative, you have the right to be informed of and discuss matters that concern the employees, and it is often the case that no decisions can be made without consulting you first. As an employee representative, you have as much right as your employer to put forward proposals, and you have an opportunity to make sure that employees can make climate-friendly and environmentally friendly choices in their working day. It can be useful to refer to provisions regarding climate, environment and sustainability in existing agreements, but if you have a good idea, management will normally be very interested in hearing about it.

### How to create a sense of ownership of climate and environment issues in workplace groups.

Climate and environment could be a fixed item on the meeting agenda for workplace groups, and the starting point could be the enterprise's climate activities and strategies, if any exist, or to put them on the agenda in order to propose measures. Many companies now have resources dedicated to environment and sustainability issues, such as sustainability managers. It may be a good idea to gain an overview of what resources and ambitions your enterprise already has and to initiate dialogue with the relevant personnel. This is good opportunity to cooperate with other trade unions in the enterprise.



*Many companies now have resources dedicated to environment and sustainability issues.*

Another good starting point for making suggestions to your enterprise on climate and environment measures could be to include your members in developing proposed measures. This is important for ensuring that measures have legitimacy and support in the workplace. Remember that many engineers and technologists possess unique skills in green solutions and technologies and therefore often have many ideas. They may come with good suggestions to move forward with, and provide you with a chance to discuss your own ideas before bringing them to management.

You could also start by asking management if it wants suggestions for climate and environment activities that could reduce waste, energy consumption, greenhouse gases and various related costs. A positive response will give you legitimacy to use your working hours.



The Norwegian labour market is characterised by good relations at central and local level regarding negotiations, cooperation and co-determination. This cooperation includes a tradition for determining not only wage growth but also labour market rights and obligations. It also offers enterprises opportunities to develop in a broad spectrum of areas and, not least, to take on broader social responsibility.

The Norwegian model is under pressure. In future, NITO will recruit more socially conscious engineers and technologists. We know that the goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and environmental impacts will dominate the coming decades. Any experience we can gain from this work will be useful because it could minimise the climate and environmental footprint of a variety of enterprises and provide practical examples which NITO can raise with central authorities as examples to be followed.

## CHAPTER 2

# MEASURES FOR A MORE CLIMATE-FRIENDLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY WORKPLACE

In this chapter we look at potential measures which you as an employee or employee representative can propose be implemented in your workplace. Many enterprises are already well under way with activities like these but can still improve, while others could address and initiate such activities with the help of suggestions and ideas from you.

## Overall management systems for climate and environment:

### Carbon footprint and carbon budget

For many enterprises, the first step in their climate activities is to calculate their carbon footprint. This provides an overview of how an enterprise is impacting the climate and shows how many emissions it is actually emitting. A carbon footprint provides an important starting point for defining plans and measures to reduce emissions.

### A carbon footprint often consists of three parts known as Scopes 1 to 3<sup>1</sup>:

- ▶ Scope 1 accounts for an enterprise's direct greenhouse gas emissions from production and transport.
- ▶ Scope 2 accounts for an enterprise's indirect emissions from energy such as electricity and district heating.
- ▶ Scope 3 accounts for an enterprise's other indirect emissions from activities such as travel, events and procurement of goods and services.

<sup>1</sup> The Greenhouse Gas Protocol is the most widely used and recognised standard for accounting and reporting greenhouse gas emissions. It is used to map emission sources and to report on carbon footprints in a comparable manner, and serves as the basis for carbon footprints used in other standards and frameworks for sustainability reporting.



While industrial enterprises often generate the largest share of direct emissions, office-based enterprises often account for the largest share of indirect emissions.

It could be a good idea to review your enterprise's carbon footprint and ask questions about emissions and what measures will be initiated to reduce them. The 'Guide Against Greenwashing' provides tips on how to assess the measures your enterprise has implemented: [gronnvasking.no](https://gronnvasking.no)

A growing number of municipalities and enterprises are now setting their own carbon budgets. A carbon budget provides a summary of measures implemented to reduce emissions and estimates the expected size of emission reductions and who is responsible for implementing the measures.

### Eco-certification

Eco-certification and eco-management systems can both help workplaces reduce their emissions and environmental impacts and show the outside world that they are taking action and meeting specific climate and environmental criteria through a certification scheme. This applies to measures in areas such as energy consumption, transport, waste, and procurement of goods and services.

### A range of eco-certification schemes are available:

- ▶ The Eco-Lighthouse Foundation ([www.miljofyrtarn.no](http://www.miljofyrtarn.no)) serves enterprises of all sizes in both the public and private sectors. The criteria focus on areas including working environment, waste, energy, procurement and transport. Specific industry criteria have also been defined for different types of enterprises. Certification takes place when an enterprise can document that it meets the set general and industry criteria. An environmental report and action plan must be published annually.
- ▶ The Nordic Swan Ecolabel ([www.svanemarket.no](http://www.svanemarket.no)) focuses on products, goods and services.
- ▶ ISO 14001 for large enterprises is based on international standards and consists of a system of environmental management ([www.iso.org/iso-14001-environmental-management.html](http://www.iso.org/iso-14001-environmental-management.html)).
- ▶ The European Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) is an environmental management system developed by the European Commission for enterprises to evaluate, report and improve their environmental performance: [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/index\\_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/index_en.htm).

## Other climate and environment measures:

### Energy efficiency and systems

Energy efficiency is a low-cost and effective climate measure. The same applies to alternative energy sources and to ways of making energy production more environmentally friendly. A large share of energy consumption in buildings is used for heating, so any measures that reduce energy consumption for heating purposes will help save energy. This usually applies to electricity. Even though the electricity that is produced in Norway is largely renewable, clean energy is still a limited resource. Rising electricity prices have given enterprises a strong economic incentive to become more energy efficient.

### Potential measures:

- ▶ Use environmentally friendly alternative heating sources in buildings, such as heat pumps, district heating, heat recovery, bioenergy (wood chip, biopellets and biogas) or solar panels.
- ▶ Start off by implementing an energy monitoring system to make it easier to identify where energy consumption could be reduced and to detect faults in technical installations faster.



- ▶ Install a building management system for heating.
- ▶ Improve heat recovery of ventilated air and install demand controlled ventilation.
- ▶ Install new lighting equipment and automation for lighting control (demand control).
- ▶ Install heat pumps.
- ▶ Improve regulation of the heating system and replace thermostat valves.
- ▶ Establish good procedures for indoor temperatures. The most important measure here is to reduce energy consumption for heating purposes when a building is not in use, such as during evenings, weekends and holidays. Energy consumption drops by around 5 per cent for every degree the temperature is reduced.
- ▶ Install time-controlled ventilation and heating systems. Time controls help save energy without affecting the indoor climate or temperature when the building is in use.



### Transport




Almost one-third of Norway's total greenhouse gas emissions comes from transport, half of which comes from road traffic. Many enterprises have huge potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, whether they create them through direct emissions from their own vehicles or through road, ferry and air travel.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a surge in the use of digital meetings, which could significantly reduce emissions created by travel and meeting activities. Striking a better balance between digital meetings and physical meetings that necessitate travel could help reduce emissions from transport.

### Here are some concrete tips on how to reduce your enterprise's transport-related emissions:

- ▶ Enterprises with high levels of transport-related emissions could invest in electric or hybrid vehicle fleets and eco-friendly fuels. Increasingly higher requirements are being set in areas such as zero-emission construction sites in connection with tenders and procurement, so one argument for why enterprises should implement them is that it would make them more competitive. Measures that could be implemented to reduce travel to and from work and during office hours:
  - ▶ Encourage employees to use public transport wherever possible, and introduce competitions and reward schemes to encourage cycling and walking.
  - ▶ Install bike parking facilities and reduce the number of available car parking spaces if possible.
  - ▶ Purchase electric bikes that can be borrowed for meeting activities.
- ▶ Update or develop a more conservative travel policy for your enterprise. Set concrete targets for reducing emissions from travel activities such as air travel, and encourage the use of environmentally friendly transport and more digital meetings. For example, develop check lists for employees aimed at reducing the amount of travel.

### A check list to reduce emissions from the enterprise's travel activities could consist of questions such as:

- ▶ Does the trip align with the enterprise's priorities? 
- ▶ Could a local employee attend the meeting (if the enterprise has regional offices)?
- ▶ Could the trip be replaced by holding digital meetings? 
- ▶ Is it possible to use an environmentally friendly travel alternative? Could trips be combined with other meetings/seminars?
- ▶ Could the number of travellers be reduced or could meetings and seminars be arranged close to public transport hubs? 



## Procurements

Consumer power applies not only to individuals but also to enterprises as buyers. The public sector alone buys goods and services worth more than NOK 500 billion annually. The choices we make when we procure goods and services can give suppliers huge incentives to make their production processes as sustainable as possible.

As an employee or employee representative, you can put climate and environment on the agenda when your

enterprise is evaluating procurement, and help ensure that it sets requirements for suppliers regarding low-emission solutions, the environment, circular economy and working conditions.

Looking for ecolabels is a good place to start. The official labels in Norway are the Nordic Swan Ecolabel and the EU Ecolabel. In order to use these labels, manufacturers must meet stringent requirements in areas as diverse as raw materials extraction to waste management. Read more about the Nordic Swan Ecolabel at <https://svanemarket.no> and the EU Ecolabel at <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/>.

### Tips on procurement and purchasing processes:

Many of NITO's members possess unique procurement expertise that provides them with opportunities to exert influence. A lot can be done to make procurement of goods and services more climate and environmentally friendly by asking a few basic questions:

- ▶ Does the product have a long lifetime and low energy consumption?

*Looking for ecolabels is a good place to start*

- ▶ Is the product repairable with spare parts that are available?  
Can the product be recycled? What chemicals does the product contain?
- ▶ Is it possible to buy a used product rather than new? For example, second-hand office furniture can be bought in many places around the country.
- ▶ Can procurement and purchasing processes be made subject to climate change criteria? In other words, develop purchasing strategies where climate change is included in the selection criteria. Suppliers could be required to document emission cuts or plans to do so by, for example, setting a target to cut emissions by 50 per cent by 2030.
- ▶ You could also refer to laws and regulations; In 2017 a new Public Procurement Act entered into force that requires the public sector to make procurement choices that are as sustainable as possible. Employee representatives in public sector workplaces can ask their superiors how this act is followed up in practice.

The Norwegian Agency for Public and Financial Management has prepared guidance material for sustainable procurement. See more at <https://anskaffelser.no/berekraftige-anskaffingar/klima-og-miljo-i-offentlige-anskaffelser>.

The website on green purchasing also offers many tips on how to proceed: [www.gronneinnkjop.no/faq](http://www.gronneinnkjop.no/faq).

## Waste management

Waste takes up a lot of space. On top of that, our growing consumption means that we are squandering increasingly scarce resources on which we are totally dependent. Supplies of certain minerals are already facing shortages, and the linear economy, which is largely based on disposable products, has resulted in large-scale raw material extraction and goods production which also create huge greenhouse gas emissions.

One simple measure is to facilitate a good system for sorting waste in the workplace. Provide more waste bins and establish a labelling system showing what waste type goes where. Make agreements with cleaning contractors to ensure that the enterprise's waste is treated at a modern waste disposal plant with maximum recycling.



You will find many good suggestions on how to treat waste at [sortere.no](http://sortere.no) and [grontpunkt.no](http://grontpunkt.no). [Grontpunkt.no](http://grontpunkt.no) provides a good overview of waste disposal and return schemes.





### **Canteen operations and food waste**

As an employee, you can also influence how your organisation's canteen is operated when it comes to selecting food suppliers, reducing food waste and establishing vegetarian days or vegetarian alternatives to reduce meat consumption.

#### **Useful tips:**

- ▶ Through dialogue with suppliers, identify relevant areas for setting criteria related to climate and environmental impacts. Suppliers hold information about which factors affect the carbon footprint of the products they supply. This can be determined by factors such as country of origin, energy consumption from fossil fuel-heated greenhouses, whether cultivation has led to deforestation, the composition of meal ingredients and the amount of foods with a high carbon footprint.
- ▶ Ask suppliers about measures to prevent food waste and any certification and labelling schemes.
- ▶ Eat up all your food: food waste is a major problem in a country where we throw away 230,000 tonnes of edible food every year. As much as one-third of the food in the world is thrown away. Many canteens have already adopted 'nudging' techniques to reduce food waste, such as encouraging people to use smaller plates so that they take smaller portions and arranging for any leftover food to be donated to a good cause or reused in other dishes.

### **Climate adaptation and climate risk**

Norway's climate is changing, and enterprises and society at large must adapt to a new everyday life with more frequent extreme weather events and natural catastrophes. Climate adaptation is about understanding the impacts of a changing climate and implementing measures to prevent damage while, on the other hand, leveraging the opportunities these changes may bring.

Few enterprises have yet to take seriously the potential risks of climate change, and may therefore miss out on the potential competitive advantages of being a climate-resilient enterprise. No requirements currently apply for reporting climate risk and climate change adaptation, but they are expected to become an obligatory part of financial reporting at some point, at least for large enterprises.

As an employee or employee representative, you could suggest that an assessment be conducted of the physical climate risks for the enterprise, and what economic and practical consequences these might have. For example, you could ask what will happen to your enterprise in the event of a flood, drought or heatwave. Conducting a simple analysis of potential factors to which your enterprise is exposed may in turn help put climate change adaptation measures in place. Another measure could be to define an acceptable level of damage caused by climate change based on a cost-benefit analysis of climate change adaptation measures and what should be prioritised.

### **Skills building**

Engineers' most important social responsibility is to develop technology for the future. Continuing and further education in climate, environment and sustainability must therefore be promoted to prepare engineers to manage the transition to a sustainable low-emission society and to build the necessary skills to develop new technological solutions. NITO is promoting the need for a skills agreement in the labour market that will be safeguarded through dialogue between the parties in the workplace and in the tripartite cooperation between the authorities and the social partners. The aim is to give individuals the right to professional development and thereby resolve current and future skills needs in the labour market.

To prepare for the transition related to climate, environment, digitalisation and new industries, there is a need for technologists with specialist skills as well as for skills such as cooperation, communication and abilities for critical thinking and ethical reflection. Strengthening the relevance of the labour market is a long-term process that demands investment and resources.



## CHAPTER 3

# EXISTING AGREEMENTS ON CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Many of NITO's basic agreements with employer organisations place emphasis on

the importance of dialogue between employees/employee representatives and management in the workplace on climate, environment and sustainability. Indeed in recent years, several basic agreements and other agreements that apply to NITO have incorporated provisions that address these issues. These agreements imply that these issues will be included in the dialogue conducted in the workplace between the enterprises' employees/employee representatives and management. They imply not only a right but also an obligation to follow up these issues in local cooperation.

A common feature of these provisions is that they place much of the responsibility for finding concrete solutions on employees, employee representatives and management. This is because that is where the potential lies for implementing concrete climate and environment measures that are adapted to individual enterprises.



Not all of NITO's basic agreements contain provisions on sustainability; for example, these are not clearly articulated in NITO's current basic agreement with the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry (NHO). This does not prevent climate and environment from being raised locally using existing, more general, wording in agreements, where employees and management can discuss various measures and solutions to find out what would be most effective in terms of measures, costs and benefits and, where appropriate, proposals for tariff regulations.

*It is not part of NITO's policy to replace demands for pay and working conditions with demands for sustainability.*

NITO's 2021 congress was concerned that employers might link negotiations and discussions on climate and environment to pay issues by citing costs. It is not part of NITO's policy to replace demands for pay and working conditions with demands for sustainability. For this reason, it is recommended that questions of cooperation between the parties on climate, environment and sustainability be raised in separate processes at other times and, ideally, with participants other than those involved in the pay settlements.

**Here is an overview of existing agreements:**

## Municipal sector

The Local Government Act and the Basic Agreement in the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) secures municipal employees the right to co-determination in matters that concern them. The intention of the Basic Agreement is that climate and environment measures promoting the sustainable development goals are included as part of the dialogue between employees/employee representatives and management. Employee representatives in Norway's municipal sector should therefore include climate and environment measures in the cooperation with their employers.

The Basic Agreement in KS applies not only to the ordinary municipalities but also to areas where the party on the employer's side is Samfunnsbedriftene

(an employers' association and interest group for enterprises in the municipal sector, previously KS Bedrift). This applies to areas that follow the collective bargaining agreement for enterprises exposed to competition and to the collective agreements for energy enterprises with membership in Samfunnsbedriftene.

**For example, the purpose clause in the introduction to the Basic Agreement, third paragraph, states:**

*'The parties emphasise the importance, in the cooperation between the parties, of promoting an understanding of and insight into the enterprise's impact on the external environment and climate.'*

Thereafter, section 1 of the Basic Agreement (which primarily addresses municipalities and county municipalities) states: *'The Basic Agreement shall, within the scope of local political democracy and through good cooperation, co-determination and joint consultation, contribute to an adaptable, sustainable and service-oriented municipal sector in the best interests of the inhabitants.'*

Furthermore, the following wording has been included in Annex 2 to the Basic Agreement:

***'Climate and environment***

*With reference to the Basic Agreement's purpose clause, third paragraph, the local parties will discuss climate and environment measures in the municipality/county municipality/enterprise.'*

## Public sector

In the Basic Agreement for the Civil Service, the following wording has been included in the paragraph defining the agreement's purposes and intentions:

***'Environment and climate***

Consideration of the environment and climate shall be part of the cooperation between the parties and co-determination and shall contribute to sustainable development.'

**And the following is stated in the purpose clause:**

*Managers at all levels shall exercise a supportive and involving management style that helps to prevent and resolve conflicts. Managers shall facilitate creative learning environments and real co-determination. The employee representatives shall be included in the decision-making process in matters concerning the employees' employment situation, including issues related to environment and climate.*

**In connection with the review of the Basic Agreement for the Civil Service in 2022, some amendments were made to the minutes of the negotiations, which now read as follows:**

***'No. 1 Sustainability and environment***

*The parties agree that if Norway is to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, the civil service must take the lead and all government agencies must contribute. The local parties must find solutions for promoting sustainability and reducing the carbon footprint in individual enterprises. It is important that reorganisation be facilitated to ensure innovation, climate-friendly solutions and protection of nature. During the agreement period, the central parties will map how the local parties can be supported in this work. The mapping will be performed by a cross-party group.*

*In addition to SDG 13: Climate action, the parties will stress the importance of the following sustainable development goals (SDGs) in the parties' continued work: SDG 4: Quality education, SDG 5: Gender equality, SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth, and SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals.*

*Skills building in issues related to sustainability, climate and environment will be facilitated across government agencies; see chapter 5.3 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.'*



## Spekter

With regard to the employers' association Spekter, one of the objectives in the introduction to the Basic Agreement (entered into between SAN and Spekter) states that the Basic Agreement should contribute to sustainable development by making measures addressing climate, nature and environment in the enterprise part of the cooperation between the parties.

**Furthermore, part II, section 28 of the Basic Agreement states:**

*'Through co-determination and cooperation, employees will contribute their experience and insight towards creating the economic conditions necessary for the continued development of the enterprise and for secure and satisfying working conditions, sustainable development of the enterprise, a good, functioning working environment, and result achievement for the benefit of both the enterprise and its employees.'*

**Moreover, we find the following paragraph in section 30 (discussions about the enterprise's ordinary operations):**

*'The enterprise's management shall discuss measures in the enterprise related to climate, nature and environment with the employee representatives with the aim of promoting sustainable development.'*

**When Part A of the Basic Agreement was negotiated in 2021, the following statement was entered in the minutes:**

### **'Sustainability and environment**

*The central parties agree that it is important and relevant to discuss sustainability and environment from an overall perspective, in line with the UN's sustainable development goals, at the same time as consideration be given to value creation. It is also important that the parties in the enterprise discuss and seek local solutions for how to reduce the carbon footprint.*

*The central parties therefore commit to include the work and follow-up activities in the revision of the Basic Agreement in 2021.*

*A cross-party committee will be appointed by 1 November 2020. The committee will develop a guide to how the parties in the enterprises can cooperate on continuing to contribute to sustainable development in the individual enterprises; see the provisions on information, cooperation and co-determination in the Basic Agreement.'*



**The guide can be read here:**

It contains, among other things, some examples that may also be relevant for employee representatives in areas of the agreement other than those concerning Spekter.

## Samfunnsbedriftene/Energy Agreement II

**Part II of the basic collective agreements for energy enterprises with membership in Samfunnsbedriftene (Energiavtale II) previously included separate minutes concerning sustainability and climate. The wording has now been slightly amended following negotiations over revision of the agreement for the period 2022–2024 and has been inserted as a separate paragraph in the actual agreement as follows:**

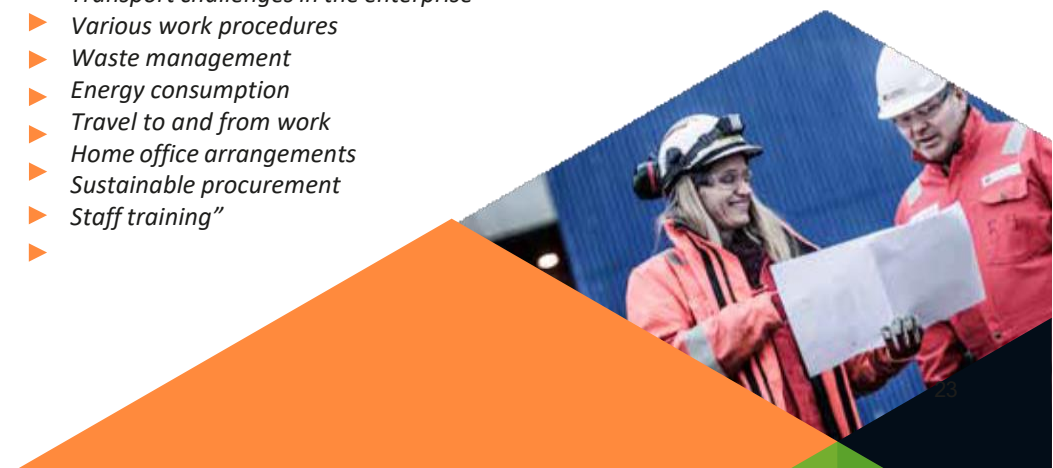
### **'Section 19 Sustainability and climate**

*The UN's sustainable development goals are also highly relevant in the energy sector. In this connection it is recommended that the local parties put this on the agenda as noted in the purpose clause of the Basic Agreement.*


*Climate and environment measures that promote the sustainable development goals are included as part of the cooperation between the parties, in accordance with the Basic Agreement. Processes between the parties should therefore be established at local level to regularly discuss environment measures that improve the enterprise's climate impacts.*

### **These can be topics such as**

- ▶ Transport challenges in the enterprise
- ▶ Various work procedures
- ▶ Waste management
- ▶ Energy consumption
- ▶ Travel to and from work
- ▶ Home office arrangements
- ▶ Sustainable procurement
- ▶ Staff training"







*In all cases it can be a good idea to forge alliances with like-minded trade unions in the workplace.*



## Private sector

Similarly clear wording has not yet been incorporated into the Basic Agreement between NITO and NHO, but it can easily be argued that, in more general terms, the purposes of cooperation and co-determination also apply to sustainability.

**It could be said that the Basic Agreement with NHO presents several opportunities to discuss sustainability, even though the word ‘sustainability’ or similar concrete terms are not mentioned. One such example is found in section**

**8-1 of the Basic Agreement, which states:**

*‘Through cooperation and co-determination, employees will contribute their experience and insight towards creating the economic conditions necessary for the continued development of the enterprise and for secure and satisfying working conditions, for the benefit of both the enterprise and its employees.’*

In all cases it can be a good idea to forge alliances with like-minded trade unions in the workplace.

Potential clarification for future use may lie in the wording included the minutes from the revision of the Basic Agreement with NHO in 2022, which states that the NHO–NITO cooperation committee would discuss sustainability and environment from an overall perspective during the period.

NHO also encourages its members to implement climate measures:

[www.nho.no/tema/energi-miljo-og-klima/klimatiltak-for-bedrifter](http://www.nho.no/tema/energi-miljo-og-klima/klimatiltak-for-bedrifter)

**Moreover, section 8-1 of the Basic Agreement between NITO and Virke states:**

*‘Through cooperation and co-determination, employees will contribute their experience and insight towards creating the economic conditions necessary for efficient operation of the enterprise, sustainable development, and for secure and satisfying working conditions, for the benefit of both the enterprise and its employees.’*

**The revision of the Basic Agreement between NITO and VIRKE in the autumn of 2022 introduced a third item in the minutes as follows:**

*‘The parties emphasise the importance, in the cooperation between the parties, of promoting an understanding of and insight into the enterprise’s impact on the external environment and climate. The parties agree that climate and environment measures that promote the sustainable development goals are part of the cooperation between the parties, in accordance with the Basic Agreement.’*

*The parties plan to establish central cooperation in the area of sustainability with the purpose of providing guidance to enterprises in their activities on climate and environment measures.’*

## CHAPTER 4

# POTENTIAL COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT DEMANDS WITH ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Many of the measures described in chapter 2 can be included in collective pay agreements. They can also be used in other formats, such as in cooperation projects aimed at changing the enterprise's environmental awareness. As mentioned above, this work should take place separately from the work on negotiating pay and working conditions.

For an in-depth description of how demands for measures can be articulated, we recommend the book entitled *Grønne tariffavtaler* [Green Collective Agreements] by Jon Olav Bjergene and Inger Marie Hagen (Gyldendal 2020). Employee representatives seeking inspiration for their work on local collective agreements can order the book from NITO's secretariat.

The book describes the motivation for negotiating sustainability measures; in other words, incorporating something as a provision in a collective pay agreement, and frameworks and instruments which employee representatives have at their disposal through collective pay agreements.

### Some examples of agreement demands that are described are:

- ▶ Energy management, electrification of enterprises and rain forest-friendly fuels
- ▶ Food, food waste and more environmentally friendly and ecological food
- ▶ Sustainability in the value chain, including through procurement and certification schemes
- ▶ Investments and pension contributions in environmental funds
- ▶ Skills development

The examples include a range of concrete suggestions for putting issues on the agenda and formulating concrete demands, and incentives for strengthening ownership of climate and environment issues, such as demands for linking management bonuses to emission reductions.

## The way forward

Engineers and technologists hold the key to the green shift. Given the current agreements and provisions on climate, environment and sustainability and the high level of trust and cooperation we have in Norway through the Norwegian model, NITO's members and employee representatives are well placed to contribute to implementing climate and environment measures.

The more people that put these issues on their enterprise's agenda around the country, the greater the overall climate and environment effects they will have. This work will also enhance the enterprise's competitiveness and employees' skills and make workplaces better prepared to meet increasing requirements and expectations from the authorities, customers and investors.

If we look ahead, climate and environment measures may also become part of what the social partners negotiate in order to strengthen the labour market's contribution. Some Norwegian employee organisations have already begun talking about this in their negotiations with employers. Social partners in countries such as the United Kingdom and Canada have already negotiated 'green measures' through collective pay agreements. One such example is an agreement that environmentally friendly travel to and from the workplace should be counted as working hours and be remunerated or financed by the employer. One possible step in this direction would be to formalise the possibility to enter into and negotiate agreements on issues concerning sustainability, climate and environment at local level.

NITO will encourage its members and employee representatives to use this guide to take the initiative to implement climate and environment measures in their enterprises. It will be good for the planet, for you as an employee, and for your enterprise's competitiveness.

**Good luck!**

NITO always wants to hear from members about what works and what does not work in practice, and about best practices which others can learn from. If you or your department have any suggestions or experiences you want to share, send them to [per-ole.hansen@nito.no](mailto:per-ole.hansen@nito.no)



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