

# Sustainable careers within greening economies

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## Abstract

Sustainable Livelihoods are more adaptable than precarious jobs, for career development through Decent Work. An essential element for Career Sustainability is Climate action, that includes Just Transitions from carbon-intensive to carbon-neutral or regenerative work. This paper analyses a municipal transition from coal-mining to a more carbon-neutral, city economy, which has foregrounded just transition for miners, and improved the wider ecosystem. The Polish city of Katowice in Poland illustrates how work and career structures, in this case municipal, can work for people in everyday life and their future careers. The case may also serve as a lighthouse project for future just transitions, as part of sustainable career development, by greening economies and supporting access to decent work for all.

## Keywords

Sustainable livelihoods, sustainable career, sustainable development, decent work, SDGs, climate action

## Introduction

Over a century ago, in the wake of a Great War (to end all wars), the International Labor Organization (ILO) was formed, with a goal of sustaining Humanity through universal access to decent work and livelihoods. Over half a century ago, post another world conflict, and during the Great Unfreezing of the 1960s, Open Systems theory proposed that “the study of organizations should take the social system level as its conceptual starting point, but that many of the actual measures [of work and livelihoods] will be constructed from observations and reports of individual behavior and attitude” (Katz & Kahn, 1966, p. 13, parenthesis added). Career development arguably encapsulates and encompasses these twin levels, system and psychological phenomena (Katz & Kahn, 1966).

Fast-forward to today, and we see ‘how’ that nexus is inherently formed. The world of work itself is in flux, including a Great Resignation, Quiet Quitting, an overarching climate crisis, and the rise of digitalization and digital mobility. Such poly-crisis poses real challenges to everyday needs for sustainable livelihoods, including for careers that are sustainable (OECD, 2024). Yet this flux may equally be an opportunity for significant change. This paper explores that issue, specifically what makes a career sustainable, from twin perspectives in (i) systems and (ii) psychology.

The ethos in the article also bridges another pair of levels: Structural vs. functional. According to the ILO (2024), the structural architecture of work itself is changing, [with] concerns... rising that ... labor market imbalances [between labor supply and demand] are structural, rather than cyclical, in nature.” (p. 1). Structural changes like these are certainly fundamental, and much of the ILO’s own ‘Decent Work Agenda’ (ILO, 1999–2024) speaks to the import of structuring work conditions (structures) to be decent, from work safety to remuneration.

At an everyday day level, research has charted work perceptions and attitudes, from happiness to commitment, and how they relate psychologically. Systems and phenomena. Yet people do not go to work to get ‘decent work conditions,’ or ‘work attitudes’ (Carr, 2024). Motivation ‘at’ work is not the same as motivation ‘to’ work. They go ‘to’ make livelihoods, and often to have functional careers in them, that are sustainable. This more *functional* view of systems and psychology, complementary to the structural, has been around since both Systems Theory and Psychology began - and it is one that we foreground in this article.

The wider systems backdrop for foregrounding a functional view is the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs. SDG-1, the Primary Goal, is to eradicate poverty in all its forms everywhere, including through decent work and sustainable careers (SDG-8).

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In total, there are 17 SDGs, 16 of which is intended to support the primary goal, by addressing poverties of opportunity in access to (for instance) nutrition, healthcare, education, and equal opportunity; to the wider SDGs that include opportunities to live in a secure society and sustainable climate; and through to partnerships for the goals (United Nations, 2024). The SDGs - like their predecessors the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - are a 'grand plan' for human development (Easterly, 2016). Like all grand plans, they require operationalization into everyday life for the plan to succeed. In that regard, the SDGs have arguably struggled (Carr et al., 2023). Hence, we will operationalize sustainable careers, to bring SDG-8 into everyday vocational life.

As well as SDG-1, through 8, the world cannot lose sight of the *remaining* SDGs, and especially, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the goals (12–15) that center on SDG-13 – Climate Action (UNCTAD, 2023). The environment is our life-support system, and without it careers cannot sustain (Di Fabio, 2024; Di Fabio & Tsuda, 2018). It is the overarching crisis that we all must address. Systemically, work impacts climate and climate impacts work, a mutually reinforcing systems dynamic that imposes natural Limits-to-Growth (Senge, 1992). The same applies to careers, which are ultimately anchored in everyday work, and work opportunities. In this article, therefore, we consider interactions between systems changes and human careers, that incorporate as paramount, climate action to increase access to decent work and thereby sustainable livelihoods.

### A work-climate nexus: city crucibles

Systems thinking tells us that change always comes at a cost, and it will thereby meet resistance from people who stand to lose rather than gain (Lewin, 1947). In the case of enabling sustainable careers, under SDG-13 – Climate Action, the world of work will need to change from an economic system in which occupations have traditionally been carbon-intensive, and -reliant, to a different one in which the footprint is greener; through a process of partnership (SDG-17), in which 'no-one is left behind.' In other words, we need a transition that is just. 'Just transition' has now become a watchword for climate action in the work and vocational space. In everyday careers, we need to consider how systems can function in ways that promote just transitions, as opposed to fostering career resistance to changes that are perceived to be unjust - and dysfunctional. (Hopner & Carr, 2024). We need to make sure that the security of people and the planet is foremost in socio-political, -cultural and -economic systems; and in how 'Just Transitions' are conceptualized and carried out for work. This article thus considers concrete, practical ways in which systems can foster just transitions to sustainable careers.

Those systems operate themselves at different levels. A key exemplar for enabling sustainable careers is the city, or municipality. Cities have been at the forefront of

enabling sustainable livelihoods through the concept, for example, of a living wage, and living wage ordinances. Since the US city of Baltimore first introduced theirs in the early 1990s, literally hundreds of cities around the world have followed suit (Carr, 2023). At a more macro level, labor and commodity markets, entailing global production and consumption, jointly affect and are affected by, climate change. Likewise, because of the nexus between work and the wider ecosystem, careers can become sustainable depending on the market configuration of climate, and societal, and economic realities that careers inhabit, and inherit (Hopner, 2023). Cities can become crucibles where these forces interact to produce just transitions to a green economy. Through a city case study (Katowice, below), we consider how local cities, *and* global markets, help to define what makes a career sustainable.

### What makes a career sustainable? a brief review

According to Van der Heijden and De Vos (2015) sustainable careers are "sequences of career experiences reflected through a variety of patterns of continuity over time, thereby crossing several social spaces, characterized by individual agency, herewith providing meaning to the individual" (p. 7). Ideally, this is continued employment in work that is rewarding and meaningful, appropriately and fairly remunerated (De Vos et al., 2020), and contributes to the greater good of people and planet (for a more extensive review, confer the psychology of sustainability and sustainable development framework (Di Fabio, 2017; Di Fabio et al., 2023; Di Fabio & Svicher, 2023, 2024; Kenny et al., 2023; Maree & Di Fabio, 2018).

Understanding what makes a career or the sequence of work experiences that "evolves over the individual's life course" (Van der Heijden & De Vos, 2015, p. 3) actually sustainable, requires a Systems thinking approach that *holds the person at the centre* (Di Fabio, 2017; Di Fabio et al., 2023). More specifically, such holds must show how other stakeholder groups (i.e., employers, peers, families), and contexts (i.e., economic and political settings, social and cultural norms, policies and institutions, work sector and occupation, or organisational culture and practices), dynamically interconnect, in order to enable people to stay in decent work across time (De Vos et al., 2020). A sustainable career can thereto be understood on three intersecting levels - personal, contextual, and temporal.

At the personal level, important resources are both generated and preserved across the span of people's careers' (Hobfoll, 1989). These include education, training, skills, competencies and self-development, career adaptability, and supportive relationships. Careers are things that people do, they exercise agency to make choices about work (paid and unpaid), in response to personal needs and desires, as well as external conditions and constraints (Van der Heijden & De Vos, 2015).

At the contextual level, people work within often changing labour markets and employment conditions. They are impacted by legislation and regular (re) negotiations

around income security and wage setting, social protections, and government support. These contexts can include social forces such as feminism or technology that can further play out in local workplace climates, which may be inclusive or exclusive (McDonald & Hite, 2018). All of these contexts interact, and in doing so raise implications for the sustainability of careers across time.

At this temporal level, careers or the “sequence of work experiences that evolves over the individual’s life course” means that understanding how the temporal dimension of work may function is also important (Van der Heijden & De Vos, 2015, p. 1). Many people now work in employment that is not necessarily specific and progressive. As such, “... the career is not limited to a linear sequence of uninterrupted work positions but can imply varying degrees of changes across jobs, organisations, occupations and employment status” (De Vos et al., 2020, p. 9). The increasingly unpredictable, ever-changing world of work may mean redefinition of capacities, especially with increased life expectancies and ageing workforces in many parts of the world, and alongside adjusting to new ways of working (i.e., digitally or remotely) (De Vos et al., 2020). Highlighting the need to pay attention to a psychological perspective of sustainable development (Di Fabio & Cooper, 2023).

The best indicators of a sustainable career are considered to be: Good health (physical and psychological), happiness (feelings of success from work), and productivity (strong performance and employability) (De Vos et al., 2020; see also, Blustein, 2006; Di Fabio et al., 2023). Successfully achieving these three indicators requires a *dynamic fit* between the person, organisation (if applicable), and wider contexts in terms of *adaptive* capacity for change that addresses changing situations and needs in work environments (De Vos et al., 2020). Functionally speaking then, developing sustainable careers requires boosting the capital of human beings by supporting opportunities for renewal whereby people can both consolidate and grow their capabilities. This in turn requires social and personal spaces to build the flexibility and adaptability to effectively function within existing and future labour markets (Newman, 2011).

Crucially, those future labor markets *cannot ignore climate change*, and its growing *impacts on opportunities for decent work* (Carr, 2023). The ILO have named environmental sustainability, decent work, and poverty eradication as three defining challenges for the twenty-first century (ILO, 2015). There are critical and unparalleled stresses on our planet, on its land, water and air (Sulich et al., 2021). Climate change is now an existential threat for human beings. The Earth is getting hotter, and since 1982, the rate of warming is three times faster than previous decades. To date, the ten warmest years on record were from 2014–2023 (Climate.Gov, 2023). Glaciers, and Ice sheets are melting, and permafrost is thawing with sea levels rising, which is directly impacting coastal areas. Warmer oceans are causing acidification and decreased oxygen levels. Rainfall patterns are changing

with precipitation increasing or decreasing dependent on geography (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 2021).

These changes are altering where and how people can live *and work*. Already, 3.6 billion people inhabit places that are highly vulnerable to climate change. Increasing climate events such as fires, heatwaves, droughts, floods and storms cause negative impacts at social, political, economic and personal levels, including livelihoods, workspaces and places. There is increased likelihood of societal and cultural upheaval, death and illness, disrupted livelihoods, fractured education, damaged food systems (WHO, 2023), and growth in extreme poverty, exacerbated by climate degradation and disruptions to livelihoods. It is estimated that 313.5 million people will be living in extreme poverty by 2030<sup>1</sup>, and factoring in climate changes scenarios, increases these figures by 18% to 305% dependent on geographical location<sup>2</sup> (Jafino et al., 2020).

To reduce the greenhouse gas emissions driving climate change, there have been a number of major steps taken. For example, the Paris Climate Accords of 2015 (United Nations, Climate Action, 2024) was the result of 190 countries pledging to keep global warming between 1.5 and 2 degrees celsius with each country and/or regions setting specific targets for reduction in carbon emissions by specific future dates, often 2030 or 2050 (Romm, 2022). This has precipitated a shift to replace fossil fuel consumption with renewable and clean energy sources, protect land and biodiversity, manage water efficiently, safeguard air, change agricultural production and transportation systems, create circular economies, and reduce waste. All these changes have the potential to help protect ecosystems, and with them, the livelihoods that both depend on, and contribute to them.

The greening of economies to help meet goals and targets for reduced or zero carbon emissions is entrenched, in some form, in most countries worldwide. The entrenchment has led for example to sustainable procurement, a green transition to building materials and construction processes, the utilizing of electric transportation or green fuels, energy and water conservation measures, repurposing and recycling, and to practicing responsible consumption and production (Central Denmark Region, 2023). Decent work is a vital part of that wider equation. Achieving any transitions to green economies will require skilled workforces - which means that governments need to partner with education, vocational and training institutions and businesses to develop and upskill/reskill workers into green livelihoods. These livelihoods require the knowledge, abilities and capacities needed to address environmental challenges, and to create new sustainable opportunities for labour and social growth (Deloitte, 2023). Sustainable careers are, thus, now embedded in the global striving for sustainability of people and planet.

### So, what makes a transition just?

At regional levels, the ILO predict that there will be a potential net global gain of 18 million jobs by 2030

through transitions to sustainable energy. Likewise, it is estimated that if Asia Pacific countries capitalize on decarbonization, this could create 180 million jobs by 2050 and add \$47 trillion to their shared economies (Deloitte, 2023). Creating the conditions for sustainable careers in greening economies requires global and regional approaches alongside whole-of-government support at national, and local levels. For example:

*Global.* The Bridging Innovation and Learning in TVET (BILT), instigated by the UNESCO-UNEVOC, UNESCO's center for technical vocational education and training (TVET), is a global knowledge platform designed to support TVET stakeholders and institutions across Europe, Asia-Pacific and Africa (European Training Foundation, 2024).

*Regional.* Frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda, the European Green Deal, and the European Sustainability Competence Framework highlight key areas for sustainability, and they set the scene for international and regional co-operation. This level of co-operation builds opportunities for sustainable careers that promote environmental and social sustainability through greening settings for occupational standards and training (European Training Foundation, 2024).

*National.* Networks such as the European Training Foundation support the greening of vocational education and training (VET), as does the Future Skills Unit within Education and Training Boards in Ireland. Likewise, the Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) has a teacher training program which supports climate literacy and action. Other examples of efforts towards greening of skills at a national level can be found in the Danish Government's 2024 'Strategy for Green Jobs in Agriculture' (Central Denmark Region, 2023).

*Vocational.* Many of the strategies and plans to move to green economies factor in transitions that are just. This includes the creation of decent work that serves to diminish poverty (Carr et al., 2021; Di Fabio & Maree, 2016), increase social inclusion, and provide social protections to support transition processes, such as job loss and impacts on communities (Blustein et al., 2019; Hopner & Carr, 2024). This decent work is often structured around providing socially responsible workplaces/spaces that are not only environmentally sustainable but also offer safe and healthy workplaces to support sustainable career development. This includes workplaces that have flexible working options, gender and ethnic diversity, work-life balance, and provide meaningful work (Central Denmark Region, 2023; Duffy et al., 2017; ILO, 2015).

*Municipal.* As well as country, regional and national-level initiatives, change can happen and is perhaps relatively manageable, at the level of cities in terms of just transitions and sustainable career development. As we have already seen, cities have led the way on living wages, as part of increasing access to decent work conditions (above). With respect to climate action, it is further estimated that cities produce approximately 75% of greenhouse gas emissions, 75% of the consumption of natural

resources and 70% of global energy consumption and will likely house 70% of humanity by 2050 (Kleibrink et al., 2023). Thus, we see that cities have a role to play in the enablement of just transitions.

We therefore now use a city case study, of Katowice a coal-mining city in Poland, to show how sustainable career development was effectively managed during a just transition to a greening economy. This transition came about from what might be considered as economic necessities, coupled with and stemming from wider structures, and functioning system dynamics (above). These necessities stemmed from market pressures and decreases in profit, expensive extraction costs and compliance issues following membership in the European Union. Nonetheless, necessity can be the mother of invention, and in this case, has the potential to show how careers can be made more sustainable through innovation and workforce investment.

### Katowice case study

Katowice is a capital city of Upper Silesia region located in the southern part of Poland. It is home to 290 thousand people and sits at the centre of the Górnośląsko-Zagłębiowska Metropolia (GZM) region, with the region responsible for around 8% of Poland's GDP (Mihaylov & Sala, 2022). The location of the town in the border region of Germany, Austria, Poland, Czech Republic, and Slovakia. Territorially separated from Poland in the thirteenth century, Katowice has changed both the course of its borders, and its national affiliations many times since then (Chmielewska & Szajnowska-Wysocka, 2011). Its rapid growth was fuelled by the region's heavy industry, a sector that flourished with the onset of Europe's industrial age. Industrialization took hold in the mid-eighteenth century when Germany gained control of the area from Austria. Recognizing the region's potential, the Germans established estate administrative centres, and Katowice was granted city status in 1865 (Chmielewska, 2013).

The city for several key reasons was extremely favourably placed for the development of metallurgy and mining. Katowice has rich mineral deposits, mostly hard coal, iron ore and other mineral resources, which formed the regional base of heavy-industry development (Chmielewska, 2013). The terrain of the land is relatively flat which made it easy to build mines and steelworks. Additionally, the presence of numerous rivers provided water for the production process. Katowice further provided cheap labour. Prior to industrialization, the region consisted of small, relatively poor villages, which provided a ready-made workforce for the growth of mining and heavy industry (Skrzypek, n.d). Katowice was located on important communication routes which facilitated the transport of raw materials and finished products. The railway system was quickly developed, which further improved the communication with other regions of Europe. Investment in the region was supported by Germans who saw a potential in the Upper Silesian Region, and had resources to actively create

an infrastructure and favourable conditions for entrepreneurs (Chmielewska, 2013).

The city's industrial growth was paralleled by significant political tensions. Poland and Germany contended for control of the region during both World Wars, with Poland ultimately winning power over the region after the Second World War. Due to its well-developed industry and a large concentration of the working class, it became a Polish flagship worker's city (Woźniczka, 2002). Post-war geopolitical realignments placed Poland within the Soviet-led Eastern Bloc. Coal mining reached its zenith during this period, with an annual extraction of 200 million tons culminating in an era often referred to as the "world created by underground wealth" (Chmielewska, 2010).

As miners were a driving force of this underground wealth, they were also a driving force for social change in the nation. Miners strikes wrought significant political changes and helped Poland to overthrow communist authorities in 1989. Poland was now free from a centrally planned economy and the primary economic goal was to transition to a free market system. This shift dramatically destabilized the mining sector, as it became increasingly reliant on global market competitiveness. Mines unable to meet the new market demands and generate profits were forced to close (Lisowski, 2006). Within the first year of the transition from communism, one-third of the Polish mines were closed, including several in Katowice (NetTG, 2020). Those mines that remained operational were compelled to enhance efficiency and modernize production to survive in the competitive marketplace. This transition ignited widespread protests, as miners, once a privileged group in society, faced a decline in both status and economic security, and increasingly became pushed to the margins of the society (Mitrega, 1999).

Poland further underwent significant structural changes, when it joined the European Union in 2004 (Republic of Poland, n.d.). This marked Poland's integration into democratic Europe and positioned it as a major beneficiary of EU funds. However, Poland needed to comply with several agreed-upon regulations. The EU has some of the strictest environmental standards in the world to protect air and water, manage waste, and to ensure responsible production and consumption (Cifuentes-Faura, 2022).

For the mining sector in Katowice, this meant both a reduction of mining production capacity, and reduction of employment in the sector within specific timelines (Blaschke, 2005). Stricter emission standards implemented in 2016 increased demand for low-sulphur, low-ash coal, which was more difficult, expensive and dangerous to extract with each year. The easily accessible and, therefore, cheap-to-extract coal had already been depleted over the years. Together, these factors shaped Poland's transition from its deeply rooted mining culture to other sources of energy.

Over 50 hard-coal mines have existed in Katowice (Chmielewska, 2010) of which only one still operates in 2024, and it is expected to close in 2039, based on the

Just Transition Plan for the Silesian Voivodeship (Mihaylov & Sala, 2022). As Artur Soboń, as Deputy Minister of State Assets stated, "ultimately, everyone will lose their jobs". Employment in the sector has plummeted from 388,000 in 1990 to 83,000 in 2019. The miners who lost their jobs during this period were forced to transition to other industries without receiving comprehensive reskilling programs (Czyżewski, 2021). Instead, the initial support was focused on financial compensations. The government established several programs, such as by substituting ex-miner's rent for up to two years after job loss, giving a preferential price if buying their apartment, offering help to find a new apartment or receiving an annual severance pay when leaving the mining sector (Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, 2021).

Importantly, this short-term focus on financial support has recently evolved to include a more sustainable approach that emphasizes reskilling and retraining. Coal miners are offered free vocational courses to diversify their skills to work in other sectors. Three rounds of training were offered by the "Wind-Mine of Opportunities", program, equipping miners with the knowledge and skills for the Polish renewable energy market, which will be required in the next decades (Pap, 2024). EDF Renewables, the company responsible for this program, expressed the commitment to participate in fair transformations by creating opportunities for work beyond mining (Wirkus, 2023).

Correspondingly, the solar power industry has expanded rapidly in the region in recent years, and it too seeks to contribute to the green energy transition. In 2021, the solar power company, Sun Roof revealed plans to hire 10,000 ex-miners over the next five years (Czyżewski, 2021). Both EDF Renewables and Sun-Roof are vital stakeholders and show the importance of both public and private partners in the greening of economies, and in the creation of decent work.

Since EU regulations have foreshadowed the mine closures in Poland, the EU in 2024 gave 300 million euros in support of mitigating the social costs associated with the closure of coal mines and the associated lignite fired power plants (Europe Direct, 2024). It will be delivered in a form of an annual severance pay that employees will receive following job loss. As the Mayor of Katowice noted "The biggest challenge was not to leave anyone behind, not to make people jobless or homeless; and Katowice managed that process quite smoothly" (Puttkamer, 2022, p. 2).

Today Katowice has transformed itself into a place of new technologies which hosts both the entertainment and culture industries. It has a Gaming and Technology Hub which offers e-sport events, and the city has become one of Poland's financial and commercial centres. This conference centre as well as the new Silesian Museum and National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra buildings occupy the land of former coal mines. The Mayor of Katowice noted, "...we transformed the job market from the heavy industry and replaced the coal mines with

businesses, with new technology, with the entertainment industry and with the culture industry” (Puttkamer, 2022, p. 1). Unemployment sits at 1.5% and wages are amongst the nation’s highest rates.

Katowice appears to have achieved the delicate balance of ensuring that transitioning to a green economy is *just* in that it has progressed “... at the optimal pace and scale to achieve the greatest possible economic growth and job creation, while mitigation climate impacts and costs to vulnerable workers” (Deloitte, 2023, p. 1). The pace and scale of Katowice’s transition, the low unemployment and well-numerated work in new technologies have contributed to prevention of poverty and social inclusion of miners in ways that redefined their identities. Social protections were put in place to act as buffers through transition periods which allowed miners to time to reskill their capabilities and capacity, all of which allowed them flexibility to further sustain and develop their careers in new forms.

## Conclusions

What makes a career sustainable co-depends on systems thinking and psychology. The structural architecture of work is transforming as climate change is now threatening the very existence of humanity. Billions of people are now highly vulnerable to the extreme weather events wrought by global warming, which in turn wreaks havoc at personal, economic, social, cultural, and political levels. Careers are on the frontline, too. The industrial system is fast disappearing and alongside it, older industry sectors such as the coal industry. Careers or livelihoods instead are now pivoting towards work which functions in very different ways from what has been business-as-usual over the last two centuries (ILO, 2024). The systems which hold this new world of work together must continue to transition from carbon-intensive to green economies. Systems-thinking facilitates these transitions in ways that are *Just*, wherein every person is offered opportunities to take steps to green economies and able to enjoy the sustainability of careers, and work experiences, across time (Hopner & Carr, 2024).

Systems such as Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), across the globe and specifically in regions that may share the same regulations and emission-reduction targets, can build a body of knowledge around Just Transitions that can be shared. This knowledge can be further capitalised to maximise practices of reskilling, conservation and responsible methods of production and consumption. Sustaining careers across time, through just transitions, creates the likelihood for people to have good health - both physical and psychological. Feelings of success and worth from work are important, not only for well-being but also for self-concept and social identity. Periods of renewal, experiences of reskilling, or vocational training required for a change-of-career creates the flexible and adaptiveness to enable a dynamic fit between person and work (De Vos et al., 2020).

Case Studies like Katowice are important to show how Just Transitions can be undertaken in practice. Cities

should continue to be an important focus for exploring sustainable careers, as they are projected to house the majority of humanity by 2050, plus consume three quarters of the planet’s natural resources and energy, as well as producing most of all greenhouse gas emissions (Kleibrink et al., 2023). An actual transition from coal mining to green technologies, viewed through the lens of Katowice, shows ‘how’ interactions at different levels - regional, national, political, economic, social, cultural, community, and ultimately personal - are necessary to bring about contemporary green economies.

Decent work which comes from sustainable careers that are also protective of the planet, brings about greater chances for financial stability and poverty eradication, social and cultural integrity, and global security. Creating work that sustains environments and societies is likely to have significant economic payoffs through job-creation, and financial growth worth trillions (Deloitte, 2023). Perhaps most importantly, people are included in communities and societies rather than marginalised. Nobody needs to be left behind. Expressed more positively in systems thinking terms, ‘Success to the Successful’!

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## Notes

1. Sub Saharan Africa (224.4 million), South Asia (30.6 million), East Asia and the Pacific (11.8 million), and the Caribbean and Latin America (1.9 million) (Jafino et al., 2020). These figures increase by nearly 18% for Africa, 116% for South Asia, 64% for East Asia and the Pacific, and by 305% in the Caribbean and Latin America when adding climate change scenari.
2. 18% for Africa, 116% for South Asia, 64% for East Asia and the Pacific, and by 305% in the Caribbean and Latin America.

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