

Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil

Your local county voluntary council



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12. Climate change

12.5 Climate change and environmental justice

Environmental justice is centred on the basic human right to a clean and healthy environment. Locally, nationally and globally the most vulnerable people with the least power and money often see this right denied. Whether it is to do with exposure to air pollution or flooding, the location of hazardous installations or simply not having access to the environment, the poorest in society are often disproportionately affected.

People living in the poorest neighbourhoods in the UK tend to be worst hit when the environment is damaged.

Deprived communities are, on average, less likely to have access to green spaces and to services, such as doorstep recycling, and are less likely to be prepared for extreme weather events such as floods.

The main cornerstones of environmental justice:

- Everyone has the right to a healthy and safe environment and the responsibility to maintain it.
- Everyone has the right to a fair share of natural resources and the right not to suffer disproportionately from environmental policies, regulations or laws.
- Everyone has a civil right to be able to access environmental information and participate in decision-making.
- The most vulnerable in society, in particular the poorest, should not suffer the disproportionate, negative effects of environmental omissions, actions, policy or law.

Capacity Global

Capacity Global works specifically with people and communities in urban areas, who suffer most from environmental injustice, to ensure their voices get heard. They work with people on local environmental issues and work that tackles global challenges like climate change. They collaborate with diverse partners and networks and we work directly with the people that suffer the most from living in poor neighbourhoods. Because of this, Capacity Global is able to develop research, share knowledge and help provide solutions that challenge inequalities and provide resources that create healthy urban environments.

Find out more at <http://www.capacity.org.uk/research/environmentaljustice.html>

The UK Environmental Justice Network

The UK Environmental Justice Network (UKEJN) is a network of organisations, communities and individuals seeking to ensure everyone has a right to a clean and healthy environment. The UKEJN was set up by Capacity Global in 2002.

Find out more at www.capacity.org.uk/policyandadvocacy/ukejn.html

Environmental Justice Foundation

Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) is a registered charity established in 2000 to empower people who suffer most from environmental abuses to find peaceful ways of preventing them.

EJF provides film and advocacy training to individuals and grassroots organisations in the global south, enabling them to document, expose and create long term solutions to environmental abuses. EJF campaigns internationally to raise awareness of the issues our grassroots partners are working to solve locally. Today EJF has a team of campaigners and film-makers based in London, and works internationally with partners in Brazil, Vietnam, Mali, Sierra Leone, Uzbekistan, Mauritius and Indonesia.

Find out more at www.ejfoundation.org

Environmental justice research and resources from Lancaster University

Lancaster University provides a resource for those interested in environmental justice and inequality, particularly from a UK perspective.

Find our more at <http://geography.lancs.ac.uk/envjustice>

The Global Environmental Justice research group, University of East Anglia

The Global Environmental Justice research group is an interdisciplinary group of scholars interested in the linkages between social justice and environmental change, with a particular interest in the global dimensions of environmental injustice.

Find our more at www.uea.ac.uk/dev/global-environmental-justice

Friends of the Earth

Friends of the Earth has a Rights and Justice Centre which offers free legal support, helping communities and other campaign groups protect their environment. Contact details and further info here

www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/fair_future/rights_justice_centre_23310.html

Environmental Law Foundation

Environmental Law Foundation has an advice and referral service.

www.elflaw.org/our-work/advice-referral/

Climate Justice

Climate Justice links human rights and development to achieve a human-centered approach, safeguarding the rights of the most vulnerable and sharing the burdens and benefits of climate change and its resolution equitably and fairly. This is currently an international framework but is very much linked to the thinking around social justice and climate change in the UK. (See Information Sheet 12.4 for further information). Further information on climate justice at an international level can be found at:

<http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/a-safe-and-just-space-for-humanity-can-we-live-within-the-doughnut-210490><http://www.mrfcj.org/about>

Disclaimer

The information provided in this sheet is intended for guidance only. It is not a substitute for professional advice and we cannot accept any responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting upon it.

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Produced by WCVA, County Voluntary Councils and Volunteer Centres.

Last Updated: 13/03/2012



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