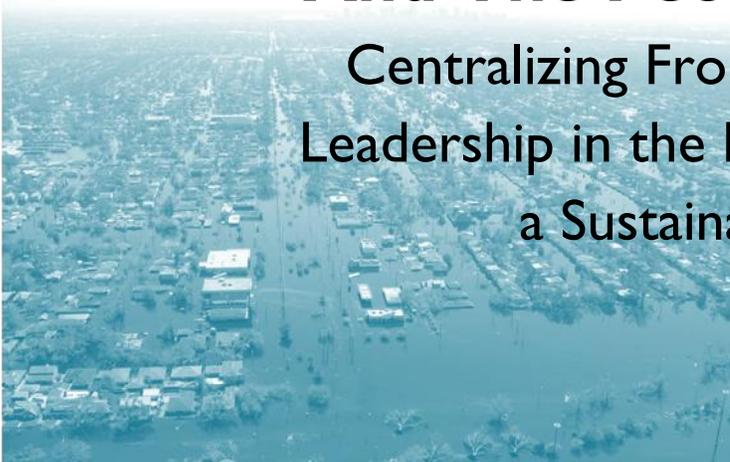


**And The People Shall Lead:**  
Centralizing Frontline Community  
Leadership in the Movement Towards  
a Sustainable Planet



# And The People Shall Lead: Centralizing Frontline Community Leadership in the Movement Towards a Sustainable Planet

## BACKGROUND

How often do we hear frontline communities say, “We refuse to work with Big Green A until we hear an apology for past wrongs and a commitment to a fundamental change in how they operate” Or, “Why would I want to work with Big Green B? They will take the credit for the work I do!” Or, “I’ll never work with Big Green C again. They have no respect for my culture.” At the same time, we often hear mainstream enviros speak with angst, “We want to work more with grassroots groups but we don’t know how to engage them.” Or, “We reached out, and they didn’t respond.” Or, “This plant is bad for this community but they just don’t get it! We are trying to help them.”



The interest in protecting the environment, eliminating toxics, stopping climate change, advancing sustainable policies and practices are upheld by groups who have historically struggled to create substantive partnerships with one another. One being grassroots groups or frontline communities, which are typically comprised of impacted individuals from low-income communities as well as communities of color, including indigenous communities, who are dedicated to relieving environmental and climate burdens in their own communities and beyond. Then there are the mainstream environmental organizations, typically predominantly comprised of white professionals and other volunteers, whose charge is to establish conservation and climate change mitigation strategies to protect and

preserve the planet, inclusive of protecting communities, but not necessarily leading with a focus on community wellbeing. Despite their similar aims, there are several challenges to date in collaborating across these groups.

Among these groups, there are fundamental differences in framing and analyzing the problems, as well as defining real solutions. For example, frontline communities are often concerned that their rights are being traded for short term and short sighted “wins,” and that some of the solutions cited transfer one set of harms from one community to another set of troubles for other communities and don’t accomplish sustainable ecological health and justice. On the other hand, big enviros express feeling constrained by a limited political context as well as funder mandates/priorities. Therefore they cite being compelled to focus on a narrower analysis of feasibility that isn’t necessarily rooted in vision, but rather incremental steps. At the same time, they say that in an ideal world they would want to work towards a similar vision as what is espoused by frontline communities, one focused on a broad framework of ecological justice that protects the entire ecosystem.

There may be a limit in how far we can go in advancing greater cohesion. However, right now there are too many barriers to actually sitting at the table at the first place to identify and build on the level of common ground that exists. With greater meaningful dialogue and a commitment to efforts to collaborate, we can determine what mutual aims we have and how we can work jointly to advance the same. At the same time, through deep listening and dedicated exchange, with increased understanding of perspectives, perhaps there can also be movement in overcoming some of the deeper fundamental differences in framing and analysis of the longer term vision and the pathway to get there.



Though, under a more narrow focus, challenges of collaboration were explored in an “*Engaging Non-Traditional Groups in Coal Plant Retirement*” session at the National Coal Plant Retirement Conference in Denver and co-facilitated by the Little Village Environmental Organization, American Lung Association, Sierra Club, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The session facilitators noted that the title itself was representative of the challenge of framing that often perpetuates the divisions. The focus of this paper reflects the premise of the session in that the frontline communities’ perspective is emphasized when analyzing the dynamics between big greens and grassroots groups.



In light of the mounting efforts to continue hazardous practices that adversely impact the earth and its inhabitants, and strip authority from key legislation and decision-making bodies, a united front in the movement towards ecological justice is needed to preserve and build upon certain safeguards, even while acknowledging that certain divisions may persist. The multi-tiered nature of environmental issues requires a multi-faceted strategy for resolution, which includes a greater level of synchronicity throughout the movement. Combining the community knowledge and commitment to change our relationship to the environment, political influence, technical knowledge, and financial resources, our collaboration has powerful potential. Together we can work

more cohesively to reform the systems, policies, and practices that have us on a collision course with catastrophic climate change while deeply harming communities in its path.

To even begin to harness our collective might, we must repair past hurts, build bridges, and pave the pathways for collaboration. This paper sets forth analysis in identifying barriers between the groups and brainstorming corresponding resolutions to establish a united front in the battle to protect and preserve the environment.

## BARRIERS TO COLLABORATION

The following outlines common impediments to concerted efforts forming between frontline communities and mainstream environmental organizations. The identification of these hurdles will help to develop meaningful and substantive resolutions to foster collaboration amongst movements.

### *a. Reputation of Environmental Organizations:*

- i. *Not people-centered/justice oriented*— Many of the “big greens” are perceived as caring more about the polar bears and the trees than about people and communities. When these groups engage with communities, there is often the perception that they are only engaging to win more supporters to their aims, rather than legitimately being concerned about the interests/needs of the communities with whom they are proposing to partner.
- ii. *Top-Down*—Communities have reported that when engaging with large environmental groups, the experience has been that the groups tend to dictate the terms of the partnership and that decision making is very top-down with the mainstream environmental groups being at the top.

### ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

Working in coalition, the NAACP has experienced multiple instances where coalition leaders/members have adopted a demanding, rather than a consultative, mutually collaborative mode of operating. For example:

In one state, the NAACP joined a coalition working to pass a renewable energy referendum. In organizing a panel to educate the constituency on the referendum, the organization was approached by the opposition with a request to participate and send a long-standing member of the NAACP to speak on their behalf. The coalition also sent representatives. The NAACP deemed it necessary to provide transparent and well-informed dialogue to their constituency. The NAACP has found, over the years of working with their constituency, that open dialogue with all perspectives at the table is best received by the membership. However, when coalition members were made aware of panel participants, their response was, “I thought I told you not to invite him”.

At the national level, the NAACP facilitated an informal working group that was established to coordinate a visit from an international partner. As background, it must be acknowledged that the international partner encouraged the group to organize the schedule for the visit, which may have lent the impression of overarching latitude. However, the partner had advocacy goals intended for the US tour and the partner was experienced with UN, World Bank, and US Congress negotiations. Providing a briefing to the partners on the current political landscape and relevant legislation under consideration is appropriate. However, on one of the planning calls, members of the group decided to send “suggested talking points” to the delegation for visits on Capitol Hill. When the delegation came and accompanied the working group members on a Hill visit, at the conclusion of the visit, one group member said in a chiding tone, “You didn’t use the talking points. At the next meeting, use the talking points.” which the partner felt overstepped the bounds of mutually respectful collaboration.

In each of these instances, the frontline community groups had a clear sense of their plans and what would work for their constituencies, as well as what would move their advocacy goals. In each instance there was a disconnect in what was supposed to be a collaborative process with multiple groups with common aims combining efforts and what ended up transpiring with certain groups exerting control in demanding that their dictates be followed.

*“They want me to talk to on their behalf but I know I won’t hear from them until the next press conference.”*

iii. *Tokenization*—Some environmental

groups have been viewed as tokenizing communities by bringing in a few people into their organizing and then holding them up as “trophy” so to speak to prove to funders or policy makers that they have “the people” in their ranks. Similarly, there have been instances where environmental groups have picked out several “leaders,” that they deemed suitable to be “representatives” of

affected communities and invited them repeatedly to give credibility to claims that frontline communities are represented in the work of the environmental groups.

b. *Differential Modus Operandi*

i. *Planning/Campaigning*—Different groups have immense variation in how they do planning and campaigning and this can be a challenge to blend in collaborative relationships.

ii. *Decision Making*—The process for making decisions, whether by consensus or majority, what steps lead to decisions, who is involved, how decisions are conveyed, etc. varies greatly between groups. Not agreeing on how to reconcile these variations result in a lack of consensus and sometimes conflict regarding a common process.

iii. *Measure of Success*—When groups do not have the same concept of what constitutes success in a campaign or project, strife is inevitable. For example, with coal plants, a community that is forced to consume pollution from a neighboring coal plant may also be dependent on the jobs for the plant and might consider installing pollution controls as a successful compromise, whereas the mainstream environmental group with whom they are partnering may not consider this a success at all because the plant continues to emit carbon dioxide which drives climate change. Similarly, for some achieving interim objectives such as educating community members or training new leaders is cause for celebration while others might focus only on the bottom line.



c. *National/Local Dynamics*

i. *Branding*—Often the ever-present quest for funding results in the need to take credit and brand work to be recognized by funders and the world for your power and influence! However, the sharing of credit and branding often becomes a tension in partnerships, particularly when one partner’s name, inevitably the national group, is more of a magnet for the media and the role of the local partner is relegated to the shadows. Whether intentional or not, the domination of branding by the national group, often results in resentment and conflict between partners.

**ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO**

A small environmental justice organization in the Midwest had organized opposition to the coal power plant in their community for over 15 years. In recent years, they convened a large coalition of allied local, state and national environmental and social justice groups to support their campaign, along with clear guiding principles and protocols for respectful collaboration. Through coordinated pressure campaigns against the utility company, the city government and coal power investors, the coalition succeeded in forcing the plant to close. Shortly after this historic success, an allied advocacy network nominated the EJ group for an environmental award — not a cash prize, but a significant public recognition for their years of work on this campaign. On receiving notice of the nomination, the EJ group asked the awards organizers to include mention of the other coalition partners, in recognition of their contributions to the campaign. Unbeknownst to the EJ group, one of the coalition partners — a national green group that had only been involved with the campaign in recent 2 years, had already “self-nominated” itself as the group that led this coalition victory. The awards event organizers were faced with the dilemma of navigating these dual nominations, and informing the large national NGO that they would have to share the podium with their coalition partners. Such instances reinforce widespread grassroots impressions that big green groups are unwilling to share the limelight, especially where media recognition, public profile and funding opportunities exist.



ii. *Funding*—Generally speaking, national groups have an easier time at securing funding than local groups. This results in tensions in many ways, especially when national groups aren't sharing their funding with local groups even while the national group is capitalizing on the relationship to legitimize their work and draw more support from philanthropic organizations.

iii. *Objectifying/Instrumentalizing*—Similar to the dynamic around tokenization and top-down approaches described regarding the reputation of large environmental organizations and their

work with local groups, local groups have experienced being objectified. Frontline communities have been treated as little more than a 'subject' or a 'case' to be exhibited as part of the argument that the national is presenting to powerbrokers, as opposed to a true partnership as a sentient agent with a role in agenda setting and decision making.

- iv. *Race Dynamics*—Communities of color report experiencing patronizing/condescending attitudes, taken advantage of, and being disrespected by white-led organizations seeking to partner. These experiences pose a significant barrier to meaningful and successful collaboration.
- v. *Rural/Urban*—Differences in circumstances, culture, and needs between rural and urban communities pose several challenges when considering organizing across geographic boundaries.



**d. Connecting with the Issue/Conflict of Interest**

i. *Lack of Awareness*--Some stakeholders most affected by coal plant pollution don't recognize the silent poison that is violating their right to breathe clean air. Others also don't connect the coal plant billowing toxins with the flooding, hurricanes or even depletion in produce in the supermarket.

*"I know that the key is listening and building local relationships but what am I supposed to do when I just don't have the time?"*

ii. *Sense of Powerlessness*--For others, once they understand the issue, they feel powerless to have any effect over the pollution from coal plants.

iii. *Competing Problems*--Whether it's high murder rates, fiscal problems at the state or local level, school crises, etc., many individuals and groups have competing challenges that make a slow and silent killer like coal pollution seem less acute than the more obtrusive issues they are trying to address.

**ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO**

A Big Green organizer engaged in aggressive tactics with an NAACP branch to get them to do what he wanted on a campaign. When he didn't get a response to email messages in the timeframe he desired, he would call, continue to email, and text with an increasingly harsh tone in his communication and with no regard for the myriad issues impacting the level of engagement of the branch. The same organizer then began to misrepresent the NAACP at coalition meetings by making negative comments about NAACP's disinterest in engaging with the coalition. This dynamic is not unique to this branch's experience as similar stories have emerged in other areas. Often Big Greens see NAACP as adding a pivotally compelling voice to their campaigns. Also, funders, with the very best of intentions, have strongly encouraged Big Greens to work with frontline communities. In some cases, it has resulted in frontline groups becoming quite aggressively hunted by these groups seeking to involve them in their efforts, but with little regard to process.

iv. *No Alternatives*--Many people speak of not seeing a viable alternative to electricity produced from coal burning that will keep the lights on at a reasonable rate, as well as maintain the livelihoods of persons employed by the coal plants and sustain the revenue that the plant provides through feeding the tax base of the hosting municipality/state.

- v. *Community Relationship with Plant Owners*—Owners of some of the plants have provided financial support to community based organizations, scholarships, and otherwise, which makes it challenging for individuals/groups to come out in opposition to harm caused by the plants.



**e. Cultural/Situational Differences**

- i. *Immigration Status*—For some communities and individuals, immigration status can dictate level of involvement because of the reluctance to engage in advocacy in activism for fear that it may jeopardize their immigration status. At the same time, these persons can be at heightened risk because these facilities tend to be disproportionately located in communities of color which is home to most immigrants. Additionally, for people who are undocumented, lack of access to health care can impact their ability to seek help for afflictions caused by exposure to pollutants.

“Quiero participar pero no soy bueno en expresarme en inglés”

- ii. *Language Access*— When English isn’t the a language of fluency for a community or an individual, community members often find themselves being forced to engage in English in partnering, thereby placing them at a disadvantage in terms of fully grasping what is being discussed

as well as being able to meaningfully contribute to discourse and decision making.

- iii. *Cultural Variances*— Whether they are indigenous communities, immigrant communities, Gullah communities, or Cajun communities, there is great variation in some of the cultures most impacted by coal fired power plant pollution. Cross cultural partnerships often fail to honor and respect cultural mores and value differences, as well as to optimize and build on cultural assets.



- iv. *Education/Literacy Level*—Persons with low literacy and/or low educational levels have experienced being at a disadvantage when engaging with organizations that are dominated by academics/college-educated persons. There is a tendency for low-literacy individuals to feel uncomfortable or insecure when sharing their perspective or contributing to decision-making when professionals dominate/lead the conversations and/or processes. This feeling is exacerbated when materials and communications are not developed to accommodate or reach people with varying literacy and educational levels.

**f. Logistical Challenges:**

- i. *Technology*--Often there is considerable reliance on technology (internet/phone) to connect and coordinate. Therefore, those who either have a different organizing culture that is not technology based or who don’t have access to technology are divided from those who rely primarily on technology for organizing.
- ii. *Turnover*—Since relationship building is such a critical aspect to partnerships and organizing across groups/ cultures, a high turnover rate within organizations/groups form a barrier to collaborations built on connections with individuals/leaders.

“Why can’t the meeting be closer to us? There’s no bus that travels to that part of town!”

- iii. *Geography*—If individuals/groups are limited by transportation, it is difficult for them to convene or travel to certain venues to reach decision makers or broaden their outreach and capacity building efforts.

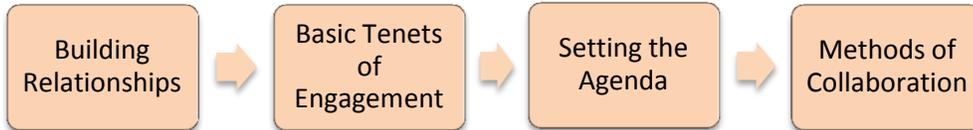
- iv. *Differential Capacity*—Some groups have less staffing or money, which limits their ability to engage and contribute equally. Also, issues of childcare, and pose a challenge for parents to participate, even though they would be a key constituency in testifying the impacts of environmental injustices on children (i.e. air pollution and impacts on children).

**g. Lack of Trust/Relationship Building**

All of these issues, combined with a lack of time and effort to engage in deliberate and meaningful relationship building, often result in superficial relationships without a core of mutual understanding and trust, which detracts from the solidity and effectiveness of the partnership.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS**

To ensure that the aforementioned barriers no longer obstruct meaningful partnerships, the following model list recommendations to establishing collaborations.



**a. Building Relationships**

- i. *Long Term:* There must be a commitment to long term relationship building to ensure that there is trust and a foundation for jointly conceived agenda setting.

**ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIOS**

The Sierra Club has taken a positive step in establishing an Environmental Justice Program lead by Leslie Fields. In several cities across the United States, Sierra Club EJ organizers who are from the communities in which they work. And they have, over the years, built relationships in these communities. These organizers have supported local organizing that is rooted in a frame of social justice with local leadership in the driver’s seat. For example, in Minnesota EJ Organizer Karen Monahan organized Sierra Club members to join the local Minneapolis branch of the NAACP. The SC members engaged side by side in the broad agenda of the branch while also introducing themselves as a resource to support any engagement the branch developed on environmental issues, demonstrating the intersectional relationship between environmental issues and the civil rights agenda. Among other activities, together the Sierra Club chapter and the NAACP branch executed an Earth Day gathering which delivered messages on conservation, food justice, economic justice, and healing justice in communities. Similarly, in Philadelphia, the Sierra Club chapter immediately reached out to the NAACP after the Trayvon Martin verdict, with an open offer to link together around this racial justice issue which is so clearly tied to a broader social justice agenda.

- ii. *Link with Leaders:* First steps in relationship building should include linking with authentic community leaders for guidance and stewardship of establishing ties with the broader community.
- iii. *Solidarity:* Relationships should be based on solidarity, not charity. The partnership should consist of groups working together to achieve mutual aims.
- iv. *Principles of Engagement:* Partners should develop principles of engagement so that there is a shared sense of values and operating standards.



**b. Basic Tenets of Engagement**

- i. *Maintaining Identity:* One group’s identity should not be subsumed by the other.
- ii. *Transparency:* Open lines of communication, information sharing, etc. are important as transparency is a critical attribute to partnership.



- iii. *Shared Decision Making:* All decision making should be shared with each partner having parity.
- iv. *Joint Strategizing:* One partner should not dictate to another how to organize.

- v. *Agree to Disagree*: Partners must be open to disagreement and have processes for working through pushback.
- vi. *Acknowledgement of Assets*: There must be recognition of the strengths/assets all partners bring to the table.
- vii. *Community Empowerment*: Empowerment of traditionally disenfranchised groups, ensuring that frontline communities are leading in the relationship, is an essential aim.

#### ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

In the late nineties/early 2000s, EarthJustice, the largest non-profit environmental law firm in the world, wasn't traditionally known for grassroots engagement. However, a chance phone call with a resident in Appalachia being impacted by mountaintop removal led the late Earth Justice staffer Joan Mulhern to spearhead what has become the organization's long-term commitment to work with and on behalf of communities ravaged by the mountaintop removal process of coal mining, at a time when no other large environmental organization was taking major action on this issue. Grassroots mountaintop removal advocates like the late Judy Bonds, Maria Gunnoe, and many others collaborated with EarthJustice on testimony before Congress and other agencies, conducted interviews with media, held rallies in Appalachia and DC, and created an online campaign to raise awareness around this short-sighted and cruel industrial practice. EarthJustice endeavors to be intentional about taking its lead from the communities they serve and elevating visibility and leadership of community leaders, as evidenced by their "Mountain Heroes" initiative, which honors grassroots leaders in the struggle against mountaintop removal.

- viii. *Defined Roles*: Clearly defined roles for all partners' increases efficiency of work and prevents overreaching of larger organizations.

#### c. *Setting the Agenda*

- i. *Learn Interests and Values*: Groups must take time in dialogue to get to know each other's interests and values.
- ii. *Establish Common Vision*: Arising from dialogue should be the establishment of a common vision between partners.
- iii. *Focus on Areas of Mutual Concern*: Disagreement on issues that aren't a part of the common vision and aims can be acknowledged, but should not be a barrier to pursuing progress on joint aims.
- iv. *Shared Bottom Line and Asks*: From the common vision should be a shared bottom line and joint asks.
- v. *Evidenced Based Strategy*: Research should provide substantiation of the need for action and the feasibility of the proposed course of action.



#### d. *Methods of Collaboration*

- i. *Honoring History*: The history and culture of the community that is the focus of organizing must be understood and honored by all seeking to organize there.



- ii. *Capacity Building*: To grow and strengthen the movement, capacity building must be a key emphasis in organizing efforts so that groups who are less involved have the knowledge, skills, and other resources necessary to scale up their engagement.

Priority must be given to identifying resources to level partner capacities, to ensure that some don't have differential access to organizing and decision making spaces within the partnership.

- iii. *Leadership Development*: Ensuring that capacity building processes result in development of leadership strengthens organizations and joint efforts, as well as builds in sustainability.

- iv. *Anti-Oppression Training*: Partners should engage in diversity and anti-oppression training as racism, classism, sexism, etc. are built into the attitudes and institutions of society and must be directly addressed in cross-cultural relationships.
- v. *Diversify Staff*: When organizing in diverse communities, to the greatest extent possible, staff composition should reflect representation of the community so that approaches are culturally and circumstantially sensitive and have greater likelihood of success.
- vi. *Appropriate Messaging*: In order for organizing to be compelling and resonant, particularly with most affected communities, the messaging needs to be relevant and ideally it should be story based so that people can connect with how the issues impact people's lives.
- vii. *Language Access*: Given the disproportionate impact of coal pollution on communities of color, including immigrant communities, ensuring equity in language access is critical to meaningful inclusion of affected communities.
- viii. *User-Friendly Convening*: Avenues of convening must be diverse to accommodate varying access to technology and financial resources. To the greatest extent possible, face to face conversations should occur to build relationships and trust among partners.
- ix. *Sharing Credit for Work*: In order to address resentment arising from one partner taking credit for joint work, deliberate, intentional measures must ensure that credit is shared for any collective efforts and resulting outcomes.
- x. *Measures of Success*: Partners must jointly determine how success is measured and each should be open and flexible in defining success and means of evaluating achievements.
- xi. *Resource sharing*: Attention should be paid to ensuring that resources are shared liberally between partners, whether it's research, materials (making sure they are accessible), allies, skills, funding, etc.
- xii. *Philanthropic Support for Grassroots Organizing*: In order to meaningfully support struggling community based organizations whose work is at the core of a successful movement, philanthropic entities must be reoriented to create innovative financing models to get funding into the coffers of these organizations for staffing and other needs.



#### ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

In July 2013, the Overbrook Foundation invited representatives of 26 grassroots, environmental justice and other base-building frontline community organizations to meet with representatives of 4 national green groups (Greenpeace, the Sierra Club, the Natural Resource Defense Council and the Union of Concerned Scientists), as well as 4 environmental funders. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss ways to overcome historic divides and differences across the spectrum of environmental advocacy, in order to foster greater cooperation, collaboration, equity, and alignment among the groups. A common challenge identified by many participants was that community-based movements are typically built around shared visions, values, principles, protocols and practice, whereas national green campaigns (often influenced by funder deliverables) are frequently developed with a top-down focus on meeting short to mid-term goals and objectives through prescribed strategies and tactics that are neither aligned with, nor vetted by popular support. Over the course of three days, participants shared stories of success and failure, exploring values, visions and cultures of organizational practice. Meeting participants all agreed that, in order to have greater impact and success across all environmental issues and campaigns:

- a. We need to create more equitable sharing in environmental philanthropy, with significantly more funding streams shifted toward community-led groups.
- b. We need to align national policy strategies with the visions and goals of organizations and alliances building power in frontline communities.

With this dual focus, the group agreed to collaborate on a *Building Equity & Alignment Initiative* - to shift resources and build better relationships across big green, funder and grassroots organizing sectors. The group also agreed to the *Jemez Principles*, as guidelines for shaping the protocols, practices and plans to carry forward this initiative.

## NEXT STEPS

As stated, this isn't the first time these questions have surfaced. In fact, there are some excellent texts/tools that have been developed to address various aspects around movement building dynamics, including: the "Jemez Principles", "Everybody's Movement", "People of Color Environmental Justice Principles of Working Together" and many more. There are also organizations like *People's Institute for Survival and Beyond*, which facilitates anti-oppression training and dialogue. Additionally, there are current efforts underway, such as the *Climate Justice Alliance* and the *Building Equity & Alignment Initiative*, seeking to illuminate and resolve some of the challenges. People are encouraged to explore these resources and apply the ethos, analysis, concepts, skills, and practices to our contexts as appropriate.

At the same time, in spite of the long held acknowledgement of the need for remedies, as well as the past and emerging resources, the dynamics persist. Without intentionally addressing the barriers to collaboration, our progress against the concerted and well-resourced efforts to maintain the status quo of our nation's reliance on harmful fossil fuel based energy sources will be limited. Though we don't want to be consumed with navel gazing either, we must seek balance in maintaining some level of productivity, while deliberately paying attention to process in building an intentional joint movement.

The following table outlines recommended actions, to keep the dialogue going between movements:

### Principles of Collaboration

- Prior to engaging in any partnership, all entities should meet and discuss the terms of their collaboration, including exploration of framing/analysis, values, aims, and objectives, as well as the modus operandi and practical issues of roles and expectations

### Ongoing Stocktaking Sessions

- At meetings where groups come together, "New Partners for Smart Growth", "Good Jobs, Green Jobs", "The Brownfields Conference" and other meetings like the American Public Health Association Annual Conference, the NAACP Annual Convention, etc., we set aside space to continue to develop ways to overcome barriers and optimize assets, as well as take stock of our progress in implementing solutions.

### Webpage

- We set up a webpage where we agree to continuously add resources on overcoming challenges and optimizing opportunities for organizing across movements. On this site, we also include a message board where people can share examples of challenges and successes in collaboration, both to provide replicable models and so that folks can glean guidance on overcoming barriers.

### Monthly Calls

- We host a monthly calls for those in various sectors of the movement to continue to talk through the barriers and successes in promoting engagement between groups, plan for upcoming events that may serve as opportunities for the movement building/stocktaking sessions, to review the webpage and discuss any need for adjustments, and to constantly monitor and evaluate progress on achieving a big tent for a collaborative movement towards environmental justice.

## CONCLUSION

The hope is that this discussion has been, and will continue to be, helpful as we all strive to achieve our collective desire for sensitive, meaningful, and productive collaboration. In ending, let's remember the ever-inspirational African Proverb, "When Spiders Unite, They Can Tie Up a Lion" and the modern version, "Together Everyone Achieves More! TEAM!"

## RESOURCES

### Principles and Practices of Environmental and Climate Justice Movement Building

- **Principles of Environmental Justice**  
<http://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html>
- **Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing**  
<http://www.ejnet.org/ej/jemez.pdf>
- **Bali Principles of Climate Justice**  
<http://www.ejnet.org/ej/bali.pdf>
- **People's Agreement of Cochabamba**  
<http://pwccc.wordpress.com/2010/04/24/peoples-agreement/>
- **Everybody's Movement**  
[http://www.yale.edu/divinity/dislocations/documents/everybodysmovement\\_AngelaPark.pdf](http://www.yale.edu/divinity/dislocations/documents/everybodysmovement_AngelaPark.pdf)
- **Cultivating the Grassroots**  
[http://www.ncrp.org/files/publications/Cultivating\\_the\\_grassroots\\_final\\_lowres.pdf](http://www.ncrp.org/files/publications/Cultivating_the_grassroots_final_lowres.pdf)

### Movement Building Organizations

- **Climate Justice Alliance**  
<http://www.ourpowercampaign.org/>
- **Indigenous Environmental Network**  
<http://www.ienearth.org/about/>
- **Peoples Institute for Survival and Beyond**  
<http://www.pisab.org/programs>
- **Movement Strategy Center**  
<http://movementbuilding.movementstrategy.org/>
- **Movement Generation for Change**  
<http://www.movementgeneration.org/programs/national-climate-justice-movement-building>

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**For Information Please Write**

NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program [jpatterson@naacpnet.org](mailto:jpatterson@naacpnet.org)