

# CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

May 6, 2022  
Climate & Health  
Symposium  
University of Miami

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Environmental Justice  
Clinic  
UM Law

# TODAY'S AGENDA

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Brief Introduction to EJ

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The Movements

03

A path forward: Just  
Transition Framework

04

Jemez Principles

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Call to Action

ABOUT ME

I'm Abigail, Acting  
Director of the  
Environmental Justice  
Clinic and Staff Attorney  
with the PEER Group.

*Community lawyer who loves the humans and the Earth*





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

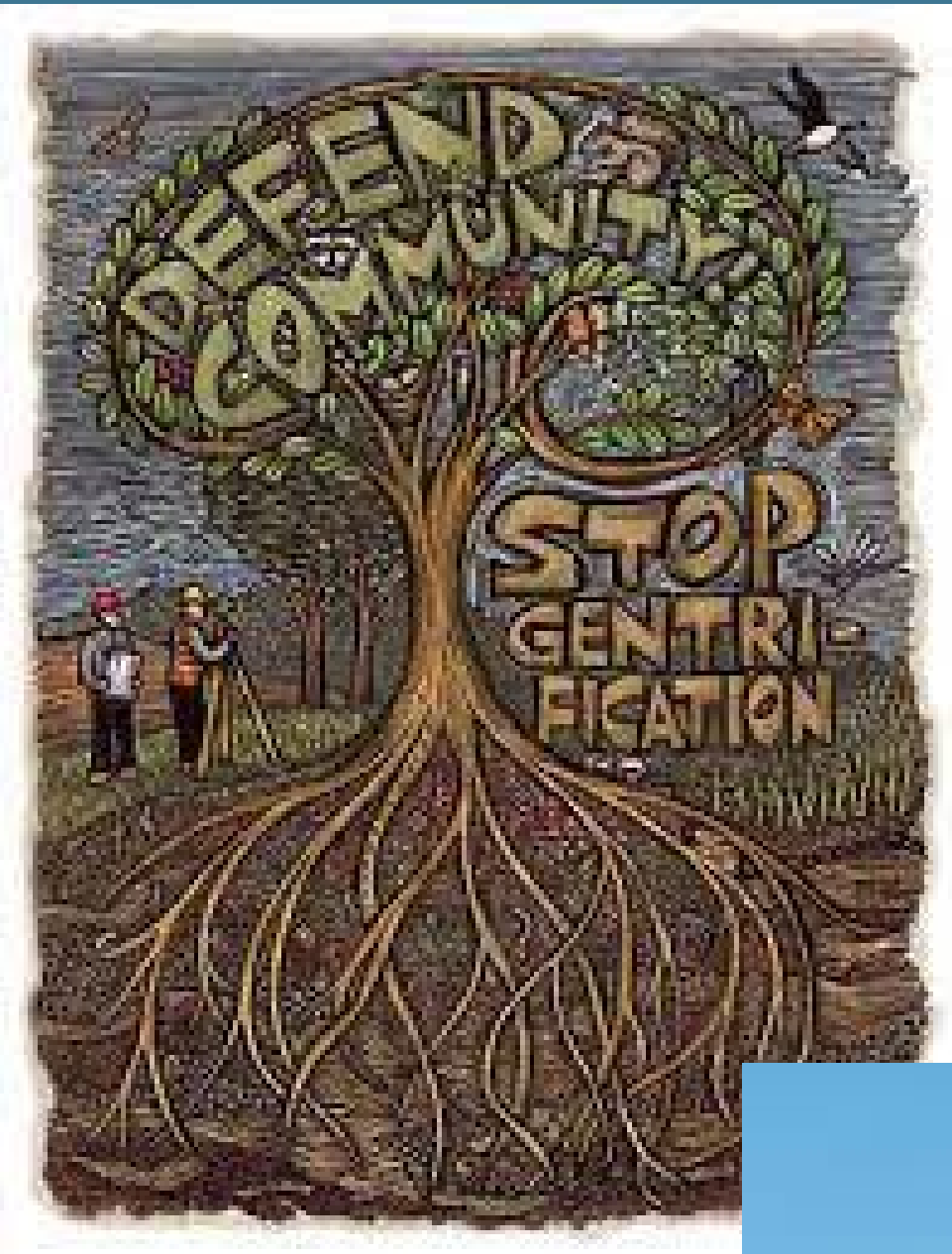


# PART I

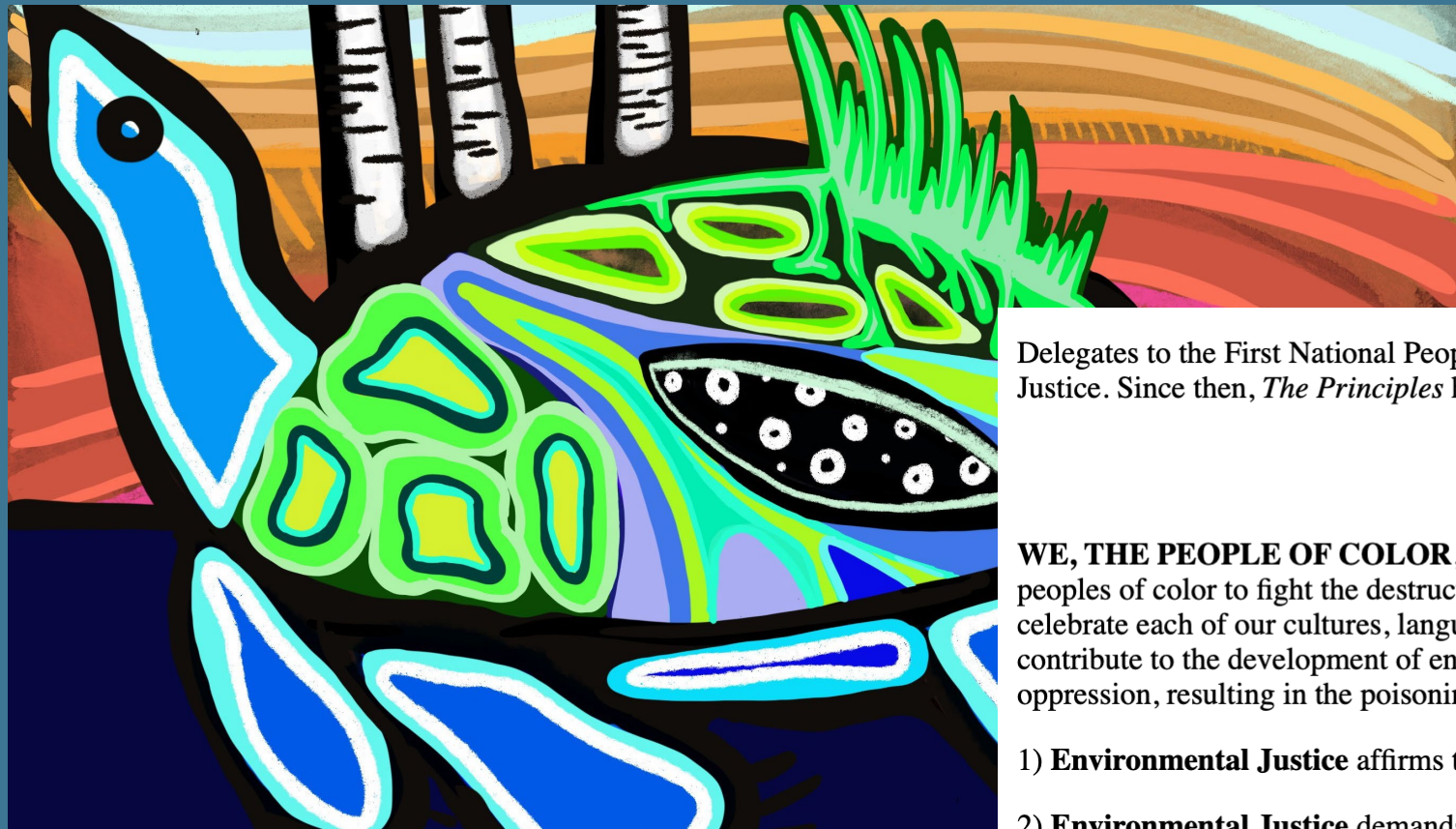
History of Environmental  
Justice

# What is Environmental Justice?





# Looking back....



Delegates to the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit held on October 24-27, 1991, in Washington DC, drafted and adopted 17 principles of Environmental Justice. Since then, *The Principles* have served as a defining document for the growing grassroots movement for environmental justice.

## PREAMBLE

**WE, THE PEOPLE OF COLOR**, gathered together at this multinational People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, to begin to build a national and international movement of all peoples of color to fight the destruction and taking of our lands and communities, do hereby re-establish our spiritual interdependence to the sacredness of our Mother Earth; to respect and celebrate each of our cultures, languages and beliefs about the natural world and our roles in healing ourselves; to ensure environmental justice; to promote economic alternatives which would contribute to the development of environmentally safe livelihoods; and, to secure our political, economic and cultural liberation that has been denied for over 500 years of colonization and oppression, resulting in the poisoning of our communities and land and the genocide of our peoples, do affirm and adopt these Principles of Environmental Justice:

- 1) **Environmental Justice** affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction.
- 2) **Environmental Justice** demands that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias.
- 3) **Environmental Justice** mandates the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things.
- 4) **Environmental Justice** calls for universal protection from nuclear testing, extraction, production and disposal of toxic/hazardous wastes and poisons and nuclear testing that threaten the fundamental right to clean air, land, water, and food.
- 5) **Environmental Justice** affirms the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples.
- 6) **Environmental Justice** demands the cessation of the production of all toxins, hazardous wastes, and radioactive materials, and that all past and current producers be held strictly accountable to the people for detoxification and the containment at the point of production.





# CORE TENETS

PROCEDURAL

DISTRIBUTIONAL

RECOGNITIONAL

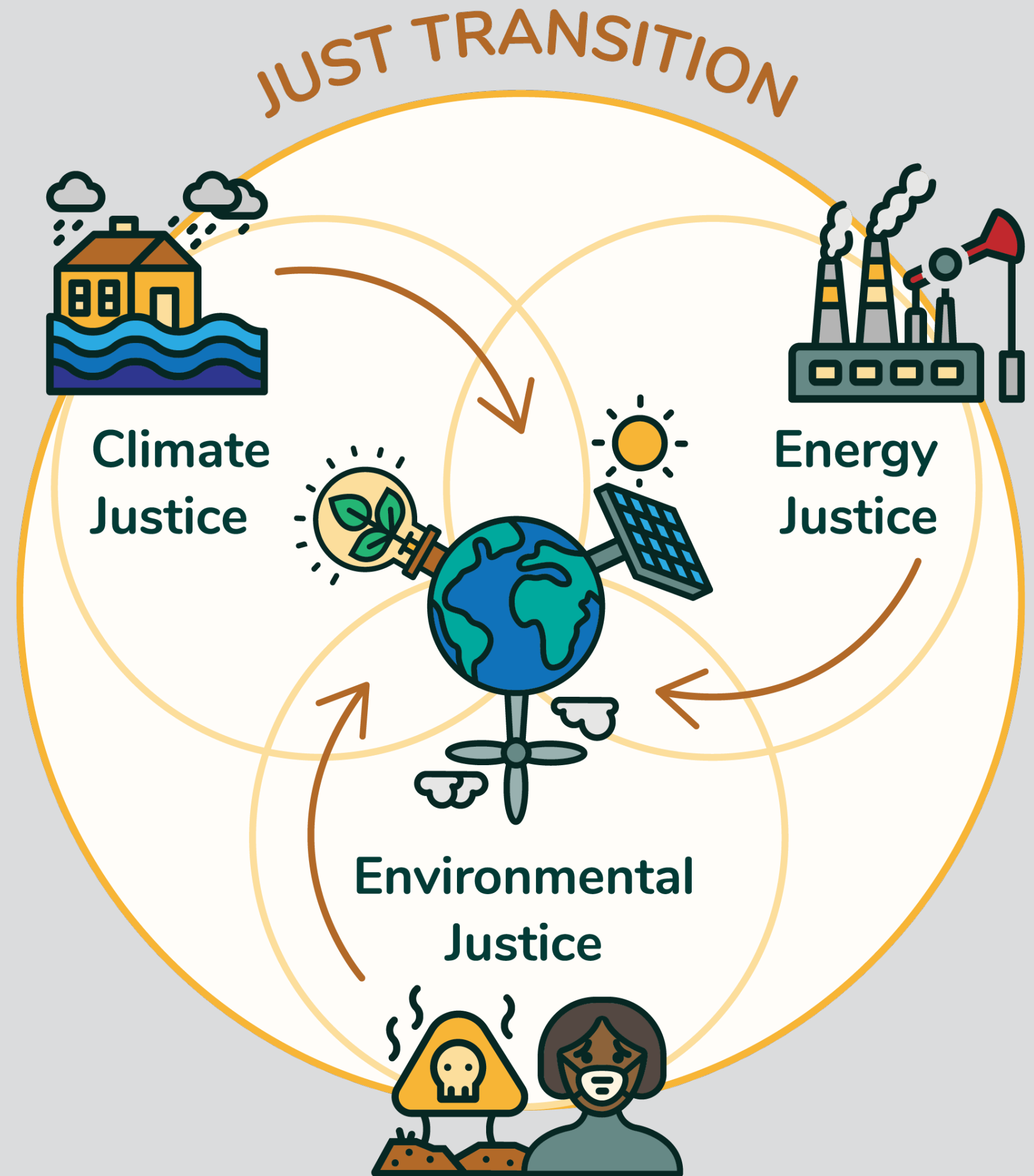


WHAT DOES  
THIS HAVE  
TO DO  
WITH  
CLIMATE &  
HEALTH?

# Impact of Climate Change on Human Health



# Intersecting Movements: JUST TRANSITION

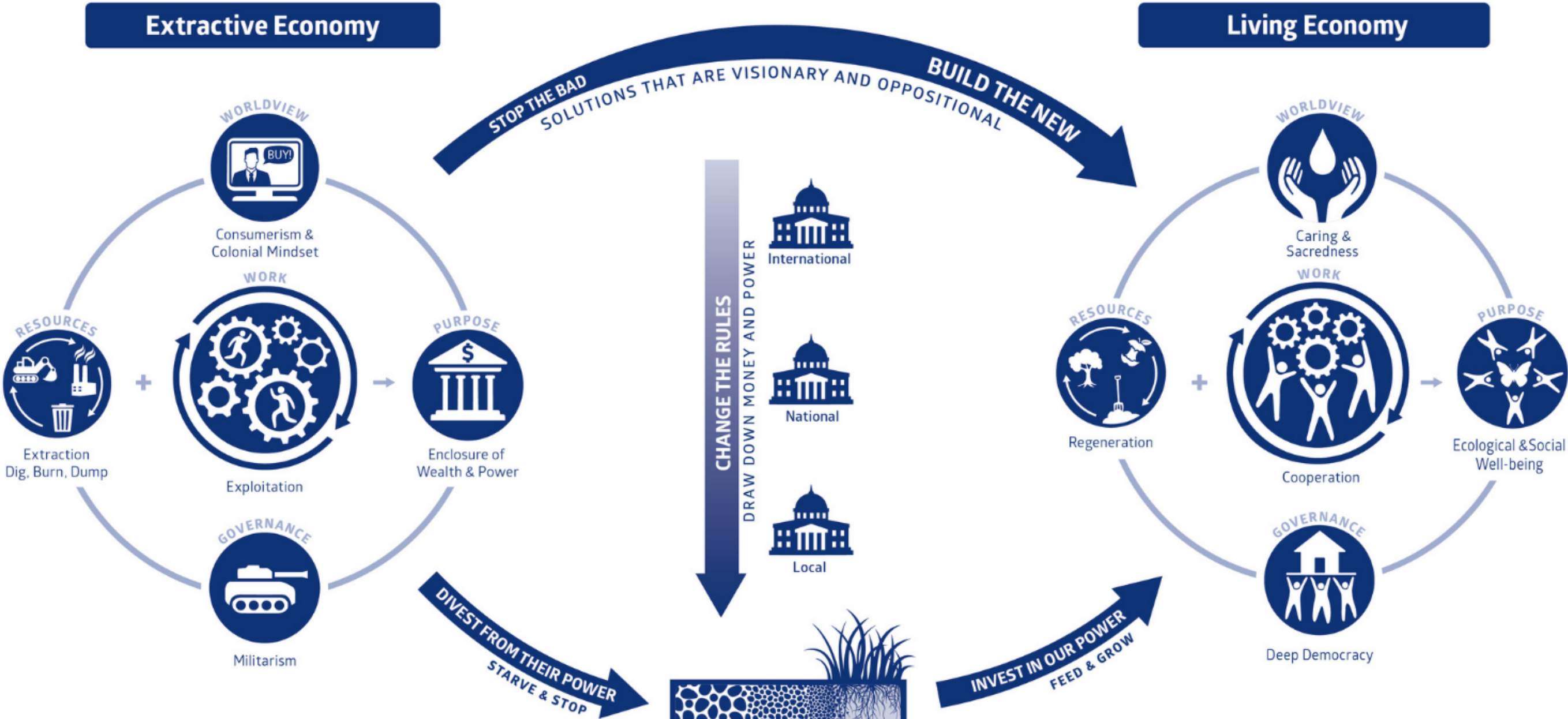


# PART II

The Framework & Principles

# A STRATEGY FRAMEWORK FOR JUST TRANSITION

RESIST — RETHINK — RESTRUCTURE



- THE WAY WE MOVE CAPITAL MUST:**
- ▶ Shift economic control to communities
  - ▶ Democratize wealth and the workplace
  - ▶ Advance ecological restoration
  - ▶ Drive racial justice and social equity
  - ▶ Relocalize most production and consumption
  - ▶ Retain and restore cultures and traditions

Developed by Movement Generation  
with **OUR POWER CAMPAIGN**  
COMMUNITIES UNITED FOR A JUST TRANSITION

# *Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing*

Meeting hosted by Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice (SNEEJ), Jemez, New Mexico, Dec. 1996

## **Activists meet on Globalization**

On December 6-8, 1996, forty people of color and European-American representatives met in Jemez, New Mexico, for the “Working Group Meeting on Globalization and Trade.” The Jemez meeting was hosted by the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice with the intention of hammering out common understandings between participants from different cultures, politics and organizations. The following “**Jemez Principles**” for democratic organizing were adopted by the participants.

### **#1 Be Inclusive**

If we hope to achieve just societies that include all people in decision-making and assure that all people have an equitable share of the wealth and the work of this world, then we must work to build that kind of inclusiveness into our own movement in order to develop alternative policies and institutions to the treaties policies under neo-liberalism.

This requires more than tokenism, it cannot be achieved without diversity at the planning table, in staffing, and in coordination. It may delay achievement of other important goals, it will require discussion, hard work, patience, and advance planning. It may involve conflict, but through this conflict, we can learn better ways of working together. It’s about building alternative institutions, movement building, and not compromising out in order to be accepted into the anti-globalization club.

### **#2 Emphasis on Bottom-Up Organizing**

To succeed, it is important to reach out into new constituencies, and to reach within all levels of leadership and membership base of the organizations that are already involved in our networks. We must be continually building and strengthening a base which provides our credibility, our strategies, mobilizations, leadership development, and the energy for the work we must do daily.

### **#3 Let People Speak for Themselves**

We must be sure that relevant voices of people directly affected are heard. Ways must be provided for spokespersons to represent and be responsible to the affected constituencies. It is important for organizations to clarify their roles, and who they represent, and to assure accountability within our structures.

### **#4 Work Together In Solidarity and Mutuality**

Groups working on similar issues with compatible visions should consciously act in solidarity, mutuality and support each other’s work. In the long run, a more significant step is to incorporate the goals and values of other groups with your own work, in order to build strong relationships. For instance, in the long run, it is more important that labor unions and community economic development projects include the issue of environmental sustainability in their own strategies, rather than just lending support to the environmental organizations. So communications, strategies and resource sharing is critical, to help us see our connections and build on these.

### **#5 Build Just Relationships Among Ourselves**

We need to treat each other with justice and respect, both on an individual and an organizational level, in this country and across borders. Defining and developing “just relationships” will be a process that won’t happen overnight. It must include clarity about decision-making, sharing strategies, and resource distribution. There are clearly many skills necessary to succeed, and we need to determine the ways for those with different skills to coordinate and be accountable to one another.

### **#6 Commitment to Self-Transformation**

As we change societies, we must change from operating on the mode of individualism to community-centeredness. We must “walk our talk.” We must be the values that we say we’re struggling for and we must be justice, be peace, be community.

There **MUST** be a  
just transition.



But how?

- Radical mind shifts
- Fight power imbalances
- Pivot away from white - dominant culture
- Build systems of accountability
- Appreciate various theories of change
- Allow for creative, multi - dimensional approaches
- Understand that the law has not, cannot, and will not save us.



The background is a solid teal color. On the left side, there are several overlapping circles. One circle contains a dark teal scribbled pattern of lines. Another circle is a solid dark teal. The overall design is modern and abstract.

# THANK YOU!

Email me at [afleming@law.miami.edu](mailto:afleming@law.miami.edu)  
if you have more questions.

