

This checklist is designed to help congregations strategize, keep track of and evaluate the environmental justice within your Green Sanctuary work.

## **This checklist follows the 4 Critical Aspects of the work**

1. Leadership
2. Environmental Justice Assessment
3. Justice Ministries and Partnerships Assessment, and
4. Action Plan and (4a) its evaluation

**Also, see SPECIFIC CRITERIA RELATED to CATEGORY OF PROJECT at the end of this document.**

### **(1) LEADERSHIP**

Choose at least one of A - D to analyze and then strategize concrete steps to improve:

A. How diverse is the composition of the GS team leadership and the people tapped to create the plan and take charge of each segment of the plan (in terms of racial-ethnic identity, class, gender, age, nationality, etc.)? How does this compare with the diversity within the congregation?

B. In the creation and implementation of the plan, does this project tap the leadership of youth or young adults in the congregation or otherwise help nurture their vision and talents in this process? If not, could it?

C. How broadly does the GS team tap other members from outside their circle to help lead various aspects of the plan? This can mean outside their circle within their congregation and it can mean outside their circle outside the congregation in the community in which the congregation is located.

D. What is the role of any partner groups in taking leadership, providing direction for any part of the Plan? If there are no outside groups helping provide leadership, why not?

## **(2) ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ASSESSMENT**

- a) Document specific dynamics and examples of how race, class, gender and possibly other oppressions are at work in the community (congregational and larger) as you relate to the environment AND how the congregation connects to these dynamics through aspects of building operations, policies, practices, ministries, etc. (You may show this by being able to identify particular corporations, institutions, government bodies, specific neighborhoods or groups of residents, and specific harms and benefits, etc.).

AND

- b) Document/demonstrate how this information has been shared with the broader congregation so that it has become wide-spread knowledge and understanding – not just held by a few people. Further, describe how the congregation has responded to this new awareness/understanding (what impact doing this analysis has had).

## **(3) JUSTICE MINISTRIES AND PARTNERSHIP ASSESSMENT**

- a) Document the consultation process re: justice ministries assessment – demonstration that it was sufficiently broad and deep.

AND

- b) Document conversation with minister or relevant consultant about the congregation's potential pastoral needs and how they inform and are informed by the Action Plan – so that the Plan does represent a “stretch” and whatever emotional, spiritual or other resources need to be mobilized in service of this effort will be mobilized.
  - What kinds of conclusions came out of this process? Did you identify any synergies or connections with environmental justice that you will build upon in this Action Plan? How clear and realistic are those? Are you missing some obvious ways to build upon what you are already doing in worship, life span education, building operations, their ej project, etc.?
  - If your environmental justice project is not related to any existing ministries or partnerships, why not? Is this a credible, compelling reason? If their project depends on a new partner, what is required to be in solidarity/partnership?
  - Has the congregation done any anti-racism or anti-oppression training for itself? Has it done any study and reflection related to class? If so, how might you utilize what members have learned and apply it to the environmental justice components of the Action Plan? If they have not, would this be a helpful next step?

- Does the Action Plan represent a “stretch” related to building or growing relationships across differences? With respect to public witness of their values/faith?
- Will personal study and/or pastoral counseling be helpful for this congregation as it stretches and grows in implementing its Action Plan?

#### **(4) THE ACTION PLAN**

- Congregation documents that you have thoughtfully considered whether your environmental justice action can link to an existing justice ministry, and if so, it represents a significant step forward in the congregation’s learning and practice of being in right relationship with others.
- If the proposed environmental justice action does not link to an existing justice ministry (or there are no existing, ongoing justice ministries), it provides a channel for the congregation to become more deeply rooted in place and deepen their learning and practice of being in right relationship with others. (It potentially serves as the start of a justice ministry for the congregation.)
- The project speaks to a significant felt need in the community (beyond what the congregation thinks is important, necessary, useful, etc.) and there is documentation related to how the congregation determined this is the case.
- The “action” project is not only a “learning” or “education” project but represents a significant act of compassion, restoration, healing, reconciliation and/or advocacy.
- Meets any specific criteria related to the particular type of environmental justice project chosen.
- How broadly within the congregation did the GS team consult before developing its Action Plan? Were there any consultations in the community before they developed their plan, particularly their environmental justice project? (Is the discussion of this adequate in the application?)
- Review each of the proposed activities/actions in light of the environmental justice analysis. Do they make sense? Is environmental justice sufficiently integrated throughout the Plan?
- What is the problem or opportunity identified for the environmental justice action project?

- Who and how did the team identify this as a priority for action?
- Is this a case of the congregation doing something for some group of people or truly working with an affected community?
- Which of the four categories does the environmental justice action project fit in? Does it meet the requirements for that/those category(ies)?
- Is this meeting a significant, pressing need? Has the group clearly identified what some of the underlying economic, political, social, and environmental dynamics are at play, which will need to be considered, if not addressed?
- Empathy and understanding – does the congregation in its proposed action reflect emotional and spiritual understanding of the problem and its dynamics and of the specific people involved?
- Is the proposed response adequate? Does it demonstrate a sufficient response to those dynamics? Is it attempting to bring about significant and long-lasting change? Or, build power for future work down the road?
- What is the significant impact that they propose to have? Have they bitten off too little? Too much? -- in terms of quantity and complexity of actions needed and length of time involved?
- Who will be making decisions and implementing aspects of the environmental justice action? Will any affected groups/neighborhoods be taking a leading role?
- Has the GS team thought about possible roadblocks or challenges? Have they developed some ideas about how to cope with possible difficulties that might emerge?
- Who are the primary beneficiaries of this environmental justice action project? (The church? Then, rethink the project!)
- Is the scope of the project in line with the size and resources of the congregation?

## **SPECIFIC CRITERIA RELATED to CATEGORY OF PROJECT.**

(Note: actual projects may be a combination of categories. In this case, they must fulfill the requirements of all the relevant categories.)

**(1) SPECIES EQUITY.** Honoring the integrity and inherent worth of all beings, and preserving and protecting the ecosystems of which they are a part.

These are projects that are likely to involve plant, wildlife, habitat or ecosystem restoration and conservation. To be acceptable, they must meet the following two requirements:

- The area to be conserved must be a public space open to all people and/or must be of cultural or social significance to people who have traditionally faced discrimination, marginalization or economic hardship.
- Planning and implementation must be done in partnership with appropriate groups from the area, including any groups representing the people who traditionally faced discrimination, marginalization or economic hardship.]

**(2) INTER-GENERATIONAL EQUITY:** Conserving, preserving, and restoring natural resources, ecosystems, and environmental “goods and services” such that future generations have as least as much access and enjoyment as we do now. This represents a commitment to sustainability in all its fullness for the entire human family.

Projects in this category must contain at least one of these two aspects:

- Nurturing and supporting youth and young adult leadership related to environmental justice issues.
- Establishing a law, policy, or institution that will have long-term, lasting environmental justice benefits for future generations.

**(3) EQUITY AMONGST HUMANS (as individuals, communities, and nations) IN BENEFITTING FROM** the extraction and use of natural resources, environmental “goods and services”, economic development, and in the enforcement of laws related to this.

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**(4) EQUITY AMONGST HUMANS (as individuals, communities, and nations) IN BEARING THE RISKS AND BURDENS** of natural resource depletion, pollution, and economic development and in the enforcement of laws related to this.

Projects in these two categories must be planned in consultation and collaboration with the intended “beneficiaries”. Ideally, the primary leadership will be undertaken by individuals or group(s) representing the “beneficiaries”. AT A MINIMUM, leadership will be undertaken in some collaborative form (in coalition, alliance, or partnership arrangement.)