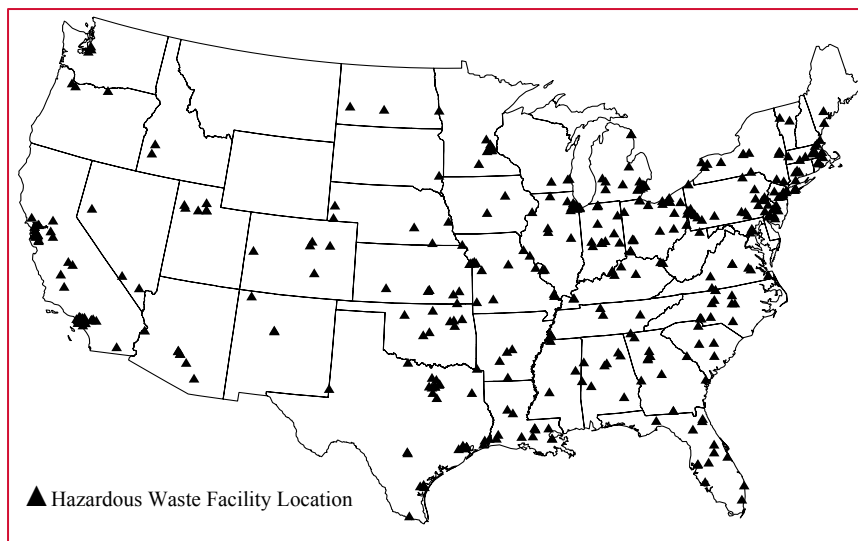


Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty 1987—2007

**A Report Prepared for the
United Church of Christ
Justice & Witness Ministries**



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ABOUT THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST JUSTICE & WITNESS MINISTRIES

Justice and Witness Ministries of the United Church of Christ embraces God's transforming mission to do justice, seek peace, and build community. Therefore, in response to the call of Christ, we speak and act prophetically through public witness, policy advocacy, issue education, and grassroots empowerment to build a more just, compassionate and inclusive world.

Justice and Witness Ministries, one of four Covenanted Ministries in the United Church of Christ, helps local congregations and all settings of the church respond to God's commandments to do justice, seek peace and effect change for a better world. The work of Justice and Witness Ministries is guided by the pronouncements and resolutions approved by the United Church of Christ.

JWM has a long history of working to confront and dismantle racism. JWM's work serves as a catalyst for social transformation, particularly in the ushering in of a fully integrated multiracial, multicultural world – a world where diversity becomes the focal point of communal celebration. Our work for criminal and juvenile justice reform, toward the abolishment of capital punishment, and in support of political prisoners is aimed to remove the barriers that divide people, that they may be liberated to live as one.

JWM uses a variety of strategies to undertake justice advocacy. These strategies include mobilizing people to participate in public life so as to impact social policy. *Responding to legislative issues, JWM positively impacts the areas of global economy, public education, workers rights, health care, economic development, and the environment.*

Working as individuals, congregations, Associations, Conferences and national covenanted ministries, the UCC is engaged in diverse ministries of compassion, advocacy and reconciliation. We seek to be a church that is multiracial, multicultural, open and affirming, accessible to all.

We embrace God's transforming mission to do justice, seek peace, and build community. In response to Christ's call, we prophetically speak truth to power and act through public witness in over twenty social justice advocacy areas. Jesus calls us to be a more inclusive church and society.

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Foreword

Twenty years ago, the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice (CRJ) published a decisive report exposing the gross disregard for people of color as toxic waste landfills were sited in their communities throughout the nation. *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States* proved to be a critical foundation for the environmental justice movement that continues today. *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty* marks the anniversary of widespread public reaction to this appalling demonstration of racism.

Prior to 1987, environmental issues and racial justice issues were commonplace in public debate, but not addressed as an inter-related problem. It was not until Benjamin F. Chavis, Executive Director of the CRJ, provoked the nation's consciousness by referring to toxic waste landfill siting in people of color communities as "environmental racism." Motivated by an appeal from UCC members in Warren County, North Carolina five years earlier, CRJ assigned Charles Lee to begin its investigation and found the problem multiplied in settings across the United States. Hazardous waste materials of all kinds were being dumped near homes, schools, and work places, affecting children and their parents and grandparents.

Thus began two decades of working with grassroots communities— from African Americans in so-called "cancer alley," the chemical manufacturing corridor between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, LA, to Native American communities like those near Prairie Island, MN, to Latino communities like those along the New River in southern California, where the *maquiladoras* (factories) located on the U.S.-Mexico border, dump their wastes. In 1991, CRJ sponsored the first People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, bringing together hundreds of people of color who were working on these issues in their own communities. A movement was born.

In 2000, Justice and Witness Ministries assumed the responsibilities of six UCC agencies addressing justice issues including the Commission for Racial Justice. The movement continued under the leadership of Bernice Powell Jackson, who designated a program ministry portfolio specifically focused on environmental justice. Two years later, the Justice and Witness Ministries co-sponsored the Second People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, or Summit II

It is ironic that twenty years after the original *Toxic Wastes and Race* report, many of our communities not only face the same problems they did back then, but now they face new ones because of government cutbacks in enforcement, weakening health protection, and dismantling the environmental justice regulatory apparatus. Our new report, *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty*, again signals clear evidence of racism where toxic waste sites are located and the way government responds to toxic contamination emergencies in people of color communities.

Long before Hurricane Katrina in August 2005 created the worst environmental disaster in U.S. history and the levee breach drowned New Orleans, millions of Americans from West Harlem to East Los Angeles learned the hard way that "waiting for government to respond can be hazardous to their health and the health of their community." Katrina blew the lid off the "dirty little secret" of race, vulnerable populations, disaster response, and unequal protection.

So, the best way to observe the 20th anniversary of the groundbreaking report, *Toxic Wastes and Race*, is by continuing the struggle for environmental justice today. To celebrate its birthday and to honor Earth Day weekend, on Saturday, April 21, we urge you not only to plant trees or clean up our parks but also join the people of devastated communities across the country in their fight to stamp out environmental racism and economic injustice. It will be our way of declaring to the world that our commitment to environmental justice and our outrage at environmental racism are as strong today as they were 20 years ago.

Join us and communities of color across the nation as we struggle to clean up our cities, our rural areas, our reservations, our playgrounds and our work sites. *La lucha continua*—the struggle continues.

Rev. M. Linda Jaramillo, Executive Minister
UCC Justice and Witness Ministries

Preface

In response to a request from a group of United Church of Christ (UCC) members in Warren County, North Carolina, the UCC got involved in what we understood was a matter of justice when in 1982 the State of North Carolina chose a poor predominantly African American community for the placement of a toxic waste landfill to dispose of PCBs illegally dumped along the roadway of fourteen counties. Back then, residents enlisted the support of the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice (CRJ) to engage in a campaign of nonviolent civil disobedience.

In response to this experience, and from others across the nation, the CRJ commissioned a study to examine what was perceived at the time to be the intentional placement of hazardous waste sites, landfills, incinerators, and polluting industries in communities inhabited mainly by African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians and Pacific Islanders, farm workers and the working poor. These groups were, and still are, particularly vulnerable because they are perceived as weak and passive citizens who will not fight back against the poisoning of their neighborhoods in fear that it may jeopardize jobs and economic survival.

In releasing the findings of the 1987 study written by Charles Lee, Rev. Benjamin Chavis, CRJ Executive Director, referred to intentionally selecting communities of color for wastes disposal sites and polluting industrial facilities – essentially condemning them to contamination – as “environmental racism.” He called on the United Church of Christ to be a champion working for environmental justice across the nation and across the world.

Since then the environmental justice movement has been trying to address inequalities that are the result of human settlement, industrial contamination and unsustainable development. Through the Environmental Justice Office, the United Church of Christ seeks to educate congregations and communities and to assist groups in organizing, mobilizing and empowering themselves to take charge of their lives, their communities and their surroundings. We also seek to address the issues of power imbalances, political disfranchisement and lack of resources in order to facilitate the creation and maintenance of healthy, livable and sustainable communities.

The environmental justice movement is as much concerned about the environment as any of the traditional environmental groups. There is only one environment. The environmental justice movement is concerned about wetlands, birds and wilderness areas; it is also concerned, however, about urban habitats, about reservations, about the things that are happening on the US-Mexican border, about children poisoned by lead in their own homes and about children playing in contaminated parks and playgrounds. The UCC is committed to keep bringing these issues to the attention of the large environmental groups and to the broader society. That is precisely the intention of our new *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty* report.

Knowing that the environmental justice movement is a dynamic one, a continuous struggle, we offer you *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty*. This updated report, however, is not the final word. It indicates, even twenty years after the original one, that there still is so much to do and that there still is so much out there to learn, understand and research.

Twenty years after the release of the *Toxic Wastes and Race* report, racial and socioeconomic disparities persist in the distribution of the nation’s commercial hazardous waste facilities. The conclusions of the 1987 Report are similar to those of our updated report. In fact, in *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty* report you will read that “people of color are found to be more concentrated around hazardous waste facilities than previously shown.” You will see that race matters. Place matters too. Unequal protection places communities of color at special risk. And polluting industries still follow the path of least resistance, among other findings.

It is my hope that in these pages you will be able to find not only the principles and values that guided the research project, which in 1987 helped galvanize the environmental justice movement, but that you also will be able to see the important role that the church plays today in the doing (promotion) of justice.

We won't be able to achieve sustainable development until we get justice in environmental protection, particularly in the enforcement of regulations. The church must be part of a long term active movement, not only within the border of the United States but keeping in mind the policies that are being exported abroad. The church also has a role in fighting racism, and I hope that this report will help us to embrace our call, while embracing the principles of the environmental justice movement opposing everything that relates to pollution, industrial contamination in poor communities and communities of color and greed-driven non-sustainable development and non-sustainable patterns of production.

Dr. C.J. Correa Bernier
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In 1987, the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice released its groundbreaking study *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States*. The report was significant because it found race to be the most potent variable in predicting where commercial hazardous waste facilities were located in the U.S., more powerful than household income, the value of homes and the estimated amount of hazardous waste generated by industry.

This year, the United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries commissioned a new report as part of the twentieth anniversary of the release of the 1987 report. The 2007 *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty* report uses 2000 census data. The report also chronicles important environmental justice milestones since 1987 and includes a collection of “impact” essays from environmental justice leaders on a range of topics. This new report also examines the environmental justice implications in post-Katrina New Orleans and uses the Dickson County (Tennessee) Landfill case, the “poster child” for environmental racism, to illustrate the deadly mix of waste and race.

Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty is designed to facilitate renewed grassroots organizing and provide a catalyst for local, regional and national environmental justice public forums, discussion groups and policy changes in 2007 and beyond.

Approach

This new report includes the first national-level study to employ 2000 Census data and distance-based methods to a current database of commercial hazardous waste facilities to assess the extent of racial and socioeconomic disparities in facility locations in the U.S. Disparities are examined by region and state, and separate analyses are conducted for metropolitan areas, where most hazardous waste facilities are located.

Key Findings

The application of these new methods, which better determine where people live in relation to where hazardous sites are located, reveals that racial disparities in the distribution of hazardous wastes are greater than previously reported. In fact, these methods show that people of color make up the majority of those living in host neighborhoods within 3 kilometers (1.8 miles) of the nation’s hazardous waste facilities. Racial and ethnic disparities are prevalent throughout the country.

National Disparities

More than nine million people (9,222,000) are estimated to live in circular host neighborhoods within 3 kilometers of the nation’s 413 commercial hazardous waste facilities. More than 5.1 million people of color, including 2.5 million Hispanics or Latinos, 1.8 million African Americans, 616,000 Asians/Pacific Islanders and 62,000 Native Americans live in neighborhoods with one or more commercial hazardous waste facilities.

Host neighborhoods of commercial hazardous waste facilities are 56% people of color whereas non-host areas are 30% people of color. Percentages of African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos and Asians/Pacific Islanders in host neighborhoods are 1.7, 2.3 and 1.8 times greater (20% vs. 12%, 27% vs. 12%, and 6.7% vs. 3.6%), respectively. Poverty rates in the host neighborhoods are 1.5 times greater than non-host areas (18% vs. 12%)

[Neighborhoods with Clustered Facilities](#)

Neighborhoods with facilities clustered close together have higher percentages of people of color than those with non-clustered facilities (69% vs. 51%). Likewise, neighborhoods with clustered facilities have disproportionately high poverty rates. Because people of color and the poor are highly concentrated in neighborhoods with multiple facilities, they continue to be particularly vulnerable to the various negative impacts of hazardous waste facilities.

[EPA Regional Disparities](#)

Racial disparities for people of color as a whole exist in nine out of 10 U.S. EPA regions (all except Region 3). Disparities in people of color percentages between host neighborhoods and non-host areas are greatest in: Region 1, the Northeast (36% vs. 15%); Region 4, the southeast (54% vs. 30%); Region 5, the Midwest (53% vs. 19%); Region 6, the South, (63% vs. 42%); and Region 9, the southwest (80% vs. 49%). For Hispanics, African Americans and Asians/Pacific Islanders, statistically significant disparities exist in the majority or vast majority of EPA regions. The pattern of people of color being especially concentrated in areas where facilities are clustered is also geographically widespread throughout the country.

[State Disparities](#)

Forty of the 44 states (90%) with hazardous waste facilities have disproportionately high percentages of people of color in circular host neighborhoods within 3 kilometers of the facilities. States with the 10 largest differences in people of color percentages between host neighborhoods and non-host areas include (in descending order by the size of the differences): Michigan (66% vs. 19%), Nevada (79% vs. 33%), Kentucky (51% vs. 10%), Illinois (68% vs. 31%), Alabama (66% vs. 31%), Tennessee (54% vs. 20%), Washington (53% vs. 20%), Kansas (47% vs. 16%), Arkansas (52% vs. 21%) and California (81% vs. 51%). Thirty-five states have socioeconomic disparities, i.e., in poverty rates. In these states, the average poverty rate in host neighborhoods is 18% compared to 12% in non-host areas.

[Metropolitan Disparities](#)

In metropolitan areas, where four of every five hazardous waste facilities are located, people of color percentages in hazardous waste host neighborhoods are significantly greater than those in non-host areas (57% vs. 33%). Likewise, the nation's metropolitan areas show disparities in percentages of African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos and Asians/Pacific Islanders, 20% vs. 13%, 27% vs. 14% and 6.8% vs. 4.4%, respectively. Socioeconomic disparities exist between host neighborhoods and non-host areas, with poverty rates of 18% vs. 12%, respectively. One hundred and five of the 149 metropolitan areas with facilities (70%) have host neighborhoods with disproportionately high percentages of people of color, and 46 of these metro areas (31%) have majority people of color host neighborhoods.

[Continuing Significance of Race](#)

In 1987, *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States* found race to be more important than socioeconomic status in predicting the location of the nation's commercial hazardous waste facilities. In 2007, our current study results show that race continues to be a significant and robust predictor of commercial hazardous waste facility locations when socioeconomic factors are taken into account.

Conclusions

Twenty years after the release of *Toxic Wastes and Race*, significant racial and socioeconomic disparities persist in the distribution of the nation's commercial hazardous waste facilities. Although the current assessment uses newer methods that better match where people and hazardous waste facilities are located, the conclusions are very much the same as they were in 1987.

Race matters. People of color and persons of low socioeconomic status are still disproportionately impacted and are particularly concentrated in neighborhoods and communities with the greatest number of facilities. Race continues to be an independent predictor of where hazardous wastes are located, and it is a stronger predictor than income, education and other socioeconomic indicators. People of color now comprise a majority in neighborhoods with commercial hazardous waste facilities, and much larger (more than two-thirds) majorities can be found in neighborhoods with clustered facilities. African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos and Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders alike are disproportionately burdened by hazardous wastes in the U.S.

Place matters. People of color are particularly concentrated in neighborhoods and communities with the greatest number of hazardous waste facilities, a finding that directly parallels that of the original UCC report. This current appraisal also reveals that racial disparities are widespread throughout the country, whether one examines EPA regions, states or metropolitan areas, where the lion's share of facilities is located. Significant racial and socioeconomic disparities exist today despite the considerable societal attention to the problem noted in this report. These findings raise serious questions about the ability of current policies and institutions to adequately protect people of color and the poor from toxic threats.

Unequal protection places communities of color at special risk. Not only are people of color differentially impacted by toxic wastes and contamination, they can expect different responses from the government when it comes to remediation—as clearly seen in the two case studies in Post-Katrina New Orleans and in Dickson County, Tennessee. Thus, it does not appear that existing environmental, health and civil rights laws and local land use controls have been adequately applied or adapted to reducing health risks or mitigating various adverse impacts to families living in or near toxic “hot spots.”

Polluting industries still follow the path of least resistance. For many industries it is a “race to the bottom,” where land, labor and lives are cheap. It's about profits and the “bottom line.” Environmental “sacrifice zones” are seen as the price of doing business. Vulnerable communities, populations and individuals often fall between the regulatory cracks. They are in many ways “invisible” communities. The environmental justice movement served to make these disenfranchised communities visible and vocal.

The current environmental protection apparatus is “broken” and needs to be “fixed.” The current environmental protection system fails to provide equal protection to people of color and low-income communities. Various levels of government have been slow to respond to environmental health threats from toxic waste in communities of color. The mission of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was never to address environmental policies and practices that result in unfair, unjust and inequitable outcomes. The impetus for change came from grassroots mobilization that views environmental protection as a basic right, not a privilege reserved for a few who can “vote with their feet” and escape from or fend off locally undesirable land uses—such as landfills, incinerators, chemical plants, refineries and other polluting facilities.

Slow government response to environmental contamination and toxic threats unnecessarily endangers the health of the most vulnerable populations in our society. Government officials have knowingly allowed people of color families near Superfund sites, other contaminated waste sites and polluting industrial facilities to be poisoned with lead, arsenic, dioxin, TCE, DDT, PCBs and a host of other deadly chemicals. Having the facts and failing to respond is explicitly discriminatory and tantamount to an immoral “human experiment.”

Clearly, the environmental justice movement over the last two decades has made a difference in the lives of people of color and low-income communities that are overburdened with environmental pollution. After years of intense study, targeted research, public hearings, grassroots organizing, networking and movement building, environmental justice struggles have taken center stage. However, community leaders who have been on the front line for justice for decades know that the lethargic, and too often antagonistic, government response to environmental emergencies in their communities is not the exception but the general rule. They have come to understand that waiting for the government to respond can be hazardous to their health and the health of their communities.

In fact, the U.S. EPA, the governmental agency millions of Americans look to for protection, has mounted an all-out attack on environmental justice and environmental justice principles established in the early 1990s. Moreover, the agency has failed to implement the Environmental Justice Executive Order 12898 signed by President Bill Clinton in 1994 or adequately apply Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

Recommendations

Many of the environmental injustice problems that disproportionately and adversely affect low-income and people of color communities could be eliminated if current environmental, health, housing, land use and civil rights laws were vigorously enforced in a nondiscriminatory way—without regard to race, color or national origin. Many of the environmental problems facing low-income persons and people of color are systemic and will require institutional change, including new legislation. We also recognize that government alone cannot solve these problems, but need the assistance of concerned individuals, groups and organizations from various walks of life. With these considerations in mind, the following recommendations are offered:

Congressional Actions

Codify Environmental Justice Executive Order 12898. Executive Order 12898 “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations” provides significant impetus to advance environmental justice at the federal level and in the states. Congress should codify Executive Order 12898 into law. Congress will thereby establish an unequivocal legal mandate and impose federal responsibility in ways that advance equal protection under law in communities of color and low-income communities.

Provide Legislative “Fix” for Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Work toward a legislative “fix” of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that was gutted by the 2001 *Alexander v. Sandoval* U.S. Supreme Court decision that requires intent, rather than disparate impact, to prove discrimination. Congress should act to reestablish that there is a private right of action for disparate impact discrimination under Title VI.

Re-instate the Superfund Tax. Congress should act immediately to re-instate the Superfund Tax, re-examine the National Priorities List (NPL) hazardous site ranking system and reinvigorate Federal Relocation Policy in communities of color to move those communities that are directly in harms way.

Hold Congressional Hearings on EPA Response to Contamination in EJ Communities. We urge the U.S. Congress to hold hearings on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA’s) response to toxic contamination in EJ communities, including post-Katrina New Orleans, the Dickson County (Tennessee) Landfill water contamination problem and similar problems throughout the United States.

Enact Legislation Promoting Clean Production and Waste Reduction. Require industry to use clean production technologies and support necessary R&D for toxic use reduction and closed loop production systems. Create incentives and buy-back programs to achieve full recovery, reuse and recycling of waste and product design that enhances waste material recovery and reduction.

Require Comprehensive Safety Data for All Chemicals. Chemical manufacturing companies must provide publicly available safety information about a chemical for it to remain on or be added to the market. The information must allow for reasonable evaluation of the safety of the chemical for human health and the environment and must include hazard, use and exposure information.

Executive Branch Actions

Implement EPA Office of Inspector General’s Recommendations. The EPA Inspector General (IG) reports that the agency has not developed a clear vision or a comprehensive strategic plan to achieve environmental justice. The EPA should implement the EJ recommendations of the IG’s 2004 and 2006 reports for addressing Executive Order 12898.

Fully Implement Environmental Justice Executive Order 12898. The U.S. EPA, FEMA, Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Labor, HUD and other federal agencies need to fully implement Executive Order 12898 in the cleanup and rebuilding in the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast region.

Protect Community Right-to-Know. Reinstate the reporting of emissions and lower reporting thresholds to the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) database on an annual basis to protect communities' right to know.

End EPA Rollback of Environmental Justice Initiatives. EPA must end its attempts to roll back environmental justice, and it must take aggressive steps to implement EJ Executive Order 12898 and provide targeted enforcement where the needs are the greatest, and where unequal protection places low-income and people of color populations at special risk.

Require Cumulative Risk Assessments in Facility Permitting. EPA should require assessments of multiple, cumulative and synergistic exposures, unique exposure pathways, and impacts to sensitive populations in issuing environmental permits and regulations.

Require Safety Buffers in Facility Permitting and Fenceline Community Performance Bonds for Variances. The EPA (states and local governments too) should adopt site location standards requiring a safe distance between a residential population and an industrial facility. It should also require locally administered Fenceline Community Performance Bonds to provide for the recovery of residents impacted by chemical accidents.

State and Local Actions

Require State-by-State Assessments (Report Cards) on Environmental Justice. Require states to evaluate and report their progress made on environmental justice. From 1993 to present, nearly three dozen states have expressly addressed environmental justice. However, little is known about the efficacy of these laws and if in fact they are being enforced.

Require Brownfields Community Revitalization Analysis. Parties seeking to benefit from governmental subsidies should be required to conduct a Community Revitalization Analysis and take steps to address the most serious impacts identified in the analysis.

Establish Tax Increment Finance Funds to Promote Environmental Justice-Driven Community Development. Environmental justice organizations should become involved in redevelopment processes in their neighborhoods to integrate brownfields priorities into long-range neighborhood redevelopment plans. This will allow for the use of Tax Increment Finance funds for cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields sites expressly for community-determined uses.

Establish Community Land Trusts. Establish Community Land Trusts (CLTs), i.e., community-governed nonprofits, to allow communities to purchase or use brownfields sites at below-market rates and redevelop them to meet a variety of community needs, for example, to provide limited-equity housing.

Adopt Green Procurement Policies and Clean Production Tax Policies. State and local governments can show leadership in reducing the demand for products produced using unsustainable technologies that harm human health and the environment. Government must use its buying power and tax dollars ethically by supporting clean production systems.

Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) Actions

Increase Private Foundations' General Support Funding for Environmental, Economic and Climate Justice, and Healthy Communities. Increase private foundation support for efforts of environmental justice groups and their allies to craft and implement legislative, public policy and legal advocacy campaigns to address environmental and public health inequities. Environmental grant makers give a tremendous amount of attention to issues of climate change. However, more philanthropic support must be given to campaigns addressing economic and climate justice issues.

Fund Support for Training New Generations of Leaders. Environmental justice organizations, campaigns and collaborative partnerships, including environmental justice centers and academic programs at universities, remain the stepchild of philanthropic giving. Foundation support is sorely needed to increase the pool of young people of color in environmental fields.

Target the “Dirty Dozen” Environmental Justice Test Cases. We urge the national environmental, civil rights, human rights, faith-based and political organizations to “adopt” environmental justice test cases for targeted action by identifying a list of the twelve worst cases, the “Dirty Dozen,” of private industry and government installations that have polluted African American, Native American, Latino American, Asian American and poor White American communities and their residents.

Step up Efforts to Diversify Mainstream Environmental Organizations. There must be a serious and sustained effort to redress the utter lack of diversity within the mainstream environmental movement. While a few environmental organizations took seriously the challenges put forward at the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in 1991, the overall lack of diversity at the staff, board and program levels remains staggering.

Continue to Strengthen Racial, Ethnic, Cross-Class Collaborations Among Environmental Justice Organizations. Some strides have been made by the environmental justice movement in building multi-racial, multi-ethnic coalitions and in developing strategic alliances with mainstream environmental groups, organized labor, faith-based groups and the scientific community. We encourage further efforts to build and nurture multi-racial, multi-ethnic, cross-sector working relationships.

Industry Actions

Adopt Clean Production Principles and Methods. Clean production is rooted in the Precautionary Principle and requires clean manufacturing processes that produce clean and safe products. Industry is urged to adopt toxic use reduction, waste reduction, zero waste and closed loop production systems that promote use of renewable energy, nontoxic materials, safer chemical practices and sustainable product design. Industry can begin by adopting the Louisville Charter for safe chemicals developed in 2004 by a broad set of environmental justice and health organizations and professionals.

Phase Out Persistent, Bioaccumulative or Highly Toxic Chemicals. Prioritize for elimination chemicals that are slow to degrade, accumulate in our bodies or living organisms, or are highly hazardous to humans or the environment, including those that disrupt hormones and the immune system and are particularly dangerous to children and other vulnerable populations.

Support Community and Worker Right-to-Know. An informed public, workers, and communities must have access to information about industries’ use and release of toxic chemicals and industries’ product chains. Disclose chemicals and materials, list quantities of chemicals produced, used, released and exported, and provide access to information.

Adopt and Uphold Legally-Binding Good Neighborhood Agreements. Uphold performance standards negotiated with fence line communities that may include community access to information, environmental and health monitoring, right to inspect the facilities, accident preparedness, pollution prevention and support of good local jobs, union jobs, local economic needs and means for dispute resolution.