



THE BUSINESS GUIDE TO

ADVANCING CLIMATE JUSTICE

FORUM
FOR THE
FUTURE



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WHO WE ARE: This guide was created through a partnership between Forum for the Future, B Lab Global, and B Lab U.S. & Canada. A core team of five people worked together since June 2023 to learn from community members, hold workshops and interviews, and compile this guidance.

B LAB GLOBAL creates standards, policies, tools, and programs that shift capitalism's behavior, culture, and structural underpinnings. They mobilize the B Corp community towards collective action to address society's most critical challenges. Their global community includes over 8,500 B Corps in over 95 countries and over 160 industries. More than 100,000 companies use our B Impact Assessment and SDG Action Manager to manage their impact.

B LAB U.S. & CANADA (B LAB USCA) is one of six partners of B Lab's global network. They foster and mobilize a growing community of people and businesses working towards a more fair and inclusive economy in the United States and Canada. At the heart of their theory of change are three impact pillars: climate justice, racial equity, and a stakeholder-driven economy. Over 2,500 B Corps comprise the U.S. & Canadian community.

FORUM FOR THE FUTURE (FORUM) is a leading international sustainability non-profit. For more than 25 years, they've been working in partnership with businesses, governments, and civil society to accelerate the shift towards a just and regenerative future in which both people and the planet thrive. Forum is focused on enabling systemic and urgent action in three potentially game-changing areas: transforming how people and organizations think about, produce, consume, and value both food and energy, and on reimagining the purpose of business in our society and economy.

The American Climate Futures program was created under the Forum umbrella to ensure that climate justice is seen as a foundational priority in private sector responses to the climate crisis. Forum is working towards ensuring that the needs and voices of those most impacted by climate change are prioritized and centered in climate solutions and that these solutions are developed in an inclusive and just way. In so doing, Forum seeks to deepen trust and spark collaboration between companies and frontline communities in support of long-term, systemic change.

FOREWORD

Over the last five years, there has been an influx of investment in climate solutions to address global greenhouse gas emissions. While billions of dollars are invested in climate solutions annually, only a small percentage is allocated to support the communities most vulnerable to its impacts - frontline communities.¹



Climate justice strengthens current and new climate action initiatives to be more effective and efficient.

As climate change intensifies, often the most severe harm falls disproportionately on frontline and underserved communities, who are least able to prepare for and recover from climate disasters. Vulnerability to climate change is exacerbated by extractive forms of capitalism and widespread inequality that marginalizes specific communities. For example, a recent report by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found Black and African American people in the United States are 40% more likely to live in areas where extreme temperatures lead to more deaths.² This likelihood increases to 59% if global warming reaches 4°C.



Through a series of interviews and workshops with frontline community leaders and experts, we have heard about the hopelessness, fear, anxiety, loss of income, displacement, damage to property, and deteriorating health that people are experiencing, along with a wide range of other injustices that intersect with the climate crisis. We also heard that progress is slow and solutions are not directly benefiting communities, with the people affected first and worst feeling unheard and left out. We've woven many insights from these conversations into this guide.

We have also heard from businesses beginning to embrace and prioritize climate and environmental justice as part of their climate action goals and strategies. We are seeking to build meaningful partnerships with communities.

We heard there is a lack of knowledge on where and how to take action for meaningful impact, an ambiguous process for equity-centered community engagement, a lack of clear metrics to measure and track progress, and a fear of failing or getting it wrong, preventing concrete and urgent action.

As many businesses begin to embrace their role and responsibility in creating equity-centered solutions to the global climate crisis, this guide will amplify and support the stories, voices, and wisdom from frontline community efforts and provide practical guidance for the private sector to take concrete climate justice action in partnership with communities. This guide builds on previous guidance including the Climate Justice Playbook for Business.

Lastly, this guide does not need to be read linearly. Read through the Table of Contents and decide where to start. If you only read one section, focus on the Guidance for Partnering With Communities.



KYLIE NEALIS

B Lab
U.S. & Canada



**KSENIA
BENIFAND**

Forum for
the Future

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

This guide is for business leaders, change-makers, and entrepreneurs committed to centering equity and justice as part of their climate action efforts.

It is for those willing and ready to take on new leadership approaches requiring a profound shift from the traditional mindset rooted in authoritative so-called expert roles. This new leadership approach focuses on a regenerative mindset, embracing humility and learning and acknowledging the need for collaboration and partnerships between businesses and frontline communities to address the climate crisis.

The guide is a compilation of perspectives from people living and working at the frontlines of climate change, people working to support and advance social justice issues, and those who believe that there is a significant role for the private sector to take action. It also includes the voices of business, policy-makers, and civil society experts working in partnership with frontline communities to advance these issues.

While climate injustice is a global issue, this guide is grounded on information gathered from communities and businesses across the U.S. and Canada. Though we believe there are learnings in this guide that could apply in multiple contexts, it is critical to acknowledge that experiences of climate injustice are context-specific.

Some organizations have fought for decades for rights to a safe, healthy, and survivable environment and have elevated the need for climate justice at a national scale, and some of their voices are shared here. They share their lived experience and solutions they seek to the climate crisis and related injustices that have long been advocated for but might still need to gain traction in the mainstream.

We offer this content to contribute to the broader conversation and provide practical guidance to companies ready to take action. We aim to elevate and connect stories of what's possible and highlight areas where urgent private-sector action is imperative.

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KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The following insights have been identified as most critical for the private sector to consider as it works to advance climate justice.

1. PRIORITIZE TRUST-BUILDING WITH FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

Frontline communities often perceive businesses to be extractive and lacking in follow-through. Businesses can begin to transform relationships by listening to frontline communities and being humble, present, and collaborative over an extended period. It is important to acknowledge past harms and take concrete actions aligned with community needs to heal historical distrust.

2. ADOPT A NEW MINDSET

Advancing climate justice calls for a different approach to business leadership, shifting away from short-term gains toward long-term solutions developed in partnership with communities to address the root causes of today's biggest challenges. These include the climate

emergency, nature in crisis, and mounting inequality. Through this transition, businesses can contribute to ecosystem restoration and renewal while championing dignity, fulfillment, and equity for all.

3. OFFER IMMEDIATE & SUSTAINED SUPPORT TO MEET FRONTLINE COMMUNITY NEEDS

Look for ways to reduce barriers for community organizations to access funding, including by shifting to an adaptive and relational model that prioritizes multi-year, unrestricted grants. Consider offering technical skills training, educational and mentorship opportunities, digital tools, and other capacity building. It is important to acknowledge disparities and engage in a deeper discussion about what a more equitable distribution of power and resources might look like.

4. CONSIDER YOUR SPHERES OF CONTROL & INFLUENCE

Every business has spheres of control, like internal operations, and influence, like its value chain and the policies it advocates for. It is important to look across both spheres when it comes to climate justice. Climate solutions are most likely to advance climate justice when relevant priorities are integrated into business strategy and decision-making. To begin, businesses should prioritize areas of action and develop a process by which to assess the environmental impact of existing and future projects.



1. THE CASE FOR CHANGE

URGENT NEED FOR JUSTICE

WHAT IS **CLIMATE JUSTICE?**

Climate justice seeks to address the disproportionate impacts of climate change on underserved communities, including low-income groups, people of color, Black and Indigenous Peoples, and those with fewer resources to prepare for and recover from climate disasters. It acknowledges historical injustices and systemic inequities that exacerbate vulnerability to climate-related events. Climate justice prioritizes the needs of frontline communities, aiming to rectify environmental and social disparities by centering equity in climate action and policymaking while holding accountable those who bear the most significant responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions and environmental degradation.

Frontline communities with the fewest resources to adapt to climate change are often the least responsible for greenhouse gas emissions³, yet many times are the most impacted. These communities have a critical perspective and expertise around their needs to be more resilient to climate change. The private sector has more opportunities to support community-led climate solutions today than ever. We'll explore these opportunities in the following sections.





2. FROM THE FRONTLINES

FRONTLINE PERSPECTIVES

PERSPECTIVES FROM FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

CEE STANLEY AT CHAMPIONS
RETREAT 2022
PHOTO: KIELINSKI
PHOTOGRAPHERS

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CENTERING FRONTLINE COMMUNITY VOICES?

Centering communities and community voices is foundational to climate justice. Uplifting, trusting, and valuing the lived experiences of the people most impacted by climate change constitutes centering community voices. Centering communities means ensuring those most impacted are deeply involved and have decision-making power when identifying solutions, setting priorities, setting policy agendas, and setting the overall narrative.

DEFINITIONS OF CLIMATE JUSTICE

Forum and B Lab USCA spoke with diverse changemakers working towards climate justice, including frontline community representatives, activists, businesses, nonprofits, council members, and policymakers. We asked how they define and approach climate justice and what they see as key principles.



READ WHAT WE HEARD ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES >



“My definition of climate justice is understanding, not only the inequities facing the frontline communities, but who is experiencing what first and who is most vulnerable to climate change. Then, I look at inequities system-wide and how that impacts what we are doing as a part of climate action.”



BRANDY BROWN

Vice President,
DNV



BRETT ISSAC

CEO,
Navajo Power

“Climate justice is not just about transition, it's about taking care of the communities that are being abandoned with the shift away from fossil fuels.”



DIANDRA MARIZET ESPARZA

Intersectional
Environmentalist

“From an intersectional environmentalist perspective, the aim should be to make engagement accessible and culturally relevant to promote equal access to meaningful participation. Environmental justice is marked by the inclusion of communities in decision-making around their own environments. Intersectional environmentalism is a lens that helps us identify and uncover opportunities for building agency around missing participation to achieve a future where we all have equal access to contributing to climate justice.”



**ADRIANA
ESPINOZA**

Deputy
Commissioner
for Equity & Justice,
New York State
Department of
Environmental
Conservation

“I think about climate justice in terms of uplifting and supporting community-driven climate solutions. There needs to be a significant paradigm shift, moving from climate progress and action to justice, by empowering frontline communities.”



ZACH LOU

California Green
New Deal Coalition

“There must be an emphasis on making sure we have leadership from communities that are most impacted by climate change, or extraction, or economic disinvestment. We don’t want to reproduce the same inequities with a new energy system, ...We must fix the system while also addressing climate.”

“You cannot talk about climate justice without also talking about environmental racism.”



**CEE
STANLEY**

Green Heffa
Farms



MANY PEOPLE WE SPOKE WITH ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE DEFINITION OF CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE VARIES BASED ON THE CONTEXT AND HISTORY OF DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES.

VISIONS FOR A JUST FUTURE

Our research concluded that we cannot have a healthy planet without healthy communities. What might the future look like if we prioritized advancing climate justice? Everyone we talked to imagined diverse and inspiring possibilities and collective visions for a just future, visions of a healthy planet, and thriving communities that live in harmony. We all have a role in shaping the arc of the future toward justice.

A JUST FUTURE IS...

COOPERATIVE & CONNECTED

“The central idea of capitalism of singular ownership is devolved – people are sharing, people understand, and live by the idea that there’s enough. You don’t take any more than you need and people take responsibility for what they do.”

SAFE & HEALTHY

“Communities are prepared for climate emergencies. Homes are safe and energy efficient. Communities are healthy.”

JOYFUL

“We have space to engage in community joy and imagination.”

THRIVING

“I see climate-safe homes, water catchment, and no more lawns or ornamental plants. We are growing food, bringing back wetlands and natural systems that were there before colonization.”

ACCESSIBLE

“Active and accessible participation by everyone when it comes to determining how we live safely in our communities.”

DEMOCRATIZED & DECENTRALIZED

“More democratic structures for people to have ownership and control over the things they need to live.”

IN A JUST FUTURE, BUSINESSES ARE...

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

“...paying their fair share of taxes, proactively seeking ways to become more environmentally mindful, even without regulations in place.”

ACCOUNTABLE TO COMMUNITY NEEDS

“...truly triple bottom line and responsive to the needs of the community.” “They recognize their roles and responsibilities to communities and the global climate crisis.”

NOT SEEKING CREDIT

“I don’t see any signs that places were built/donated – the company didn’t want credit; it wasn’t a political move. We don’t have to recognize things that were donated, we just know because we see who’s in the community.”

SHARING PROFIT & ENSURING CO-BENEFITS

“...democratized, decentralized access to energy - building resilience while also maximizing co-benefits like new jobs or increased ownership opportunities. Profits flow back into the community.”

SUPPORTING & STEPPING ASIDE

“...outsourcing to grassroots and frontline efforts rather than expanding their own infrastructure.”

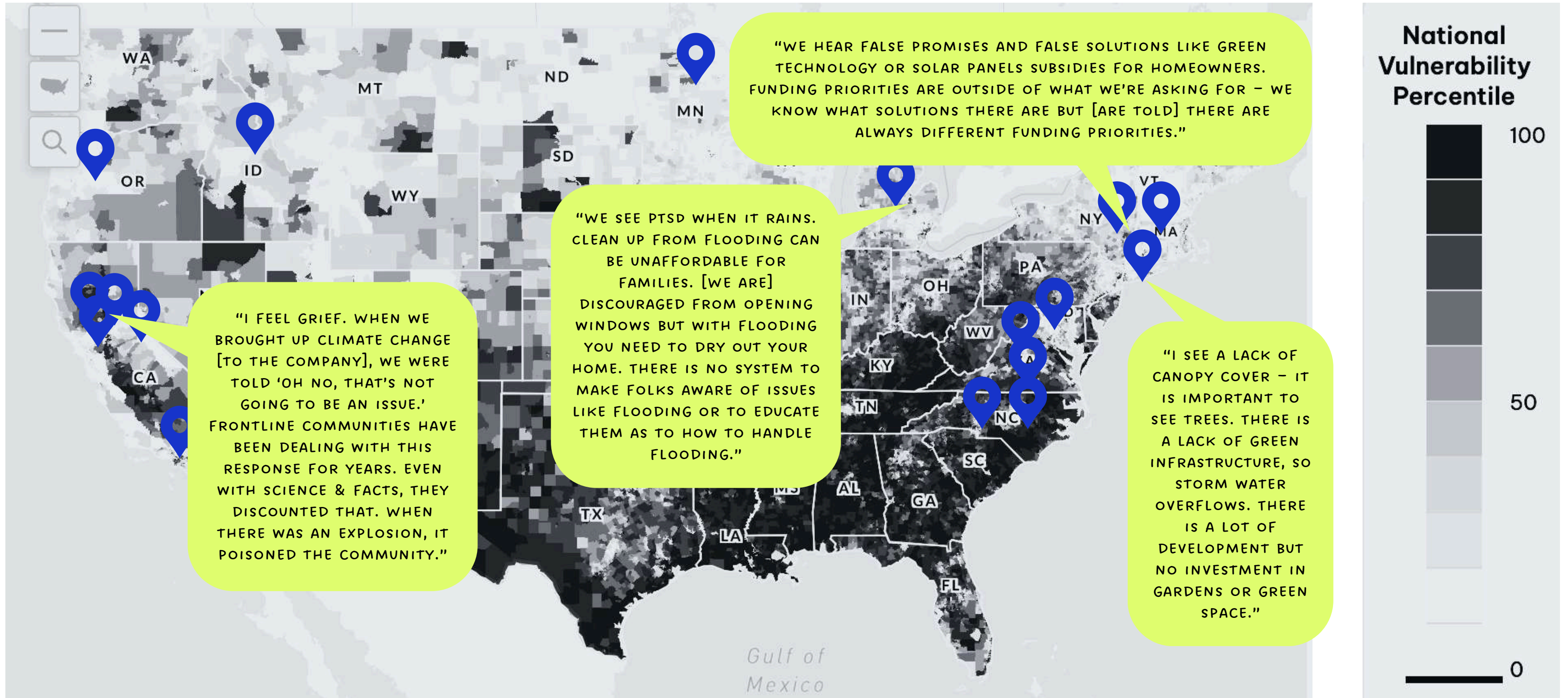


QUOTES FROM INTERVIEWS AND WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED BY FORUM AND B LAB USCA IN 2022 AND 2023 ARE ANONYMOUS.

INSIGHTS ON CURRENT CLIMATE IMPACTS

We asked community leaders across the United States about their experience of climate impacts – represented by the pins on the map on the next page. Their quotes highlight some of the experiences of those living on the frontlines of climate change. These perspectives emphasize that environmental, economic, and social injustice are deeply intersectional – none can be addressed without the others.

The Climate Vulnerability Index (see map on the next page) was developed to assess climate vulnerability through a holistic lens. It illustrates how the combination of environmental factors and social stressors, such as health, infrastructure, racism, or socioeconomics, can exacerbate a community’s capacity to cope with and recover from climate impacts.⁴ See [Appendix 1: Additional Resources](#) to access this and other resources.



MAP FROM THE CLIMATE VULNERABILITY INDEX



3. OVERVIEW

GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESS

HOW TO GET STARTED



“We need business, but we need business to operate in a very different way—profoundly aligned with the principles of climate justice. This means reimagining markets to not simply limit harm; they must foster healthy communities and ecosystems.”

TRACEY OSBORNE

UC Center For Climate Justice

As seen from the climate vulnerability map, there is a need for urgent action on climate justice across the United States and beyond.





The private sector is a significant driver of a just and regenerative economy in which people and the planet take priority. With resources and influence to leverage, businesses have the potential to catalyze meaningful change to advance climate justice. This section explores how businesses can take action across multiple scopes and areas of impact, including internal operations, supply chains, products and services, and policy advocacy — at scale and with speed.

We heard from many businesses that they recognize that centering justice and equity in their climate action efforts is critical, but significant roadblocks exist. These include:

- A lack of knowledge about where to take action aligned with business objectives for the most meaningful impact
- Uncertainty about the process by which to work with communities and the repercussions of accidentally misstepping
- Uncertainty around how to overcome lack of trust due to past and ongoing harms between business and communities.

Complex, interconnected challenges like climate change, environmental impacts, and social justice must be tackled systemically. These are often divorced from corporate strategy but can and should be integrated and embedded across the organization.

When speaking with frontline community leaders, we asked about their experiences with businesses to understand where there has been harm through action or inaction and to identify opportunities for future action. Some of the most significant barriers heard across frontline communities that can hamper or halt progress and even result in a regression require massive shifts in how businesses tend to approach partnerships and respond to community needs. These include:

1. Reluctance and resistance to acknowledging and addressing past harms that have led to trauma, mistrust of business in communities, and fear of failing.



LAPRISHA
BERRY
DANIELS

Detroiters Working
for Environmental
Justice

This reluctance has hampered meaningful progress towards climate justice by businesses. Some of these past harms include, but are not limited to, actions such as pollution, gentrification, displacement, and inequitable access to resources, as well as ignoring and even discrediting communities when they try to speak. When businesses evade accountability and protect their interests over those of frontline communities, it leaves people feeling deeply mistrustful about the intentions and priorities of business. Many businesses are hesitant to take action toward climate justice because they're afraid of failing or getting it wrong. This work requires a level of discomfort, humility, and willingness to innovate.

“There has been so much harm done by businesses in the past, so there is a big issue of trust. When local companies want to pitch in, people are concerned that their image will show up and it will look like we are supporting their practices. Therefore, we only engage with folks who we trust and have worked with in the past. We must build those relationships before a crisis, so the trust is already there when we need help.”

2. Transactional approaches to partnership and shallow, low-impact gestures driven by public relations and business growth instead of genuine interest in supporting communities.

This often leaves communities feeling like they are an afterthought and not a true partner in collaboration. When businesses approach a community with an imposed solution, expecting a marketing opportunity or brand loyalty in return,

communities lose trust and confidence in the potential of the partnership. They can label the efforts as performative. Additionally, short-term annual growth goals, urgency, and profit maximization often drive business decisions that result in catastrophic damage to our ecosystems and communities and climate solutions that are not aligned with the needs of frontline communities and don't address the root of the problem. Businesses need to shift the criteria for evaluating successful climate action efforts to include community adaptation, resilience, health and safety-related outcomes.



4. EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS

PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITIES

PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITIES

The following sections highlight key opportunities and steps for developing community partnerships and examples of how companies can take actions that benefit frontline communities and the planet's health.

PRINCIPLES FOR PARTNERSHIP WITH FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

In the winter of 2023, frontline community leaders and employees of Certified B Corps, guided by expert facilitators, came together to advise B Lab USCA on its climate justice strategy. Over ten months, the group met virtually six times and built a working relationship centered on the willingness to have honest, and sometimes uncomfortable, conversations needed to build trust. These workshops were supplemented with interviews with frontline community leaders based on trust, respect, curiosity, honesty, and a willingness to have uncomfortable conversations. As an outcome of this co-creation process, B Lab USCA has developed the Principles for Partnership with Frontline Communities. These offer guidance on how businesses can build and nurture equitable partnerships with frontline communities.



As you read the following section, we call on you to consider how your company can embrace the following Seven Principles for Partnership with Frontline Communities* across the areas of impact covered below to help create a just and thriving future.

 THE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM THE PRINCIPLES. PLEASE VISIT THE LINK ABOVE TO READ THEM IN FULL.

Principle 1

CENTER TRUST & TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATIONS

Centering trust and transparent communication will move the private sector away from the extractive and exploitative norms of business and towards equitable relationships. Businesses can foster trust by actively listening to community partners with curiosity and good faith, being transparent about expectations, intentions, and values, and getting specific about the time and resources they have to put into shared projects.

7 PRINCIPLES

FOR PARTNERSHIP WITH
FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

1

Center Trust &
Transparent
Communications

2

Center Local
Wisdom
& Perspective

3

Commit to
Equitable Resource
Allocation

4

Prioritize Racial
& Cultural Literacy

5

Center Conflict
Acknowledgement &
Trust Regeneration

6

Clear & Equitable
Decision Making

7

Center Long-Term
& Sustainable
Commitment

Principle 2

CENTER LOCAL WISDOM + PERSPECTIVE

Moving at the speed of trust, we actively listen before exploring how local wisdom intersects with systemic solutions inspired by Western science and institutions. We expand our perception of what solutions are valued and focus on co-creating pathways that address both immediate needs and longer-term systems change.

Principle 3

COMMITMENT TO EQUITABLE RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Acknowledge power and resources and redistribute them to serve the local community best. Resources may encompass money, time, in-kind donations, and political influence, amongst other forms of power. There are stark resource disparities between large companies and grassroots, frontline communities. With this commitment, businesses move away from a top-down power dynamic towards partnerships that redistribute power and resources in tangible and equitable ways.

Principle 4

RACIAL + CULTURAL LITERACY WILL BE PRIORITIZED BY PARTICIPANTS

Businesses are accountable for their own motivation, learning, and continuous commitment to being grounded in racial and cultural literacy. This accountability is imperative to move collectively toward the larger vision of a just and equitable society.

Principle 5

CENTER CONFLICT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT + TRUST REGENERATION

Center conflict acknowledgment and trust regeneration through active listening and by taking accountability for missteps. When missteps occur, move into the action of conscious repair using restorative justice frameworks.

Principle 6

CO-DEVELOP CLEAR & EQUITABLE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Co-develop clear and equitable decision-making processes that meet the needs of all partners. In partnerships, move towards diverse, intersectional, culturally aware, trust-based decision-making. All parties should understand how a project comes to life, moves forward, the shared goals, and who is responsible for which pieces. Additionally, local wisdom, how historically marginalized and impacted voices are centered, how the work is communicated, how the final project outcomes are shared, and who is acknowledged need to be clear.

Principle 7

CENTER LONG-TERM & SUSTAINABLE COMMITMENT TO ENSURE OUR COLLECTIVE SURVIVAL

Pursue long-term and sustainable commitments for the collective survival and liberation of people and the planet. Understand that short-term investments cause harm and are often focused on image and virtue signaling. By creating long-term partnerships that extend beyond typical corporate program timelines, businesses can consider the sustainability and impact of the collaboration.



5. PARTNERING IN PRACTICE

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP GUIDANCE

PARTNERING IN PRACTICE

In the following section, you'll find tangible guidance and suggested actions for how to apply the Principles for Partnership with Frontline Communities to your business' climate justice work.



"Your bottom line starts with your neighbors, you must be mindful of the full impact on people and communities."

MICHELE ROBERTS

Just and National Climate Platform



1. PREPARE WELL

TAKE STOCK INTERNALLY BEFORE EXPLORING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Businesses often wonder where to start when it comes to community engagement and partnership around climate justice issues. Before actively engaging with communities, companies must undertake crucial internal groundwork. This internal work at this early stage is critical in influencing the outcomes of community engagement and partnerships.



HERE ARE SOME TOPICS TO HELP KICK-START AN INTERNAL DISCUSSION.

CONSIDER YOUR BUSINESS FOOTPRINT

Identify locations across your operations and value chain. Assess how climate and environmental justice manifest in these communities. Look at where your employees reside, where your business operates, where your products are manufactured, where materials are sourced, used, and disposed of, and where your customers live. Identify prevalent issues. These include rapid response to weather-related incidents, flooding, fires, droughts, pollution, and limited access to green spaces. Utilize tools like the [Climate Vulnerability Index](#) or [EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool](#) to understand how social and environmental factors affect vulnerability.

TAKE TIME TO MAP CRITICAL STAKEHOLDERS

The most effective climate justice action happens through collaboration. Every business has a range of stakeholders and partners to work with on climate justice. Use the stakeholder collaboration wheel from [The Climate Justice Playbook for Business](#) to prompt thinking about who you can work with and how (See [Appendix 3](#)). Consider who might not be typically involved, such as people of different socio-economic status, people of color, immigrant and refugee communities, school boards, youth, cultural and social organizations, elderly community members, and clergy.

BUILD ON EXISTING EFFORTS

Historically excluded communities have long advocated for safe and healthy environments, amplifying the importance of climate justice nationwide. Identify areas where you can bolster existing impactful work. Reflect on relevant issues and organizations already engaged in them, utilizing stakeholder mapping to guide your approach. Build on existing relationships within your organization, including those

cultivated through employee volunteering or philanthropic efforts, to align with organizations tackling these issues.

LISTEN TO & LEARN FROM COMMUNITY VOICES

Review articles, blogs, videos, and social media to understand community challenges. Conduct listening tours in diverse neighborhoods, providing necessary support such as compensation, travel, accommodation, and childcare for community members contributing their time and expertise. Surface assumptions by identifying potential gaps in your understanding of issues before engaging with communities.

ACKNOWLEDGE HISTORICAL INJUSTICES & ASSESS COMPLICITY

Consider ongoing harm and negative impacts your business or industry may have contributed to or is still contributing to. You can use Causal Loop Mapping, a visual systems mapping tool, to identify potential unintended consequences of your

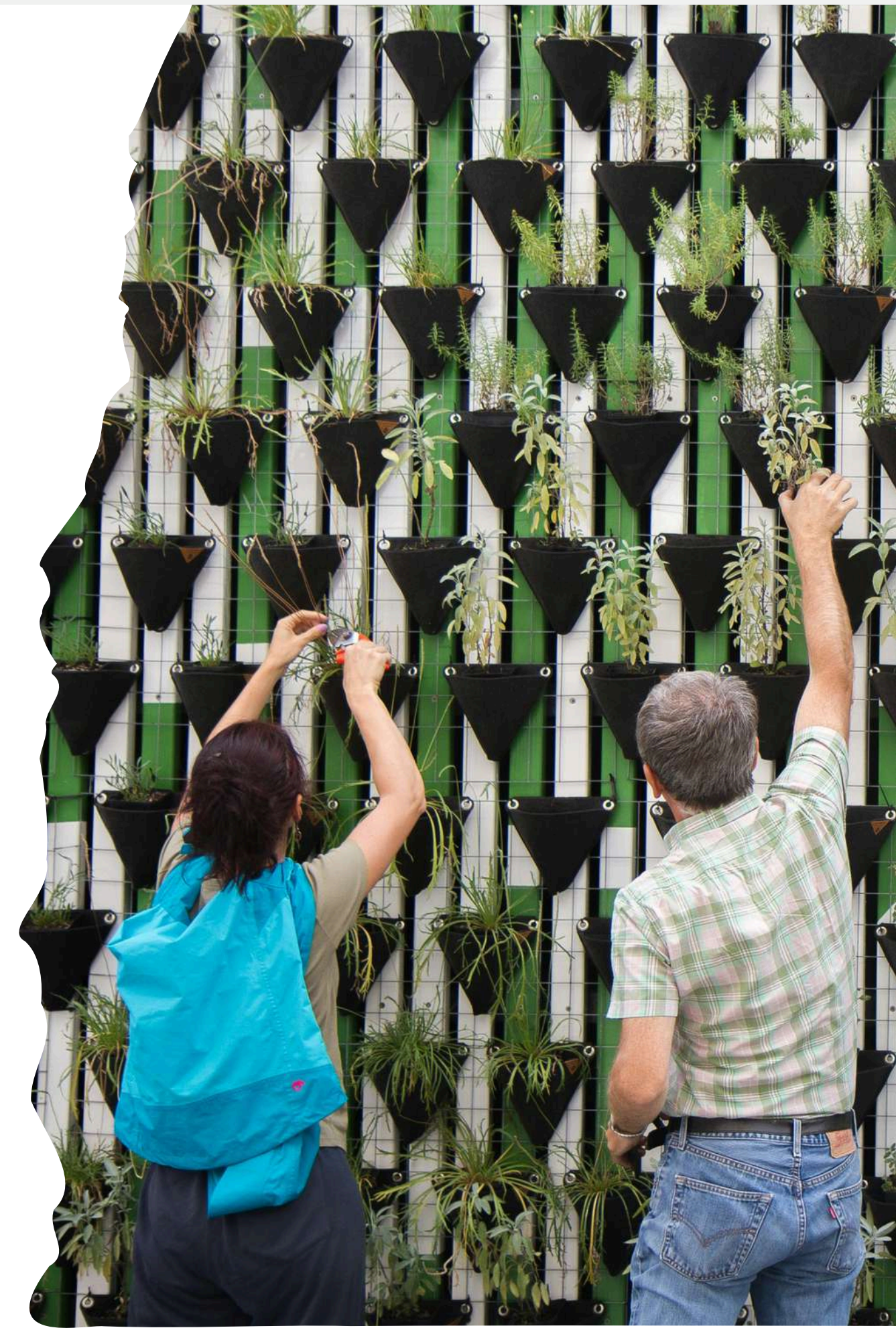
current decarbonization pathways on people and communities.

EVALUATE YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAM'S ENGAGEMENT

Review partnership guidelines and assess leadership openness to new approaches. Assess available financial resources and commitment to long-term relationships. Learn more in the Internal Engagement: Leadership and Employee Engagement and Governance section.

ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY

Collaboratively set metrics and consistently monitor progress internally and within engaged communities. Remain flexible and ready to adjust approaches if they prove ineffective.



2. BUILD HEALTHY & JUST RELATIONSHIPS

LEARN, BUILD TRUST, & RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Now that you have done the internal groundwork consider essential elements for cultivating community relationships. Prioritize trust over perceived deadlines and urgency. Notice tendencies to move fast or show up in a way that might feel like the business is suddenly parachuting in or dominating. Have a budget in place to support this part of the process, which may require a significant time investment.



“Let the community set the tone and set the pace of the relationship.”

JACQUELINE LEE-TAM

Climate Justice Organizing Hub Canada

BUILD TRUST THROUGH INTENTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Prioritize the pace of trust-building when initiating new relationships. Allocate time for deep listening across diverse perspectives through multiple meetings, listening sessions, focus groups, and individual conversations. Include communities traditionally underrepresented and respect all feedback. Attend existing community-based meetings to understand prevailing concerns and perspectives firsthand. Prioritize transparency about your intentions at these gatherings, which is key to building trust.

ADDRESS ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS

Consider community needs when planning interactions to avoid further burdening them. Offer flexibility in meeting locations and consider times that would be convenient, considering job and family priorities. Identify the community’s spoken languages and customs for effective communication and offer translations.



VALUE LIVED EXPERIENCE BY ACTIVE LISTENING

Avoid rushing into solutions or making immediate commitments. Frontline communities have often felt disregarded by businesses parachuting in with solutions without genuinely listening. Recognize that businesses may not have all the answers. Honor grassroots expertise and acknowledge the insights of those directly affected. Be willing to have difficult and uncomfortable conversations at times in order to gain perspective and align on common goals and shared values.

TAKE OWNERSHIP OF YOUR LEARNING

Take responsibility and commit to deepening your understanding of the issues at play. This work might be your job, but this is someone's day-to-day experience. Continue to develop awareness of systemic racism and cultural literacy.

3. PROGRAM CO-DESIGN

ACTIVATE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

As you identify everyday needs and challenges with key communities and community-based organizations, be intentional about how you formalize the relationship to work together to tackle challenges.



ESTABLISH A COMMON GROUND AND SHARED VISION

Identify shared goals and contributions. Co-create program priorities by genuinely partnering with communities, prioritizing needs, and avoiding assumptions. Encourage open idea-sharing from all parties and jointly establish clear leadership roles for local community members. Consider facilitating visioning sessions using tools like Appreciative Inquiry and [Three Horizons](#) to guide the process. Establishing a shared vision at the outset enables each partner to comprehend their joint objectives and contributions toward the collective vision as the partnership progresses.

JOINTLY CONSIDER DECISION-MAKING AND THE LEVEL OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Empowering affected communities to engage in creating and implementing solutions and policies is essential. This empowerment can help address equity gaps, reduce climate vulnerability, and enhance community capacity to organize for change. Use the [Spectrum of Community Engagement](#), developed by Movement Strategy Center, to support community participation in solutions development and decision-making.



“We need leaders that are experiencing the harm to be the ones coming up with the solutions.”

OZAWA BINESHI ALBERT

in her Ted Talk, [Climate Action Needs New Frontline Leadership](#)

START SMALL WITH MINI PARTNERSHIPS OR PROJECTS

To test working dynamics and gather early feedback, begin by exploring small-scale collaborations or events, such as supporting local initiatives. Consider resources and skills beyond monetary contributions that can help advance the partnership, including public relations, strategic planning, budgeting, or project management. Remember, the skills sharing will be reciprocal.

SET UP A FLEXIBLE & ADAPTIVE PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

This structure needs to be strong enough to hold everything together yet have the flexibility to adapt to process, purpose, and people shifts. Consider diverse communication styles and preferred collaboration methods via email, phone, or in-person meetings.

DOCUMENTATION FOSTERS TRANSPARENCY

Share progress through videos, podcasts, visuals, or transcripts to meet varied learning needs. Identify partner needs and document progress in accessible formats.

ENSURE THERE ARE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE WORK

This includes corporate, philanthropic, and government funding for various project phases. Ensure funding for partnerships with intermediary organizations, such as local climate justice groups, and compensate community residents to facilitate community engagement and bridge-building efforts for example by covering childcare or transportation costs.

DISCUSS POTENTIAL CHALLENGES & SUCCESSES

Engage in conversations about risks and opportunities. Define what success means for all parties and identify potential pitfalls and hurdles.

Address power dynamics, cultural differences, and individual perspectives openly. Understand community perspectives on past unmet expectations to mitigate future disappointments. Plan for the aftermath: Ensure communities are equipped for success post-partnership. Discuss exit strategies, including timeframes and support needs for contingency plans or finding new partners.

CONTINUE TO MITIGATE BARRIERS TO ACCESS PROACTIVELY

Providing outreach materials in multiple languages is critical. In addition, ensure you are conducting community engagement in places where residents spend their time, such as parks, schools, churches, or health hubs. Providing transit passes, childcare, and food at events also reduces barriers.

4. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

As you implement the program, stay nimble and agile to ensure you progress towards desired outcomes. Create spaces for honest feedback and check-ins, and allow time to pivot if needed.



SET UP REGULAR CHECK-INS TO ENSURE PROGRESS IS STILL MOVING TOWARDS DESIRED OUTCOMES

Develop simple feedback structures that work for all parties. Continue to prioritize critical needs of the community that intersect and exacerbate climate risks. Establish accessible and culturally sensitive grievance mechanisms for communities to report perceived infringements on their rights and climate-related impacts. Treat all feedback as valuable.

ESTABLISH COMMUNITY ADVISORY BODIES

Hold yourself accountable to your shared action plan. For example, this could be done through existing environmental justice community groups or local residents directly impacted by the program.

ESTABLISH A PLATFORM FOR STORYTELLING

Make the work visible to the community and a broader audience. Working with partners in sharing

on social media platforms could inspire additional partnerships between businesses and local communities in other locations.

SECURE SUSTAINED PROGRAM FUNDING

Grassroots organizations require financial support to amplify their voices and implement solutions. Address resource disparities openly in partnerships, recognizing the expertise of local organizations and community members. As the more resourced party, businesses should engage in two-way conversations about equitable power redistribution and integrate this into budget planning.

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Consider the full range of your assets that can be supportive, including the product or service you offer and your facilities, for example, warehouse space, event space, office facilities, and vehicles. Digital assets like social media can also be helpful to community organizations.

5. PROGRAM CONTINUITY, TRANSFERS, OR SUNSETTING

As you near the end of your original work plan, there are several options for moving forward. Ideally, the program end would have been discussed as part of formalizing the partnership.



Still, unforeseen developments can occur during program implementation, where you may need to either continue, jointly adjourn, or close the program. Your choice will depend on whether the program's original objectives have been met and whether there is a continuation of work. At this stage, consider the following:

ARE YOU FULLY TRANSFERRING THE PROGRAM TO THE COMMUNITY?

Ensure the community has resources to carry the work forward and support to prepare for loss of funding or benefits. Consider long-term funding and sustainability via a government policy that now provides core funding or working with the partner organization to design a business model or nonprofit structure for the innovation. Offer communications with the business team to ensure there is support to address questions and concerns or if any issues arise after the work ends.

ARE YOU JOINTLY ENDING THE PROGRAM BECAUSE THE ORIGINAL NEED HAS BEEN MET?

Consider a joint evaluation, a dialogue on lessons learned, and ways to share your learnings and work with others.

ARE YOU JOINTLY CONTINUING THE PROGRAM AS NEW NEEDS HAVE COME UP?

Make sure to reassess your joint goals, ways of working, and joint outcomes, and identify areas where you may need to pivot.



6. ACTION & INFLUENCE

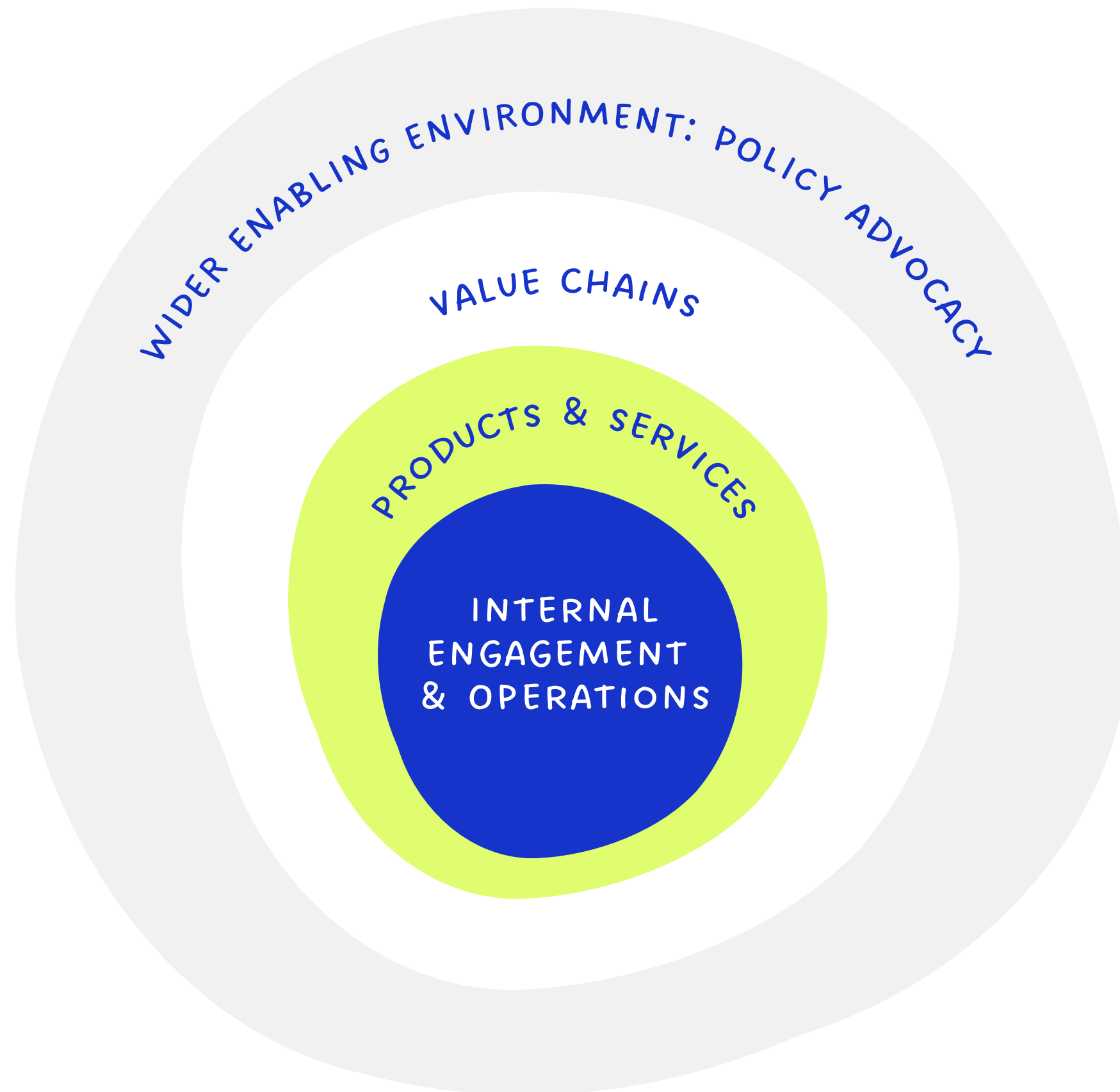
BUSINESS SPHERES OF ACTION

BUSINESS SPHERES OF ACTION & INFLUENCE

Every business has a range of spheres of action and influence.

The following guidance outlines actionable steps within areas of direct control, such as operations, employee policies, and finances. We also delve into products, value chains, and the broader enabling environment, where companies can exert influence and foster resilience and innovation. Finally, we explore opportunities to advocate for policy changes alongside the climate justice movement and accelerate and scale best practices through collaboration with industry leaders.





"There needs to be a deep shared understanding of what the root causes of the problems are, and a recognition that you are showing up with a commitment to transform those systems that have resulted in interlocking oppressions for so many people. Even if you come from a different place in the ecosystem of social change, you want to leverage the resources that you have in the private sector to be able to do that transformational work. That is a really important place to start."



JACQUELINE
LEE-TAM

Climate Justice
Organizing Hub Canada



7. HOW TO TAKE ACTION

INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT: **LEADERSHIP, EMPLOYEES & GOVERNANCE**

Before engaging with frontline communities, conducting internal groundwork to foster effective and authentic partnerships is essential. This work involves educating your organization about climate and environmental justice and understanding how these concepts manifest within the communities you are hoping to engage. Doing this work requires humility, patience, embracing a long-term approach, intentionality, and commitment.

It necessitates building internal alliances and securing organizational buy-in for required cultural shifts. Strategic employee engagement is crucial for meaningful climate justice initiatives, particularly by involving senior leadership and decision-makers.

Embracing climate justice demands a new leadership approach, prompting reflection on the organization's contributions to community harms and its responsibility to address them. Championing climate justice also involves aligning the organization's culture with mindsets that support climate justice principles.



MAKING THE MINDSET SHIFT

The diagram shown here, from The Climate Justice Playbook for Business, invites us to reflect on different corporate mindsets. The left wheel presents components of an extractive business mindset that have been identified as most likely to exacerbate climate injustice. The right wheel offers ingredients of a more regenerative mindset that businesses can develop to enable and advance climate justice.

“In order to make this work and to make it real, we need to be willing to give up power and give credibility to the voices who are most impacted.”

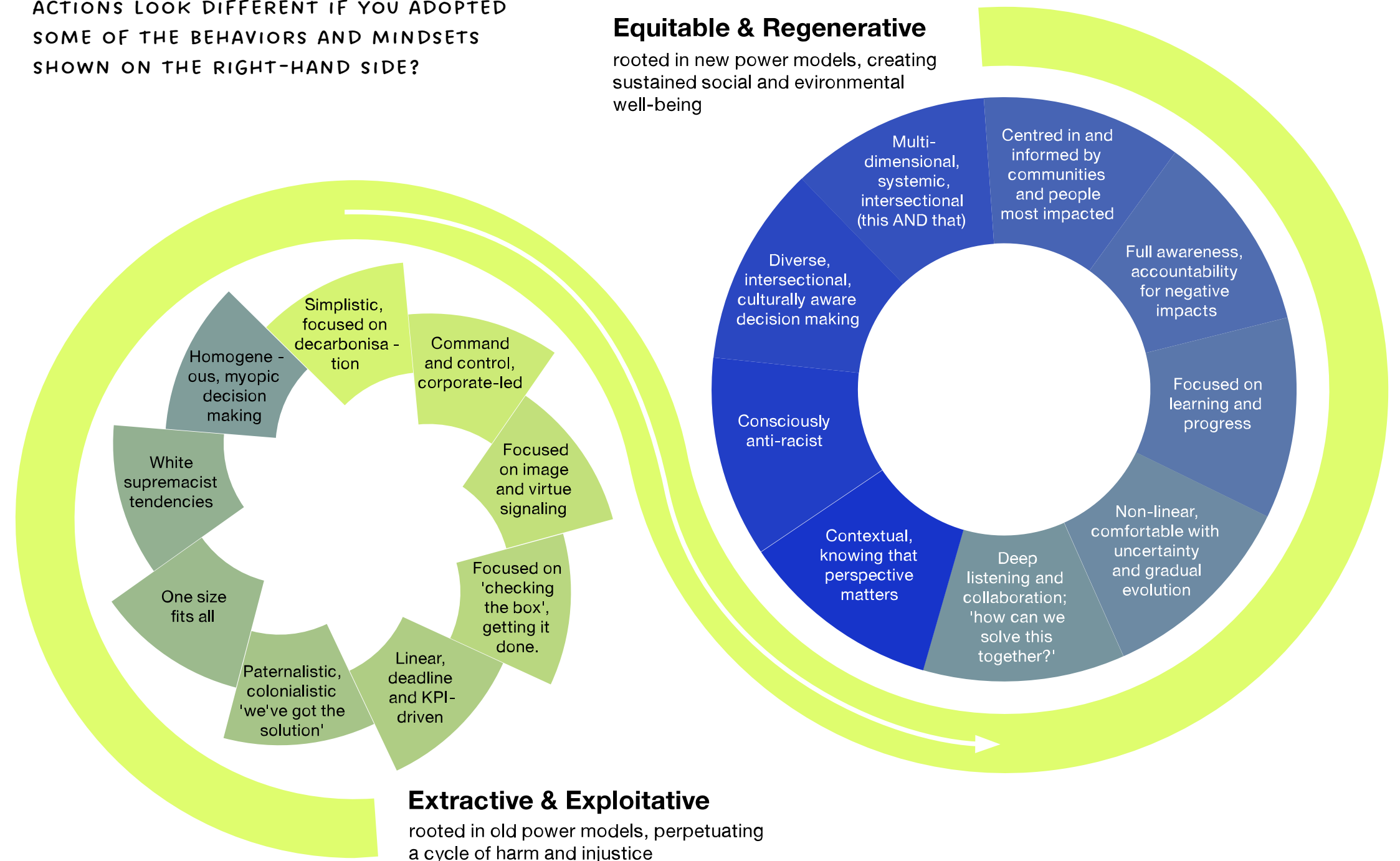


BRANDY BROWN
Vice President, DNV

* WHICH EXTRACTIVE AND EXPLOITATIVE MINDSET ELEMENTS ON THE LEFT-HAND SIDE FEEL MOST FAMILIAR TO YOU?

* NOTICE THE CHANGES IN AN EQUITABLE AND REGENERATIVE MINDSET. HOW MIGHT YOUR ACTIONS LOOK DIFFERENT IF YOU ADOPTED SOME OF THE BEHAVIORS AND MINDSETS SHOWN ON THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE?

* WHERE ARE YOU MOST AWARE OF THESE BEHAVIORS IN YOUR BUSINESS?



GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

CONDUCT LISTENING SESSIONS

Listen to various employee groups across your geographies and functions to get a range of their perspectives and ensure they are represented. Ensure you include various in-house affinity groups such as Human Resources teams, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion coalitions, sustainability teams, and in-house youth councils.

FOSTER A FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF CLIMATE JUSTICE AMONG EMPLOYEES

Educate all staff on climate and environmental justice principles, including historical context and contemporary manifestations of injustice. Utilize learning and training initiatives that complement effective community engagement and offer additional organizational benefits such as facilitating non-violent communication and anti-racism training.

EVALUATE HIRING PRACTICES

Assess your organization's hiring process, including for senior leadership roles, to leverage the expertise and insights of community members. Formally involve employees with local knowledge in shaping engagement and sustainability programs. Ensure equity in employment by guaranteeing job security and fair compensation, especially amidst rising living costs in various regions.

PROMOTE ONGOING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Share resources, actively listen to employee concerns and ideas, and foster a safe and supportive environment for idea generation. Ensure employees are compensated for their contributions. Consider establishing Employee Representation Groups to address specific issues collaboratively.

GUIDANCE FOR SENIOR LEADERSHIP

EMBRACE A LONG-TERM VIEW ON VALUE CREATION

Partnering with communities requires sustained commitment over many years and entails prioritizing long-term sustainability. Recognize that this unfolds gradually and may not yield immediate returns. Focus on building trust and supporting frontline communities and organizations to achieve their goals during the early stages of partnership development.

PRIORITIZE DEEP LISTENING TO DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

Do this within the business and with stakeholders, especially those with firsthand experience of climate impacts. Look for ways to participate in existing community-based meetings to understand local concerns.

CREATE A CLEAR VISION THAT BUILDS CLIMATE JUSTICE INTO YOUR COMPANY'S BROADER MISSION

Link positive social and environmental impacts to the core purpose and values of the business.

INTEGRATE CLIMATE JUSTICE INTO YOUR BUSINESS DECISIONS

Ensure this happens alongside budget, scope, and other environmental and social impacts. Provide precise steps for evaluating climate and environmental justice impacts, both positive and negative, as part of project and program assessments.

FOSTER A CULTURE THAT VALUES & FACILITATES COLLABORATION

Enable this culture with stakeholders across frontline communities to address environmental justice issues effectively.

FOLLOW THROUGH WITH GENUINE COMMITMENT

Make sure you are addressing community concerns. Identify the right individuals within your organization to lead relationship-building with frontline communities. Ensure they possess strong partnership-building skills and are adequately resourced with staff and financial support to act upon community feedback effectively.

GUIDANCE ON GOVERNANCE

PROVIDE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TRAINING

Ensure this is provided to board members and leaders at various levels across the business.

DEFINE EXECUTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Designate one member of your business' Executive Leadership Team as the ultimate accountable party for climate justice actions company-wide and for fostering genuine progress. If one exists, ensure this individual also participates in the company's internal sustainability advisory group.

GIVE CLIMATE JUSTICE REPRESENTATION ON THE BOARD

Appoint a member explicitly responsible for ensuring environmental justice is prioritized and advocated internally and externally.

ESTABLISH AN EXTERNAL CLIMATE JUSTICE ADVISORY GROUP FOR COMPANY-WIDE STRATEGY AND PROJECTS

The Chair of this group should also serve on the company's External Sustainability Advisory Group to facilitate integrated collaboration and approaches.

PROVIDE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TRAINING

Ensure this is provided to board members and leaders at various levels across the business.

ADVOCATE FOR LEGISLATION IN ALL OPERATING TERRITORIES

Help legislation ensure businesses have a legal obligation to deliver social and environmental benefits and profits. This means leading companies will not be disadvantaged by leading on climate justice agendas, as all companies would be held to the same obligations. Refer to B Lab USCA's [legal requirements](#) for a good example of this framework.

CASE STUDY

Founded in 2017, Dr. Bronner's Green Team is a diverse, cross-departmental, project-based group of employees devoted to making positive environmental changes at the company and beyond.

Over the years the Dr. Bronner's Green Team has organized and led Earth Week programming for employees company-wide, invited guest speakers on topics ranging from composting to green voting to public transit access and equity, helped implement low-flow faucets and movement sensor lights at the manufacturing facility, organized a Buy Nothing Pop Up Shop, designed the company-wide waste sorting bin system, provided education

for all Dr. Bronner's employees on diverting waste from landfill, drafted a Green Reuse and Purchasing Policy, written company-wide newsletter entries about living green at home and in our community, and more. The team embodies the principles of climate and environmental justice by designing the team with diversity and company-wide representation as goals and creating inclusive spaces of learning and empowerment. Green Team is a place where employees from the frontline to management are equals, and members develop professional skills essential to the environmental movement, like public speaking, computer literacy (e.g. using Microsoft Outlook, Word, and Teams), planning, running & facilitating meetings, and networking with colleagues and beyond the local San Diego environmental community. Everyone on Green Team has allocated hours to participate each month, and the team's leadership, meeting structure, location, times and formats are chosen to prioritize equity and relationship-building and center front-line worker needs.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

What resonates with you?

Which internal initiatives do you already have in place, and what's still needed?

How does your organization consider and discuss climate and environmental justice?

Is this something your leadership team is aware of or a place where education is required?



8. HOW TO TAKE ACTION

INTERNAL OPERATIONS

INTERNAL OPERATIONS

To address climate-related impacts, consider your internal operations, encompassing elements owned and controlled by your company, such as buildings, vehicles, equipment, and production processes. These include resources like energy, water, and plastics.

As you evaluate your decarbonization pathways, recognize their varying impacts on existing disparities.⁵ For instance, reducing CO2 emissions alone may not significantly alter existing air pollution disparities, and some electricity sector decarbonization pathways worsen existing disparities. Achieving equity necessitates targeted interventions like sectoral policies and community-focused measures, highlighting the imperative for structural changes.

Moreover, communities feel overlooked when sharing their climate-related health impacts with industry, emphasizing the need for acknowledgment and action to address the harms individuals face.



“Where [communities] see health impacts is different from our regulatory folks. We see the problem here. They don’t see the problem. The way that we measure impact is antiquated. There’s an odor problem in Detroit. The regulator is saying that it’s not doing anything to you. We’re saying we don’t want headaches or nausea. We know odors cause anxiety. Anxiety is not something that regulators are going to measure as a health impact.... I went to all the meetings where it was being explained. They never tied in what our concerns were.”



**LAPRISHA
BERRY DANIELS**

Detroiters Working for
Environmental Justice



As you develop a strategy to decarbonize your internal operations, evaluate how your climate action plan aligns with principles of equity and justice. Map out how your initiatives address frontline communities' environmental and climate impact disparities. It's essential to prevent and mitigate negative impacts on these communities and ensure that they receive equitable benefits from your efforts.

GUIDANCE FOR ACTION **INTERNAL OPERATIONS**

IDENTIFY IMPACTED OR POTENTIALLY IMPACTED INDIVIDUALS, COMMUNITIES, & STAKEHOLDERS

Focus on understanding concerns rising from communities and identify areas where these fall within your direct sphere of control vs your sphere of influence. Consider partnerships with others to address areas outside of your direct control.

CONDUCT SYSTEMIC AND ONGOING EVALUATIONS AS PART OF YOUR DECARBONIZATION PLAN

Look at how reshaping your systems and operations to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions can eliminate existing negative impacts and drive health benefits such as clean air quality.

ALIGN CORPORATE DECISIONS REGARDING TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT AND OTHER EFFORT-MITIGATION DRIVERS TO ENSURE COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Involve community members in deciding how investment decisions will directly impact and benefit their communities.

ENABLE UNRESTRICTED, LOW BARRIER-TO-ACCESS FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Ensure that your corporate philanthropy efforts enable this and that your company follows the principles of trust-based philanthropy.

START LOCAL WITH YOUR BUSINESS' FUNDING EFFORTS TO SUPPORT A POSITIVE FINANCIAL IMPACT

For example, where your headquarters or the majority of your workforce is located or with frontline and underserved communities across your supply chain.

DEVELOP AN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR EVALUATING SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS

Ensure community knowledge and input is gathered through direct community engagement, such as listening sessions. Incorporate cultural heritage impacts into environmental, social, and human rights impact assessments.

ASSESS YOUR ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Focus on your business activities and relationships with third parties, including business partners. The [UN Global Compact Business Reference Guide on UNDRIP](#) helps businesses understand, respect, and support Indigenous peoples' rights by illustrating their relevance to business activities.

RECOGNIZE THE PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS

This includes the right to Self-Determination and Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), which require that businesses fully and meaningfully engage Indigenous peoples to obtain their consent for business activities that will affect them or their rights.⁶

INVEST IN EDUCATION AND CAPABILITY-BUILDING PROGRAMS

Help communities prepare for and thrive in a just transition. Look for ways to partner with local climate justice groups already providing training and upskilling programs. Offer job placements.

ESTABLISH A LEGITIMATE, EFFECTIVE, & CULTURALLY SENSITIVE OPERATIONAL-LEVEL GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

The grievance mechanism allows people to report perceived infringements on their rights and climate and health-related impacts committed by the business or third parties working on the business's behalf. Treat all feedback as valid.

ALIGN YOUR GOVERNANCE WITH YOUR CLIMATE TRANSITION PLAN BY ADOPTING STAKEHOLDER GOVERNANCE

Consider becoming a benefit corporation if the legal status is available in your state or province. If not, work with an attorney to adopt a legal amendment that embeds your commitment to stakeholders into your legal DNA. Stakeholder governance requires companies to consider the impact of their decisions on stakeholders like workers, customers, local communities, wider society, and the environment and give them the flexibility to profit and purpose.⁷

BUSINESS **CLIMATE FINANCE**

Every company, regardless of size or industry, can advance climate justice through their financial practices and align their money with climate solutions versus further funding the fossil fuel industry.

Climate finance refers to local, national, or transnational financing, drawn from public, private, and alternative sources of financing, that seeks to support mitigation and adaptation actions that will address climate change.⁸ Business climate finance refers to how companies' financial decisions and practices align with climate-friendly options and can be levers for climate solutions. These levers include but are not limited to company investments, including 401(k) employee retirement plans, corporate philanthropy efforts, insurance, and banking.

Why is business climate finance so critical? According to the Business Climate Finance Initiative,⁹ a group that brings together businesses and investors to increase private sector investment in the transition to a low-carbon climate-resilient future, the way businesses approach their finance has a tremendous impact on climate.

- Over \$8.4 trillion in assets are held in 110 million 401(k) employee retirement plans across the United States.
- The average carbon intensity by U.S. banks is roughly 126 ktCO₂e/\$billion. In other words, for each \$1 billion spent, these banks generate emissions comparable to about 30,000 internal combustion engine cars running for a year.
- In February 2022, 13 of the world's largest non-financial companies cumulatively held cash and investments that exceeded \$1 trillion - these corporations' cash and investments generate emissions at a huge scale.
- The cash holdings of U.S. companies are their most significant source of emissions.

GUIDANCE FOR ACTION

BUSINESS CLIMATE FINANCE

INVESTIGATE YOUR FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Are your current bank or investments funding the fossil fuel industry or exacerbating climate change?

CONSIDER SWITCHING BANKS

Move your money to a sustainable, climate-friendly bank or credit union.

HAVE AN HONEST DISCUSSION WITH YOUR CURRENT BANK AND INVESTMENT PARTNERS

If you are not in a position to switch banks, push your financial partners to cut ties with the fossil fuel industry and fund more community-based climate solutions.

BE TRANSPARENT WITH YOUR CLIENTS AND CUSTOMERS ABOUT YOUR CLIMATE FINANCE WORK AND JOURNEY

If you have an annual impact report, consider including a financial section.



EXAMPLES

WORKING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO REMOVE ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Tradewater, a 50-employee company with headquarters in the United States and Costa Rica works with communities directly living with the effects of hazardous emissions left behind by companies. Communities dealing with these issues might experience health problems, contaminated soil and water, and decreased land values. Tradewater works with communities to manage materials and seeks to hire local people in the process.¹⁰

A JUST TRANSITION TO DECARBONIZATION

As part of its decarbonization of their portfolio, the Ohio-based electricity company AEP partnered with the Just Transition Fund to convene a community transition task force when it announced plans to retire its Texas fossil fuel power plant by 2023. AEP and the Just Transition Fund worked together to draft a high-level action plan for local economic diversion within six months of closure. The transition task force helped relocate the plant's workforce members into new jobs outside of the coal industry. By the end of 2021, 75% of the workforce had secured new employment.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1

What resonates with you?

2

Which internal initiatives do you already have, and what's still needed?

3

Where do you see an opportunity to start?

4

Whom do you need to engage and work with to start taking action?



9. HOW TO TAKE ACTION

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

The current climate crisis and material use are intimately linked. It has been calculated that the vast majority of Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHGs) are generated by the extraction and handling of material resources.¹¹

In addition, thousands of potentially harmful chemicals are in daily products, ranging from electronics to medical equipment, toys, personal care products, and food products, with many linked to long-term health issues such as cancer and congenital disabilities. Furthermore, the existing system of wealth distribution is not equitable towards communities that are already harmed, with about one in every four Americans struggling to meet basic needs,¹² while overconsumption from wealthier populations is driving waste, pollution, and ecological collapse.

The mainstream system of production and consumption has allowed businesses to thrive while exploiting the planet's finite resources and people's health and livelihoods. Businesses addressing climate justice need to see that they are not separate from these issues but are inextricably linked to them. This can show up across the value chain from how a business undergoes research and development for new products, the frequently prevalent procurement, contracting, and financial models across a value chain, how it delivers its products and services, and actions taken at a product's end of life.

As organizations work on centering equity and justice as part of their corporate strategy and climate action transition plan, consider what it means to take a justice-led perspective for your existing and future products and services. Reflect on your organization's distinctive assets, position, and expertise and impacted communities needs and well-being.

GUIDANCE FOR ACTION

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

INVEST IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR LONGER-TERM PRODUCT DESIGN

Consider both the environmental and long-term health impacts at each stage of the value chain to help you shift your product portfolio towards solutions that avoid and reduce harmful toxins and chemicals and link to better health outcomes for people and the planet.

IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK DIRECTLY WITH COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE

Co-design local adaptation interventions and climate responses, considering inclusivity, inequalities, and regional demands. For instance, consider how your circularity strategy and approach as part of your products' end-of-life can be rooted in the community's needs and assets. For example, reuse and repair are two labor-intensive activities with the potential to provide a variety of occupations across local markets, especially for persons who are currently excluded from the labor market.¹³ For every 1,000 tonnes of materials gathered for reuse, social enterprises engaged in reuse activities today generate, on average, 70 jobs.¹⁴

IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE YOUR CUSTOMERS AROUND CLIMATE JUSTICE ISSUES

Leverage your communications and marketing platforms to help amplify stories of frontline communities. This might include engaging your customers to vote for climate policy change, supporting and financing a climate justice organization, or volunteering.



“Businesses have a unique potential to reach a base of consumers that are interested in the brand and expand that to taking policy action with them.”

ZANAGEE ARTIS

Zero Hour

INVITE COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO LEAD AND TELL YOU WHAT THEY NEED

Consider the ramifications across your value chain. For example, if you provide solar panels for a community, consider the required skills and costs for requisite maintenance and, eventually, end-of-life.

CONSIDER PRODUCT AND SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY DURING EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

Identify opportunities to enable resilience and reach vulnerable communities during extreme events through the products and services you provide. Plan with communities for future potential events to ensure resilience and accessibility at the community level, including supporting existing climate resilience hubs, such as [the Climate CREW](#).

CONSIDER NEW BUSINESS MODELS TO ADDRESS THE WEALTH INEQUALITY AND DECISION-MAKING GAP

For example, cooperatives and employee-owned businesses might aim to redistribute power and share responsibility and resources.

ENGAGE WITH INDUSTRY PEERS

Together, advocate for broader change and work collectively to address shared societal issues. This work could include partnering with industry counterparts, policymakers, and frontline advocates to roll out climate and environmental justice standards across the sector, including phasing out toxins, waste reduction, etc.



EXAMPLES

NEIGHBORHOOD-GOVERNED INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURES

Equitable Internet Initiative develops neighborhood-governed community wireless networks and internet infrastructure for residents from historically excluded communities. This initiative is a collaboration between Detroit Community Technology Project (DCTP), Community Tech New York, and three organizations in Detroit – Grace in Action in Southwest, Church of the Messiah in Islandview, and the North End Woodward Community Coalition (NEWCC).

INDIVIDUAL IMPACT

The Solutions Project is partnering with Ecosia, a search engine platform, to highlight the impact of individual actions and how everyday tasks contribute to a growing movement for social change. For a month, each Ecosia search will directly support The Solutions Project.

HOME RENOVATIONS

Grapevine Outdoors, a Certified B Corp in Portland, partnered with local nonprofit Taking Ownership PDX (TOPDX), an organization working to renovate and revive homes and businesses for Black families in Portland. Grapevine Outdoors has a network of billboards around the city which they used to highlight TOPDX's work by offering billboard space at discounted rates.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1

What resonates with you?

2

Which internal initiatives do you already have, and what's still needed?

3

Where do you see an opportunity to start?

4

Whom do you need to engage and work with to start taking action?



10. HOW TO TAKE ACTION

VALUE CHAINS

VALUE CHAINS

Businesses of all sizes are exposed to myriad climate-related and human rights challenges within their value chains. They are increasingly under pressure to report on their supply chains' environmental and social impacts. More and more, they must report on raw materials sourcing, manufacturing processes, transportation, distribution of goods and services, end of life and disposal, and the circumstances in which people work across the various tiers.

Across various supply chains, there's a recurring issue of power dynamics favoring a select few stakeholders, leading to disproportionate control over decisions and unfair treatment of less powerful actors. This imbalance manifests in unjust pricing, exploitative procurement practices, and dictated terms of contracting, all of which disadvantage suppliers, compromise product quality and environmental standards, and leave suppliers bearing unequal risk from climate-related disasters and economic volatilities.

Workers face financial instability and lack agency, while procurement teams are often incentivized to prioritize cost reduction without considering fair wages and the resources required to look after landscapes, perpetuating social issues like hunger and housing insecurity, and how stakeholders further up the value chain can steward the land or promote more sustainable waste practices. Sustainability efforts often address problems caused by these practices, creating a cycle of remediation. Ultimately, a small fraction of actors capture most of the value in the supply chain, leaving others struggling to cover their costs of production.



Incorporating representation of stakeholders across all tiers of the value chain not only ensures equitable decision-making but also provides a more comprehensive understanding of how the industry impacts necessary production landscapes. This approach allows for diverse perspectives, and knowledge of the specific landscapes and contexts in which your business benefits from. This can assist in providing accurate assessments of the potential harms caused by a company's value chain and offer insights into effective strategies for addressing these issues.

GUIDANCE FOR ACTION

VALUE CHAINS

CHANGING PROCUREMENT AND PRICING PRACTICES

Much of the sustainability work that happens in value chains is with post-profit investment. Giving license to procurement teams to pay the true price of production costs and recognize the social and environmental costs can significantly reduce the social and environmental challenges felt by value chain stakeholders.

PROMOTING PRICING TRANSPARENCY TO ASSIST IN DRIVING EQUITABLE MARKETS

When shareholders can count on certain payments based on certain qualities from the market, this can improve the quality of production and thereby reduce negative environmental practices employed to grow/manufacture/transport them.

ESTABLISHING GREATER TRACEABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN

This can include high-tech forensic traceability testing or fewer technological approaches, such as conversation-based mapping, which can help capture a snapshot of your supplier base. Many businesses are now incorporating traceability requirements in their business processes, finding that it's instrumental in ascertaining who is operating within their value chain, in what contexts, and in meeting environmental and social targets.¹⁵ It will also assist in ensuring safety standards,¹⁶ meeting regulations,¹⁷ and driving efficiencies within their businesses.¹⁸

PARTNER WITH SUPPLIERS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

This could include, but is not limited to, vulnerable, minority, and women-owned businesses to promote economic growth in marginalized communities.

REMEMBER THAT PURSUING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN YOUR VALUE CHAINS INCLUDES PROTECTING WORKER RIGHTS AND HEALTH

This involves ensuring safe working conditions, fair wages, and protection from exposure to hazardous materials or pollutants. Workers in agriculture and critical minerals are particularly vulnerable to environmental risks.

ENGAGE SUPPLIERS IN A TWO-WAY DIALOGUE

This will help to deepen relationships across the tiers of the value chain. Practice deep listening to understand current and future potential challenges and areas for innovation.

GIVE VALUE CHAIN PARTNERS OPPORTUNITIES TO BE REPRESENTED

Offer meaningful opportunities for those working in your company's operating contexts to share their insights, their expertise and perspectives. Consider their feedback thoughtfully and ensure that decisions which may impact their area of work reflect the representatives' views.

WORK WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO DESIGN STRATEGIES FOR CARBON REDUCTION, BIODIVERSITY IMPROVEMENTS, POSITIVE HEALTH OUTCOMES, & CLIMATE ADAPTATIONS

This might include partnering with suppliers to identify and scale climate resiliency and adaptation, lending financial support during climate crises and supporting suppliers with their own decarbonization efforts. It could also include investing in supply chain workers' health and well-being, and enabling climate-resilient infrastructure such as typhoon shelters or contour dams for terraced fields.¹⁹

ENABLE ACCESS TO FINANCE FOR SUPPLIERS TO TRANSITION TO CLIMATE-POSITIVE PRACTICES

This could include targeted no- or low-interest loans to help build long-term community resilience or foster long-term contracts and relationships to increase suppliers' and manufacturers' resilience and ability to shift to more sustainable practices.

ENSURE DECARBONIZATION STRATEGIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION MEASURES DO NOT COME AT THE COST OF A COMMUNITY'S RIGHTS, LIVELIHOODS, OR ACCESS TO RESOURCES

For example, some rigorous forest protection measures within carbon offset projects have been criticized for excluding local communities that have respectfully collected food and medicines in the forest for hundreds or thousands of years and have been evicted due to forest protections.

PARTNER WITH SUPPLIERS

Ensure all suppliers meet environmental targets in ways that are co-created with and ensure direct benefit to local communities. Recognize the disproportionate tasks and financial demands that some stakeholders are laden with to achieve those targets.



EXAMPLES

PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE DAIRY SUPPLY CHAIN

Ben & Jerry's adopted a first-of-its-kind worker-driven social responsibility commitment: Milk with Dignity, originally developed by farm workers, including migrant workers. As a result, Ben & Jerry's pays a premium to provide economic relief to struggling farm owners while ensuring their dignity and respect. Farm workers will see concrete improvements in wages, scheduling, housing, and health and safety protections. They will be educated on their rights and how to enforce them, effectively serving as frontline defenders of their human rights.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATIONS AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Forum for the Future convenes several multi-stakeholder collaborations, including Growing our Future, the Climate and Health Coalition, and Cotton 2040. Cotton 2040 trialed an ecosystem services market approach to growing regenerative cotton with formerly conventional-style growers. A critical part of this transition was channeling the correct information and de-risk funding to transition to climate-positive practices. It is designed to increase incentives and financing for farmers to adopt regenerative production practices with the potential for positive climate and health impacts.

CLIMATE CRISIS RAPID RESPONSE FOR COFFEE FARMING COMMUNITIES

Cooperative Coffees, a Certified B Corp, launched an emergency relief fund to support their farmer partners in career recovery from disastrous flooding. As natural disasters and other crop failures became more frequent due to climate change, the fund changed from the Roya Fund to the Climate Impact Fund. The fund now focuses on supporting farmers in building resilience while promoting regenerative practices and natural disaster recovery. One of Cooperative Coffees' long-time partners, COMSA, trains farmers worldwide in sustainable agricultural practices.

“The most important part is making space and recognizing when you have a position of power... figuring out how much you can actually take a step back and bring these communities directly into the decision-making process to represent themselves because they know what they're doing.”



MELISSA
WILSON
BECERRIL

Cooperative Coffees

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1

What resonates with you?

2

Which internal initiatives do you already have, and what's still needed?

3

Where do you see an opportunity to start?

4

Whom do you need to engage and work with to start taking action?



11. HOW TO TAKE ACTION

POLICY ADVOCACY

WIDER ENABLING ENVIRONMENT: POLICY ADVOCACY

Companies of all sizes and industries can use their power and influence to push for legislation that addresses the climate crisis in a way that also supports more just outcomes for communities at the local, state and federal level. Examples include investment in green infrastructure, ensuring a just transition for displaced workers, regulations requiring emission tracking, eliminating exploited labor from supply chains, and legislation protecting natural resources and community health.

While becoming a policy expert isn't necessary, companies can collaborate with organizations like B Lab USCA and [Ceres](#), which specialize in engaging businesses in policy advocacy and stakeholder-driven economies. Despite having considerable political power, businesses can be hesitant to address issues like fossil fuel use and intensive agriculture, which exacerbate climate justice concerns. Companies must leverage their political influence to support community calls to action in addressing these issues.



Businesses also have an opportunity to contribute to environmental justice efforts by supporting existing initiatives like Justice40 and leveraging their influence to advocate for equitable distribution of climate and clean energy investments. Understanding the dynamics of existing policy initiatives enables businesses to proactively address environmental injustices and advance equitable solutions to climate change.



“We need aligned businesses to not wait, to challenge and disrupt the power structures now in ways that frontline community groups cannot.”

KEYA CHATTERJEE

U.S. Climate Action Network



GUIDANCE FOR ACTION

POLICY ADVOCACY

ENSURE THAT YOUR ADVOCACY AGENDA ALIGNS WITH YOUR COMPANY'S CLIMATE TRANSITION PLAN, MISSION, AND VALUES

This will ensure all stakeholders and rights holders are onboard. Consider engaging employees in the development of the advocacy agenda to ensure buy-in.

PARTNER WITH INDUSTRY COUNTERPARTS TO SET AND REVIEW ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE JUSTICE STANDARDS ACROSS THE SECTOR AND TO COORDINATE EFFORTS

However, also be aware that not all industry groups will be aligned with climate policy values and goals. For example, some trade organizations, business associations and chambers of commerce might advocate for issues that oppose climate policy goals. We recommend reviewing your organization's membership and policy goals before joining. Once engaged in a collaborative effort, you can also do good work by advocating within that organization to align values and goals to climate justice outcomes.

APPROACH POLICY ADVOCACY FROM A LENS OF JUSTICE AND EQUITY

Champion new ways of thinking about the role that business can and should play. Align your lobbying efforts with priorities set by communities to create the leverage needed to enact change.

JOIN LOCAL AND NATIONAL COALITIONS

These coalitions can accelerate your business-focused advocacy and lobbying efforts and share your values.

LEVERAGE EXISTING PROGRAMS, RESOURCES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FROM NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

Participate in government consultations, working groups, or collaboration opportunities to help advance change.

ENGAGE YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS TO ESTABLISH POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS FOR THE LONG TERM

Policymakers are always ready to meet with constituent employers and to hear about a company's positive impact. You don't need a specific policy request to start building relationships.

EXAMPLES

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVES

Intersectional Environmentalist facilitated a community stakeholder engagement initiative to bridge the Can Manufacturers Institute (CMI) with environmental justice thought leaders and generate a policy and program action report. Aimed at ensuring new recycling legislation implements key environmental justice considerations, the report equitably serves those most impacted by recycling giveback programs. It can set a powerful precedent for future legislation. The success of this project was marked by the inclusion of stakeholders in the community and those with significant expertise in recycling programs.

COALITION BUILDING

Seventh Generation, along with a small coalition of other businesses and business associations in New York State, pioneered a partnership with NY Renews. NY Renews is a leading coalition of over 300 environmental justice, climate justice, labor, faith, and community organizations that work to further an ambitious climate justice policy agenda in the state legislature.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1

What resonates with you?

2

Where do you see an opportunity to start?

3

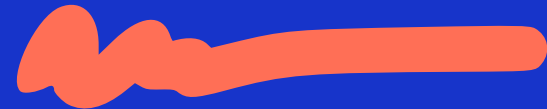
Which internal initiatives do you already have, and what's still needed?

4

Who do you need to engage and work with to start taking action?

CONCLUSION

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?



Regardless of size or sector, every business is responsible for uplifting and bolstering community-driven solutions to the climate emergency. To navigate this path effectively, companies should understand and acknowledge their motive for engaging in this work and allow it to serve as their compass. Embracing a process with full awareness and accountability for negative impacts necessitates a willingness to navigate discomfort while moving forward at the pace of trust.



Businesses need to recognize that short-term thinking and corresponding investments prioritizing image-building can be seen as virtue signaling and ultimately contribute to long-term harm. Creating long-term partnerships that challenge the often-tight timelines dominating corporate culture enables more sustainable and more impactful collaborations. Taking a first step is essential. Businesses must be brave and hold themselves accountable for past shortcomings in supporting their communities. They then can move forward to genuinely and effectively contribute to the important work of climate justice.

To have an impact and shift how businesses have shown up to support communities on the frontlines of climate change, businesses must commit to continuous learning and listening. Similarly, we know that trust-building among communities and businesses is iterative, non-linear, and requires a deep dedication to relationships over time.

In 2014, the first People’s Climate March was held in New York City. More than 400,000 people marched in the streets of Manhattan to demand climate action centered in justice. The march's slogan was “To Change Everything, It Takes Everyone.” That could not be truer today, and businesses have a paramount role. So, find your starting point or continue making an impact where you have been already, and know that to change everything, it takes everyone — *especially businesses.*



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! PLEASE SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEEDBACK ON THIS GUIDE BY REACHING OUT TO:
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PEOPLE'S CLIMATE MARCH.
PHOTO: [SOUTH BEND VOICE](#)

GLOSSARY DEFINITIONS

CLIMATE JUSTICE

Climate justice seeks to address the disproportionate impacts of climate change on underserved communities, including low-income groups, People of Color, Indigenous peoples, and those with fewer resources to prepare for and recover from climate disasters. It acknowledges historical injustices and systemic inequities that exacerbate vulnerability to climate-related events. Climate justice prioritizes the needs of frontline communities, aiming to rectify environmental and social disparities by centering equity in climate action and policymaking while holding accountable those who bear the most significant responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions and environmental degradation.

CLIMATE VULNERABILITY

“The degree to which natural, built, and human systems are at risk of exposure to climate change impacts.”

SOURCE:

[Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program](#))

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The just treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of income, race, color, national origin, Tribal affiliation, or disability, in agency decision-making and other federal activities that affect human health and the environment so that people:

- Are fully protected from disproportionate and adverse human health and environmental effects, risks, and hazards, including those related to climate change, the cumulative impacts of environmental and other burdens, and the legacy of racism or other structural or systemic barriers; and
- Have equitable access to a healthy, sustainable, and resilient environment to live, play, work, learn, grow, worship, and engage in cultural and subsistence practices. (Source: [EPA](#))

EQUITY

Unlike the notion of equality, is not about sameness of treatment. Equity denotes fairness and justice in process and in results. Equitable outcomes often require differential treatment and resource redistribution so as to achieve a level playing field among all individuals and communities. This requires recognizing and addressing barriers to provide opportunity for all individuals and communities to thrive. (Source: [McGill University](#))

FRONTLINE COMMUNITY

A group of people who are already or will likely experience the consequences of climate change first and worst in ways that will cause significant damage, upheaval, and life loss. They experience disproportionate impacts of the climate crisis due to compounding inequities. They are often also experiencing and struggling with harmful corporate and industry activity, jeopardizing their health, well-being, and local environment. (Source: [Climate Reality Project](#))

INTERSECTIONAL ENVIRONMENTALISM

A more expansive and inclusive take on environmentalism calling for justice for all people and the planet. It looks at how environmental injustice and racism affect frontline communities, especially people with overlapping or multiple marginalized identities, working to bring them to the forefront of environmental activism. (Source: [Intersectional Environmentalist](#))

INTERSECTIONALITY

Coined by [Kimberlé Crenshaw](#), intersectionality acknowledges the complex and cumulative way that multiple social and personal identities and issues can combine, overlap, and intersect to create layers of power and privilege, as well as adverse layers of oppression.

MARGINALIZED PEOPLE

People who experience unequal access to resources and power, who are often Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), and live in lower-income communities and neighborhoods that lack basic infrastructure. (Source: [Pachamama Alliance](#))

RACISM

The concept of racism is widely thought of as simply personal prejudice, but in fact, it is a complex system of racial hierarchies and inequities. At the micro or individual level, there is internalized and interpersonal racism. At the macro level of racism, we look beyond the individuals to the broader dynamics, including institutional and structural racism.

REGENERATIVE MINDSET

Embracing the power of nature to renew and regenerate, understanding that humans are a fundamental part of nature, and respecting everyone's universal rights and potential to thrive. (Source: [A Compass for Just and Regenerative Business](#))

GLOSSARY OF ORGANIZATIONS



IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING THE ORGANIZATIONS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT, PLEASE REFERENCE THE LIST BELOW:

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN INDIAN FARMERS

CALIFORNIA GREEN NEW DEAL COALITION

THE CHISHOLM LEGACY PROJECT

CLIMATE JUSTICE ORGANIZING HUB CANADA

COALITION OF COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

COMMUNITIES RESPONDING TO EXTREME WEATHER

DETROITERS WORKING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

EQUITABLE AND JUST NATIONAL CLIMATE PLATFORM

GREEN HEFFA FARMS

THE HIVE FUND FOR CLIMATE & GENDER JUSTICE

INDIGENOUS CLIMATE ACTION

INTERSECTIONAL ENVIRONMENTALIST

MOVEMENT RIGHTS

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NEW YORK STATE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (NYSERDA)

THE SOLUTIONS PROJECT

SUNRISE MOVEMENT

TAKING OWNERSHIP PDX

UC CENTER FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

US CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK

WALKER-MILLER ENERGY SERVICES

ZERO HOUR

THANK YOU.



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CLIMATE NEUTRAL
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Earth's Tomorrow Foundation
Environmental Defense Fund
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HSBC
Intersectional Environmentalist
Provoc
Purpose
Rewired
Seachange Collective
Seventh Generation
Simple Mills
The Solutions Project
Voicing Voices
WM
We Mean Business Coalition



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APPENDIX 1

GUIDANCE FOR PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITIES

- [Climate Vulnerability Index](#)
- [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) (Council on Environmental Quality)
- [Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool](#) (Environmental Protection Agency)
- [The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership](#) (Movement Generation)
- [Fighting Redlining & Climate Change with Transformative Climate Communities](#) (Greenlining Institute)
- [Drawdown Neighborhood Series](#) (Project Drawdown)

LEADERSHIP, EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE

- [The Prosci ADKAR® Model](#) (a research-based, individual change model that is part of the Prosci change management methodology)

- [Climate Solutions at Work](#), presented by Drawdown Labs (a how-to guide for employees looking to make every job a climate job)

INTERNAL OPERATIONS

- [UN Global Compact Business Reference Guide on UNDRIP](#)
- [B Lab USCA Business Climate Finance Community of Practice](#)
- [Business Climate Finance Initiative](#)
- [14 B Corp Banks Using Your Finances To Do Good](#)

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

- [Transforming Consumption](#)
- [Redefining 'the good life': Why and how consumption needs to change](#)

SUPPLY CHAINS

- [Just Transition in Supply Chains: A Business Brief](#) (UN Global Compact)
- [Reconfiguring value chains: Seven essential shifts for resilient, fair and thriving value chains](#) (Forum for the Future)
- [Climate and Supply Chain Report](#) (Business for Social Responsibility)

POLICY ADVOCACY & BUSINESS CLIMATE FINANCE

- [Policy & Stakeholder-Driven Economy Program](#) (B Lab USCA)
- [Environmental, social, and governance \(ESG\) Guide](#) (B Lab USCA)
- [Business for Innovative Climate and Energy Policy \(BICEP\) Network](#) (Ceres)
- [Policy Center](#) (American Sustainable Business Network)
- [Growing Our Future Policy Workstream](#) (Forum for the Future)
- [2 Years of Justice40 Integrating Environmental Justice into US Climate Policy](#) (WRI)

APPENDIX 2

This guide was inspired by research, conversations, and partnerships with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities and frontline organizations, highlighting how responses to climate challenges exacerbated inequality and racism. Shifting power, decision-making, and innovation are urgently needed to include and partner with traditionally excluded and frontline stakeholders to ensure the viability of any climate resilience planning and solution.

The impetus behind this work is to ensure that climate solutions are collaborative and co-designed, from the diagnosis to methodology to processes, with national and local partners. This guide was created through thematic, qualitative analysis of pre-existing literature, documents, and data, fused with semi-structured interviews conducted over Zoom with representatives from climate and environmental justice organizations, community groups and coalitions, academics,

policymakers, private sector representatives, foundations, and industry associations. In addition, Forum for the Future and B Lab USCA held four meetings with community members and private sector representatives to understand and identify the needs of communities and gaps in which climate solutions must be more inclusive and just.

We will continue to engage frontline communities and the private sector through workshops and place-based engagements. Our goal is to facilitate conversations that will deepen trust and spark collaboration between companies and communities in support of long-term, systemic change. Our methodology around collaboration will consider and include the following people, ideas, and mindsets:

- People who see the situation they are in as unacceptable, unstable, or unsustainable. Interconnected challenges such as air quality and environment, food security, health, economic security, and racial injustice must be named and addressed.

- People cannot transform their situation alone or by working only with their current networks.
- The actors who need to work together to transform are often too siloed or polarized to be able to approach this work together without support.
- There are no existing initiatives that are driving similar outcomes. We must work to ensure that efforts are not duplicative but amplify and accelerate progress.
- Cross-sector leadership in a community wants to see change and is open to taking action following crowd-sourced feedback.

APPENDIX 3

As you map out your stakeholders using the collaboration wheel, here are some examples to get you started:

EMPLOYEES:

Start by learning from your employees how climate justice issues are affecting them. This could relate to short-term impacts from climate shocks or long-term issues like asthma in urban areas. Work with employees to increase understanding of climate justice issues by offering climate and environmental justice training.

CUSTOMERS:

There is an opportunity to start a conversation about climate justice issues with your customers. Perhaps with a company blog or platform used to amplify climate justice activists' work in your area and offer ways your customers can support them.



POLICYMAKERS:

Take the time to learn how climate justice issues are showing up in your supply chain and how members of your supply chain are adapting to climate issues in their region.

PROXIMATE COMMUNITIES:

Understand how climate issues are showing up in the communities where your business is located, have the most impact, or affect your employees. Listen to well-established community groups highlighting the people most affected and vulnerable. What are their challenges, and where do they need support the most? Listen and learn, participate, support, and engage in local events, sign up for newsletters, and develop your understanding of the issues.

ALIGNED BUSINESSES:

You don't have to do this work alone. Think about the businesses you already have relationships in your area or industry and ask how they explore climate justice issues. Is there an issue you might work on together?

POLICYMAKERS:

Use your company's voice to support climate justice campaigns to influence local or national policy change. Are there existing campaigns your company could support and encourage others in your sector to take part in? Are there policy advocacy networks you could join?

CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTIVITISTS:

Identify climate justice activists and campaigning organizations working on issues relevant to your core business or important to your employees. Take time to understand their campaigns, focus areas, and how you can support them.

ACADEMICS:

Developing partnerships with academics can also be helpful. Suppose there is research that could strengthen your work. In that case, you may be able to find students to collaborate with, and academic bodies may have different access and influence to amplify the work you are doing with grassroots experts. Offer paid internships, fellowships, and work-study programs, especially ones that partner with youth from frontline communities or that have lived experience with climate change.

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