

## **GWSA IAC CJWG Refined List of Preliminary Recommendations: Submitted 9/28/2020**

The Climate Justice Working Group first convened in January 2020 with the goal of ensuring equity is a factor in evaluating GWSA policy, the Roadmap to 2050, and the CECP for 2030.

We define equity & climate justice as follows in the [CJWG Preliminary Recommendations for 80 x 50 Study Scenario Planning \(Feb.24, 2020\)](#)

**Equity** means treating an individual or community according to their needs, thereby ensuring that historically marginalized people and historically disinvested communities, especially people of color, low-income residents, and English isolated residents, gain access to opportunities and resources and discharge the negative consequences of unsustainability. Unless justice, equity, and worker rights are central components of our equitable climate agenda, the inequality of the carbon-based economy will be replicated in the new pollution-free economy.

**Climate justice** focuses on the root causes of climate change - human-made greenhouse gas emissions and related pollution - and making systemic changes that are required to address unequal burdens to our communities and realign our economy with our natural systems. As a form of environmental justice, climate justice means that all humans (some would say species, too) have the right to access and obtain the resources needed to have an equal chance of survival and freedom from discrimination. As a movement, climate justice advocates are leading from the grassroots up to create solutions to our climate and energy problems that ensure the right of all people to live, learn, work, play, and pray in safe, healthy, and clean environments, especially historically marginalized communities including people of color, low-income residents, and English isolated residents.

We identify three overarching goals/themes in the [CJWG Preliminary Recommendations to Improve the Master Policy List to Address Climate Justice \(Aug. 7, 2020\)](#) that should be incorporated into the Principles Document that the entire IAC should support.

### **1. People-Centered Approach to Achieve Net Zero Emissions by 2050**

- a. To the extent possible, resource investment and program design should be data driven and targeted to redress long-standing inequity experienced by communities most vulnerable to effects of climate change and most at risk of pollution, displacement, energy burden, etc. (e.g., geotargeting of EE)
- b. Protections against pollution, disproportionate burden, and displacement must be factored into program design and implementation. (E.g., EJ population definition, MCI protections, enhanced incentives, WFD provisions, etc.)
- c. Complementary policies necessary to achieve balance (ex., congestion pricing) - be holistic

### **2. EEA has obligation to meet/achieve compliance with multiple laws and policies**

- a. Meet mandates/objectives of GWSA, GCA, GJA, EO 552, EEA EJ Policy

### **3. Priority Policies must prioritize and anchor equity and justice.**

- a. Can't be guided by strict GHG emissions reductions achieved
- b. Value co-benefits and health impacts of action, but also costs associated with inaction
- c. Require data collection and analysis of data to assess the effectiveness of climate policies.

We offer the following six policy priorities as essential to ensuring the goals identified by the CJWG and overwhelmingly supported by the IAC are met.

- 1. Set annual air pollution reduction targets for pollution hotspots**
  - a. To fully account for health impacts/co-benefits of proposed policies, agencies need to expand the air monitoring network, actively analyze air monitoring data, and consistently review environmental and energy policies to assess what is working and what needs to be tweaked to achieve air quality improvement.
- 2. Require diverse hiring and workforce development practices across all sectors to achieve quality jobs.**
  - a. The Commonwealth should allocate agency staff to work with an independent advisory council to oversee job creation. The jobs created through procurement, infrastructure projects, and implementation of climate policies should create a pathway out of poverty, with family-sustaining wages and benefits. The contract opportunities should advance women-, people of color-, and veteran-owned businesses and incentivize domestic and local quality job creation. Funding should be allocated for programs that directly recruit, train, and retain those underrepresented in the workforce, including women, people of color, veterans, formerly incarcerated people, and people living with disabilities. Training should also be provided for workers who need to learn new skills to support the just transition away from fossil fuels to clean energy.
- 3. Ensure that community engagement influences state decision-making**
  - a. All state advisory committees should include representation from EJ populations.
  - b. The Environmental Justice Advisory Council should be routinely convened and invited to participate in decisions about transportation, electricity, buildings, nature-based solutions, development, and housing.
  - c. Agencies should routinely engage in robust stakeholder processes to seek public input in advance of decisions.
- 4. Prioritize climate investments in EJ populations**
  - a. When dollars are being directed to support development, a concerted effort should be made to a) prioritize investment in EJ populations that will enable climate-smart building and b) convene input from an advisory body that includes community and worker representation to guide how funding is allocated.
  - b. Provide enhanced incentives and innovative financing for income-eligible customers, regardless of credit-worthiness, to make new, clean technologies more accessible and affordable (e.g., EVs, air source heat pumps, solar panels, rides on regional electric rail).
- 5. Redress harm of long-standing environmental, energy, and development policies that have burdened EJ populations and other vulnerable residents**
  - a. Projects receiving state funds must *increase* housing affordability.
  - b. Any new incentives for solar projects must prioritize opportunities for ownership of renewable energy assets in historically disadvantaged communities
- 6. The burdens of existing energy infrastructure must be reduced for nearby residents and workers. Additionally, ensure that increased clean energy investments do not increase the energy burden in LMI and EJ communities.**

- a. The state should establish target deadlines to close polluting facilities, such as aging landfills, incinerators, fossil-fuel power plants, and other facilities that create a public health burden, especially for environmental justice populations and other vulnerable communities.
- b. Utility rate design must incorporate analysis of environmental burdens.
- c. Utility rates must be monitored to ensure rates decrease or are stabilized for LMI communities during the transition.