

Principles of the Youth Environmental Justice Movement

From the Second National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit,
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As drafted by the youth of the Second National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, here stand nine principles of the youth environmental justice movement. This document is the product of several days of discussion amongst a group of 150 youth and youth forums held outside of the Summit. It does not assume to represent the entire youth environmental justice movement, particularly the perspectives of Native and rural youth.

- Environmental justice demands for the United States government to be held accountable for violations of human rights and land rights, both domestically and internationally.
- Environmental justice demands that young people work to incorporate the principles of environmental justice into government funded institutions that perpetuate the issues affecting youth of color, indigenous youth, and immigrant and undocumented youth.
- Environmental justice respects and promotes the full involvement of all people across the full spectrum of identities and abilities that make us who we are.
- Environmental justice demands that low-income youth, including immigrant youth, and indigenous youth, live in communities that are secure from crime, drugs, disease, pollution and labor exploitation.
- Environmental justice calls for us to build communities, conduct gatherings, and build our political structures in a way that reflects the histories, traditions and practices of the full spectrum of identities and abilities that make up the communities we come from and that do not reflect the structures that oppress us.
- Environmental justice calls for us to utilize movement resources, such as funds, staff and people's time and energy, in a way that is sustainable, renewable and puts these resources back into our oppressed communities so that they serve the movement as a whole.
- Environmental justice requires the experiences of youth and elders to be shared and respected in all areas of the movement and the need for an intergenerational approach that challenges divisive tendencies.
- Environmental justice demands that as youth we stand against unjust war in all its forms, including disproportionate military recruitment in our communities, the media's glamorization of military lifestyle and the tremendously destructive effects militarism has on the environment.
- Environmental justice demands that youth seek to challenge and change the environmentally destructive aspects of our lifestyles in order to stop the destruction of our planet.

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