



Environmental Justice

By Dr. Ileana Johnson Paugh [Canada Free Press](#)

Class warfare is about to get larger and more confusing – environmental justice will take the stage next to social justice. Executive Order 12898 signed on February 11, 1994, by President Bill Clinton set out to address environmental justice concerns in minority and low-income populations by requiring federal agencies to do the following:

- Develop an “environmental justice strategy”
- Promote enforcement of health and environmental laws in low-income and minority population areas
- Improve research and data collection in environmental justice issues
- Identify minority and low-income patterns of consumption of natural resources
- Every agency must have environmental justice as part of their mission
- Every agency must identify and address “disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations”

“Environmental justice as a social movement has grown rapidly since the early 1990s in response to concerns about disproportionate environmental burdens in poor, indigenous and minority communities. Natural resources and environment played an early and important role in helping bring national attention to this emerging social and political problem.” (University of Michigan, School of Natural Resources and Environment)

“Environmental Justice seeks to help the public and policymakers use scientific information to build sustainable communities world-wide,” says Professor Bunyan I. Bryant Jr., coordinator of the Environmental Justice field of study.

Sustainable communities is one of the stated goals explained in the 40 chapters of the United Nations Agenda 21 document signed in 1992 by 179 nations in Rio de Janeiro. “The recommendations are not legally binding but nations that signed it are morally obligated to implement them according to the United Nations.”

The EPA administrator cited in a memo dated January 2010 “environmental justice is one of the agency’s top priorities.” EPA released its “Plan Environmental Justice 2014” in September 2011.

The Plan EJ 2014 has three goals:

1. To protect the environment and health in communities overburdened by pollution
2. To empower communities to take action to improve their health and environment
3. To establish partnerships with local, state, tribal, federal governments, and organizations to achieve healthy and sustainable communities.

The third goal is very worrisome as it expands the EPA’s control over our lives in order to achieve the UN Agenda 21’s goal of sustainable communities. It is unclear how they are going to measure scientifically which communities are “overburdened by pollution” or how income correlates to air, water, or soil pollution intake by people with lower incomes since we all breathe the same air, eat food grown from the same soil, and drink water from the same sources. As this is a social movement invented by the leftist and Marxist elements in our society, aided by the interests of UN Agenda 21, it hardly represents a scientific endeavor.

U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) was asked to examine the EPA’s environmental justice, “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people in developing, implementing and enforcing environmental laws, regulations, and policies,” and published its report in October 2011. A draft of GAO’s report was provided to the EPA. EPA disagreed with two of GAO’s recommendations, partially agreed with one recommendation, and did not address the remaining recommendations.

The Council on Environmental Quality oversees the federal government’s compliance with Executive Order 12898 and with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

NEPA was enacted by Congress in 1970 to “assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings.” Congress also mandated

that, “before federal agencies undertake a major federal action significantly affecting the environment, they must consider the environmental impact of such actions on the quality of the human environment, such as cultural, economic, social, or health effects including those on populations and areas with environmental justice concerns.”

Plan EJ 2014 advances environmental justice by:

- Rulemaking (writers must include environmental justice in their plans)
- Permitting (EPA-issued permits to address environmental pollution on poor populations)
- Compliance and Enforcement (targeting pollution problems in disadvantaged communities)
- Community-based action (giving grants and technical assistance to overburdened communities to help address environmental problems)
- Administration-wide action on environmental justice (“establishing partnerships and initiatives with other federal agencies to support holistic approaches to addressing environmental, social, and economic burdens of affected communities”)

I am a bit confused since EPA stated that they wanted to apply Environmental Justice scientifically, but the language changes to “holistic.” I may be wrong, but it appears as another effort by EPA to control our population, land, air, and water under the guise of giving help to disadvantaged populations, a form of spreading the wealth through one more social program.

GAO identifies all environmental stakeholders as Congress, the administration, state and local governments, agency staff, agency customers, interest groups, and the public.

The stakeholders of the environmental justice plan are identified as the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice, state agencies, and community groups.

EPA relies on the Clean Air Act and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act to implement its programs. If a state is approved by EPA as meeting relevant criteria, the state is responsible to monitor and give permits, thus becoming a primary enforcer. States will be then responsible to carry out EPA’s environmental justice plan.

EPA has national ambient air quality standards for certain pollutants that are harmful to the public and the

environment. State Implementation Plans must carry out these standards. Grants and loans programs such as Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds must now include Environmental Justice in their plans and programs. States, identified as key stakeholders, have limited detail how they are going to do this.

Community groups will buy into the Environmental Justice idea through funding mechanisms, training, technical assistance, and environmental indoctrination.

According to the GAO report released October 2011, EPA’s Plan EJ 2014 provides limited detail to states about their role in ongoing planning or about the states’ role in a nationally consistent environmental justice-screening tool (EJ SCREEN). The report points out the lack of standard definitions for basic environmental justice terms, such as minority and low-income.

EPA responded that it did not develop terms on purpose because it did not want to leave out certain communities that did not fit their predetermined definition. In other words, environmental justice will not be just at all, it will be capricious, random, and it will not be scientific.

Environmental Justice (EJ) will be further pandering to low-income voters, redistribution of wealth, control of natural resources, economic activity, land, and water use, a furthering of UN Agenda 21 goals.

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Brushfires Note: *Environmental Justice takes racism to a new level. Some websites even go as far as to call it Dr. Martin Luther King’s legacy. This is one more wedge to drive between people and divide us even more. Montana’s Senator Max Baucus introduced the Environmental Justice act of 1993 in the Senate. The bill was signed into law by Bill Clinton in 1994. Find the bill here:*

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=s103-1161>