

Clear-Eyed Equity: Setting a Climate Equity and Justice Research Agenda

So where do justice and infrastructure spend meet?

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- Proposal for a research agenda relevant to climate equity and justice of up to 500 words

“As redistribution, climate change is also a matter of justice – it is about who gains and who loses as change occurs and as interventions to moderate change unfold.” “Like climate change, climate-response measures and the discourses surrounding them have their own, even-less-understood, stratifying outcomes for vulnerable populations.” [Marino and Ribot’s “Special Issue Introduction: Adding insult to injury: Climate change and the inequities of climate Intervention.”]

So where do justice and infrastructure spend meet? Where is that working well? Where are equity and adaptation working at a scale that is sufficient to meet the dueling problems of climate adaptation and social inequity? The brunt thesis is that equity is small scale, grass roots, very local. Adaptation is infrastructure, big building, green and resilient bonds, credit rating agencies. Is there a meeting of these two movements?

If not, and if we presume there needs to be, what needs to change to ensure they collide and make good for one another? They share challenging characteristics: a lack of a consensus definition, a lack of consensus measurement standards, a history of treating symptoms versus cause, movements that lack a center and are not well connected.”

It is easier for adaptation experts to work where there is a clear path (raise this sea wall, increase this city’s albedo), while the path for equity in adaptation seems murky and threatened to be disregarded in the scrum of adapting swiftly to this burgeoning risk.

What are the five steps for the organizing model to moving from “I do not see the adaptation field having equity. It is marginalized and that is entrenched.” To “we are only as strong as our most vulnerable neighbor, the survival and thriving of the most vulnerable is our priority.”