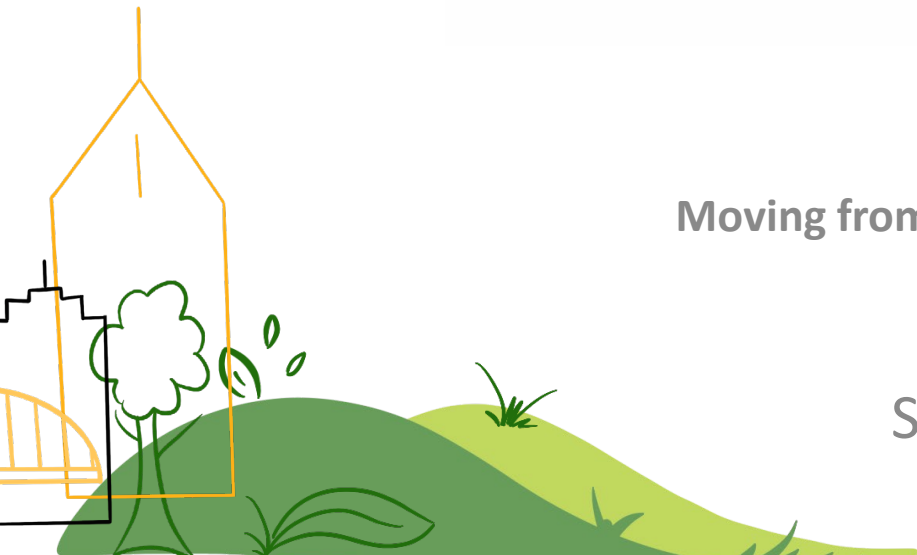




**Moving from Environmental Racism to Environmental Justice**  
*Sankofa September meeting at CMU*

September 28, 2023 @ 12 PM





# BLACK ENVIRONMENTAL COLLECTIVE

***Our mission*** is to advance just solutions that support Black communities' ability to combat environmental threats to quality of life, food, environment/place, and climate.

The Black Environmental Collective is an authentic space where a network of leaders can quickly, empathetically, and responsibly respond to the needs of Black populations as environmental emergencies persist and arise.

Since 2018, we have been committed to acknowledging and *acting on the need to address systemic root causes of environmental discrimination and creating effective solutions.*

# HOW WE WORK

We'd love to collaborate with you



Environmental Justice & Sustainability Education



Leadership Development



Movement & Coalition Building



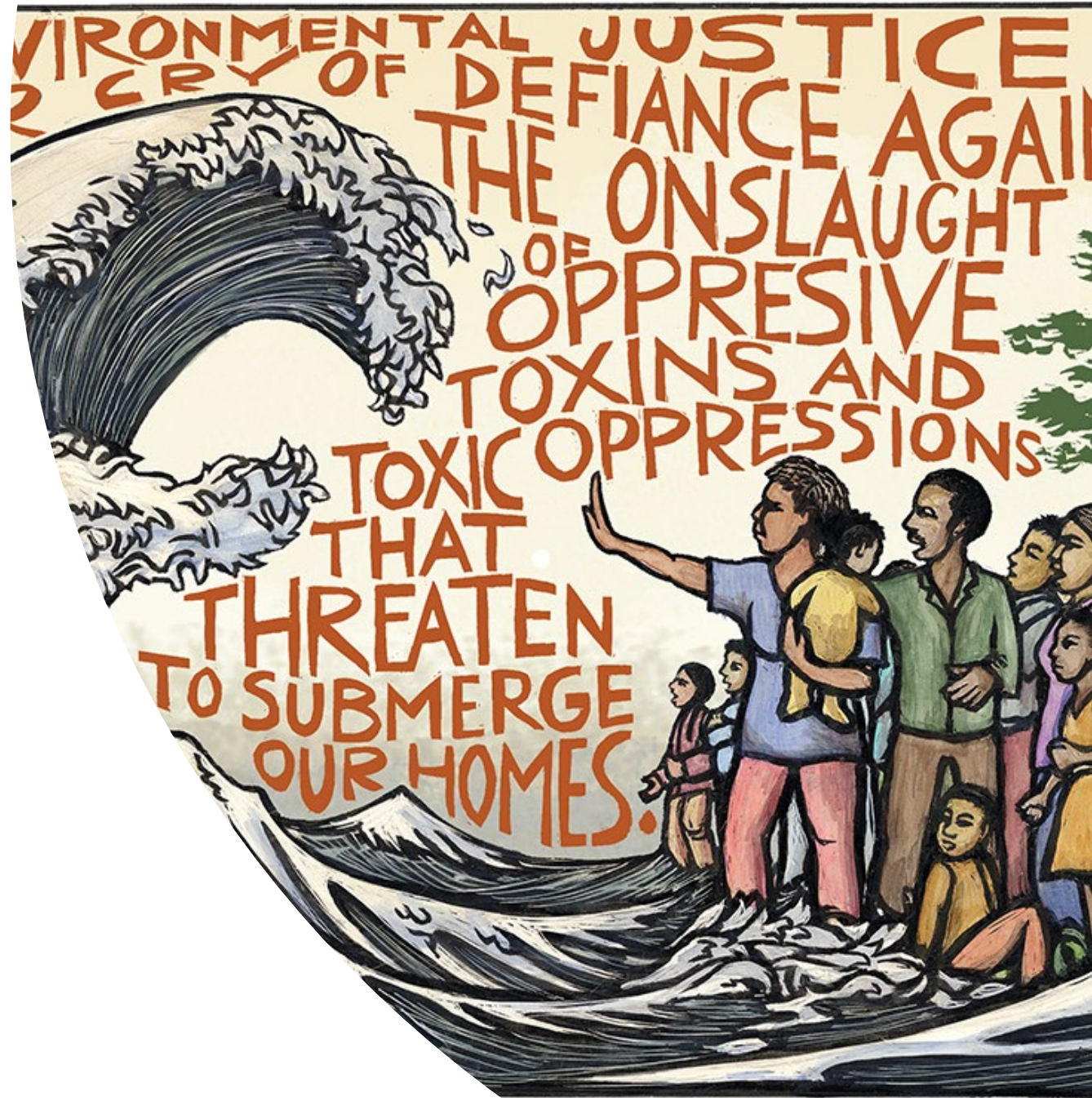
Green Space Activation

# Why do we exist?

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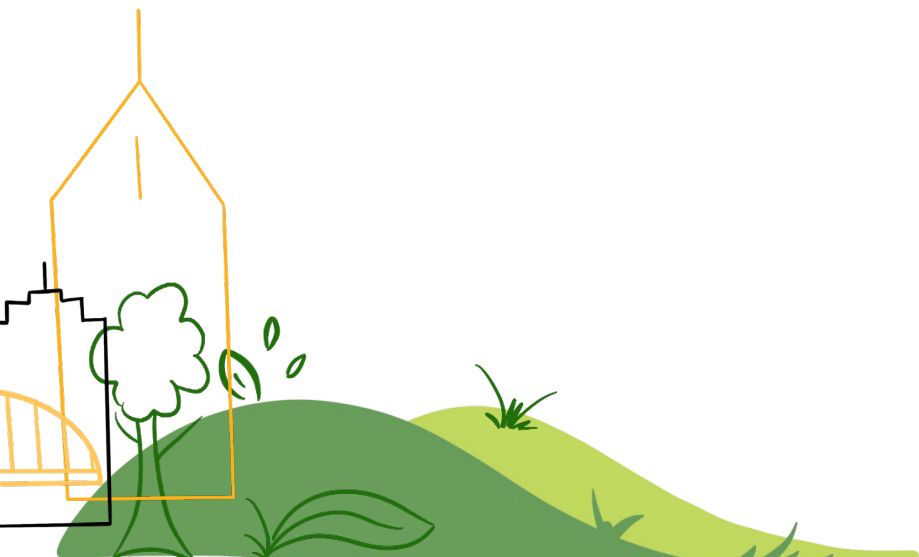
Express the urgency for **ALL** sectors (government, nonprofits, businesses, etc.) to focus on:

- balancing people and the planet with profits
- advocating around a shared vision for environmental justice on behalf of Black people
- Reclaiming sociopolitical agenda





# Environmental Justice Movement $\neq$ Sustainability Sector

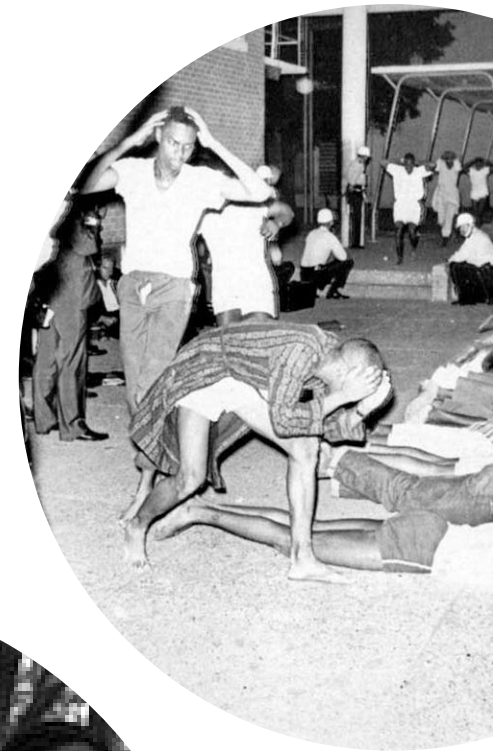
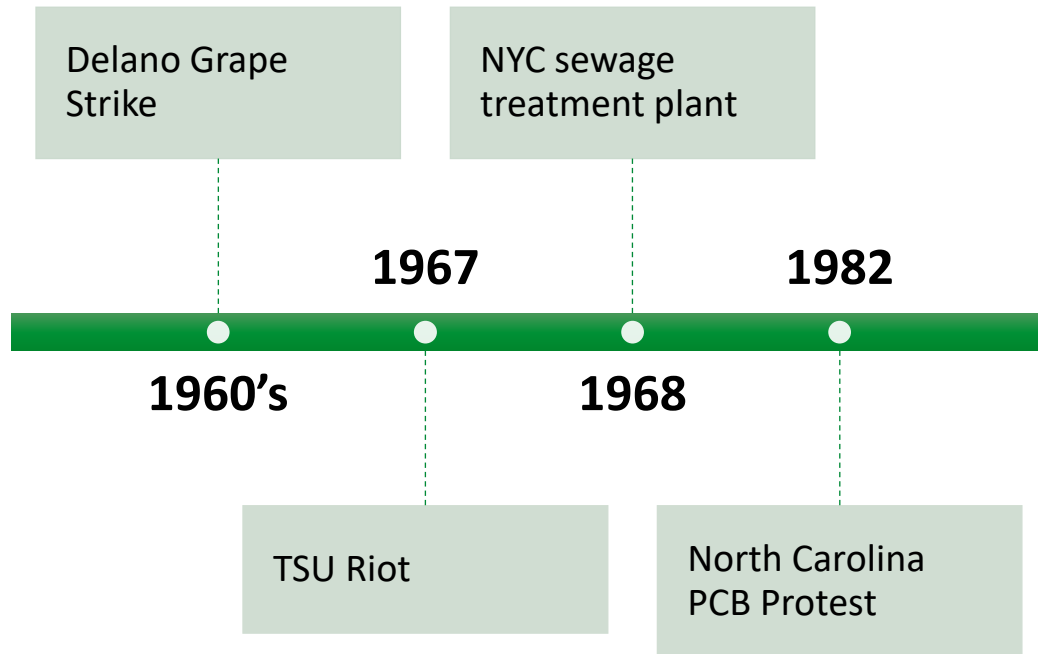


# Shared Definitions

- What is the sustainability sector? – *affiliations and connections, money, political agenda, institutions, etc.*
- What is the movement? - *grassroots, people, history, cultural relevance*



# Beginnings of a movement



# BIRTH OF A MOVEMENT



## February 11, 1968 – Memphis Sanitation Strike

The Memphis Sanitation Strike arose out of garbage workers' demands for fair pay and better working conditions. It was the first time African Americans mobilized a national, broad-based group to oppose environmental injustices.

## December 1979 – Bean vs. Southern Waste Management Corp.

An organization of Black homeowners in Houston, TX organized to fight the siting of a waste facility near their homes. *Bean vs. Southwestern Waste Management Corp.* was the first US lawsuit filed that charged environmental discrimination in waste facility siting under civil rights laws.



## September 1982 – Warren County

Sit-in Against Warren County, NC PCB Landfill: nonviolent sit-in protest against a polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) landfill in Warren County, North Carolina. Over 500 environmentalists and civil rights activists were arrested and the protest was unsuccessful in halting construction. This protest is widely considered the beginning of the environmental justice movement.

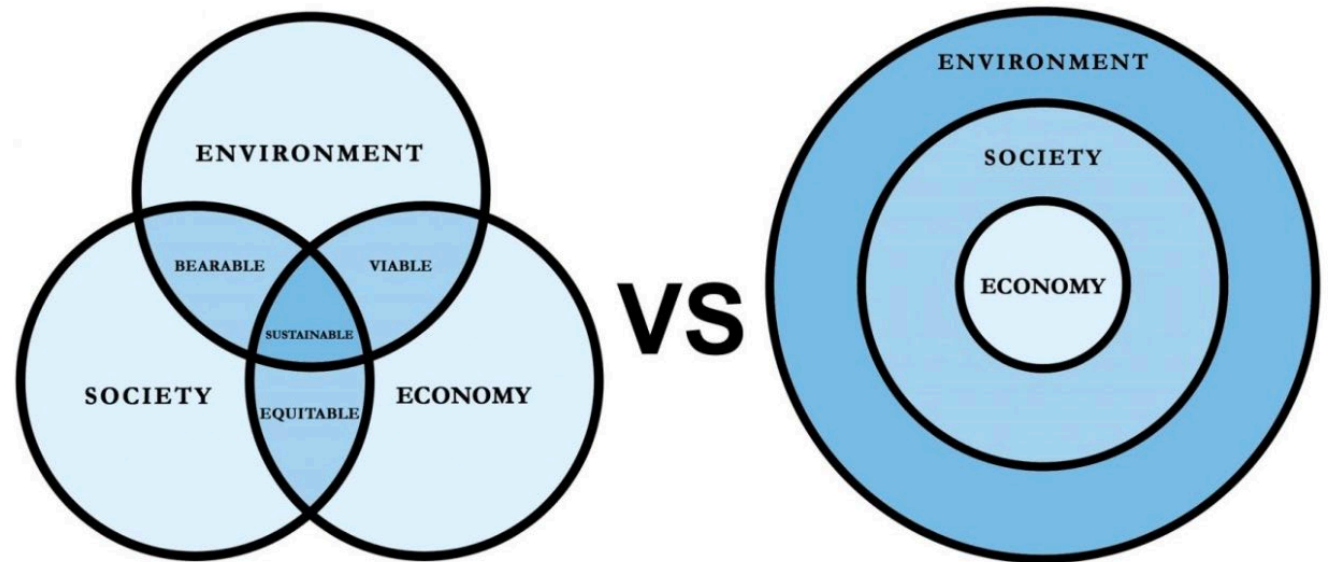
## April 1983 – Dr. Robert Bullard

Dr. Robert Bullard conducted a groundbreaking study documenting the location of municipal waste disposal facilities in Houston. *Solid Waste Sites and the Black Houston Community* was the first comprehensive account of environmental racism in the United States.



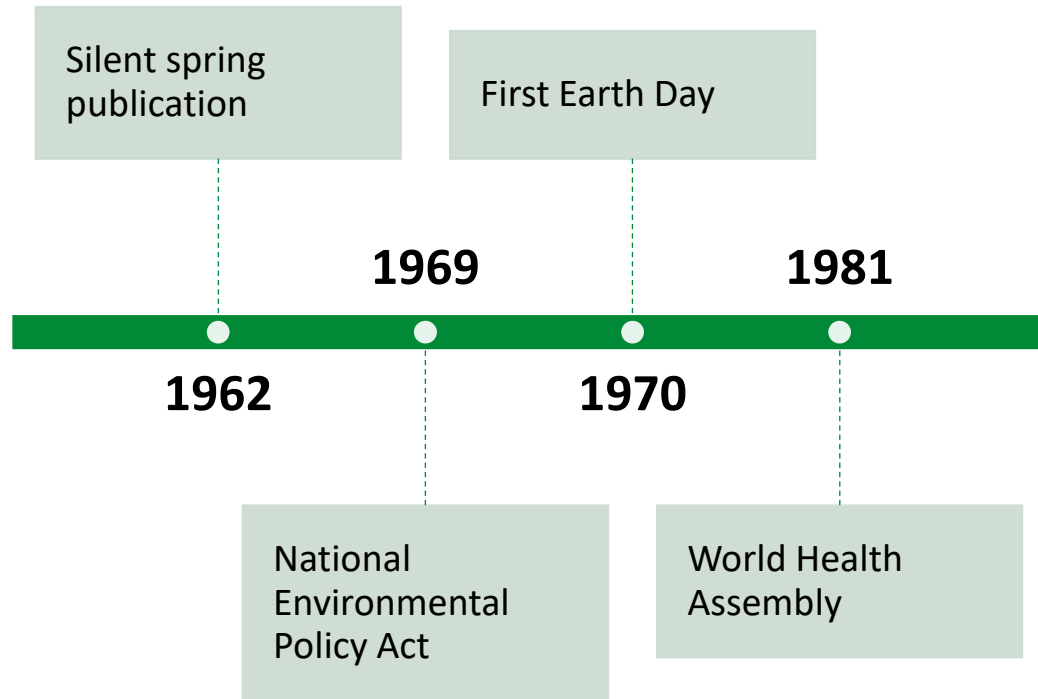


# Additional political barriers



- 1865 land seizures and slave sharecropping debts
- National Housing Act of 1934 (*Redlining*)
- Recidivism restrictions

# Beginnings of sustainability



# What sets them apart?

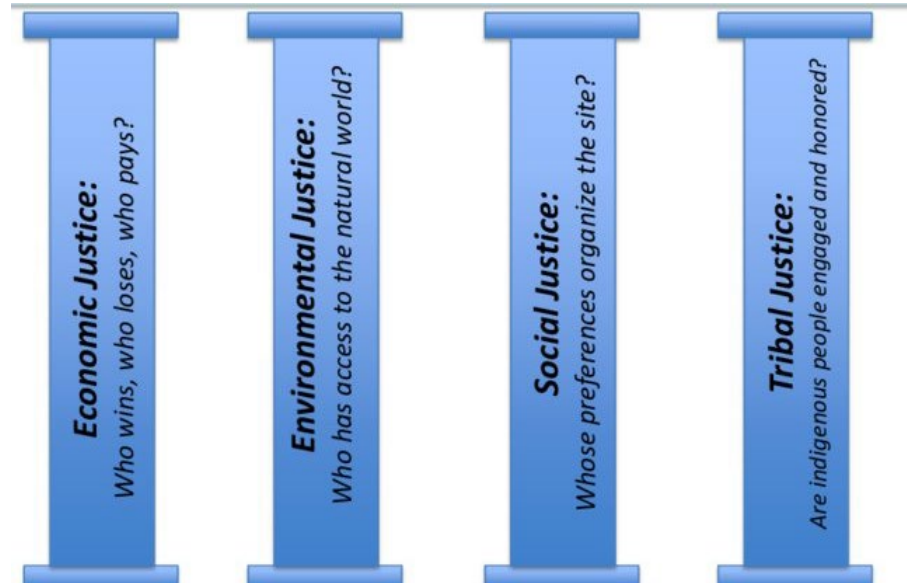
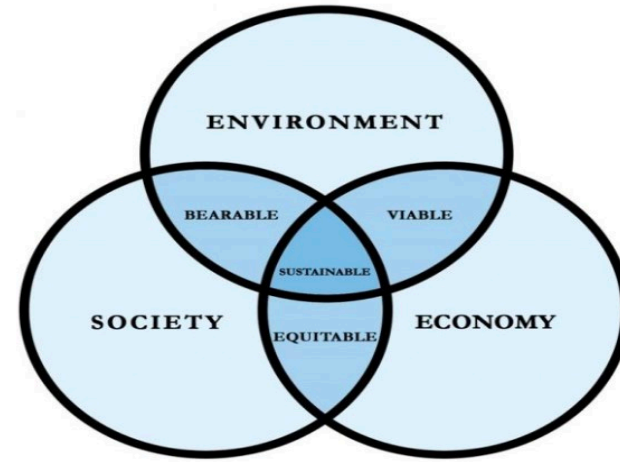


**Movement** has the people and experiences that validate the sectors purpose.

It needs to have credible, authentic, dependable, willing ties to the sector



**Sector** involves profit/resources and is needed to address justice



# Interconnectedness of both ideologies

- Sector must be informed by and must listen to the movement
- Sector is needed to address justice
- Movement must be strategically aligned with the sector
- Movement must have equal access to decision-making processes



# A few facts

- Yale program on Climate Change communication in 2020 suggests that people of color in the U.S. (Hispanics/Latinos, African Americans, and other non-White racial/ethnic groups) are **more concerned** than Whites about climate change.
- Hispanics/Latinos (69%) and African Americans (57%) are more likely to be Alarmed or Concerned about global warming than are Whites (49%).





# Sustainable solutions for whom?

## *Climate Change Is Harming the Planet Faster Than We Can Adapt, U.N. Warns*

Countries aren't doing nearly enough to protect against the disasters to come as the planet keeps heating up, a major new scientific report concludes.

"Some Black farmers argue that the Agriculture Department, led by Secretary Tom Vilsack, was too slow to disburse the debt relief and allowed critics time to mount a legal assault on the law."

Black Farmers Fear Foreclosure as Debt Relief Remains Frozen

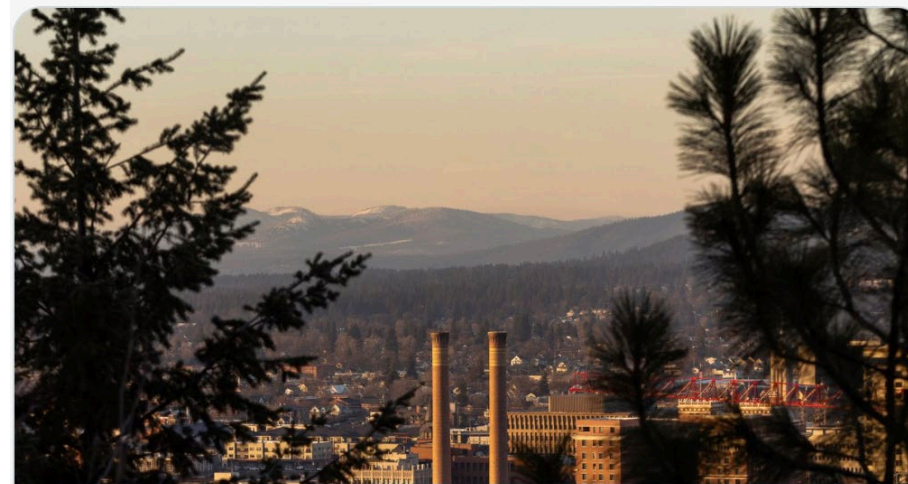


nytimes.com

Black Farmers Fear Foreclosure as Debt Relief Remains Frozen

Lawsuits from white farmers have blocked \$4 billion of pandemic aid that was allocated to Black farmers in the American Rescue Plan.

The Next Affordable City Is Already Too Expensive




nytimes.com

The Next Affordable City Is Already Too Expensive

In Spokane, Wash., home prices jumped 60 percent in the past two years. The increase is fueled by buyers fleeing the boom in cities like ...

# Recently on Twitter...

**Occupy Democrats** @OccupyDemocrats · Jan 25  
This is what **ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM** looks like! They put toxic sites that manufacture nuclear weapons just up the river from communities of color, and now cancer in Burke County, GA is 20% higher than normal. We need to [#StopInvestingInDestruction](#) @outriderfdn



**NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE KILLING BLACK AMERICANS RIGHT NOW!**

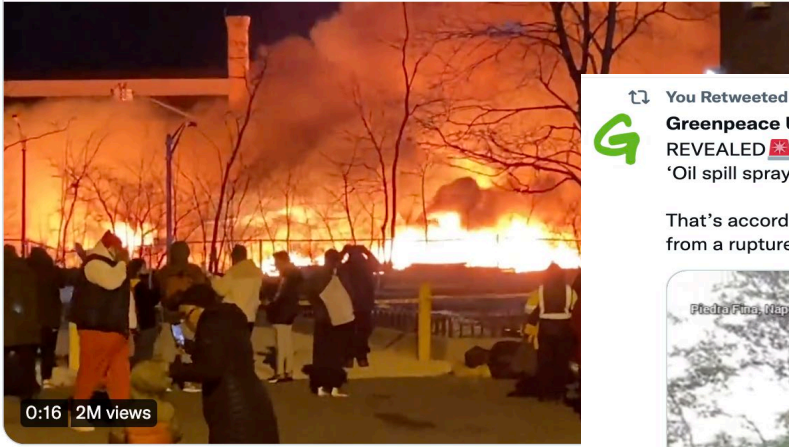
UTRIDER

ON THE RIVER HERE IN WAYNESBORO--

**THIS IS WHAT ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM LOOKS LIKE!** 😡

**Comfort Dyke** @ComplexBlackBoi  
Notice that most of the residents are Black and Brown. This is the projects.  
This is what we call Environmental Racism.

**Nick Calway** @NickJCalway · Jan 14  
Large fire at a chemical plant in Passaic New Jersey. The mayor is asking nearby residence to keep their windows closed. @CBSNewYork  
[Show this thread](#)



You Retweeted  
**Greenpeace UK** @GreenpeaceUK · Jan 31  
**REVEALED** ⚠️  
'Oil spill sprays crude into Ecuador's Amazon rainforest'  
That's according to Indigenous activists, who shared footage of oil spraying from a ruptured pipeline.



# Effects of environmental injustice: How expensive is poverty?

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- At the mercy of systems and institutions
- Lack of generational access creates setbacks (i.e. generational wealth, poor housing stock, etc.)
- Declining quality of life
- Victim of all Ism's: racism, sexism, classism

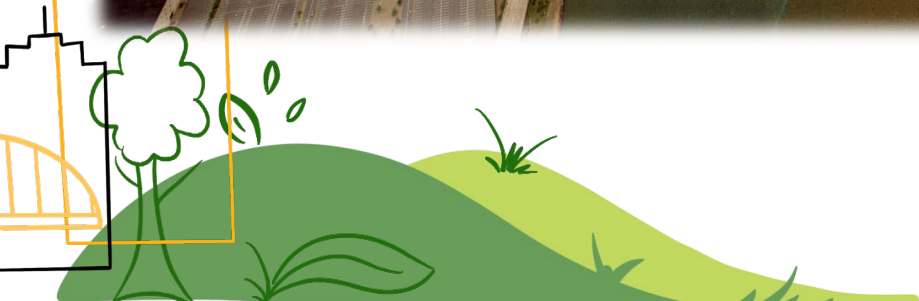




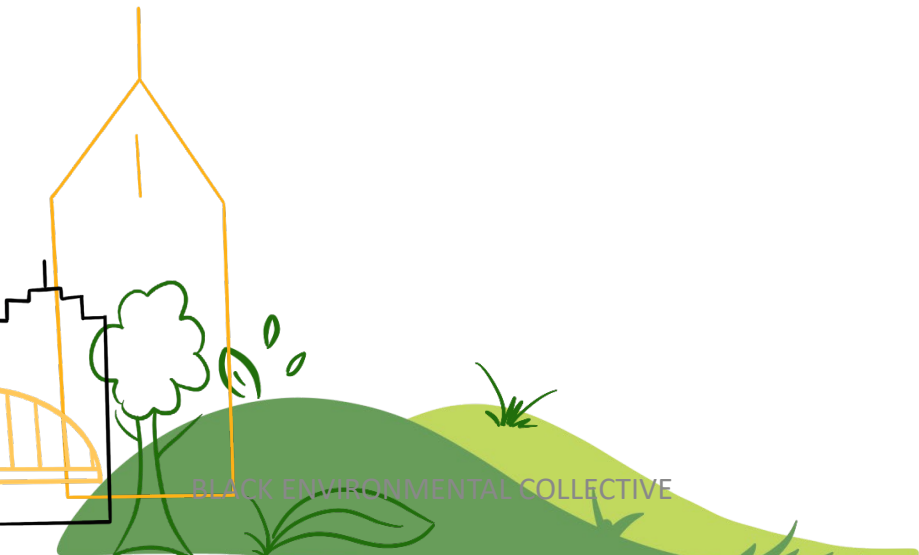
# Good ol' Pittsburgh facts



- COVID19 and Vaccine equity
- Water & other utilities are a burden to Pittsburgh residents
- Clean air is a right **not** a privilege
  - Pittsburgh Toxic Ten
- Racism is a critical public health and environmental justice issue




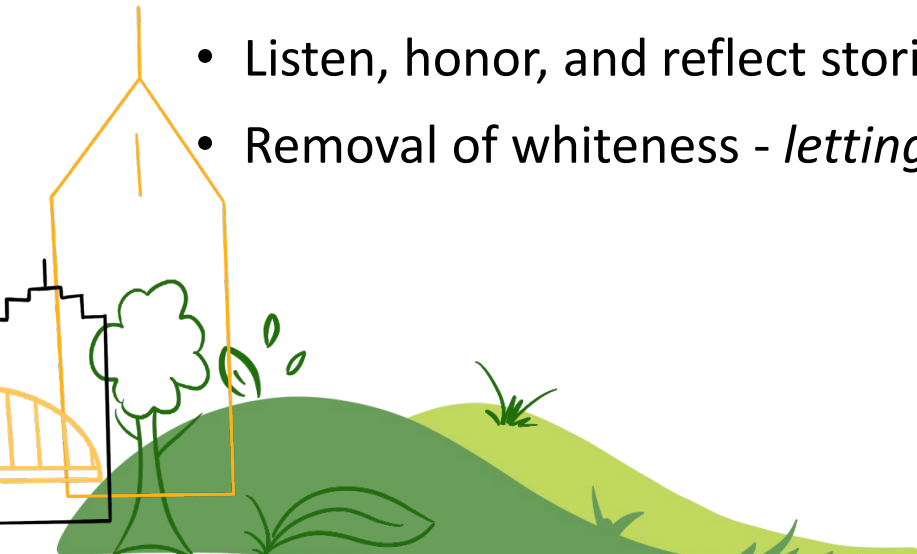
# *What to do?*





# Be an asset to the movement

- 
- Ask yourself “*Who am I?*” and “*How am I connected to the Movement?*”
  - Culturally relevant theory & radical design
  - Empathy
  - Equality, equity, and justice
  - Deepened stance on co-conspiratorship
  - Intentionality
  - Listen, honor, and reflect stories and experiences
  - Removal of whiteness - *letting “otherness” lead*



# Be a great global citizen & fellow human

- Advocate for equitable development in historically excluded communities
- Educate and familiarize yourself with the reality of others
- Engage + elevate your Black allies/co-conspirators
  - Black Environmental Collective
  - Black Equity Coalition
  - Black Appalachian Coalition
  - Casa San Jose
- Join a movement!
- Use your privilege for the advancement of other spaces



# *Just* solutions not just solutions..

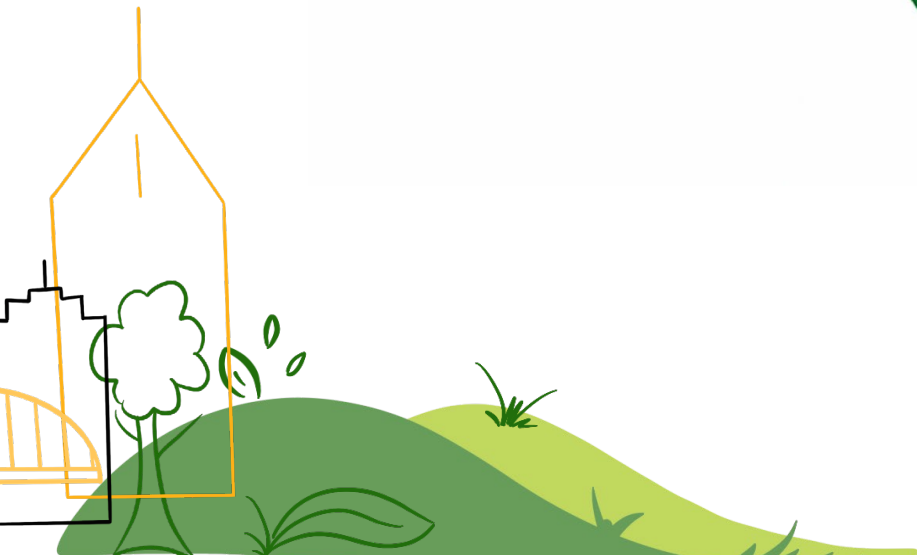


2030  
DISTRICTS  
NETWORK



BLACK ENVIRONMENTAL COLLECTIVE

Thank You!



 @BlkandGreenPGH

 The Black Environmental Collective

 [Blackenvironmentalcollective.org](http://Blackenvironmentalcollective.org)