

Committee: Environmental Commission (EC) Sub-commission 2

Issue: Ecopopulism as a movement for environmental justice

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INTRODUCTION

The Environmental Justice (EJ) movement, as it is referred to in today's society, has a different history depending on the parts of the world one investigates. European society was inspired by Marxist criticism of the social classes, and its application in the environmental context. Eastern cultures perhaps derived the same mentality from the criticisms of colonialism, and from the Civil Rights Movement: a movement aiming for similar goals. More specifically however, the exact notion of "Environmental Justice", is rooted in the attempts of minority groups in the USA, during the late 60's until the early 80's. The reality these groups were facing due to their race as well as income was beginning to unify them across the US. They staged protests, resisted injustices, and ultimately began to achieve their goals, which were to protect themselves and their communities against harm, due to unjust decisions as a result of their race. The movement fought decisions to locate toxic waste facilities in minority-based communities, and demanded compensation for harms committed.

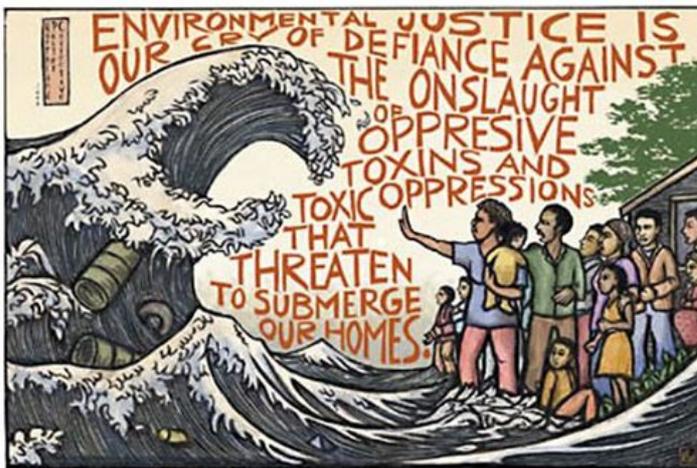


Figure 1: Poster from the WCAI concerning environmental injustice

As it grew, a greater nationwide understanding was achieved, and therefore the movement was able to gain momentum. Legislation was passed in favour of environmental justice. Offices, organisations and agencies were formed to regulate and maintain the progress that was being made, as well as to achieve further goals set for the future. In a sense, the movement was able to redefine even the word 'environment', intertwining our previous understanding of it with a newfound one. Not

only did people understand that the environment is affected by social, cultural and economic factors, but they also realised how struggles against injustices may threaten one's environment.

A common misinterpretation of the environmental justice movement, is that it differs very little from the environmentalist movement. When – in the 1960's – the environmentalists realised that human activity is plaguing the environment (in the traditional sense of the word), they began to advocate the EJ movement, believing that through it, a better quality of life can be achieved. Despite sharing a similar name therefore, EJ surpasses the concept of environmentalism, as it does not only share its history, but also that of pre-EJ social justice movements.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy to recognize that, despite being deeply rooted in the social uprising of minorities, the EJ movement has also been aided throughout its course by a number of scholars. In 1983, Robert D. Bullard analysed the patterns between the siting of federal siting choices for landfills, and the socio-economic demographics of the areas that were chosen. Thus, he realised the connection between race and siting decisions, and was able to provide some statistics for the public to view. Bullard has also commented on EJ in his title *Environmental Justice for All*, stating: "Citizens didn't remain silent for long. Local activists have been organizing under the mantle of environmental justice since as far back as 1968", in reference to the early days of the movement. In 2004, Sylvia Hood Washington released her book *Packing Them In: An Archaeology of Environmental Racism in Chicago, 1865-1954*. The title contains a large number of case studies, highlighting the importance, progress, and purpose of the movement. Scholars like Hood Washington not only educated the masses on the topic, but also brought their passion into their work. She states, in the aforementioned book: "The phrase *packing them in* refers to the way in which these populations were forced to exist in deadly high densities because of how they were perceived from both an environmental and social perspective by the larger body politic." Overall therefore, we cannot dismiss the importance of scholars in this movement, and should utilise their work as a basis for our understanding of it.

Achieving environmental justice is a benchmark for the development of modern-day society, as it allows for a plethora of other injustices to be combatted, and thus can contribute to the eradication of inequality and injustice as a whole. Defining environmental justice however, as well as separating its own definition from that of ecopopulism, can be a challenging task. Due to their similarities, the two movements exist in parallel, often as a part of each other. Ecopopulism is a mean by which environmental justice can be achieved, however in order for it to exist, a movement aiming for environmental justice is required. Therefore, a combination of these two ideas would provide an even stronger basis on which to expand, and ultimately achieve the goals that must be achieved.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Environment

The word environment can be defined in two ways. One of these is: “the natural world, as a whole or in a particular geographical area, especially as affected by human activity¹.”

Another, more broad definition is: “the circumstances, objects, or conditions by which one is surrounded.” When considering this definition, one must take into account not only the natural surroundings, but also social conditions, health, and every input that may influence a human’s life.

Environmental Racism²

Reverend Benjamin Chavis, the Executive Director of the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ during the Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States report in 1987, refers to “environmental racism” as racial discrimination in:

- Environmental policymaking
- Enforcement of environmental laws and procedures
- Targeting of communities for the siting of waste disposal and polluting industries
- Excluding minorities from decision making boards

It is rather essential to comprehend the relationship between environmental justice and environmental racism, so as to be able to gain understanding of the problems which must be solved. It is due to the existence of environmental racism, and other such injustices, that environmental justice, and later ecopopulism surfaced.

Justice

Justice is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as: “just behaviour or treatment³.” This definition is rather too vague, and does not provide enough information for one to be able to apply the term in more complex cases, such as that of environmental justice.

In order to obtain a more specific and detailed definition, therefore, we can look at a different source. The Legal Dictionary defines justice as three things:

- Fairness
- Moral rightness

¹ "Environment." English Oxford Living Dictionaries. N.p., n.d. Web. 4 July 2017.

² University of Washington, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, “Environmental Justice”

³ "Justice." English Oxford Living Dictionaries. N.p., n.d. Web. 4 July 2017.

- A scheme or system of law in which every person receives their due from the system, including all rights, both natural and legal.⁴

Environmental Justice

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, colour, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies⁵.”

A UN report on the topic states: “The concept of environmental justice has arisen in this context: a mechanism of accountability for the protection of rights and the prevention and punishment of wrongs related to the disproportionate impacts of growth on the poor and vulnerable in society from rising pollution and degradation of ecosystem services, and from inequitable access to and benefits from the use of natural assets and extractive resources⁶.”

Furthermore, Professor Bunyan Bryant from the University of Michigan, wrote in his book *Environmental Justice: Issues, Policies, and Solutions*, that: “Environmental Justice (EJ)...refers to those cultural norms and values, rules, regulations, behaviours, policies, and decisions to support sustainable communities where people can interact with confidence that the environment is safe, nurturing, and productive. Environmental justice is served when people can realize their highest potential...where both cultural and biological diversity are respected and highly revered and where distributed justice prevails⁷.”

Ecopolitism

Ecopolitism is the term sometimes applied to the contemporary environmental justice movement, or development during the 1980s (notably in the United States) of thousands of community groups who developed a national co-ordinating infrastructure, in order to protest against inappropriate dumping of hazardous wastes, use of pesticides, and other environmentally damaging toxic substances.

Linking the meaning of the two ideas (ecopolitism and environmental justice), due to their large number of similarities, is Razmig Keucheyan, in his book *Nature is a Battlefield: Towards a*

⁴ "Justice." The Free Dictionary. Farlex, n.d. Web. 24 June 2017.

⁵ "Environmental Justice." EPA. Environmental Protection Agency, 10 Apr. 2017. Web. 24 June 2017.

⁶ "Environmental Justice - Comparative Experiences in Legal Empowerment." UNDP. UNDP, n.d. Web. 24 June 2017.

⁷ Bryant, Bunyan I. *Environmental Justice: Issues, Policies, and Solutions*. Washington, D.C.: Island, 1995. Print.

Political Ecology. Keucheyan thus allows a better understanding of the terms to be achieved. He writes: "In the United States, as elsewhere, the popular classes and ethnic minorities are concentrated in urban areas, whether in inner-cities, or on the city periphery. In walling the social off from the natural [they] also erect a barrier between the urban and the rural. In contrast, precisely what the environmental justice movement is trying to do is to tear down this barrier... This current is often described in terms of 'ecopopulism' – a populism in the original sense of an anti-elitist popular movement that uses a representation of the past to critique the present. Yet the historical forms of populism in the USA and Russia had a very marked agrarian component. As such, we can only really apply the term 'ecopopulism' to the environmental justice movement on condition that we also emphasise its urban dimension."⁸

Populism as a whole proves to be challenging to define. Cas Mudde, a political scientist at the University of Georgia, has attempted to do so, and his definition of the term has become rather influential. According to him, "populism is a 'thin ideology', which sets up a mind-set of a people with a pure purpose, against a corrupt elite. Therefore, this thin ideology can be attached to various 'thick ideologies' (such as socialism, nationalism, etc.) in order to explain the word in context, and aid in particular agendas."⁹ Similarly, ecopopulism can act in the same way, as it requires a specific context in which to be defined: in this case that of environmental justice.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The concept of environmental justice began at different times, depending on which area of the world one focuses on. Each country has developed different policies, with different agendas, and varying abilities and progress when regarding their achievement. There are also a plethora of factors affecting the decisions made by policymakers, and these must be examined when probing the outcomes and the history of this complex matter.

⁸ Keucheyan, Razmig, and David Broder. *Nature Is a Battlefield: Towards a Political Ecology*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2016. Print.

⁹ "What Is Populism?" *The Economist*. *The Economist Newspaper*, 19 Dec. 2016. Web. 24 June 2017.

The US Beginning – Warren County Protest



Figure 2: Arrested protesters during the Warren County Protest

The exact beginning of the environmental justice movement in the United States is not easily determined, due to the fact that it existed long before it gained attention throughout the country. Isolated communities complained separately about the way their land was used for decades, until a single event was able to unify them all.

In the early 1980s, the movement for environmental justice escalated, and quickly became a national struggle for social and racial equality, when dealing with environmental concerns. This was all set off by a protest in Warren County, North Carolina, in 1982. The community was mainly African-American, and was chosen to host a toxic waste landfill site, which would accept PCB-contaminated soil. This controversial decision by the state of North Carolina led to multiple parties gathering to ultimately stage a massive protest, led by the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP). Despite failing to alter the decision of the state, the Warren County protest gathered enough national attention to set forth the environmental justice movement.

Two major studies also emerged from this protest, both of which linked the racial demographics of an area to the decisions of siting of hazardous waste. The General Accounting Office (GAO) revisited the hazardous waste siting decision of the EPA's Region 4, as a result of a plea by Delegate Walter Fauntroy of the US House of Representatives. The said region contains states which have a high proportion of minority residents, and the results found proved that the large number of landfill sites were related to the high proportions of coloured, Hispanic, and unemployed people. The United Church of Christ also conducted a study in 1987, in order to determine which, the major factor influencing siting decisions is. The study showed that 3 out of 5 African-American and Hispanic people

live in a community housing toxic waste sites, thus concluding that race has the biggest influence on said decisions.¹⁰

The First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit

Another result of the Warren County protest was the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. This occurred in 1991, and consisted of hundreds of representatives gathering from across the US in Washington, in order to discuss and come up with a framework to combat the issue that they all faced: targeting minority communities for the siting of hazardous waste.

The major outcome of this summit (after 4 days of work) was a document called the *Principles of Environmental Justice*. This document combined the interests of the great number of delegates, forming a basis which allows opposing interests to be disregarded. Ergo it promoted the combined effort to achieve national awareness of the environmental justice movement through communication and unified effort.

The Anti-Toxics Movement

During the 1970s and 1980s, multinational corporations were given no sanctions concerning their hazardous waste disposal. This led to toxic pollution reaching dangerous levels, and consequently to the creation of anti-toxic waste campaigns. These movements gained international attention, and protesters utilised their knowledge on instances of corporate disregard for stakeholder communities in order to gain momentum.

Merrell Dow was a multinational corporation involved in the production of “agent orange”, which was utilised in vast amounts during the Vietnam War. The corporation, along with others (such as Pfizer, Merck and SmithKline), was attracted to establish its production facilities in Ireland. This was largely due to the country’s reputation regarding low taxation, favourable wage and environmental laws, and relaxed authorial figures. Protests ensued, following this relocation of the multinationals, and therefore sparked further outrage in the campaigns against environmental injustice and anti-toxics.

The relationship between the two notions is sometimes difficult to pinpoint in an exact fashion. An attempt at this was made by both Razmig Keucheyan and Cas Mudde, who similarly proposed a definition relating the two terms. Populism, the concern for the wellbeing and benefit of the common person, when placed in an environmental context (ecopopulism) is an ideology which

¹⁰ *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States*. Rep. N.p.: United Church of Christ, 1987. Print.

aims to exterminate the barrier which has been created between urban and rural areas, and thus be utilised as a means by which environmental justice can be achieved.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

North America

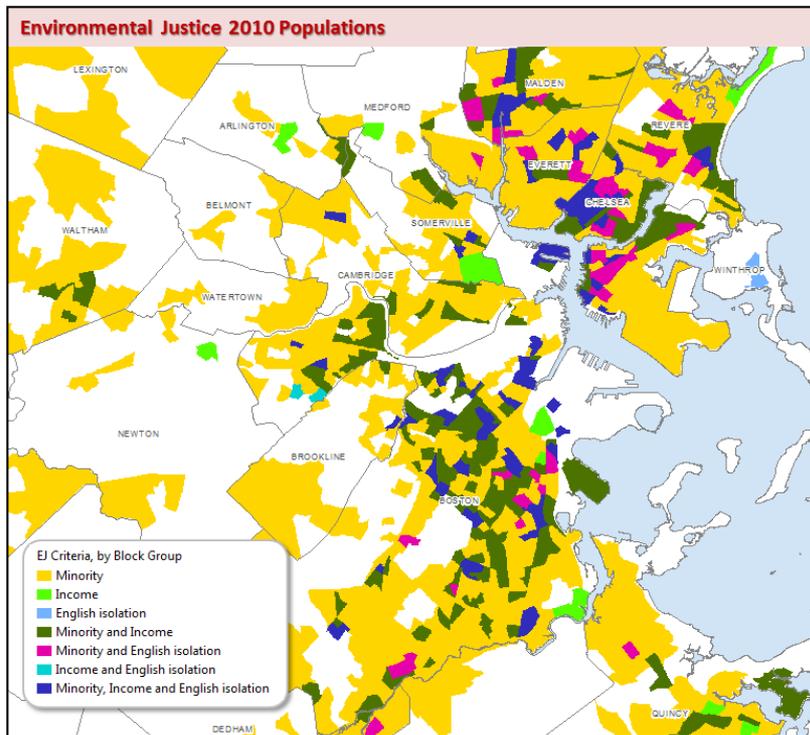


Figure 3: Minority populations and how they are affected by EJ

The USA is where Environmental Justice began. As a result of the movement’s long-term persistence, the US have made the most substantial progress when regarding the matter, and have also provided a basis of sorts for other nations to utilise. The aforementioned progress can be ascribed to

the amount of legislation passed, as well as the organisation of the responsible agencies and offices, which were formed with the aim of supporting the movement, and act as the framework for its development.

It is however, also noteworthy to state that the most advancement has occurred with regard to race or ethnicity, whereas other socio-economic factors have not been as attended to. Furthermore, despite the EPA’s assistance with siting across the nation, decisions are largely based on each individual state’s policies, therefore making universality, as well as equality a difficult task. Lastly, due to recent years’ turmoil in the financial sector, as well as the geo-political disputes across the globe, it may be stated that environmental issues (including socio-environmental ones) have been stalled.

Canada, on the other hand, has not achieved the same progress. The amount of research and time allocated to EJ are minimal, despite studies¹¹ already showing an unequal distribution of land

¹¹ Buzzelli, Michael. *Environmental Justice in Canada - It Matters Where You Live*. Rep. N.p.: CPRN, 2008. Print.

and resources among Canadian people. The aboriginal people are the most resource-dependent, and are therefore the most vulnerable and the most exposed to hazards, with the low-income communities also facing a similar problem. The Canadian government has also openly opposed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, arguing that the rights and responsibilities of indigenous people are not balanced. Overall, Canada’s efforts to achieve environmental justice are not substantial, however – under the necessary international incentive – this may change.

European Union (EU)

The European Union only began to regard environmental justice as a topic of debate in the rather recent past. The early 2000’s saw the adoption of common regulations and a framework based on which member nations could advance their societies.

The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom (UK) led the way with its sustainable development plan “Securing the Future” in 2005¹². In a sense, this placed the responsibility of the combatting of environmental injustices to the state, thus providing a legal basis for the topic. It must be stated however, that in the

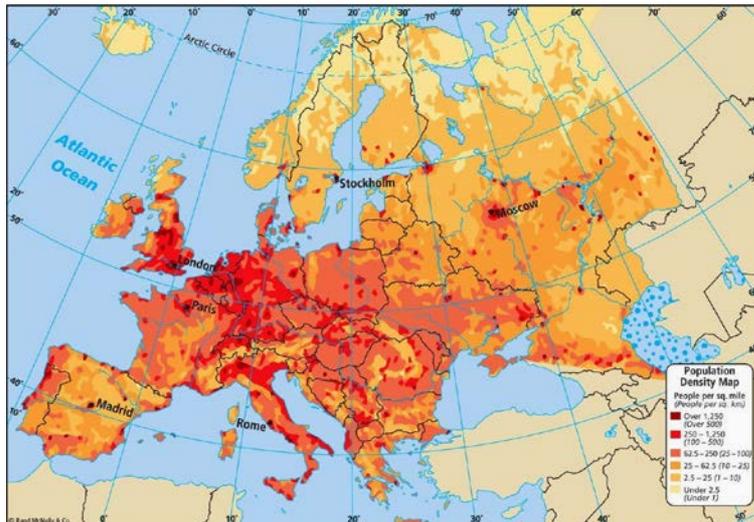


Figure 4: Population density in Europe

UK, and in the EU in general, there is far greater emphasis on social factors influencing hazardous environmental decisions than in the US, where the main emphasis is on race.

Germany

Germany does not differ greatly from the UK’s viewpoint, as they have taken similar actions to limit environmental injustices in and around the main cities. However, the German government can be said to have placed emphasis on this issue due to its public health dimension, far more than the social or discriminatory one.

France

¹² *Securing the Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy*. Rep. N.p.: HM Government, 2005. Print.

On the completely opposing end is France. The French government shows no intention to place environmental justice on their national agenda. This is contradictory to recent studies, which have shown clear indication of socio-economic factors influencing the siting of hazardous facilities: be they for toxic waste disposal or for energy production.

Sweden

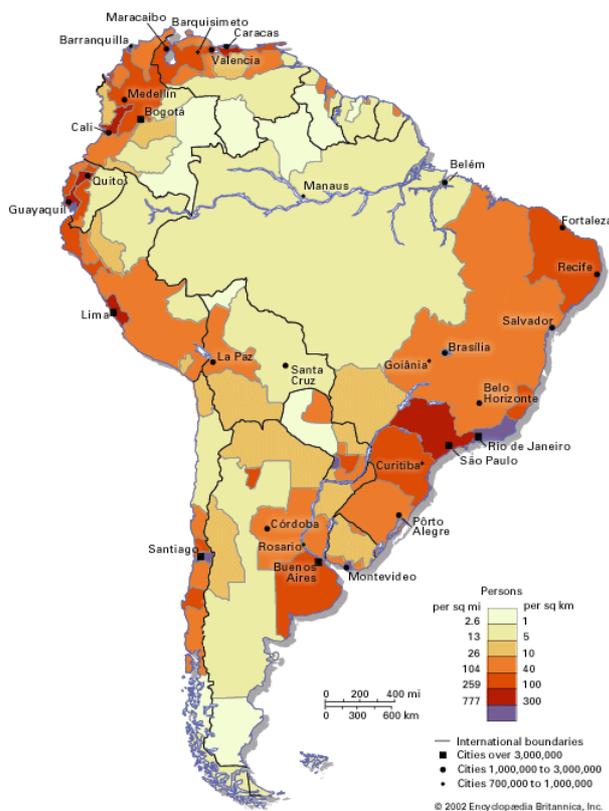
Environmentally, as well as socially, Sweden is a country that has substantially contributed to issues at hand. Their sustainable development agenda is one of the country’s greatest priorities; something which environmental justice is an exception of. The extent to which this is true is great, as is proved by the fact that Sweden has been tried at Court by the EU, for failing to abide by environmental legislation.¹³

Latin America

The Latin American continent displays trends that differ from that of the European, as well as the North American ones: simply due to the fact that the large indigenous population plays a far greater role than that in the other continents. What is more, the lengthy history of dictatorships in

the region ensured that the need for social justice had already been established, therefore creating a platform for environmental justice activists to utilise.

Figure 5: Population density in Latin America



Lastly, foreign investments are a rather crucial enemy to the region, since it is large corporations which – through a variety of development plans – endanger the local environment.

Brazil

The Brazilian economy is one of the fastest-growing in the world. Despite the opportunities that this may provide, it has led to a greatly varying regional development.

¹³ "Commission Refers BELGIUM and BULGARIA to Court and Gives Sweden a Final Warning over Poor Air Quality." *European Commission - PRESS RELEASES - Press Release - Commission Refers BELGIUM and BULGARIA to Court and Gives Sweden a Final Warning over Poor Air Quality.* European Commission, n.d. Web. 09 July 2017.

Social justice, and more specifically environmental justice, is something the country has been greatly recognized for its pursuit of, especially due to the UN Conference for Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992)¹⁴. However, the Brazilian Network for Environmental Justice (BNEJ), has not yet been as successful as it would have wished, meaning that the most affected populations are the indigenous populations residing in the immediate vicinity of rivers, as they are given no choice in the siting decisions for dams.

Bolivia and Venezuela

Bolivia and Venezuela do not differ greatly in policies. The former has resisted the sale of natural resources to the private sector, whereas the latter has openly expressed its support of “equal but different responsibilities” when regarding climate change (Cochabamba People’s Summit, 2010)¹⁵. This was in opposition of other countries’ wishes to “equally share” climate change costs, meaning that all countries must contribute equal amounts. Venezuela’s resistance to this claim is an example of environmental justice advocacy, since Less Economically Developed Countries with weaker economies were to be paying the same figures as MEDCs with far stronger economies.

Yet another noteworthy case, would be that of Argentina and Uruguay, during their dispute over the Uruguay River pulp mills, in 2002. Uruguay was taken to the International Court of Justice (ICJ); however, the actions were not ruled as infringing of any international law.

Overall – despite struggling with social justice and civil rights issues, the Latin American states have taken great steps to achieving further environmental justice progress, and their policies seem to be aiming for even greater steps.

Asia

The Japanese government, despite initiating the Kyoto Protocol, in an attempt to create an international principle for the regulation of CO₂ emissions, has positioned itself against the principle, and therefore projects an image which resembles France’s: one of a lack of recognition.

The People’s Republic of China, has displayed incredible development in the manufacturing and primary sector in recent years. As a result of this, the distribution of wealth in the county is far from equal. Therefore, one is able to witness – when looking at the Chinese population – the phenomenon known as the “poverty trap”. Disadvantaged, low-income populations are not able to escape their conditions, due to social conditions which prevent their increase in income. It is however, evident that the government has made efforts to improve these conditions, evolving the legislature

¹⁴ "UN Conference on Environment and Development (1992)." *Earth Summit*. UNDP, n.d. Web. 09 July 2017.

¹⁵ "People’s Agreement of Cochabamba." *World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth*. N.p., 14 June 2010. Web. 09 July 2017.

concerning foreign investment and attempting to constrain factories and international corporations.

A very similar example can be seen in India. Yet another country with rapid economic development, its community gap almost mirrors that of China's. An exacerbating factor in this case, is that there is a tribal structure in effect, which creates inequalities between different areas in the country. A prime example of environmental injustice in India is the division of Bastar, which is located in the state of Chhattisgarh. Due to its mineral wealth and indigenous population, the area has been entirely exploited by multinational corporations, creating immense mines for bauxite, iron and copper. Improvement however, has been noticed, since the TAI (The Access Initiative) took the National Environmental Appellate Authority (NEAA) of India to Court, and won the case¹⁶, due to substantial evidence of the Authority being biased for developers and corporations.

The Philippines, in April 2010, adopted "procedures for environmental cases", after an order of the Philippine Supreme Court. Such a development allows environmental courts in the country to avoid expensive and long-lasting trials, by simplifying them, shortening them, and decreasing overall costs. Therefore, more money is available to be given to the poor, and it is also simpler for courts to monitor local cases.

Africa

Nigeria, among other African nations, is a prime candidate for toxic waste and unwanted substance exports. Despite this, the Nigerian environmental injustices are mainly based on the fact that their main industry lies in oil. The production facilities in the country are situated at the South, therefore only affecting a certain proportion of the population. As a result of this, protesters from the South have gained the attention of the government, which, in 2000, created the Niger Delta Development Commission, in order to aid the recovery of affected regions.

South Africa was one of the earliest countries to give substantial attention to the issue, as in the early 1990s they had already established an Environmental Justice Networking Forum. In a country where racism was institutionalised, it was rather difficult for the movement to gain racial dimensions, however its environmental protection policies were rather advanced. Post-apartheid, the environmental rights of citizens were included in the country's Bill of Rights.

Middle East

The Middle East is one of the two most water-lacking regions in the world, along with North Africa. Therefore, the largest environmental injustice concerns this issue, which affects more than 50

¹⁶ "The Access Initiative." *India and the Philippines Improve Access to Environmental Justice | The Access Initiative*. The Access Initiative, n.d. Web. 09 July 2017.

million people, not only in their drinking water, but also in agricultural and development projects. As a response to this issue, several countries (along with the support of the UN Development Program), have formed the Arab Water Council(AWC), in order to aid resource management efforts.

Saudi Arabia, alongside being a part of the AWC, also faces environmental injustices regarding its petroleum operations, the locations of which are questionable, as they are highly polluting.

In Israel, environmental justice issues are greatly pertinent to the country's treatment of the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Figures released by the Israeli Water Commission display a vast difference between the yearly consumption of an Israeli and a Palestinian¹⁷.

The Pakistani government has displayed trends of having EJ as a priority in its agenda, and has already developed a strong basis, with its Committee for Enhancing Environmental Justice, whose purpose is to oversee the progress of an Asian Development Bank initiative.

Oceania

Australia's government does not prioritise environmental justice, despite the majority of the aboriginal population facing the issue daily. However, in rather recent developments (in 2010), the national EPA declared its wishes to develop relevant strategies. This led to the creation of an Environmental Citizenship Strategy in November 2012, to further their plans.

Environmental Justice Organisations, Liabilities and Trade (EJOLT)

EJOLT was a project of FP7¹⁸, which ran from 2011-2015, and was supported by the European Commission. The aim of this project was to unite and support EJ organisations, in their mutual effort to achieve environmental equality and sustainability. The unity of scientists, activist organisations, as well as legal professionals who specialise in environmental matters resulted in a greatly beneficial cooperation. The agenda of EJOLT was to expand all actions related to EJ, whether those be international databases, conferences, mutual cooperation, papers of all types, or even the mere spreading of awareness.

Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF)

The EJF is an activist organisation, which operates in multiple parts of the world, and is thus one of the largest of its kind. Their purpose is to ensure the basic human right of a sustainable and secure environment. Their work aims to give a voice and an identity to the populations which are most

¹⁷ "Israel." *FAO*. FAO, n.d. Web. 09 July 2017.

¹⁸ "Environmental Justice Organisations, Liabilities and Trade." *Environmental Justice Organisations Liabilities and Trade*, EJOLT, www.ejolt.org/project/.

vulnerable, and most overlooked. Thus, their usage of video, photography and other means by which to spread awareness are successful at achieving this goal. They pride themselves on working at the ‘frontlines’ of environmental injustice, and using their material, they are able to expose these injustices: taking them to the highest levels of local and international authority.¹⁹

Earthjustice

The two aforementioned organisations deal with two different possible solutions to environmental injustice. One of them being the spreading of awareness, and the other being the unity of resources. Earthjustice (a non-profit organisation) engages in legal activity, aiming to successfully represent and support all activities which push for the improvement of the Earth, including environmental justice. Their advancement for clean energy is the prime example of this movement.²⁰

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
February 11, 1968 (USA)	The Memphis Sanitation Strike was a strike held by garbage workers in Memphis, Tennessee, who believed that their working conditions and pay was an environmental injustice.
December 15, 1972	The UN Resolution 2997 was passed, and thus the UN Environment Programme was established.
September 1982 (USA)	The Warren County non-violent sit-in protest took place, as a response to North Carolina’s decision to site a PCB landfill in their community.
1987 (USA)	The UCC conducted a study on a national level, investigating the relationship between uncontrolled toxic waste sites and race. It was the first to highlight that environmental racism was a key factor influencing siting decisions.
October 1991 (USA)	The First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit was held, which resulted in the formation of the 17 Principles of Environmental Justice, a guide for national and international environmental justice action.

¹⁹ “Who We Are.” *Environmental Justice Foundation*, ejfoundation.org/who-we-are.

²⁰ “Our Work.” *Earthjustice*, Earthjustice.org/our_work.

1992	The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was established.
1993 (USA)	The National Environmental Justice Advisory Council was created, by the EPA Administrator Carol M. Browner. This was a federal council which held public meetings to discuss environmental justice issues that affected the nation.
February 11, 1994 (USA)	The Executive Order 12898 was signed by President Bill Clinton. Its purpose was to ensure that minority and low-income populations were also environmentally protected. This led to the creation of an Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice which advised federal agencies on strategies that would benefit minority populations.
2001 (USA)	The Warren County community is provided with federal resources to remediate the PCB landfill and develop in a community-driven way.
May 2003 (USA)	The EPA releases a document called the <i>Framework for Cumulative Risk Assessment</i> . This was indicative of the effort the EPA made in order to universalise the concern for difficult risk assessment instances, and to protect minority populations.
2007 (USA)	The Toxic Waste and Race at Twenty study concluded that people of colour are more concentrated around dangerous waste facilities than the previous 1987 study conducted by UCC.

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

Environmental injustices occur on the global level as well. Much in the same way that States view minority or low-income neighbourhoods as more suitable for waste disposal sites, there are countless examples of MEDCs distributing their waste to LEDCs for disposal. As a side effect of globalisation, corporations are also benefitted from utilising LEDCs for production facilities, polluting factories, and other such potentially hazardous activity.

The UN, being an international party, has resorted to various activities to protect both the environment as a whole, and the stakeholder populations. The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) was established by UN General Assembly (GA) Resolution 2997 (XXVII), which was passed on the 15th

of December 1972²¹. Furthermore, the UN Environment Assembly was established as the policy-making organ of the UNEP.

Two decades later, in 1992, several countries joined in an international treaty, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, in order to promote international cooperation for the combatting of climate change. Although not directly related to EJ, the UNFCCC ensures that the polluting substances which threaten local environments are eradicated (or limited) to begin with, thus removing the need for their regulation.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

The majority of nations face environmental justice issues, and have done so for decades. It is thus natural, that each nation is at a different stage, either in the recognizing of the topic at hand, or in combatting it. Attempts have been made worldwide, some more successful than others, to solve the issues, and we can utilise some as examples of good practice.

The creation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), has substantially aided in the combatting of environmental injustices on an international level, and the relevant governing bodies in specific countries has done so on a national and local level.

A variety of Summits and Conventions, such as the ones in Stockholm (1972), Rio de Janeiro (1992), and Copenhagen (1995) have produced a number of treaties, resolutions and declarations, which further the development of the issue. The UNEP's most recent action is the International Advisory Council for the Advancement of Justice Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Environmental justice, as well as other pressing issues of our age, must be addressed with a view to permanence. Long-term solutions must be conceived, so as to ensure that future generations are met with substantial progress. As a prerequisite for said solutions to be put to action however, we – as societies – must comprehend the origin of the issue. In the case of environmental justice, a social division, as well as the isolation of minorities are key contributors, and each can be combatted separately and differently.

²¹ "United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., n.d. Web. 09 July 2017.

Education, as can be said for the majority of societal failures, is a pivotal means by which to reach a conclusive and irreversible end. The wrong education of children – or even the lack of one – could exacerbate any social issue. Minority groups are only treated as such due to the human perception of difference in race, as well as the xenophobic tendencies displayed by the majority of cultures. A more diverse, cultured education in young children therefore, could be the basis upon which to eradicate such misguided perceptions, and therefore eradicate social discrepancies due to race. Furthermore, it is also pertinent to discuss the economic aspect of the issue, due to the fact that it can, too, be improved through education. Human empathy can be extended far beyond its current capabilities, and it is for this reason that a more emotion-based education in a child's early years could aid in the development of the will to empathise, aid others, and exist in a far less self-centred way. Thus, making low-income workers regarded as equals in future generations will insure that when environmental decisions are made, there shall be no differentiation between race, income groups and more. The overall purpose of educational development is to ensure that future generations are taught the mistakes that the previous ones have made, and therefore not make the same ones. The same applies for environmental justice: teaching populism, and more specifically ecopopulism as a way of thinking in early childhood will create adults with empathy, concern for others, and an overall more concerned society.

Despite the need for a permanent solution however, there are actions that must be taken in the near future, so as to improve the already-existing foundation of environmental justice awareness globally. The first of those would be to increase subsidies of international organisations to local and regional environmental justice groups, in order for campaigns to be funded. These campaigns may vary greatly and may be anything from supporting local community projects, to spreading awareness for protests and marches against unjust decisions. Through this regional funding, the need for an international governing body on the matter will greatly decrease, and allow for less bureaucracy and faster decision-making. Due to the fact that these organisations, whether local or international, are already in existence, the support of their ongoing efforts by the international community, the UN, and other global powers, will most likely lead to improvement throughout the globe.

Moreover, the importance of the problem to be addressed partially lies in the unsustainable sources of energy upon which the entire world relies. Therefore, pushing for the shift to cleaner, more sustainable power globally will eliminate the problem of unsustainability and unjust pollution at its root. Governments have already begun to implement plans and establish goals, however there are setbacks in the process. Nations with no limits to their usage of energy and pollution are preventing a global improvement, and it is therefore up to the international community to address this issue and achieve their cooperation (be it through sanctions or other means).

Furthermore, health disparities in low-income and minority areas are a large topic of concern, since the aforementioned disadvantaged populations have an equal – if not greater – need for health services, which is met with a far worse infrastructure. This can be combatted through the subsidisation which was previously mentioned, but can also be brought to the attention of the state and the federal governments, as an instance of environmental injustice. Gaining nationwide attention would only benefit the cause of the movement, as it would ensure the support of those possessing the ecopopulism mind-set was given.

Another, less active response to the issue would be the creation of a global sharing network, for people to have access to and be able to gain support, advice and more from others which have been placed under similar, if not the same, conditions. Despite this not providing a means by which to eradicate environmental justice, it is still a temporary ailment for those facing injustices.

Ecopopulism, as well as environmental justice are two subjects which must be slowly integrated into the core part of our society. The use of education, and specifically the alteration of early-childhood education to promote empathy and solidarity will cause the most significant changes in future societies, and the other, more short-term solutions will allow this change to be introduced in a smoother fashion. Overall, the progress made can be exponentially grown over the years to come, and that is where our hopes lie.

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Pictures' and Graphs' Bibliography

Figure 1: <http://capeandislands.org/post/massachusetts-has-environmental-justice-problem#stream/0>

Figure 2: https://sites.duke.edu/docst110s_01_s2011_sb211/what-is-environmental-justice/history/

Figure 3: <http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/it-serv-and-support/application-serv/office-of-geographic-information-massgis/datalayers/cen2010ej.html>

Figure 4: https://www.tes.com/lessons/pp78_Xfqqrh7iw/european-population

Figure 5: <https://wyhs-human-geography.wikispaces.com/latin+american>