

A large photograph of a diverse group of people, mostly young adults, wearing red shirts and holding a red banner. They are standing in front of the US Capitol building in Washington, D.C. The image is overlaid with a large, semi-transparent red banner that contains the text 'PROTECT, REPAIR, INVEST, AND TRANSFORM' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. A large, stylized white fist icon is also overlaid on the banner. The background is a clear blue sky.

# A PEOPLE'S ORIENTATION TO A REGENERATIVE ECONOMY

PROTECT,  
REPAIR,

INVEST, AND  
TRANSFORM

United Frontline Table

A row of 14 circular icons, each containing a white symbol on a red background. The symbols represent various social and environmental issues: a gear with a star, a fist holding a torch, a butterfly, a person holding a sign, a group of people, a heart with a cross, a house with a sun, a wind turbine, a person holding a sign, a person holding a sign, a person holding a sign, a person holding a sign, a person holding a sign, and a person holding a sign.

### United Frontline Table



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REPAIR,  
INVEST, AND  
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United Frontline Table  
June 2020

# INTRODUCTION

The intersecting crises of income and wealth inequality and climate change, driven by systemic white supremacy and gender inequality, has exposed the frailty of the U.S. economy and democracy. This document was prepared during the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated these existing crises and underlying conditions. Democratic processes have been undermined at the expense of people's jobs, health, safety, and dignity. Moreover, government support has disproportionately expanded and boosted the private sector through policies, including bailouts, that serve an extractive economy and not the public's interest. Our elected leaders have chosen not to invest in deep, anti-racist democratic processes. They have chosen not to uphold public values, such as fairness and equity, and not to protect human rights and the vital life cycles of nature and ecosystems. Rather, our elected leaders have chosen extraction and corporate control at the expense of the majority of the people and the well-being and rights of Mother Earth. Transforming our economy is not just about swapping out elected leaders. **We need a shift in popular consciousness.**

There are moments of clarity that allow society to challenge popular thinking and status quo solutions. With all the challenges that this pandemic has created, it has also revealed what is wrong with the extractive economy while showcasing the innate resilience, common care, and original wisdom that we hold as people. Environmental justice and frontline communities are all too familiar with crisis and systemic injustices and have long-held solutions to what is needed to not only survive, but also thrive as a people, as a community, and as a global family. We cannot go back to how things were. We must move forward. **We are at a critical moment to make a down payment on a Regenerative Economy, while laying the groundwork for preventing future crises.**

To do so, we say—*listen to the frontlines!* Indigenous Peoples, as members of their Indigenous sovereign nations, Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, Brown, and poor white marginalized communities must be heard, prioritized, and invested in if we are to successfully build a thriving democracy and society in the face of intersecting climate, environmental, economic, social, and health crises. A just and equitable society requires bottom-up processes built off of, and in concert with, existing organizing initiatives in a given community. It must be rooted in solutions for a healthy future and a Regenerative Economy from the lens of the people. These solutions must be inclusive—leaving no one behind in both process and outcome. Thus, frontline communities must be at the forefront as efforts grow to advance a **Just Transition to a Regenerative Economy.**

*A People's Orientation to a Regenerative Economy* offers community groups, policy advocates, and policymakers a pathway to solutions that work for frontline communities and workers. These ideas have been collectively strategized by community organizations and leaders from across multiple frontline and grassroots networks and alliances to ensure that regenerative economic solutions and ecological justice—under a framework that challenges capitalism and both white supremacy and hetero-patriarchy—are core to any and all policies. These policies must be enacted, not only at the federal level, but also at the local, state, tribal, and regional levels, in U.S. Territories, and internationally.



## ABOUT THIS WORK

For years, frontline organizations and networks have been working to advance a Just Transition and equitable solutions to the interlinked crises of economy, climate, and democracy, calling for the end of an extractive economy that lays waste to people and the planet. Over time, we have built relationships and solutions across local communities from California to Mississippi, New York to Puerto Rico, Illinois to Massachusetts, Kentucky to the Gulf Coast, and with a myriad of Indigenous communities from Alaska to the Lower 48. We have long advocated for climate justice through a Just Transition. The emerging Green New Deal (GND) has created an opportunity to deepen this work. And while a GND has been recognized as calling for the required scale to address the climate crisis, the need to define what it means to people presents a set of challenges.

From national efforts like the New Economy Coalition's *Pathways to a People's Economy*, to regional efforts like *Gulf South for a Green New Deal*, to the local frontline-led efforts of PUSH Buffalo and Our Power Richmond, community leaders have been organizing, educating, and working collaboratively to take concrete actions to make the concept of a GND real on the ground. This work has expanded over the last year, across frontline networks, geographies, and silos. In the Summer of 2019, **Climate Justice Alliance**, **It Takes Roots**, and **People's Action** brought together 80 leaders from 64 frontline and allied organizations to participate in the Frontline Green New Deal + Climate and Regenerative Economy Summit in Detroit. At this summit, we identified green lines (what we want), yellow lines (what we're still questioning), and red lines (what we say no to) for GND policies, from development through implementation. This tool was originally shared by People's Action during the 2019 summit in Detroit. During the COVID pandemic of 2020, we adapted it to help shape *A Peoples Orientation to a Regenerative Economy*, which is designed to support policy development and organizing to Protect, Repair, Invest, and Transform our communities and the economy.

This document is a result of this collective work. It contains over 80 ideas for policies and solutions, presented as fourteen planks, for a Regenerative Economy that a Green New Deal could provide. These planks are grouped into four overarching stances: **Protect**, **Repair**, **Invest**, and **Transform**. A Green New Deal would require all four to work together. We must protect and repair communities and workers from the historic and present violence and tolls of an extractive economy. We must invest in resilient and sustainable infrastructure and systems that center the rights and expertise of Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, Brown, Indigenous, poor, and marginalized people. And we must transform the interdependent relationships that connect our governance system, people, communities, workers, and the Earth.

*The United Frontline Table (UFT) is comprised of the following networks, alliances, coalitions, and their members, with the cooperation of movement support organizations: Asian Pacific Environmental Network, Center for Economic Democracy, Climate Justice Alliance, Dēmos, Grassroots Global Justice Alliance, Gulf Coast Center for Law and Policy, Indigenous Environmental Network, It Takes Roots, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Labor Network for Sustainability, New Economy Coalition, People's Action, Right to the City Alliance, The Rising Majority, Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, and UPROSE. This is a subsector of groups that were present at the Detroit Frontline GND Meeting. The Frontline Table has plans and criteria for expansion in Fall of 2020.*

*A People's Orientation to a Regenerative Economy is created in partnership with the **Just Community Energy Transition Project**.*



## WORKING DEFINITIONS

**Regenerative Economy**<sup>1</sup> is based on ecological restoration, community protection, equitable partnerships, justice, and full and fair participatory processes. Rather than extract from the land and each other, this approach is consistent with the Rights of Nature, valuing the health and well-being of Mother Earth by producing, consuming, and redistributing resources in harmony with the planet. A Regenerative Economy values the dignity of work and humanity and prioritizes community governance and ownership of work and resources, instead of oppressive systems that devalue people and their labor through violent hoarding by a few. Rather than limit people's ability to fully shape democracy and decisions that impact our communities, a Regenerative Economy supports collective and inclusive participatory governance. It requires re-localization and democratization of how we produce and consume goods, and ensures all have full access to healthy food, renewable energy, clean air and water, good jobs, and healthy living environments. A Regenerative Economy requires an explicit anti-racist, anti-poverty, feminist, and living approach that is intersectional and eschews top-down, patriarchal, classist, xenophobic, and racist ideology.

**Feminist Economy**<sup>2</sup> visibilizes and repairs the harms of capitalism's exploitation of both paid and unpaid reproductive labor. It focuses on eliminating the gendered division of labor and gender binary that enforces global capitalism's exploitation and extraction of resources from women all over the world—especially from the Global South, Black, Indigenous, Asian and Pacific Islander, migrant women, and gender non-conforming (GNC) people. In a feminist economy, we recognize, value, and center reproductive labor—low-carbon, community-generating, life-affirming, and skilled work—that is necessary for the well-being of everyone and to sustain human society and nature itself. Feminist economy focuses on four principles to re-envision our world: ensuring bodily autonomy and self determination as it relates to feminized and GNC people; socializing reproductive labor; being in right relationship with people globally; and being in right relationship with nature. The Regenerative Economy is inherently a feminist economy because it understands life—its production, growth, sustenance, and reproduction—as the center of gravity from which value is created. A feminist economy requires undoing centuries of extractive economic policy founded on the ideology of individualization, isolation, and invisibilization of the reproductive labor required to sustain human life from one day to another—from the carework that happens in the home, to the support that happens in communities, to the resource generation that happens in the planet. Rather than commodify war, the feminist economy engenders peace.

An **Extractive Economy**<sup>3</sup> is a capitalist system of exploitation and oppression that values consumerism, colonialism, and money over people and the planet. The extractive economy perpetuates the enclosure of wealth and power for a few through predatory financing, expropriation from land and commonly accessed goods/services, and the exploitation of human labor. An extractive economy views natural resources as commodities, using an oppressor mentality to expand the free-market logic into all cycles and functions of the Earth.

- 1 Adapted from Movement Generation, Indigenous Environmental Network, Climate Justice Alliance, People's Action, and Grassroots Global Justice Alliance, drawing upon Indigenous leadership and generations of work and vision from Black farming cooperatives and labor movements.
- 2 Working definition and description by Grassroots Global Justice Alliance.
- 3 Adapted from Movement Generation *Just Transition Framework*, informed by the Just Transition Alliance, Indigenous Environmental Network, and Climate Justice Alliance.

It places a price on nature and creates new derivative markets that increase inequality and expedite destruction. It digs, burns, and dumps with no regard for the impacts on communities and uses force to undermine democracy, community, and workers.

**Climate Justice**<sup>4</sup> focuses on the root causes of the climate crisis through an intersectional lens of racism, classism, capitalism, economic injustice, and environmental harm. Climate justice supports a Just Transition for communities and workers away from a fossil fuel economy and focuses on making the necessary systemic changes to address unequal burdens to our communities and to realign our economy with our natural systems. As a form of environmental justice, climate justice means that all species have the right to access and obtain the resources needed to have an equal chance of survival and freedom from discrimination. As a movement, climate justice advocates are working from the grassroots up to create real solutions for climate mitigation and adaptation that ensure the right of all people to live, learn, work, play, and pray in safe, healthy, and clean environments.

**Energy Democracy**<sup>5</sup> frames the international struggle of working people, low-income communities, Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, Brown, and Indigenous nations and their communities to take control of energy resources from the energy establishment and use those resources to empower their communities literally (by providing energy), economically, and politically. It means bringing energy resources under public or community ownership and/or governance, which is a key aspect of the struggle for climate and energy justice, and an essential step toward building a more just, equitable, sustainable, and resilient economy.

**Environmental Justice**<sup>6</sup> embraces the principle that all people and communities have a right to equal protection and equal enforcement of environmental laws and regulations, including human health. Environmental justice recognizes that, due to racism and class discrimination, communities of color, low-income neighborhoods, and Indigenous nations and communities are the most likely to be disproportionately harmed by toxic chemicals, exposures, economic injustices, and negative land uses, and the least likely to benefit from efforts to improve the environment.

**Food Sovereignty**<sup>7</sup> is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute, and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.

**Frontline Communities**<sup>8</sup> are those impacted most by climate change and its root causes, which include white supremacy, patriarchy, and colonization. These communities are embedded in legacy struggles against social, economic, and environmental injustices exacerbated by extractive

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4 Adapted from Alternatives for Community and the Environment and Indigenous Environmental Network.

5 Fairchild, Denise and Weinrub, Al. *Energy Democracy: Advancing Equity in Clean Energy Solutions*.

6 Dr. Robert Bullard and the Ella Baker Center.

7 Excerpted from La Via Campesina - *Declaration of Nyéléni*, 2007 Forum for Food Sovereignty in Sélingué, Mali.

8 It Takes Roots.

and pollutive industries that have been purposely and systemically situated adjacent to their communities, and in some cases, on the actual land of the communities. This disproportionate exposure to climate and environmental injustice results in acute and chronic impacts to human and environmental health. Frontline organizations are those created of, by, and for frontline communities, and are accountable to a base of frontline community members.

**Green New Deal** pays homage to one of the most exclusionary sets of policies in the history of the U.S., which advanced economic solutions at the expense of Black, Indigenous peoples, and poor white domestic workers. Paired with the forces of white supremacy, these policies prevented Asian and Pacific Islander, Black and Brown people, Indigenous peoples, workers and communities from taking part in programs that created generational wealth for majority white people, while also contributing to the creation of sacrifice zones and frontline communities via redlining. For these reasons and more, we hold that a Green New Deal must be more than a resolution or set of policies. It must be a tool for systemic change that builds and sustains grassroots power in a way that supports and scales out existing initiatives—locally, regionally, and nationally—through translocal organizing models that address and repair decades of discrimination associated with the historic New Deal. For this to occur, and for the purposes of the UNFT, any Green New Deal must align with the 1991 *Principles of Environmental Justice* and uphold the principles and tenets of Just Transition, energy democracy, and food sovereignty. It must also address myriad sectoral shifts including, but not limited to, housing, healthcare, mass incarceration and preservation of democracy. It must recognize existing treaties with Indigenous peoples and the U.S. government must adopt the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. We believe this to be the only way that a Green New Deal can be the vehicle that delivers us to an equitable Regenerative Economy available and accessible to all.

**Just Recovery**<sup>9</sup> is a framework that resists the status quo solutions of disaster recovery that focuses on aid, extraction, and displacement and moves toward transformative solutions that respond, recover, and rebuild. “Respond” means to activate mutual support networks to support communities on the ground to meet the articulated needs of those most impacted and vulnerable, rather than national emergency response that often marginalizes those most impacted. “Recover” means to provide resources and support so that all people can get back their homes and work, rather than extract and exploit cheap labor and land from impacted communities. “Rebuild” means long-term support to communities so they become stronger than before the disaster and are no longer vulnerable, rather than displacing people from their communities. A Just Recovery framework was advanced after Hurricane Harvey in Texas and Louisiana, as a way to incorporate and build upon the incredible work of so many people and communities, much of it led by women of color, from the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to the BP oil disasters.

**Just Transition**<sup>10</sup> is a framework for a vision-led, unifying, and place-based set of principles, processes, and practices that build economic and political power to shift from an extractive

9 Adapted from the *Just Recovery Framework* by Jayeesha Dutta, the leadership of Bryan Parras and T.E.J.A.S., and Another Gulf is Possible. For more, see the *Our Power Puerto Rico: Moving Toward a Just Recovery* report by Climate Justice Alliance.

10 Based on historical Just Transition principles and adapted from Climate Justice Alliance definition informed by many members and in partnership with the Just Transition Alliance, Indigenous Environmental Network, and Movement Generation.

economy to a Regenerative Economy. This means approaching production and consumption cycles holistically and waste free. The transition itself must be just and equitable, redressing past harms and creating new relationships of power for the future through reparations. If the process of transition is not just, the outcome will never be. Just Transition describes both where we are going and how we get there. The Just Transition framework focuses on stopping the bad to build the new by divesting from the exploitation of labor and extraction of resources and investing in cooperative labor and regeneration. Just Transition challenges the dominant worldview of colonialism, consumerism, and the concentration of power governed through violent force and advances a worldview of sacredness and care, as well as ecological and social well-being governed through deep democracy.

**Reproductive Labor** encompasses all the work we do to create and sustain human life—from giving birth, parenting, and raising children to providing food, shelter, clothing, and care for people who rely on us to meet their physical and emotional needs. Reproductive labor encompasses building and maintaining familial and intimate relationships, broader communal ties, crisis planning and management, and passing on cultural knowledge and wisdom. Though this work implicates all of us, of all genders—and some aspects of this work have been commercialized by capitalism—the majority of it remains invisibilized, unpaid, and expected from bodies understood as women. This labor is neither recognized nor valued as work within the capitalist economy, enabling capitalists to accumulate massive wealth from feminized labor by not paying for it. Thus, the very concept of waged work in our present reality depends on, and simultaneously relies on, the invisibility of unwaged work.

**Sacrifice Zones**<sup>11</sup> are working class Black, Brown, multiracial, and poor white communities and Indigenous Peoples whose health, wealth, and lives have been sacrificed to advance the profits of corporations that control polluting industries. These specifically include communities impacted by pollution hotspots created by ports, transportation centers, fossil fuel, chemical, manufacturing, mining, and industrial agriculture industries.

**Translocal Organizing** is a model of collective struggle that fosters the consolidation and diffusion of experiences, resources and wisdom across a given set of geographic spaces. Rather than viewing spaces of resistance as disconnected, translocalism advances a paradigm of interdependence that fosters a fusion of various local communities and movements. The desired outcomes include the cooperation of communities that are decentralized enough to address and dismantle local challenges, and centralized enough to effect change within larger geographic spaces, both regionally and across state lines. Translocal organizing models provide communities with more power and greater ability to scale up and scale out their solutions, while informing and influencing local and state governments. This can, in turn, leverage national transformations necessary to change the rules.

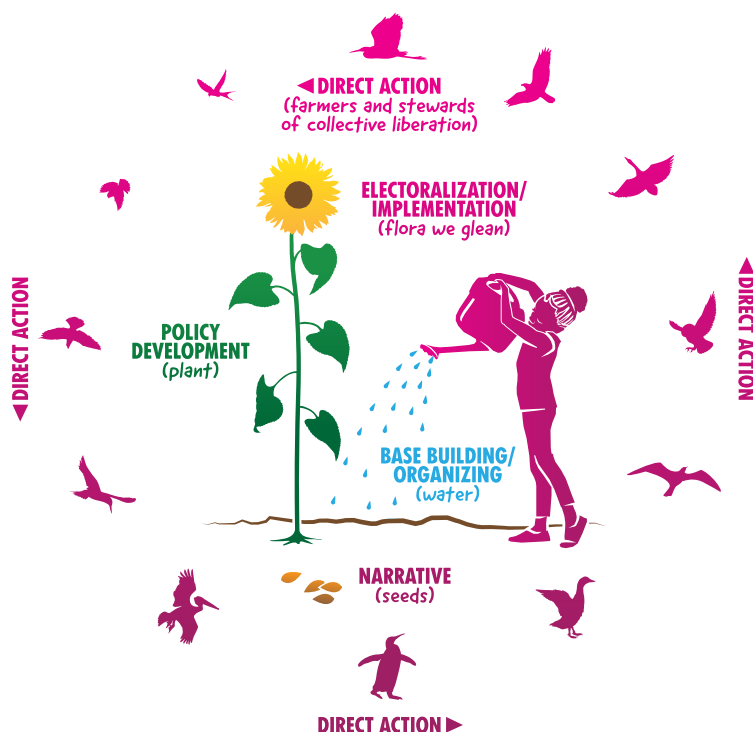
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11 People's Action, based on the historical struggle of environmental justice and frontline communities fighting against extractive industries.



# HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE TO ENHANCE YOUR WORK

Achieving the solutions proposed in this document will require five critical points of intervention by community-led frontline organizations, advocates, and policymakers. These intervention points were developed during a joint committee breakout session at the Frontline Green New Deal + Climate and Regenerative Economy Summit that took place in Detroit in July of 2019. They are as follows:



**Narrative (Seeds)** Represented by seeds, we understand that all of our efforts must begin with the narrative—our story and vision for the world we want and know is possible. Short, medium, and long-term organizing strategies—indeed, entire movements—grow and are derived from narratives. As the Center for Story-Based Strategy teaches us: “The point is not to tell our own stories better. The point is to change existing stories. The currency of story is not truth, but meaning.” As we continue to craft our story of a Regenerative Economy, we understand that through greater meaning, we establish a greater set of truths. The seeds of our narrative form the roots to weather the many storms ahead.

**Base Building and Organizing (Water)** Our narratives are nourished and made tangible by the strength of our organizing, which is the water that provides life for our stories and vision. We view organizing as the vehicle that moves us from where we are to where we want to be, as articulated and driven by our narratives derived from our collective wisdom, vision, and power. Many Indigenous traditions tell the story of women being the “keepers of the water,” which is rooted in the important role of women in organizing.



**Policy Development (Plants)** With our seeds nourished by our organizing, we are better positioned to design and develop the policies that are informed by our principles. Be they Just Transition, Just Recovery, Energy Democracy, Food Sovereignty, the UFT believes in the powerful nexus between policy development and grassroots organizing.



**Electoralization and Implementation (The Flora We Glean)** Developing and introducing policies is one part of the overarching process that gets us to a regenerative economy. As organizers, we understand that the people we put in positions of power through a fair, transparent, and accessible electoral process must be beholden to the people, the workers, and their communities, and not the wealthy few or corporations. This is the best way to ensure that when policies are enacted, the implementation phase serves those on the frontlines of intersecting crises first and foremost. The people we put in power must act as nourishment that increases the ability for all of us to **live our power** as individuals and collectives.



**Direct Action (The Stewards Who Bring Our Visions to Life)** We hold that while transition is inevitable, justice is not. As Fredrick Douglass said, “Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.” Only through principled struggle in the form of organized defiance can we hold the people we put in power accountable to the masses. We must all become stewards of our movements and the struggles that guide them. It is incumbent upon us all to create critical connections that lead to critical mass, to serve as a reminder that our lawmakers and our systems of governance must always be by and for the people. We must struggle to fight the bad, build the new, change the story, and move the money. This is how, and why, we utilize direct action.

The five points of intervention serve as a guide and pathway to develop our narrative, shape our organizing, and design and develop the policies required to uplift our people and communities, while ensuring that we place good elected or appointed people into positions of power, who will serve us through just implementation. We reserve the right to unleash and use our power through direct action, when necessary, to establish and maintain universal and bilateral accountability.

*A People’s Orientation to a Regenerative Economy* offers three dynamic tools to advance these interventions. First, we offer a series of questions to inform narrative and policy development for Just Transition and Regenerative Economy. Second, to advance this transition, we provide a framework:

**Protect, Repair, Invest, and Transform.**

This framework offers overarching demands, non-negotiables, and solutions. Third, we present over eighty policy ideas broken into fourteen planks. These fourteen planks (described in the legend below) are deeply intertwined and should be held as a collective framework to achieve a Regenerative Economy. Each plank has been significantly developed in this document. The planks are organized in a way that begins with a focus on human rights and dignity, moving into infrastructure shifts for a Regenerative Economy, and ending with a look at how we can resource these solutions.

# THE 14 PLANKS

|                                                                                     |                                                                                  |           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
|    | <b>INDIGENOUS and TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY</b>                                         | <b>18</b> |
|    | <b>JUSTICE FOR BLACK COMMUNITIES</b>                                             | <b>20</b> |
|    | <b>JUSTICE FOR IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES</b>                                         | <b>22</b> |
|    | <b>JUST TRANSITION FOR WORKERS and COMMUNITIES</b>                               | <b>24</b> |
|    | <b>PROTECTIONS and INVESTMENTS FOR SACRIFICE ZONES and ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE</b> | <b>26</b> |
|    | <b>HEALTHCARE FOR ALL</b>                                                        | <b>28</b> |
|   | <b>HOMES GUARANTEE</b>                                                           | <b>30</b> |
|  | <b>ENERGY SOURCES and POLLUTION MITIGATION</b>                                   | <b>32</b> |
|  | <b>ENERGY DEMOCRACY</b>                                                          | <b>34</b> |
|  | <b>FOOD SOVEREIGNTY and LAND SOVEREIGNTY</b>                                     | <b>36</b> |
|  | <b>EQUITABLE and CLEAN ENERGY/ EMISSIONS FREE TRANSIT</b>                        | <b>38</b> |
|  | <b>JUST RECOVERY</b>                                                             | <b>40</b> |
|  | <b>INVESTING IN A FEMINIST ECONOMY</b>                                           | <b>42</b> |
|  | <b>INVESTING IN THE REGENERATIVE ECONOMY</b>                                     | <b>44</b> |

# STRATEGY QUESTIONS FOR ANY JUST TRANSITION TO A REGENERATIVE ECONOMY<sup>12</sup>

In 2019, Climate Justice Alliance and Labor Network for Sustainability developed the *People's Solutions Lens for a Green New Deal* (the *People's Solutions Lens*<sup>13</sup> is adapted from a tool created by It Takes Roots), offering five questions to determine whether a Green New Deal and all associated policy and organizing initiatives are rooted in justice, equity, and deference to workers, frontline communities, and the environment.

The UFT asks the following strategic questions derived from the People's Solutions Lens to inform policy and organizing for a Regenerative Economy. We encourage community organizations, policymakers, and advocates to refer to and utilize the 80+ policy recommendations offered in this document when crafting and implementing local, state, tribal, or federal policies, and while developing the organizing strategies necessary for the successful implementation of each. As policy proposals are advanced, they must include assurances that center racial, intergenerational, and gender equity, as well as human rights, economic, and environmental justice, within all solutions. The following People's Solutions Lens questions are meant to serve as a clarifying guide to assist policymakers and advocates in developing solutions that center and prioritize frontline communities and workers.

## Who tells the story?

### Clarifying Questions:

Who developed the narrative depicting the frontline-led struggle against the interlinked crises of climate change and the extractive economy? Are frontline communities and the people who reside in them centered, or not, in media stories about a Green New Deal? Are they always portrayed as indigent or are their solutions, including Just Transition, Food Sovereignty, Housing, Healthcare, Energy Democracy, and Just Recovery, also uplifted?

Are the people impacted first and worst by the extractive economy speaking for themselves to policymakers, the media, and society at large? Or is someone who is not accountable to them telling the story?

Why is it essential for those directly impacted to control their own narrative? How does this relate to policy development and associated organizing? How are artists and cultural workers from frontline communities supported to shape the narrative of their communities?

## Who makes the decisions?

### Clarifying Questions:

Do marginalized communities have access to the power to fully self-determine their future and the decisions that directly impact their lives? At what point in the policy making and organizing strategy development process do those who will be most impacted need to be

<sup>12</sup> Adapted from the *People's Solutions Lens for a Green New Deal*, Center for Social Inclusion, Noor Consulting, and Just Community Energy Transition Project.

<sup>13</sup> The *People's Solutions Lens for a Green New Deal* was inspired and adapted, with permission, from the original People's Solutions Lens - a collaborative creation by It Takes Roots and their Funder Support Circle.

included in the overall process?

What roles do they need to play, during the drafting and implementation phases, to ensure that any policy meant to benefit marginal communities actually does?

Are there existing power dynamics that prevent or limit inclusiveness, information flow, and full participation?

### **Who benefits and how?**

#### **Clarifying Questions:**

Does the proposed solution directly benefit Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, Brown, Indigenous, poor, and marginalized people and their communities in the short, medium, and long term? In what ways does the proposed solution benefit and provide pathways to uplift marginalized communities from impoverished to thriving?

How will this solution take on larger structural issues that harm all communities? How are workers' rights prioritized and expanded in this solution?

### **What else will this impact?**

#### **Clarifying Questions:**

What physical, financial, and social infrastructure is impacted by this solution? Does this support the community or create more challenges? Does the solution address and mitigate cumulative impacts?

What are the unintended (or intended) consequences of this policy idea? What are the trade-offs that must be considered, and who would these trade-offs benefit or adversely impact?

### **How will this build or shift power?**

#### **Clarifying Questions:**

How does this solution create opportunities for more community governance and ownership of capital, resources, land, and means of production?

Where are the existing power dynamics? Do they need to be altered or transformed to ensure far-reaching and lasting benefits? How will the proposed solution redistribute power?

Where are the regulatory, legal, or legislative entry points for implementing this solution at local, state, tribal, regional, or federal levels? Who needs to be a partner in order to build power to advance, implement, and maintain this policy?



# FRAMEWORK FOR POLICIES THAT ADVANCE A REGENERATIVE ECONOMY

This is an arc of evolution for our work. Whether we are advancing a People's Bailout right now in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, summoning national grassroots power to take on the climate crisis through Just Transition and Green New Deal policies, or advancing implementation and organizing strategies, we see this as a continuous process that puts us on a trajectory towards collective justice, rooted in a Regenerative Economy that is intersectional, anti-racist, and feminist. This evolution requires that we reorient our relationship to each other and to Mother Earth in order to seed a Regenerative Economy.

The framework offered here—**Protect, Repair, Invest, and Transform**—is meant to orient us in this continual evolution. We must invest in solutions that protect our communities today, while building the world we want to live in tomorrow and beyond. These four categories often blend together. For example, reparations require repair, investment, and transformation. We offer this framework with the intention and purpose that all elements must be advanced in concert to successfully transition to a Regenerative Economy.



## 1. **PROTECT.** *Solutions must protect, not harm, our communities.*

### Our demands:

- Clean and protected air, water, land, bodies, and communities.
- Non-extractive, clean, and renewable energy sources.

### Our solutions:

- Honor those whose land we are on, and support U.S. policy to respect the full and inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples and tribal sovereignty.
- Recognize the right of Tribal Nations to develop and implement their own laws and protocols under the principles of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent regarding any development that impacts their health, land, water, air, territories, sacred areas, and other historically significant and cultural sites.

### Our non-negotiables:

- Our communities are not displaced and gentrified by investment.
- Our Tribal Nations and communities are not, and will not, be Sacrifice Zones for pollution and extraction.



## 2. **REPAIR.** *Solutions must repair the harms of our extractive economy.*

### **Our demands:**

- Decarcerate and demilitarize our communities.
- Justice for immigrants.

### **Our solutions:**

- Make reparative investments in marginalized communities.
- Make reparations to the descendants of enslaved persons forced to provide free labor.
- Support Indigenous Peoples and Tribal Nations in land reclamation and governance of their rightful homelands.

### **Our non-negotiables:**

We do not invest in building weapons of destruction, policing, or immigration policies that cause harm or create family separations anywhere.



## 3. **INVEST.** *Solutions must move non-extractive and equitable investments to our communities and workers.*

### **Our demands:**

- Living-wage, union jobs, workplace democracy, and worker ownership.
- Strong public health infrastructure.
- Investment in a Regenerative Economy based on care, “essential work,” and reproductive labor.
- Community rights to the resources required to create productive, dignified, and ecologically sustainable livelihoods.

### **Our solutions:**

- Organize workplaces and communities to collectively self-govern how investments and resources are generated and distributed in their communities to build a Regenerative Economy.
- Shift means of production to workers and communities.
- Strengthen campaigns for divesting from fossil fuel and other extractive industries.
- Divest from extractive practices and reinvest in Just Transition in communities to collectively meet energy, food, housing, and transit needs in healthy, sustainable, resilient, and ecologically just ways.
- Advance public dollars to build community wealth through local collective ownership and governance, rather than contribute to widening the wealth gap or increasing corporate control.

### **Our non-negotiables:**

- No more corporate bailouts, no more investments in, or subsidies for, fossil-fuel extraction, production, and infrastructure or companies that put profits over the health of our people and planet.



#### **4. TRANSFORM.** *Solutions must provide the foundation to transform relationships and structures so that they are rooted in respect, equity, and justice.*

##### **Our demands:**

- Healthy, affordable, and safe homes for all.
- Quality, low- or no-cost public healthcare for everyone.
- Economical, accessible, clean energy, and carbon-free public transit.
- Access to clean and affordable drinking water is a human right, not to be privatized.
- Compensation of reproductive labor and collectivization of carework supported and protected by governments and society.

##### **Our solutions:**

- Transition to community-governed energy and utility systems.
- Better position communities to know, sow, and grow their own food on healthy soils through regenerative agricultural practices and practices that do not include the agricultural carbon market sequestration projects that are being used to offset industrial pollution.

##### **Our non-negotiables:**

- No commodification of us, nature, or our planet. We must transform from privatization of nature to equal legal rights for ecosystems to exist, flourish, and regenerate their natural capacities. The Rights of Nature—Mother Earth—demand regenerative and dynamic economic relations that reject extractive and predatory market-based mechanisms that allow for the commodification, privatization, and financialization of Earth's natural resources and processes.

# REGENERATIVE ECONOMY POLICY STANCES & PRIORITIES



Photo by Brooke Anderson

## INDIGENOUS AND TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

Indigenous peoples have suffered and continue to suffer from historic injustices as a result of dehumanization and racism and the colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right of self-determination in accordance with their own needs and interests, extending to their rights affirmed in treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements entered into with the United States and its several States. We must address the urgent need to respect and promote their inherent rights as peoples. When considering energy, climate change, and Green New Deal policy, it is important that the U.S., and its agencies, consider the history of destructive energy and mineral exploitation in Indigenous lands and territories. A just nation-to-nation relationship means breaking the cycle of asking Indigenous nations to choose between a colonial imposed model of an extractive economy or preservation of their Indigenous sovereignty, including protection of their traditional lands, waters and air, and the right to practice their spirituality and cultural lifeways.



**Protect**

**Sovereignty:** Strengthen and support Indigenous nations in the exercise of sovereignty to prevent further erosion of tribal and Indigenous sovereignty and recognition of off-reservation treaty reserved hunting, fishing, gathering, and ceremonial rights—including Indigenous measures to protect and preserve Indigenous language, culture, spiritual practice, sacred sites, and traditional relationships with Mother Earth. Demand that the U.S. fully implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples without any attempted qualifications that seek to diminish the inherent rights and sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples.



## Protect

**Free, Prior, and Informed Consent:** Codify and enshrine Free, Prior, and Informed Consent principles in U.S. federal law, with a right of judicial review. The U.S. shall, by rule or order, establish a consistent standard and procedure requiring U.S. federal agencies to secure the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent of Indigenous nations and entities confronted with federal actions affecting the protection of their environment, lands, water, livelihoods, and culture.



## Repair

**Address and Heal Broken Responsibilities:** All efforts must be made to pressure the U.S. administration to order and commission an independent review and determination of broken environmental and social trust responsibilities to all Indigenous nations (American Indian and Alaska Native nations and their citizens). This review shall be used to formally and legally recognize liability of the U.S. government, and on that basis, to direct Congress to establish a 12-year fund specifically dedicated to repairing its government-to-government relationship, ensuring an economic Just Transition for Indigenous nations and their peoples.



## Invest

**Indigenous Just Transition:** In recognition of the federal trust responsibility—as a legally enforceable fiduciary obligation on the part of the U.S. to protect Indigenous treaty rights, lands, assets, and resources—now is the time for the U.S. to invest in Indigenous-led Just Transition. This investment must support Indigenous nations and Indigenous grassroots leadership in developing the transition to an Indigenous-based regenerative-living economy, transitioning from tribal housing with black mold to green, affordable, energy-efficient sustainable homes, to community health care, clean renewable energy, and energy efficiency, sustainable community planning and ecosystem restoration, and meaningful work and localized community-building jobs.



## Transform

**Strengthening and Reclaiming Power:** Now is the moment to create systemic changes in U.S. policies towards Indigenous nations and their peoples. It is an opportunity for transformation to bring procedures and mechanisms for redress, restitution, and a Just Recovery of treaty violations and due recognition to Indigenous peoples' laws, traditions, customs, and land tenure systems—including those lands which were traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used and which were confiscated, taken, and damaged without their Free, Prior and Informed Consent.



Photo by Frank Blazquez





Photo by People's Action

## JUSTICE FOR BLACK COMMUNITIES

James Baldwin once wrote, “The truth is that this country does not know what to do with its Black population now that the Blacks are no longer a source of wealth.” Whether killed for jogging by white terrorist vigilantes, or killed in their own homes by militarized police, imprisoned at a disproportionately higher rate, denied loans for farming, or denied the right to take part in the democratic voting process, Baldwin’s words are vindicated every day. Black lives are perpetually dehumanized by U.S. society and forced to exist in a proverbial Apartheid state. Pursuing a Regenerative Economy requires a society committed to anti-racism, and a transformation in how we view and value the lives of Black people. For this to occur, the U.S. must embark on a massive truth and reconciliation initiative that addresses everything from symbols of hate, in the form of confederate statues and street names, to acts of hate that place Black lives at risk. In addition to these demands, we should engage with the comprehensive Vision for Black Lives platform by Movement for Black Lives.<sup>14</sup> The dream deferred has since exploded; it is time for the nation, and the world, to wake up collectively.



**Protect**

**End Mass Incarceration and Capital Punishment:** Black families, to great measure, are disproportionately separated through the carceral system. Black men and women are more often held in jail with untenable and inequitable bail requirements and often receive legal support from an underfunded and overwhelmed public defense system. We must divest from, and reject, privatization of prisons. We must end cash bail and invest in stronger legal support for our communities. We must make our families whole through transformative justice approaches and by freeing Black folks who have been disproportionately jailed for non-violent offenses.

<sup>14</sup> *A Vision for Black Lives*, by Movement For Black Lives <https://m4bl.org/>



### Repair

**Make Reparations:** The nation is built on continental displacement of persons and commodification of bodies, violent extraction of labor and infliction of physical, emotional, and mental abuse, resulting in multigenerational trauma to Black Peoples. We must find pathways to repair, reconcile, and move forward through transformative justice processes that are legal and equitable remedies to heal communities spiritually, physically, and economically.



### Repair

**Reinstatement of Voting Rights:** A Regenerative Economy requires deep democratic processes and the ability to vote for what matters. Policies must allow for communities to have a say in how resources flow into a community and how projects are developed. Therefore, policies must reinstate protections under the Voting Rights Act and expand voting rights to all incarcerated, and formerly incarcerated, people without fines, fees, or new day “poll taxes.” Invest in better voting infrastructure in Black neighborhoods to ensure everyone has a right to vote.



### Repair

**Equitable Access to Housing, Jobs, Healthcare, and Education:** Black people have been redlined, credit-checked, discriminated against, and ignored when soliciting services and goods necessary to thrive and survive. In particular, Black trans, queer, and gender non-conforming folks have felt the deep burdens of marginalization and isolation in the extractive economy. Policies must establish mechanisms that maintain justice and equity as part of the implementation of access and care.



### Invest

**Invest in Community-Governed Infrastructure:** Make and expand direct investments in Black communities, cooperatives, food sovereignty programs, HBCUs, arts, cultural, and spiritual programs, land trusts, and other socio-economic programs to create thriving communities.



### Transform

**Build Community Governance and Oversight Over Local Institutions and Economies.** Recognize that Black cooperatives have long been a model for deep democracy in action and central to the success for economic health of Black communities. Unfortunately, too many local economic and political institutions—such as policing, courts, school boards, chambers of commerce, and others that directly impact the day-to-day lives of communities—have ignored the wisdom of Black cooperatives, resulting in the lack of true community input, oversight, and accountability. Any federal or state investment that utilizes local institutions as implementers must recognize the legacy of Black-led cooperatives and require community-governed mechanisms moving forward.



### Transform

**Divest from Extraction and Invest in Our People:** Advance a massive divestment/reinvestment package designed to foster the trajectory toward a Regenerative Economy, rooted in equity, that values community and environmental well-being above all else, and that leaves no one behind. Moreover, past and cumulative harms associated with militarization and mass incarceration must be redressed and repaired to create robust justice mechanisms.





Photo by Brooke Anderson

## JUSTICE FOR IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

Torn away at the border. Criminalized for being the “other.” Underpaid for labor. In the U.S., immigrants—particularly immigrants from Southeast Asia, Latin America, Africa, and immigrants who practice Islam—are too often seen as less than human. Immigrants have been falsely accused of crimes, causing job losses, and terrorism. Since 2017, over 5,400 children have been separated at the border, while many families are held in detention centers across multiple states.<sup>15</sup> To pursue a Regenerative Economy requires that we uphold the rights of refugees and immigrants as equals in our society.

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15 American Civil Liberties Union



**Protect**

**No More Family Separations:** Reunite children with their families. Families in detention centers must be freed. A Green New Deal must divest from, and reject, unjust immigrant detention and family separation. No deal should ever fund the border wall between the U.S. and Mexico.



**Protect**

**Divest from Militarism and Imperialism:** Refugees and immigrants often flee their home countries due to war, violence, and oppression that are a result of U.S. foreign policy. U.S. Department of Defense resources have overwhelmingly gone to support private interests, fossil fuel interests, and other extractive economies. We must divest from militarism and imperialism and reinvest those dollars to support a global and Regenerative Economy that protects immigrants and refugees and creates stability for communities across the globe



**Repair**

**Full and Fair Compensation for Essential Work:** Guarantee and pay living wages to the many undocumented immigrant workers who grow and harvest our food, do care work, and drive the service, retail, and hospitality economies. As COVID-19 has shown, their work is critical to the economy and daily modern life. All work and workers, regardless of immigration status, must be respected and dignified through livable wages; safe working environments; fair treatment, free of harassment and threats; and workers' rights protected by law.



**Repair**

**Equitable Access to Housing Healthcare, and Education:** Immigrants have been discriminated against, denied access to care, and denied entry to schools. In particular, undocumented trans, queer, and gender non-conforming immigrants have felt the deep burdens of marginalization and isolation in unjust immigration policies and services. Policies must create equitable and caring pathways for members of this community.



**Transform**

**Full Asylum and Protections to Undocumented Immigrants:** A Regenerative Economy values the lives and dignity of all people and workers. We cannot achieve our vision if millions of immigrants are forced into the shadows. We must create an inclusive society that grants protections and asylum to all immigrants. Immigrants must be treated equally, and granted full participation in democracy.





## JUST TRANSITION FOR WORKERS AND COMMUNITIES

The dignity of the worker and the voice of community are two values that should be central to any economy. Yet, the extractive economy has prioritized profits at the expense of people and frequently wedges workers and communities against each other. Too often, we have witnessed the fossil-fuel industry pit community concerns against workers' rights, when we should be united in a common goal—to build healthy and vibrant communities where we work and live. Bringing community and labor together is critical to fully address the climate crisis and advance a Regenerative Economy.



Protect

**No Automation without Direct Union Job Placement:** Automation of jobs must be recognized as a critical reason for job losses. Due to industry changes, and starting with unionized sectors as a standard, all workers should receive training and job placement support, along with fully guaranteed pensions.



Protect

**No More Extractive Wealth:** Fossil fuel companies, Big Ag, waste incinerators, and financial corporations profiting from these sectors have heavily extracted from frontline communities, particularly in Appalachia, the Gulf South, and Indigenous lands. These corporations must be penalized for harms and not allowed to profit, practice greenwashing, or lead the transition away from these extractive practices. In addition, all subsidies for fossil fuel and corporate agricultural practices and commodities, including tax breaks for land and water, must be phased out by 2024 and reinvested in renewable energies, regenerative agriculture, and frontline-led Just Transition.



Repair

**Labor Rights and Fair Compensation:** Secure and enforce worker protections, guarantee collective bargaining rights, and expand unionization and bargaining rights for day laborers, domestic workers, and other marginalized and exploited workers. Provide a federal living wage and a guarantee to honor prior labor agreements (including pensions and other retirement plans) in cases of corporate bankruptcy, dissolution, and/or transition.



Invest

**Resources:** Provide non-extractive investment resources to workers, worker-owned cooperatives, and small-scale businesses who will integrate ecological practices and relocalize production, aggregation, and distribution.



Invest

**Support for Public Sources:** Shore up funding for schools and other public programs that provide vital services to communities and currently rely on tax dollars paid by extractive industries.



Invest

**Self-Determination:** Community governance of our economies—from food, energy, and housing, to transportation, production, and waste, along with other Just Transition projects—must put the decision-making for planning, siting, operations, and investments in the hands of impacted communities.



Transform

**End Racial Capitalism in Jobs:** Expand just and equitable job opportunities in any labor solution that strategically combats racism, discrimination, patriarchy, and income inequity.



Transform

**Pathway to Living Wage Work:** Create millions of low- to no-emission, good jobs with security and living wages for workers in industries transitioning off of the extractive economy—especially those working in the fossil fuel industry, displaced and new healthcare workers, and workers typically excluded from collective bargaining, such as domestic, childcare, food chain, service sector, gig workers, and arts and cultural workers.





Photo by Malena Mayorga

## PROTECTIONS AND INVESTMENTS FOR SACRIFICE ZONES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITIES

Everyone has a right to breathe clean air and drink clean water. But that right is not afforded to people living next to the engines of the extractive economy: refineries, incinerators, industrial agriculture, etc. The extractive economy has sacrificed communities in exchange for accumulating wealth, resources, and power. The past and present harms done to people living in “sacrifice zones” and environmental justice communities must be rectified and repaired. Our society cannot build a more just and healthy economy if communities continue to be seen as expendable.



### Protect

**No More Inequitable Investment:** Require stipulations on any public funding for “green development” or subject remediation of sacrifice zones to local planning ordinances to ensure against gentrification or family displacement.



### Protect

**Protect and Prioritize Those Most Impacted:** Do no harm and prioritize the voices and decisions of climate-impacted communities, sacrifice zone communities, Tribal Nations, and frontline communities in any energy, jobs, land use, and other policies or public investments that impact their communities.



### Protect

**Create a National Environmental Justice Census:** Identify sacrifice zones and other racially- and economically-discriminated communities and Tribal Nations using a cumulative impact standard that would measure the historical, current, and potential abuses of all polluters, including public health and multigenerational health impacts; air, soil, and water pollution from multi-contaminants and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; other environmental hazards and hotspots; economic and environmental justice impacts from extraction; and climate vulnerability. These standards would then be linked to restrictions to prevent the establishment of new extractive and pollutive industries or practices—as well as the dismantling of existing ones—and to proposals to maximize co-pollutant reductions in the design of GHG mitigation policies.



### Repair

**Repairing Harm:** Finance targeted investments to repair the harms that have been historically inflicted on environmental justice communities, with an added emphasis on ensuring that financial penalties levied on specific polluters and their corporate parents be reinvested in reparations in the specific impacted communities.



### Repair

**Pass and Enact Strong Regulations:** As we transition away from an economy dependent upon extractive and pollutive industries and practices—which disproportionately impact Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, Brown, Indigenous, poor, and marginalized people—we must strengthen, not weaken, environmental protections and regulations. For example, we need to restrict and regulate greenhouse gas emissions, surface transportation of fossil fuels, disposal of waste from oil and gas drilling, petrochemical development, use and disposal of toxic agrochemicals—the list is endless. These practices are wreaking havoc on communities and the environment.



### Invest

**Community Governance over Remediation, Reclamation, and Restoration:** Environmental justice and sacrifice zone communities must have governance over the planning, funding, and implementation of the remediation, reclamation, and restoration of toxic and polluting sites, while investing in solutions that are ecologically just and build community wealth.





## HEALTHCARE FOR ALL

Healthcare is a human right. It should be reliable, safe, and nurturing. When the pandemic struck, millions lost their healthcare because they lost their jobs. COVID-19 also made visible the existing deep racial disparities in health coverage, treatment, and prioritization. No one should be turned away because they cannot afford care. No one should be treated differently by doctors because of their race. The U.S. healthcare system continues to marginalize poor and working-class communities without addressing its shortcomings. A Regenerative Economy requires that society create a healthcare system that is holistic, nurturing, and job-creating.



**Protect**

**No More Inequitable and Racialized Burdens:** Immediately create a regionally-based healthcare system that addresses inequity and disparity, and removes the economic burdens and occupational and environmental health impacts on Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, Brown, Indigenous, poor, and marginalized people, which include at-risk workers in extractive industries.



**Protect**

**Right to Clean Air, Water, and Communities:** All communities—especially environmental justice communities who have borne the adverse health impacts and other unjust costs of our extractive economy for decades—have a right to clean air, water, and communities free of known and unknown toxic environmental contaminants. Access to clean, healthy, affordable, and community-held water systems, and measures to ensure healthy soils and clean air and breathable communities, must be part of the infrastructure that ensures and protects everyone’s right to clean air, water, and communities.



**Invest**

**Equitable Healthcare Infrastructure:** Aggressively build and resource an accessible, equitable healthcare infrastructure aimed at ensuring robust, quality, and resilient healthcare to all people in the country, especially those who are neglected by the current medical system and who endure unstable health conditions caused by environmental and climate injustice.



**Transform**

**Right to Just, Equitable, and Accessible Healthcare:** Design and publicly fund a universal healthcare system that guarantees equitable and just access to holistic health-care for all people. A universal healthcare system must be designed to address and eradicate racist healthcare practices of our current system. The public health system should prioritize those underserved by for-profit insurance companies and those with occupational and environmental health impacts from chronic and acute exposure to multi-contaminants and hazardous working and living conditions due to work in, and proximity to extractive, pollutive industries.



**Transform**

**Improve and Expand Healthcare Systems for All Indigenous Communities:** Recognize the U.S. government’s commitment and responsibility to provide healthcare to Indigenous Peoples. Recognize the limitations of Indian Health Services as the primary healthcare provider by making significant investments to expand and improve the availability of healthcare services to Indigenous Peoples within Tribal Nations, as well as through urban Indian hospitals, clinics, and health programs. The dire needs include immediate access to safe water and sanitation systems; funding for Tribal Epidemiology Centers, specialists, and health research facilities; and expansion of telehealth capacity within Indian Territories, which requires investment in bridging the digital divide via increased broadband access and technological skill-building.





## HOMES GUARANTEE

Shelter in place or “safer at home” has been essential in addressing the current pandemic. Yet, prior to the pandemic, nearly 40 million people faced some level of housing insecurity or rent- and mortgage-burden.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, too many low-income rental units are in a state of disrepair leaving many marginalized communities to deal with lead paint, leaking roofs, mold, and other toxic issues. A majority of people are one or two paychecks away from being evicted, while many Asian and Pacific Islander, Black and Brown communities are continually displaced due to land speculation and gentrification. The current pandemic and the climate crisis exacerbate these challenges. Our homes must not be commodified in ways that leave people out. Our homes, in all forms, must be secure, safe, affordable, healthy, and central to a thriving community.

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16 Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University



### Protect

**Rent Control:** Establish a national rent control standard so no one is forced out of their homes because landlords or land speculators seek to drive up profits at the expense of people.



### Protect

**Community Governance of Land:** Millions of acres of Indigenous Peoples' sovereign lands were taken through the Dawes Allotment Act and the Burke Act, creating land fragmentation and illegal property and tax structures that resulted in loss of lands and jurisdictional authority. Black and Brown people have been driven off land and dispossessed of homes due to land theft, racist lending practices, land speculation, gentrification, and tenant exploitation. Policies should tax land speculators and support community control of land through the creation of, or investment in, existing land trusts and other cooperative measures, as determined by each community, to support a Just Transition and anti-displacement practices.



### Invest

**Make Homes Healthy:** Invest \$1 trillion over ten years in protected funding for public housing authorities, community land trusts, and tribal and local governments to build new, green, socially-owned housing. Acquire existing housing stock through tenant option-to-purchase acts, and retrofit all housing that needs it. Enforce healthy homes and energy efficiency standards on private landlords.



### Transform

**Guaranteed Permanent Affordable Housing:** Make homes attainable for all by investing and building 12 million units of climate-resilient, healthy, and permanently affordable social housing to end homelessness and drastically lower rent burden for low- to middle-income people.



### Transform

**Housing in Tribal Nations:** Recognize U.S. governmental obligations to Tribal Nations and provide additional, and increased, funding to the Indian Housing Block Grant formula distribution portion. Earmark funding for the Indian Community Development Block Grants and Imminent Threat Grants, resulting in Tribal eligibility for additional appropriations within federal housing and homeless assistance programs.





## ENERGY SOURCES AND POLLUTION MITIGATION

One in three people struggle to breathe clean air. Nearly 100 million people in the U.S. live in a community with poor air quality, disproportionately impacting Black and Brown people. Indigenous Peoples have suffered negative health impacts from uranium mining. Poor rural white communities have lost access to healthy water and farming due to fracking and oil drilling. Instead of ending these practices, mainstream advocates, investors, and policymakers seek to commodify carbon and fossil fuels at the expense of frontline communities. These solutions fail to address the impacts of pollution, environmental racism, or the extractive economy. A Regenerative Economy rejects these false solutions and embraces a more holistic, renewable, ecologically just energy system from beginning to end.



**Protect**

**No More Extractive Market-Based Mechanisms:** No cap and trade, carbon markets, loopholes, or subsidies that allow the fossil fuel industry to manipulate and adversely impact communities in other parts of the world. Industry should not be permitted to operate without cutting emissions at the source.



**Protect**

**No More False Solutions:** Ban fracking in all states by 2021. End exportation of fossil fuels. Demand that natural gas, oil, and coal are no longer acceptable energy sources by 2030. Phase out nuclear energy by 2030 and end uranium mining and processing. End waste-to-energy incineration plants.



**Protect**

**No Geoengineering:** Geoengineering refers to a set of proposed technologies to intervene in and alter Earth systems on a mega-scale in order to manipulate the climate without lowering fossil fuel extraction. It also applies to carbon sequestration techniques currently in practice. No solar radiation or cloud brightening experiments. No ocean iron fertilization. No large-scale biomass and biofuels activities, carbon capture and sequestration, or other geoengineering techno-fixes.



**Protect**

**No More Unjust and Privatized Renewable Energy Expansion:** Renewable energy creation must not replicate ecological devastation and harms of environmental racism or worker injustice. Clean energy systems must include reparative opportunities for impacted communities to participate in and benefit from them, while focusing on ecologically just energy developments. For example, large scale hydro-electric dams should not be classified as clean, renewable energy; wind and solar projects should prioritize ecological land use and not exacerbate global harm; and tidal power should function in ways that do not disrupt the ocean's ecosystem.



**Transform**

**No More Commodification of the Energy Commons:** Recognize energy production, generation, and electric utility as a commons-held right and not as a privately-owned commodity that is bought and sold for profit, creating economic or health burdens on people and nature that benefit the few.



**Transform**

**Build with “Closed-Circuit” Renewables:** Prioritize renewable energy production that is environmentally-sound and ethically-sourced, from development to deployment.



**Transform**

**Create Zero-Waste Systems:** Prioritize zero-waste systems, including compost, reuse, and recycling to avoid landfill development and waste-to-energy projects. Prioritize resources for publicly-owned and worker cooperative zero-waste companies.



**Transform**

**Advance a Renewable Energy Economy:** Keep Fossil Fuels in the Ground. 100% publicly-owned and democratically-controlled renewable energy by 2030.





## ENERGY DEMOCRACY

When the power goes out due to storms, wildfires, or grid failures, private utilities, and energy companies get bailed out and the people get shut-off. The lack of community control and governance of our energy systems has created one of the most extractive systems in our society. Our energy system has polluted our communities, fueled our climate crisis, and concentrated wealth in the hands of corporate executives, while nearly one-third of families struggle to pay their energy bill.<sup>17</sup> There is a different way forward. The original New Deal created pathways for energy to be a public good, yet purposely neglected to center racial equity and justice in that effort. We can learn from this and position communities to govern their energy decisions. Collectively, we can reprioritize how we create, use, and distribute clean, renewable energy—without nuclear—in order to power our Regenerative Economy.

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<sup>17</sup> U.S. Energy Information Administration.



Protect

**No Corporate Bailouts or Corporate Takeovers:** No bailouts of corporate energy companies using taxpayer dollars; no privatization of municipal or public energy systems or rural electric cooperatives; no investment and subsidization of monopolized corporate energy generators and distributors.



Protect

**Community Governance of Energy Development:** Shift to community governance over planning processes, zoning decisions, regulations, and siting of renewable energy projects and grid build-out, through a strong anti-racist, anti-gentrification analysis.



Repair

**Repair Relationship between People and their Energy System:** Prioritize and center Black, Brown, Indigenous, Asian, and Pacific Islander, frontline, and poor people in decisions on energy supply and distribution.



Invest

**Equitable Electrification and Energy Efficiency Retrofits:** Invest in equitable electrification programs under a publicly-owned system that prioritizes low-income communities and decreases energy bills, improves green building standards that minimize energy use and support passive housing designs, and prioritizes low-income residents with deep energy efficiency retrofits.



Invest

**Renewable Energy and Grid Integration Research:** Invest in research to explore the best technological approaches to determine whether horizontal integration of renewable energy into the current grid infrastructure is possible at the scale needed, as well as how to support and strengthen resilient systems of community-governed and local renewable energy systems and projects.



Transform

**Grid Models and Modernization:** Build out resiliency through community-governed microgrids; research new technology to modernize the grid to prioritize decentralized renewables and support resilient systems that include storage, conservation, and efficiency.



Transform

**Make the Grid a Public Utility:** Create mechanisms for local governance of energy systems integrated into a public grid, without privatization.



Transform

**Recognize Energy as a Public Good:** Publicly take over investor-owned utilities that fail to commit to transition from fossil fuels, seek bailouts and rate-hikes, or fail to address the climate crisis adequately. Give workers and communities oversight of public takeovers, and call for liquidation of assets that can be utilized to invest in renewable energy.



Transform

**Make the Grid within Tribal Nations a Tribal Utility:** Create mechanisms for Tribal Nations to own and manage their own electric utility systems and renewable electricity-generating infrastructures, ensuring priority access to the electrical grid for green energy by regarding tribal projects as a government instrumentality.





## FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND LAND SOVEREIGNTY

From seed to harvest, too many of us are disconnected from our food. We live in a food apartheid, where white and wealthier communities can access healthy foods, leaving the rest of us captive to corporate agriculture and chemical companies that push unhealthy food options. Our food system is so unhealthy that during the current pandemic, large-scale farms have thrown away food while over 40 million people go to bed hungry.<sup>18</sup> We are not only disconnected from our food, but from the land on which we live. The land, which provides the soil to grow our food and the ground on which our homes are built, has been commodified and extracted to serve the economy, rather than held with the sacred care that it should be given. To cultivate a Regenerative Economy, we need to reshape our society's relationship to the land and to food.

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<sup>18</sup> Feeding America. [www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org).



**Protect**

**Protect Land through Land Trusts:** Create local and federal mechanisms that will decommodify land and stop the displacement of Asian and Pacific Islanders, and Black and Brown people.



**Repair**

**Sacred Relationship:** Repair our relationship with the Earth and protect the Rights of Nature/Territorial Integrity of Mother Earth through non-carbon market regenerative agriculture, land stewardship, and Indigenous-led reclamation projects.



**Invest**

**Rural Infrastructure:** Invest in rural communities, particularly in Appalachia and the South, to develop community-governed broadband, energy, water, transportation systems, and regional agricultural food hubs. Deepen investments in socially-disadvantaged communities, particularly Black farmers and land stewards, who have been marginalized and wronged through previous rural development programs, as well as poor white communities who lack necessary infrastructure and whose resources have been utilized by extractive companies.



**Invest**

**Tribal Infrastructure:** Invest in Tribal Nations to advance community food systems under the nexus of food sovereignty and policy areas of agriculture, land, water, and climate change. Reclaim, revitalize, and revive traditional knowledge, such as gathering, hunting, fishing rights, and practices, and traditional seed-keeping systems.



**Invest**

**Food Sovereignty:** Invest in localized food and farming systems in urban and rural communities: seed saving, healthy soil testing, and ecological land development through agroecology, permaculture, and other sustainable land uses. Invest in worker and community-ownership of regional food systems through non-extractive finance to worker-owned food businesses, including food distribution.



**Transform**

**Ecological Restoration:** Provide environmental protections and ecological restoration pathways to address the human-caused damage, destruction, and degradation of ecosystems by extractive industries, such as industrial agriculture and fossil fuel infrastructure. Mandate that governments and businesses adhere to ecologically-just practices and frameworks as we transition to sustainable economic systems and infrastructure, including energy, food production, transportation, and construction.



**Transform**

**Invest in Translocal and Regional Systems:** Build out intentional regional systems that connect local communities to each other through restorative land, energy, and agricultural practices, and that break down the false and deeply racialized urban-rural divide among our communities. Investments in food relief/aid should support shifts to a needs-based farm-to-community regional distribution system, rather than the current profit-driven model.





## **EQUITABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY/ EMISSIONS-FREE TRANSIT**

Transit cuts, inadequately protected bus drivers, and a lack of options for people living in rural communities without cars are the result of a decades-long investment in highways rather than in public transit. This deeply inequitable transportation system has left many urban and rural frontline communities without access to reliable, affordable, and equitable transportation. The prioritization of highways has brought air pollution to marginalized communities whose neighborhoods were torn apart by highway projects. Highway transportation fuels the climate crisis as the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. Expanding and improving transit systems would create millions of new, living-wage jobs in a Regenerative Economy. For a Just Transition, we must reprioritize our transportation system.



**Protect**

**No more “Smart Growth” Development:** Require stipulations that any public funding for transportation be met with local planning ordinances to ensure against gentrification and family displacement.



**Protect**

**No more Highway Capacity Expansion:** Stop investing in highway-centric transportation projects for single-occupancy vehicles at the expense of mass transit. Strengthen protections and community decision-making processes regarding transit projects, especially in frontline communities that have borne the disproportionate burden of pollution.



**Transform**

**Rural Public Transit:** Invest in connection and public transit in rural communities, including electric vehicles (EV), where needed, and community-owned EV infrastructure.



**Transform**

**Urban Public Transit:** Invest in mass transit that is free or low-cost, renewable, sustainable, and regional, with zero displacement.



**Transform**

**Cars:** Support EV infrastructure and vehicle deployment only after investments in equitable and sustainable mass transit are developed and deployed.





## JUST RECOVERY

It takes roots to weather the storm, a pandemic, economic collapse, and a neglected democracy. In the midst of the trauma and toll that storms such as Katrina, Sandy, and Maria have had on our communities, the current pandemic's inequitable impacts, or the long history of economic and political disenfranchisement, frontline communities have created sophisticated and strong networks of response, recovery, and rebuilding. We must invest in these roots to strengthen their reach to protect the most marginalized, while leading the way to a more just recovery.



**Right to Return:** Protect the rights of climate migrants and climate refugees who settle in new communities, while providing a right to return to lands that remain livable and/or providing full and fair compensation for losses. For example, Alaska Native villages are facing a myriad of legal, political, cultural, and economic factors, thus complicating government funding for finding new lands for relocation from melting permafrost and ice.



**Community Governance of Restoration Practices:** Support restoration of land, soil, and water through community governance and care, prioritizing Indigenous and rural communities impacted by climate disasters.



**Invest in Community Hubs:** Move resources to build out local infrastructure and community hubs, powered by renewable energy to meet the needs of disaster-impacted communities for broadband services, and to provide shelter, heat/cooling, electricity, food, water, medicine, and communication in times of crisis and need.



**Urban Public Transit:** Invest in mass transit that is free or low-cost, renewable, sustainable, and regional, with zero displacement.



**Invest funds in Mutual Aid Collectives:** Community initiatives are often more effective and impactful in disbursing funds, supplies, and counseling support compared to national nonprofits. Funding should be made available to staff local mutual aid networks, and these centers should be prioritized for disaster and federal funding support in order to move resources in local and accountable ways.



**Just and Equitable Recovery Funding:** Increase funding and resources to support community-driven recovery and mid- to long-term rebuilding and implementation projects with improvements that further equitable mechanisms for adaptation, recovery, and rebuilding. Local control should be fostered for administering disaster insurance programs, such as the National Flood Insurance Program, rather than allowing private companies to control these resources, services, and processes.





## INVESTING IN THE FEMINIST ECONOMY

In a feminist economy, we recognize, value, and center reproductive labor as low-carbon, community-generating, life-affirming, and skilled work that is necessary for the well-being of everyone and to sustain human society and nature itself. Feminist economy focuses on four principles to re-envision our world: ensuring bodily autonomy and self-determination as it relates to feminized, transgender, and gender non-conforming people; socializing reproductive labor; being in right relationship with people globally; and being in right relationship with nature and Mother Earth.<sup>19</sup>



**Protect**

**Strengthen Worker Rights and Protections:** Strengthen labor laws that protect “worker rights to organize” in critical frontline industries, particularly essential workers in health, caregiving, food production, and the service economy, most of whom are Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, Latinx, and Indigenous women. This includes policy tools such as the Essential Workers Bill of Rights.

<sup>19</sup> The United FrontlineTable is in solidarity with Feminist Green New Deal formation that has been gathering gender justice movements around this work. This plank of our policy platform reflects the alignment across these tables. <http://feministgreennewdeal.com/principles/>



## Protect

**Protect Women and Girls from Violence in Extractive Industries:** Protect women, girls, transgender, and gender non-conforming people in the U.S. and across the Global South from violence perpetrated by those working in extractive industries. Women and girls, particularly Indigenous women, suffer violence at the hands of men working in deeply extractive “man camps” in remote locations, with no accountability or justice. Man camps—along with the larger dynamics of colonialism, patriarchy, and white supremacy—create conditions that contribute to the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women across North America.<sup>20</sup> Advance protections for environmental defenders in frontline communities in the U.S. and in the Global South.



## Protect

**End US Sanctions:** Permanently lift U.S. economic sanctions against Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, and 25 other countries. Sanctions have been used as a weapon of resource control around basic survival needs, often forcing sanctioned governments to rely on extractive industries to provide resources for their populations. Sanctions destroy governments’ ability to provide basic resources, leaving women to take up the burdens that result from the chronic impact of war and militarism.



## Repair

**Pay Our Climate Debt to the Developing Countries:** The U.S. must transfer adequate public financing and renewable clean energy and water access technologies to poor developing countries; end all austerity measures and cancel the debts imposed that benefit banks; and transfer public funding to repair the harms to impacted communities, especially rural, Indigenous Peoples, Afro-Descendant, trans, and gender non-conforming women-led communities throughout the Global South who are most impacted by the climate crisis.



## Invest

**Invest in the Care Economy:** Use public funding to greatly expand financial support for housework, childcare, and elder care. Demand social recognition of this historically, and current, unpaid and underpaid work as valuable, low-carbon, community-based, critical work in a Regenerative Economy.



## Transform

**Transform Health Care & Reproductive Justice:** Reject false population growth alarmism and arguments that affix the blame for climate change on people’s, especially women’s, reproductive capacities. Invest in healthcare access, globally and inside the United States, that respects bodily autonomy, particularly in environmental justice communities where toxic chemicals pollute the water, air, and land, jeopardizing our health—including our reproductive health—often with a disproportionate impact on Black, Indigenous, and Latinx women.

20 *Violence from Extractive Industry ‘Man Camps’ Endangers Indigenous Women and Children.* University of Colorado, Boulder, Jan 29, 2020<https://www.colorado.edu/program/fpw/2020/01/29/violence-extractive-industry-man-camps-endangers-indigenous-women-and-children>





Photo by Brooke Anderson

## INVESTING IN THE REGENERATIVE ECONOMY

Finance is critical to realizing our vision for a Regenerative Economy. However, most tools that we have at hand are extractive and fall short of achieving what we need. Finance should be an instrument designed to ensure communities can meet their needs and have full exercise of rights, from participatory budgeting to creating commons of capital. We should subordinate debt to the health and well-being of communities and not the other way around. Finance is currently designed to extract, concentrate, and control wealth. It must be regulated and restructured to restore capital into communities for long-term health, well-being, and resilience.



**Protect Communities from Corporate Majority Control:** Limit the level of ownership outside investors can have on community and Regenerative Economy development projects, e.g. require a minimum of 51% interest held by the public or community of a given locality.



**No More Regressive Financing:** Stop subsidizing corporate control of energy and agriculture through large-scale tax credit programs that incentivize profit-driven and extractive solutions for our energy and food systems.



**Debt Relief and Reparations:** Use public funding to provide debt relief for rent, mortgages, utilities. Direct resources towards community ownership, rather than to prop up the current extractive economy.



**Enact Progressive Taxation:** Impose a wealth tax on the rich (individuals and corporations) and reinvest funding to repair and rebuild communities most impacted and marginalized by our current inequitable economic system.



**Eliminate Subsidies and Tax Breaks to the Fossil Fuel Industry:** Eliminate subsidies, tax breaks, and exemptions funneled into fossil fuels. Route these dollars to fund and invest in Just Transition.



**Public Banking:** Establish postal, state, and municipal public and community-owned banks to finance and seed regenerative efforts, rather than extractive efforts that commodify land and nature. Convert private banks to public ownership after a financial crisis.



**Invest in Local Governance:** Build the capacity of frontline community residents, institutions, and organizations to develop, plan, and implement participatory budgeting practices to advance community-governed projects, such as investment in healthy homes (including social housing), regenerative agriculture, broadband, and resilient and renewable energy systems that will require massive public investments.



**Divest from a War Economy and Re-Invest in our Communities:** Divest from funding military contractors, weapons development, and military spending that harms our communities and re-invest federal dollars to fund a Just Transition for a Regenerative Economy.



**Non-extractive Financing:** Provide financing, technical support, and training for frontline communities to establish, operate, and cooperatively own enterprises that meet community needs (i.e. community solar, regional food systems, etc.), whether they be cooperatives or public institutions. Non-extraction means removing barriers to financing (i.e. collateral, credit, etc.) for communities not taking out more from the community than was invested.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Five Principles of the People's Bailout <https://thepeoplesbailout.org>
- Asian Pacific Environmental Network <http://apen4ej.org/our-work/>
- Climate Justice Alliance Just Transition Resources <https://climatejusticealliance.org/just-transition/>
- Dēmos <https://www.demos.org/our-issues/economic-justice/climate-equity>
- Indigenous Environmental Network Just Transition <https://www.ienearth.org/justtransition/>
- It Takes Roots <http://ittakesroots.org/about/>
- Grassroots Global Justice COVID 19 Movement Resources <https://ggjalliance.org/resources/movement-resources-in-response-to-the-covid-19-pandemic/>
- Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy Gulf South for a Green New Deal <https://www.gcclp.org/gulf-south-for-a-green-new-deal>
- Kentuckians for the Commonwealth <http://www.empowerkentucky.org/>
- Labor Network for Sustainability Toolkits <https://www.labor4sustainability.org/>
- New Economy Coalition Pathways to Peoples Economy <https://peopleseconomy.org/>
- People's Action Homes Guarantee Platform <https://homesguarantee.com>
- Right to the City Alliance Homes for All <https://homesforall.org/>
- Trade Unions for Energy Democracy Working Papers <http://unionsforenergydemocracy.org/resources/tued-publications/>
- UPROSE <https://www.uprose.org/>

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