

What is Environmental Justice?

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Carroll <mailto:m@ttew.org.uk> <p>The concept of environmental justice makes a direct link between the need for environmental security and the defense of basic human rights. It seeks to protect the natural environment and the people and wildlife that depend upon it by linking environmental security, human rights and social need. Environmental justice is explicitly anti-

racist and recognizes the ethical, equity and justice issues raised in the design and application of new technologies like genetic engineering. </p><p>Some questions that occur include: Who will be the primary beneficiaries of this technology? What are its costs? Who will bear those costs? What alternatives will be foreclosed if this technology is adopted? </p><p>Environmental justice would address such questions as food safety including access to organic and nutritious food, mandatory labeling of GE foods, public education on GE; work

ers safety including farm and immigrant labour exposure to possible health risks associated with GE crops and pesticides; undisclosed locations of field trials endangering communities and nearby farmers; the impact of biodiversity loss on marginalized communities in particular; and government transparency and the participation of diverse communities in our movement. </p><p>Environmental justice also asks questions of international solidarity such as the impact of Canadian promotion of GE crops and research on communities in the Global South. Environmental justice ties back to food sovereignty and the ability of communities to make decisions about their future and the ability of farmers to make a living. </p><h3>Environmental Justice: </h3>demand that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias. affirm the right of all workers to a safe and healthy work environment without being forced to choose between an unsafe livelihood and unemployment. demand the cessation of the production of all toxins, hazardous wastes, and radioactive materials, and that all past and current producers be held strictly accountable to the people for detoxification and the containment at the point of production. demand the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-

making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation. affirm the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-

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