

Box 7: Climate Justice and Adaptation: Current Status and Opportunities for Deeper Integration

In the US and around the world, a diverse and growing coalition of national, regional, and grassroots organizations are forging a movement for climate justice. That movement increasingly overlaps with the nascent adaptation field.

Despite these connections, some respondents noted that integration of movement and field is not as good as it could be across the four dimensions: Purpose, People, Practice, and Pillars. One argued that a “big shift in the organizing model” is needed to change societal values and practices. And much can be learned from the movement on how to integrate social equity and justice concerns into adaptation. For example, the adaptation field does not yet (but could):

- Make deliberate efforts to build relationships and trust between mainstream and grassroots resilience-building groups;
- Help capture and share lessons from the movement across the adaptation field;
- Provide technical assistance to groups otherwise unable to use available information and resources;
- Share resources with less advantaged groups in meaningful ways;
- Give marginalized people voice and a seat at the table;
- Focus on the roots of the climate crisis; and
- Conduct a sharper analysis of what drives differential vulnerabilities, resource exploitation, and racial and socio-economic disparities.

Some believed that, until the climate justice movement and the adaptation field commit to working together, communities will not be able to address the converging climate, economic, health, and justice crises.

While interviewees differed on whether and how the climate justice movement should influence the further evolution of the adaptation field, there are signs of mutual growth, enabled by major field donors like The Kresge Foundation, which supports actors who straddle the movement and the field. Through its own broad definition of resilience, Kresge urges those focused on climate vulnerabilities to embrace economic and social issues, and those focused on social justice issues to address climate change. Kresge asks both to embrace adaptation and mitigation as complementary and necessary strategies needed to close the resilience gap.