

American Society of Adaptation Professionals' Policy Priority #2 Action Plan

Priority #2: Prioritize justice and equity in all aspects of climate resilience investments

As part of the 2022 goals for the American Society of Adaptation Professionals' (ASAP) Policy Practice Member-Led Interest Group (PPG), a series of meetings were held to develop action plans relative to the group's six policy priorities for 2022. The action plans will help PPG members be more proactive in advocating for climate-related policies.

This action plan summarizes key insights and recommendations from the June and July 2022 focus on Priority #2: Prioritize justice and equity in all aspects of climate resilience investments (see box). Part 1 of the discussion (June) featured presentations from Annie Bennett, Associate Director for the Adaptation Program at the Georgetown Climate Center, and Vickash Mohanka, Transformational Climate Finance Manager at the Chisholm Legacy Project. Annie provided an overview of the Georgetown Climate Center's Equitable Adaptation Legal & Policy Toolkit. Vickash presented on the importance of restorative economics, which is rooted in the principles of community ownership, community control, and self-determination (among others).

For Part 2 (July), small groups were asked to discuss the following:

Reflect on your organization's role, authorities/capacities, and positionality relative to the work that needs to be done to prioritize justice and equity in all aspects of climate resilience investments.

1. What are the key ways that your organization can use its positionality to accomplish this goal? Provide examples where possible
2. Where is this work going well? Where are the challenges? Provide examples where possible.
3. How can ASAP support this work?

The following list of actions is derived from the discussions within the small groups.

For ASAP member work within their respective organizations:

- Recognize the role, authorities, and capacities your organization can utilize to advance equity and equitable investment. This may include, but is not limited to, establishing and/or advocating for equitable best practices related to:
 - decision making/policy development;
 - creating, competing, awarding, and completing grants or project proposals;
 - financing and investing;
 - community engagement;
 - budgeting;
 - data collection, analysis, and application;
 - hiring, contracting, and ownership;
 - performance measurement and accountability frameworks;
 - service delivery;
 - building community and organizational capacity; and

- o resource distribution.
- Do the work. Don't just talk about the need for equity in our respective areas of work; we need to follow through to make the needed changes.

For ASAP:

- Identify and amplify best practices emerging from local/state/fed governments. Look for examples that:
 - o help illustrate the different ways that equity and equitable investment need to show up in different areas of work (e.g., the list above)
 - o show where this work is going well, and where it isn't going well, and why;
 - o are good examples of governments holding themselves accountable (e.g., tracking metrics)
- Be precise in our use of the terms "Climate Justice", "Equity", "Sustainability", "Resilience" - Avoid greenwashing
- Hold members accountable for working in this way
- Make sure that members have the space to understand where their power lies and how to use it
- Continue to talk about this to make justice and equity central to adaptation work

In addition to identifying action steps for Policy Priority #2, the following change to the policy description was recommended as part of the review of this action plan:

- Amend the following statement to include assessing who is being harmed, and how, in accordance with Justice 40: "Track and report where climate resilience investments are being made and create mechanisms to assess who is benefitting from these investments as well as who is being harmed (and how).

Policy Priority #2

Prioritize justice and equity in all aspects of climate resilience investments

Every climate resilience investment decision affects justice and equity. Policymakers must put in place mechanisms to assess climate resilience investment decisions to ensure they prioritize justice and equity. This means that policymakers must:

- Acknowledge the root causes of inequitably distributed climate impacts, namely systemic oppression and centuries of unequal investment. Address injustices, especially racial and economic injustices, at their core whenever possible to remove these barriers and create the conditions needed for individuals, communities, and systems to be able to adapt and transform. Address past injustices by reallocating money to those impacted by unjust systems in the past and present.
- Create dedicated funding streams for the people and communities most impacted by climate change* and evaluate and eliminate challenges they face for accessing existing resources and services.
- Track and report where climate resilience investments are being made and create mechanisms to assess who is benefitting from these investments.

- Commit to fair decision-making processes by centering the needs and experiences of those most impacted by climate change* in policies and programs. Ensure that all individuals and communities have power in the processes and decisions that may affect them. Support people, especially Indigenous Peoples', self-determination, access to traditional lands, and ability to move out of harm's way if - and how - they choose.