

Environmental NGOs Delegation

Tufts Inquiry

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## **Environmental NGOs Briefing Paper**

### **Background**

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are advocacy- or service-driven non-profit organizations that are not affiliated with a specific government - though they may have a specific country of focus or receive government funding - and are mainly funded by the donations of individuals and foundations. This term was established by the United Nations in 1945, in an effort to differentiate between private organizations and governmental bodies, though organizations of this nature have been in existence for much longer. International NGO work plays a critical role in citizen involvement and mobilization at both community and national levels. Historically, major areas of focus for NGOs are human and civil rights, though there are many issues of attention for NGOs both within and outside of these classifications. There are two main types of NGOs, those being “operational NGOs” and “advocacy NGOs”; operational NGOs focus on the design of relief or development projects, whereas advocacy NGOs work to defend or promote a specific cause.

Environmental non-governmental organizations play a critical role in combating environmental and climate change related issues. Since they lack government affiliation, environmental NGOs are adept at conducting research used to implement and update environmental policies, creating institutional change, and working directly with people to live

more sustainable lifestyles. Additionally, non-governmental affiliation allows environmental NGOs to target a specific area of change or improvement, creating more in-depth and direct results than a government. Having environmental NGOs allows citizens to become involved and voice their concerns while creating positive change, therefore creating new perspectives on climate change and forging the individual's role in its prevention and damage reduction.

## **Introduction**

The seven NGOs that are represented below include organizations that tackle a myriad of issues in multiple different countries. Each organization prioritizes environmental protection and continuously dedicates their resources to finding ways to create a cleaner and safer Earth.

The Natural Resources Defense Council is an international NGO based in New York City that was founded by attorneys and law students with environmental concerns in 1970. The mission statement of the NRDC is that “NRDC works to safeguard the earth—its people, its plants and animals, and the natural systems on which all life depends” ([www.nrdc.org](http://www.nrdc.org)). The NRDC pursues this mission by combining science, litigation, advocacy, business and partnerships. The NRDC is based in the United States and played a large role in passing key US climate legislation, including the Clean Air and Clean water acts. The NRDC is also active internationally, advocating for climate solutions in China, India, Latin America, and Canada, and helping to forge international agreements such as the Paris Climate Accords.

Climate Refugees is an NGO dedicated to its founding vision of raising awareness around the increasingly urgent issue of persons becoming displaced as a result of climate change. Based in New York, New York, United States, and founded by current Executive Director Amali Towers, Climate Refugees strive to defend the rights of humans globally who are forced to migrate for this reason. While working to promote the stories of those displaced and forced to

migrate as a result of climate change through detailed area-specific reports and case studies, they bring recognition to the issue and use this information in policy recommendations made to governments and international groups.

Greenpeace International is a global NGO that was founded by Irving and Dorothy Stowe, a Canadian environmental activist. The NGO is an international community of independent campaigning corporations that use non violent protest and creative communication to show global environmental issues and promote answers which are crucial to a peaceful future. Located in over 55 countries, Greenpeace is funded through donations of private contributors rather than the government in order to ensure the priority to aid citizens in the cause of Global warming. From diseased water in Russia to oil spills in Yemen, Greenpeace is a well-rounded NGO that focuses on a variety of climate issues including Forest Protection, Defending Democracy, and Toxicity, to name a few.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (or the World Wildlife Fund in the United States and Canada) is a global NGO founded by Max Nicholson. It was founded in 1961 in Switzerland, where its headquarters still are located. The WWF is the world's largest conservation NGO, as it supports over 3,000 local conservation projects and has locations in over 100 countries. Its primary aim is to preserve the environment and local wildlife, as well as reduce the impact of climate change on natural habitats. It organises its projects into six categories: food, freshwater, oceans, forest, wildlife, and climate. It receives most of its funding from individual donations.

Earth Island Institute is an international NGO founded by David Brower in 1982. It has over seventy-five currently running projects, all working towards helping achieve cleaner energy and a better climate, along with ensuring that women and indigeous leaders are able to take charge in dealing with climate change. Earth Island Institute runs a legal division (Earth Island

Advocates), a program specifically targeted to increase youth leadership (New Leaders Initiative), and a journal that works to voice opinions and educate people on climate/energy issues (Earth Island Journal). Our NGO implements wide scale projects, from working to eliminating the use of plastic water bottles (1000 Fountains Project) to protecting natural land necessary for Indigenous People (Altai Project).

Since 1987, SHAPE has been working out of Tiruvannamalai, India to improve environmental and social conditions. Founded by A. Parthiban, this non-governmental organization is currently participating in several environmental projects, such as CLEAN India Scheme, tree planting in Tiruvannamalai, and Covid-19 relief in their region. Some of their former projects include, homing orphans, water provision, and humanitarian resources for HIV/AIDs patients. They are currently women-led by President Rita J. and her 4 other committee partners.

## **Key Points:**

### **Global Governance**

- On the international level, we need to invest in countries individually so that they can grow their green infrastructure from inside their own country. Countries need to be beholden to themselves and their citizens to combat climate change and need to have the sovereignty and tools to do this.
- We also need to promote cooperation between countries so that we can have a global response as climate change is first and foremost a global issue.

### **Migration**

- Countries and nations need to adapt laws and policies to address the growing number of climate-displaced persons who are in need of relocation.

### **Security**

- What are our plans to protect citizens, especially of third world countries against the destruction that comes with climate disasters?

- What can be done to aid non-governmental organizations, especially countries with harsher government powers, ensure safety against both pandemic and natural disaster for citizens in many regions?

### **Energy**

- Regarding fossil fuels and the energy industry, what can we do to reduce the impact of climate change?
- Which renewable energy source(s) are the most sustainable?

### **Agriculture and Food Security**

- What is the impact of climate change on global agriculture?
- What is food insecurity globally and how is it affected by the distribution chain?
- What is your project doing to address their issue and their response to climate change?

### **Economic Development**

- How does the plight of climate change affect the global economy?
- How can businesses implement sustainable tactics throughout their infrastructure in order to combat climate change?

### **Justice and Humanity**

- How to balance the pressure for solving climate change without harmfully affecting low-middle income countries?
- What are some projects/actions that countries can invest in to help the impact that climate change has?

## **Issues and Committees:**

### **Global Governance - Margaret Bowles**

The Natural Resources Defense Council is a collision of lawyers, policy advocates, scientists and concerned citizens, with a focus on advocating for beneficial climate change policy and legislation on the national and international level. The NRDC has worked on national-level initiatives around the globe, including in India, China, Canada, Latin America and the United States, where it was founded and is based. The NRDC has also worked on establishing global cooperation between key groups, including in the development of the Paris Climate Accords.

This includes navigating many complicating factors, such as varying leadership, balancing values of national sovereignty versus intervention, animosity and misinformation about climate change reform efforts, and the differing political and social systems of the countries it operates in. However, NRDC is committed to working on individual-country initiatives and facilitating international cooperation with the knowledge that both of these methods are essential to the fight against climate change.

The NRDC operates on a system of conjoining litigation, business, science, partnership and advocacy. The NRDC has taken cases all the way to the United States Supreme Court to make victories for the climate and local communities. It also played an integral part in the introduction of some of the United States's most impactful pieces of climate change legislation. The NRDC recognizes that environmental protection and economic growth must go hand-in-hand, and partners with many businesses to encourage the sale and development of climate-safe goods. It is also known for its policy initiatives being grounded in strong peer-reviewed research conducted by its wide range of experts. Partnering with other organizations is also important to the type of action taken by NRDC, especially those representing marginalized groups most affected by the climate crisis. Finally, this organization was built and is fueled by advocating for solutions to the climate crisis with business leaders and elected officials on the local, state, national and international level. The NRDC has put this strategy to use all over the world.

In China, the NRDC were the first international NGO to launch a clean energy program in China and are currently forging ahead with these projects. The NRDC is also providing training to legal professionals in China to continue this work. In India, the NRDC encourages work on resource-efficient buildings, heat management with the India Cooling Plan, cleaner air

quality, and supporting marginalized groups such as female salt farmers with green technology. In Canada, the NRDC is recognised as a credible climate change researcher and has earned itself a place in the federal regulatory process. The NRDC is also involved in litigation, and tries to prevent the construction of the controversial XL gas pipeline and prevent unsustainable boreal deforestation. Finally, it advocates for policies and standards for sustainable transportation in Latin American cities plagued by dangerous air pollution. The NRDC also works with business and financial groups in these countries to encourage green investment.

The NRDC is also involved in extensive environmental advocacy and litigation in the United States. In fact, the NRDC played an integral part in the Clean Air and Clean Water acts. These acts set standards for air and water pollution in the United States, set a blueprint for federal climate-funds allocation and helped the United States meet international climate commitments (e.g. Montreal Protocol). This organization works in all regions of the United States and its territories. The type of programs initiated by the NRDC vary from national level programs to local projects. In the United States, it partners with organizations like The Equal Efficiency for All Initiative, which advocates for clean and efficient energy in affordable and accessible housing. It has also represented clients like the citizens of Flint, MI in climate lawsuits. Through this work, the NRDC seeks to represent and advance marginalized groups in the United States. Finally, the NRDC has worked with and promoted the US Climate Alliance, a bipartisan movement by 25 states to make climate reforms in accordance with the goals of the Paris Accords, even while the US was withdrawn on the Federal level.

In addition to this work, the NRDC is a proponent of global governance and international climate change agreements. This organization participates in United Nations negotiations, promoting necessary climate action from our world leaders. In the negotiation of the Paris

accords, the NRDC was able to use its US-India connections to help forge the historic Kigali Amendment in the Montreal protocol. The NRDC also works to help countries meet their international commitments. During international agreements the NRDC is one of the few organizations that can bring groups like indigenous peoples, advocacy groups and government agencies to the negotiating table between the US and Canada.

However, the NRDC recognises that there are a number of challenges to be contended with in ensuring such global cooperation. Perhaps most notable, different countries have different social and political systems leading to different methods of making change, groups and individuals in power and, unfortunately, different groups that are marginalized. Even within the same countries and political systems, there can be changes in leaders and political parties. A relevant example of this is the dramatically different climate policies of the Trump Administration (2016-2020) and the Biden Administration (2021-present). Another issue is that all around the world there are levels of misinformation, climate dynasism and minimaliation and even animosity towards climate change reform, sometimes aggravated by elected leaders.

There is no getting around that climate change is a global issue and that we are all affected by not only our own actions but the actions of other countries on the global stage. However, climate change affects different countries differently and different systems of government are best equipped to combat the climate crisis in different ways. Because of this, both creative nation and community initiatives and strong international agreements are required to combat this imminent and global threat.

### **Migration - Ellie Hyde**

As an organization with a mission to “defend the rights of human beings displaced internationally and across borders as a result of climate change”, Climate Refugees views



migration as a critical and prominent issue. This is a problem that disproportionately affects communities that are minimally responsible for contributing to the causes of climate change, and are unequipped to face the consequences. Though it has not always been the case, climate refugees are becoming and will continue to become an increasingly relevant reality. Persons who are forced to flee their homes and sometimes countries as a result of climate change often lack support and protection while making this change, which is what Climate Refugees exists to change. Climate Refugees' focus and work are centered around the lives of persons who have been displaced by climate change, meaning the organization is not involved with the issue of changes to animal migration patterns as a result of climate change.

Climate Refugees sees an obstacle in the fact that many persons whose lives have been displaced by climate change are denied refugee status and support in their own or other countries. Despite the United Nations' determination that climate refugees should be a classification, many countries have laws and policies making it difficult for new migrants and refugees to enter and inhabit a new country, especially if they are moving as a result of climate change caused displacement. Additionally, a majority of persons who become climate-displaced are already in poor economic situations due to the negative effects of climate change that they are facing, meaning there is a lack of access to resources that can aid in the transition of relocating to a different region or country. An absence of resources and acceptance makes the whole process of climate change induced migration complicated, and different for every case. Climate Refugees feels that it is necessary for international law to begin advocating for the rights of persons who are displaced as a result of climate change.

Climate Refugees believes that global policies regarding migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers need to be reformed. Systemic change is crucial to accommodate the growing number of

persons whose lives have been displaced as a result of climate change, and to make it easier for those in this category to seek refuge or migrant status in areas that have not faced the same negative effects of climate change. While defending the rights of climate-displaced persons, Climate Refugees works to identify cases, trends, and gaps, which they address while meeting with governments, the United Nations, and relevant international organizations to promote and inspire changes in policy and practice to better support and protect climate-displaced persons. They are currently working to advocate for the passing of the Climate Displaced Persons Act, which was recently reintroduced in the United States House and Senate, and would establish a Global Climate Change Resilience Strategy and authorize the admission of climate-displaced persons to the United States. Climate Refugees believes that it is crucial that global policies regarding migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers are reformed, to recognize and accommodate the growing number of persons whose lives have been displaced as a result of climate change.

As a non-governmental organization, Climate Refugees works internationally regarding climate-displaced persons, but is based in the United States with an emphasis on United States policy change. They also work to highlight the perspectives of climate-displaced persons globally with a focus on those most often affected, usually in Africa, Central America, and South America. Climate Refugees has recently published information regarding the effects of climate change in Madagascar, Mozambique, and Africa as a whole. Mozambique, a country that contributes 0.02 percent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions annually, has been facing more frequent and severe storms as a result of climate change, resulting in the displacement of an extreme number of people. Tropical cyclone Ana hit Mozambique in January, 2022, destroying hundreds of homes and killing at least twelve people. This follows two cyclones that hit Mozambique within weeks of each other in 2019, which killed over six hundred people and left

two million others in need of assistance and caused Mozambique to rank the most affected country in the world by extreme weather events that year. Madagascar was also hit by tropical cyclone Ana in early 2022, displacing one hundred-thirty thousand people and killing at least fifty five. This was followed by tropical cyclone Batsirai two weeks later, displacing an additional forty eight thousand and overstressing the country's emergency response capacity. Additionally, Madagascar is in the middle of one of the worst droughts the country has experienced in the past forty years, placing an additional two million people in need of urgent food assistance. In an article published March 2022 with information from The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Climate Refugees addresses the alarming idea that by 2030, 700 million of 1.4 billion people in Africa could be displaced as a result of climate change. All of these places, which Climate Refugees is working to spread information about, demonstrate the dire need for international policy change regarding persons who are or will soon become displaced by climate change.

There must be a complete reformation of the way people think about border security, starting in the United States, which will ideally inspire other nations to do the same. It is critical to transition to a more humanitarian response to migration across borders, with an emphasis on recognizing that persons seeking refuge are just that, people trying to escape a dangerous or no longer viable living situation. Climate change and the ensuing displacement of many people is a much greater threat to security than any persons seeking relocation, and by acknowledging the human rights side of climate-displacement and that there is a complex backstory for every person attempting to cross a border, there will be a global shift in mindset around climate refugees, migrants, and asylum-seekers and a realization that it is possible to accept new persons into a country without it risking security.

## **Security - Lyris Downie**

As stated earlier, SHAPE, which operates in India, faces and strives to resolve a multitude of security issues. It is important to recognize the Indian government and SHAPE as two separate entities that both overlap and differ greatly. It is also important to understand India as a country to successfully comprehend SHAPE's motivations and limitations.

A main security concern is the spread of disease, climate displacement, and environmental wellbeing. HIV has been a significant problem in India for decades. The national rate of transmission exceeds international averages, a total of 2.1 million currently infected. These numbers increase as you go deeper into the impoverished areas of the nation. SHAPE aids in the treatment and diagnosis of this illness. Alongside HIV, Covid-19 has plagued the country, leading to over 300,000 deaths. In regions like SHAPE's home of Tiruvannamalai, Covid has brought death and poverty to the area. This organization works to mask and test citizens, and provide other life saving resources. Masks are made by the group's very own members, and have set a goal to safeguard over 400 children. When it comes to climate change in India, unfortunately the country has always been at the higher end of the chart. India earned itself third place on most charts detailing top CO2 emissions in the world. India is home to some of the most polluted cities and water bodies. This crisis has been caused by, to name a few: improper disposal of waste and human remains, overuse of coal as energy, and overpopulation. These environmental factors have left India devastated. The environment has created families without proper water supply, insufficient food supply because of soil degradation, airborne ailments, and temperature rises.

The climate, while affecting the population physically, has also affected people's perception of how secure their country is in times like these. SHAPE recognizes that India is far

from secure and is in need of a lot of assistance. The recent years have just proven how much their help is necessary. From the organization's perspective, the people of their country are the main concern, as are the health of its citizens, and should be for a long time. The priority has always been and always will be the emotional, physical, and financial well-being of the citizens, while maintaining and sustaining wildlife.

Although SHAPE has never made an official statement on migration, what can be assumed by their actions is that SHAPE focuses on a "better" India. The idea is to improve living conditions in order to prevent forced migration. Sadly, in 2019, a reported five million people fled from India because of climate related disasters. The Indian government has not done much to lower this number. As for climate refugees coming to India, it is neither much of a concern for SHAPE and the Indian government, considering that the country is being greatly affected itself.

In 2020, countries saw a radical shift in how they viewed the stability of their nation. Many countries experienced overwhelming death and economic decline, among other things. Almost every country closed its borders in order to reduce infection, which caused these issues to begin with. And for the first time, civilians began to doubt their safety. India was on the list of countries who closed borders in order to protect citizens from a global standpoint. As previously stated, SHAPE has unfortunately adopted the pandemic as one of their biggest issues. From SHAPE's perspective, this decision was imperative. From the perspective of both the Indian government and SHAPE, the pandemic has only enforced the idea that the health of their communities are the priority over other global-pandemic-related issues.

India depends on fossil fuels, specifically coal, to power their population of over a billion people. India depends largely on themselves and the U.S for energy. In recent years, plans have been made to expand India's energy sources, but the much needed change has yet to occur.

Citizens, including SHAPE, are still hopeful for any good that may come from renewable energy plans. India has been subjected to heavy criticism globally for their poor handling of the climate crisis, but unfortunately things are not so easy for India. The country has a troubling 2/3 of the population already impoverished. Cutting fossil fuels completely out in a timely fashion is almost impossible for the nation to achieve on its own. Other countries have been successful at coercing India to embrace the tradition of fossil fuels, because of India's vulnerable economy. The nation has almost been discouraged from change up until recent years, when the crisis became too deadly to ignore. SHAPE, being a non-governmental organization, has no tangible position in the global energy trade. However, since they are non-governmental, they have the mobility to adopt clean energy habits without foreign influence. Alas, these practices take place on a much smaller scale with no significant change.

### **Energy - Julian Lane**

As temperatures rise all around the planet, weather events become more and more severe, and sea levels rise, it's clear to see the damage that climate change is doing to the planet. What is also clear to see is that climate change's cause is rooted in the usage of fossil fuels, such as oil and coal, and the carbon emissions created when they are used. Therefore, it's logical to assume that solving our overuse of fossil fuels and switching to renewable energy is the key to reducing the impact of climate change. If the world doesn't switch to renewable energy, climate change will affect and cause harm to every person, every country, and every ecosystem on the planet. The World Wide Fund for Nature is committed to preserving the planet for all life that lives on it.

Fossil fuels do incredible damage to global ecosystems, and in general, environments around the globe. Climate change as a whole causes rising global temperatures, higher sea levels,

and more extreme weather events around the world. Higher temperatures can kill plants and wildlife who are adapted to the former temperatures of their environment, or may drive wildlife into other ecosystems in a phenomenon known as “invasive species”. This is particularly damaging when these invasive species are pathogens for diseases that their new ecosystems have not adapted to. These unnatural shifts in the food web can disrupt and even kill entire ecosystems who depended on this wildlife. This is especially true for ocean wildlife, who are in addition affected by changes in the pH, salinity, and depth of the ocean. Though some may argue that the impact on wildlife seems largely irrelevant to human wellbeing, it is actually catastrophic, as it can result in food shortages worldwide. In addition, these more extreme weather events caused by climate change - such as storms, forest fires, droughts, flooding, and tornadoes - can result in the destruction of both animals’ natural habitats, as well as towns and cities.

Renewable energies are the key to reducing the damage of climate change. In fact, they’re not only useful, they’re necessary. The World Wide Fund for Nature is most interested in solar energy as an alternative, as they believe it is the most efficient and easily wide-spread alternative to fossil fuels. Solar panels are becoming more common worldwide, and are a good way for individuals to reduce their personal carbon footprint, alongside the use of electric vehicles and heating systems. Solar farms can also operate at the scale of utility companies, making it a versatile alternative to fossil fuels. There are other alternatives to solar energy - such as wind energy, nuclear energy, and hydroelectric energy - but the World Wide Fund for Nature is most interested in the use of solar energy. This is because the construction of wind turbines can be dangerous to natural habitats, and must be built with the area’s natural habitat in mind. In addition, hydroelectric energy can disrupt the native ecosystems living along the rivers and oceans that it harvests energy from. The World Wide Fund for Nature also supports nuclear

energy, as it is also a viable - and extremely reliable - alternative. It is also already used to provide 10% of the world's electricity. However, widespread public opinion of it is divided, due to possible safety risks in the construction and operation of nuclear power plants.

It's easy to assume that climate change is an issue caused by irresponsible individuals, but as it turns out, the majority of carbon emissions are the fault of large corporations in the energy industry. A 2017 report by the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) states that 71% of carbon emissions are caused by just 100 companies. Many of these companies are major oil companies, such as Exxon Mobil and Shell, as well as state-owned entities such as Coal India and National Iranian Oil. It's vital that the energy industry - both state-owned and not - take responsibility for their role in climate change, and begin to pivot towards renewable energies as an alternative. In many cases, governments around the world must introduce restrictions on these corporations to prevent them from releasing as many carbon emissions, and penalising them should they fail in this. All-in-all, the energy industry is incredibly reliant on fossil fuels like oil and coal, and it is necessary for them to make the shift to renewable energy instead.

When it comes to the shift to renewable energies, some may argue that the economic trade-offs will be too great. However, this is a logical fallacy. Though the energy industry is able to make profit off of fossil fuels in the short term, there is a finite amount of oil and coal in the world, and the world is slowly running out of it. The MET states that the world will likely run out of fossil fuels within the 21st century if fossil fuel usage continues along its current trajectory. If the world does not make the switch to renewable energies before this happens, the economic cost to the entire world will be exponentially greater - much greater than the economic strain that may occur if it switches to renewable energy now. Where the real logical fallacy lies, however, is in the idea that the world is not already paying an economic cost. Governments and



corporations worldwide have been depleting and destroying natural resources in the pursuit of profit, and as a result have acted against their own self-interests, as well as the interests of everyone else. This is a concept in economic theory known as a “tragedy of the commons.” Should these resources be entirely depleted, everyone who used these natural resources - which includes everyone on the planet - will have to bear the economic and environmental cost, even if they were not at fault. Therefore, the economic trade-offs the world has to make now are well-worth it to avoid the immense economic damage that would happen otherwise.

In conclusion, climate change is an urgent issue that cannot be ignored. Its effects are already visible all around the globe, and its roots clearly lie in the overuse of oil, coal, and other fossil fuels. If we want to reduce the damage climate change is doing - and will continue to do in the future - we must switch to renewable energies as soon as we can.

### **Agriculture and Food Security - Francesca Collins**

The One Acre Fund, founded by Yale graduate Andrew Youn, is a non-profit organization that works on helping stop poverty by providing farmers with the tools and supplies they need in order to become more productive. This NGO helps farmers in sub-Saharan African countries such as Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Malawi, Uganda, and Zambia. (4)

Climate change has affected agriculture and has changed the environmental norm for farmers. While there are some benefits it has overall made it harder for farmers to adapt to a changing climate and be able to bounce back after more frequently occurring natural disasters. These extreme weather patterns such as floods, droughts, and temperatures make it more difficult for crops to grow. These events destroy the plants causing large loss economically and for food security. (9) The increase of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and temperature will lengthen the season in certain regions, resulting in a larger crop yield. This has made it possible for crops that originally were

only able to grow near the equator able to in other parts of the world. According to NASA the change in climate has produced different predicted yields for different crops; maize crop yields are projected to decline 24%, while wheat could potentially see growth of about 17%. Maize a crop grown across six continents and used all over the world which makes it a strong basis. In 2070 maize is expected to have a 40+ yield in some places and in other parts of the world it is expected to have a 40-. At the same time there is a downside this also makes it a better climate for weeds and fungi that kill crops (9).

Food insecurity is a global issue that is seen in both rural and urban areas. The One Acre fund specifically works with countries in sub saharan Africa because it is a large delivery territory, there are inexpensive effective tools that are known to end poverty that are unintroduced, and they have the lowest crop yield due to low productivity from lack of resources (7). Again while poverty and food insecurity is seen on all continents it is most prevalent in Africa. From 1960-2014 Sub-Saharan African produced the lowest Cereal yield following behind Asia, South America, Europe, and then North America (7). Food security is achieved when there is a high-yielding production of food that creates a surplus. This gives the farmers enough food to sell in order to make a profit while still being able to feed themselves their children (8).

The uneven distribution chain of food is one of the main reasons for the poverty levels. While Sub-Saharan seems daunting because it is a large delivery territory, in reality the amount of square footage used for farmland is small in comparison. Condensed the area of poverty in both urban and rural farm land is less than half of the U.S. area (7). This means distribution is extremely plausible but the time, money and effort have to be put into place. One Acre Fund works on delivering supplies to help farmers such as fertilizer and hybrid seeds. They also provide the farmers with rural field officers to teach them techniques to become more productive.

By creating routes to deliver supplies to these farmers it also builds routes for the farmers to distribute goods. This not only benefits the farmers with profits but the people who buy it, creating a symbiotic relationship.

Being not just environmentally friendly but beneficial is a priority to the One Acre Fund. One of the NGO's goals is to plant one billion trees in the next 13 years and by 2020 they planted 24 million. They are also environmentally cautious with the resources they provide for the farmers, making sure to use fertilizer responsibly to be environmentally sustainable. Also one of the main resources is compost; organic matter that is put back into the ground to provide plants with nutrients to grow instead of going into landfills.

### **Economic Development - Malavika Suresh**

Greenpeace is an international institution that strives to foster an international community that advocates for environmental justice. Greenpeace itself is composed of 27 independent national and regional organizations in over 55 countries, with the headq/quarters being located in the Netherlands. All of the affiliated organizations rely on sponsors from individuals and corporations, rather than government funding, in order to function. Some major donors include the "Tides Foundation" and the "Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation". Depending on the economy of the respective country, Greenpeace functions differently. Since the NGO collaborates directly with their communities to enforce their mission, they end up receiving the effects of that country's economy. For example, a third-world country, which has a weaker economy, may have a weaker branch of Greenpeace and may not function as efficiently as a branch with a more powerful economy, such as the US. Greenpeace is actively and diligently working to combat the harsh effects of climate change. Their vision revolves around the idea of implementing resourceful policies and investments, like solar power or green engineering, which have come to

have been known as some of the most inexpensive forms of energy on Earth. This shift that Greenpeace seeks to enforce, however, will have a negative impact on institutions that neglect the idea of climate change and rely on the distribution of oil based products to fuel their economy.

Greenpeace is based internationally, so each branch of the NGO will function as it sees fit in order to accommodate the economy and social climate of the region. A Country with a weaker economy will be more affected by climate change, depending on a multitude of factors, such as supplies, relief system etc, and will have a smaller branch of Greenpeace.

The first example of the effects that Greenpeace has on nations both big and small is the region of Kamchatka, Russia. In October of 2020, Greenpeace's Russian branch arrived at Kamchatka, Russia to inspect the water in Kamchatka, Russia. According to scientists and locals, they experienced sore throat, eye pain, and itching pain. The unknown cause for this sickness also depleted 95% of marine life in the area, upsetting the welfare of fishermen and marine workers as well. When Greenpeace Russia arrived they made sure that "Researchers took samples of seawater, soil and dead animals" and analyzed them in order to find a source for this pressing issue. This intense investigation revealed the underlying unresolved problems in Kamatchka's environment, from landfills to hazardous waste. In a broad effort to combat this, Greenpeace Russia urged the Russian government to "support people on the frontlines of environmental crises, to tighten environmental policy to prevent future disasters, and to adopt a long-term program for green transformation of the economy." Another example of Greenpeace's efforts is the case of Mauritius. Mauritius experienced its worst environmental disaster in history when a giant capesize bulk carrier leaked its fuel into a Mauritius lagoon. Mauritius' water soon became contaminated with over 900 tonnes of toxic fuel. This spill greatly affected the

environment, society, and fishermen, as countless Mauritius citizens relied on the services of fishing and tourism to sustain a living. In addition to this, the seemingly corrupt government of Mauritius shielded the corporations which caused this disaster, so the full effects of this catastrophe were not made fully clear to the public. In response to this disaster, the parent organization Greenpeace International has been using its voice by creating and promoting petitions that combat the oil spill and aided in the relief of the people of Mauritius. The most current and one of the most long standing projects of Greenpeace is its combat against the looming crisis in Yemen. Greenpeace called for swift action to resolve the “long outstanding environmental and humanitarian threat” of the Yemen Oil spill. The goal of this intervention was for Greenpeace to successfully convince the UN to Remove the FSO safer off the coast of Yemen. This particular safe contained over 10,000 gallons of oil, thereby putting the entire environment at risk if a spill were to happen.

Greenpeace is an organization that promotes the use of a Circular Economy. A circular economy would by definition foster “economic sustainability” while also spurring economic growth by using resources more efficiently. This minimizes waste while also making the most out of the resources that we already utilize. The goal of the circular economy is to reduce waste by reducing consumption and production by becoming resourceful and more efficient when utilizing renewable resources. In a less broad context, within a circular economy, there is a huge emphasis on small actions such as recycling, conserving energy, and reusing and repurposing items. But, in order for the Circular Economy to function effectively, Greenpeace calls for the slowing down of “consumption and production of materials, resources and energy all together”, which can lead to backlash from businesses that rely on increased production to produce profits.

Greenpeace perceives climate change as a n imminent and extreme threat to the global

economy. The reimagination of the global economy in response to the gradual and persistent climate changes forces the entire workforce to shift and take action in order to function. In order to combat this mentality, the NGO advocates for the use of new technologies and business practices that implement consolidation of resources using techniques such as “ sharing, renting, cooperative, non-hierarchical, slower cycles”. Right now, the Global economy functions on a “ ‘take, make, dispose’ model of production”. In the new era of rapid climate change, this model is increasingly less sustainable as the Earth is soon coming to a convergence with the idea of eliminating some essential resources altogether.

Greenpeace works under the premise of protecting wildlife in every form, preventing pollution on Earth, ending all nuclear threats, and promoting peace. Their goal is to work in a state of personal responsibility and nonviolence, meaning that they are “ accountable for our actions and take personal responsibility” and are “committed to peacefulness”. They focus on independence and don’t rely on funding from corrupt businesses that ultimately go against the Agenda of the NGO. Right now, the Global economy functions on a “ ‘take, make, dispose’ model of production”. In the new era of rapid climate change, this model is increasingly less sustainable as the Earth is soon coming to a convergence with the idea of eliminating some essential resources altogether. The goal of Greenpeace is to collaborate with businesses and implement a plan to educate other systems of the economy on the premise of the “Circular Economy” while promoting Diversity, Inclusivity, and Equity within the infrastructure of the NGO.

### **Justice and Humanity - Lavanya Gupta**

The Earth Island Institute is a nonprofit organization that works across the United States and around the globe to mitigate climate change, through focusing on conservation, clean energy,

helping indigenous communities, and empowering women and youth in environmental leadership. There are more than 75 projects running currently to address interconnected issues and focus specifically on empowering the communities that need it the most. Our organization also runs the Earth Island Institute journal, which displays a wide range of perspectives about environmental issues. The specific issues being focused on include the impact of fossil fuels, aid needed for countries most affected by climate change, policies needed to be enacted on the Global South, and the issue of climate refugees.

Fossil fuels have a substantial negative impact on the environment, as they work to speed up climate change. In order to reduce the use of fossil fuels, those financially supporting the fossil fuel industry must start putting money into clean and renewable energy sources. Many big companies are the ones funding this industry, and a key player is the Central Banks. It turns out that the 12 largest banks support oil, gas and coal industries through policies and direct finance. About 3.8 trillion dollars have gone from these banks into fossil fuel industries, allowing them to expand and develop more projects. By not harnessing the power that large corporations have to end the climate crisis, the most vulnerable countries like the Global South will be left to carry the burden as the climate gets worse. The children of these countries will be left to deal with the consequences of climate change, despite not taking part in facilitating it. Instead, these companies could invest in clean energy and clean energy targeted programs like the Indigenized Energy Initiative at Earth Island Institute. It works to diminish energy poverty in Indigenous communities. Another potential project is the EnergyRich, which establishes local small scale manufacturing of renewable energy technology. By investing in projects like this, these companies can do their part to mitigate the climate crisis instead of directly funding it. If they fail

to do so, the most vulnerable countries will be faced with issues that they are not necessarily equipped to handle.

It is important to look at what countries will be most affected by climate change, and the responsibility that other countries have to help solve the issues that will arise in these countries. The more vulnerable countries tend to be located where it is hotter. The countries that have fewer economic resources have a lower capacity to cope and need more time to rebuild and recover, meaning that they will not only be hit the hardest but also will struggle the most with recovery. These countries are often not the ones mainly responsible for the climate crisis, as it is instead mainly the bigger player countries like China and the United States, as they are the ones that have gone through rapid industrialization. It's an ethical dilemma as to whether richer countries have a right to ask countries' currency industrialization to stop, as they have been doing it for years and mainly facilitated the climate crisis. By asking these big player countries to invest money and time into projects that help different countries across the globe, they can do their part in aiding climate change. An example of such a project is the EcoEquity project running under the Earth Island Institute, which works to protect the poor emphasizing the importance of equity in climate change policies. This includes equity in the people leading these environmental movements. These countries can work to be included in projects like the Women Climate Center International, which is led by women in development professionals in Uganda, Kenya, South Africa and the United States(a big player country). Another potential project that these countries could invest in is the Altera Project, which is an innovative approach that addresses the environmental and socio economic effects that urbanization has. Other projects work to specifically include the Indigenous Community, which has been specifically targeted in the past when it comes to land acquisition for furthering of fossil fuel industries. By investing in these



projects, these countries can not only work to help those they have wronged by also putting their money into something that will not further the fossil fuel industry.

Another main focus must be the Global South and the smaller island states, as they are not only one of the most vulnerable countries, but are sometimes not economically able to handle the disasters that come with climate change. In these hotter areas, people tend to (and have always tended to) settle near rivers and coastlands for obvious agricultural and economical benefits. This matched with rising sea levels creates serious risk for cities in the Global South settled near big bodies of water. Their recovery, as previously mentioned, will take longer due to geography, lack of funding and vulnerable infrastructure. For these reasons, it is particularly important for those big player countries and corporations to invest in projects that specifically work to help those countries. An example of such a project would be Guías Unidos Project, which focuses on emphasizing conservation-minded tourism in Nicaragua. By encouraging conservation of these lands, there will be a limit on how much they can be mined for the use of fossil fuels, essentially helping to stop the detrimental effects that climate change has on these places. Another issue also arises, as the people who are a part of these communities being negatively impacted by climate change are forced to leave their homes.

As climate change worsens, leaving more storms and disasters in its wake, people are forced to leave their homes and are left to become climate refugees. Despite there being an extremely large number of environment refugees, an estimated amount of 50 million by 2020 from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, they are often not recognized by many countries. Places like Kiribati, Tuvalu, China and Thailand are in serious danger of rising sea levels. The acceptance of climate refugees is rare, and policies put into place do little to help those places that refugees are expected to return to. Because the amount of environmental

refugees is only expected to increase, as climate change worsens, it is important that while countries work to stop climate change they also accept those having to flee due to its effects. These policies should include rehabilitation of land and soil after climate disasters, along with the desalination of low coastal areas.

It is absolutely necessary for the countries with the economic means to help do so, as they are also often the ones who facilitate and encourage the climate crisis. Corporations need to accept their responsibility of investing their money into organizations that help the climate, over the industries that only work to make it worse. Otherwise, the countries most affected will be unable to handle the destruction, and the amount of climate refugees will only increase. Countries should be willing to accept these refugees and help them, as climate change is a global issue. There are numerous projects being run by not only the Earth Island Institute, but other organizations that will be able to reach their goals through the help and cooperation of other countries.

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