



11 COMMON BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FOR ROMA

PREAMBLE:

In acknowledging the urgent need for environmental justice and sustainable development, we affirm a commitment to principles that recognise, respect, and safeguard the rights and cultural heritage of Roma communities. Rooted in the values of equity, inclusivity, and justice, these principles strive to address historical and ongoing environmental injustices faced by Roma populations. Recognising the vital role of Roma communities in shaping a sustainable future, we embrace a holistic approach encompassing legal and political recognition, equal access to essential resources, health equity, housing rights, and environmental empowerment.

By upholding an anti-racist and antigypsyist lens, these principles reject discrimination and bias, seeking to dismantle systemic inequities. Through gender inclusivity, protection of children's well-being, and building partnerships rooted in solidarity, we envision a future where environmental justice is not just a principle but a lived reality for all.

The common basic principles emerged through deliberations with community representatives, civil society members, practitioners, and academics engaged in Roma rights issues during the 1st Environmental Justice Conference for Roma held in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, on October 11th, 2023.

11 COMMON BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FOR ROMA:

1

The legal and political recognition of Roma Rights:

To acknowledge and respect the rights and cultural heritage of Roma communities in an environmentally sustainable manner. This includes their right to self-determination, language, and traditional practices, especially those that are environmentally sustainable.

Equal Access to Clean Air, Safe Water and a Healthy Environment:

To ensure that Roma communities have equal access to clean air, safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, and a healthy environment without being disproportionately burdened by pollution, environmental hazards and degradation, and to take proactive measures to protect Roma communities from pollution, industrial emissions and hazardous waste.

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Health Equity:

To guarantee that Roma communities have access to quality healthcare services and address the disproportionate health burdens they may face due to environmental pollution and hazards.

Access to adequate housing:

To advocate for integrated housing policies in a non-discriminatory manner, to combat homelessness as well as housing segregation and to provide Roma communities with access to safe, healthy, and affordable housing in non-segregated neighbourhoods.

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Environmental Empowerment and Inclusion:

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To promote the right to access information, environmental education and awareness within Roma communities, ensuring that they are included in discussions and programs related to environmental protection and sustainability, and to enable the Roma population to assert their rights and participate in environmental and climate protection.

Climate Resilience and Community-led Sustainable Development:

Implement policies and strategies to address the climate vulnerabilities of Roma communities. Prioritize community-led sustainable development to empower Roma and enable climate adaptation without negative gentrification impacts. Promote green infrastructure projects that enhance climate resilience without displacing or marginalizing Roma communities, emphasizing inclusive decision-making and cultural-economic empowerment.

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Recognition, Empowerment, and Inclusive Access to Green Jobs for Roma Communities:

Promote the right to access green skills training programs and quality job opportunities, empowering Roma individuals to participate in the green economy actively.

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Gender-Inclusivity:

To incorporate a gender-sensitive approach to recognize and address the distinct environmental challenges Roma women face. To address the unique gender-based vulnerabilities and discrimination faced by Roma women within environmental justice efforts, promote gender equity, and ensure active participation of women in environmental decision-making.

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Children's Well-being:

To prioritise the protection and well-being of children within environmental justice initiatives. Consider the unique vulnerabilities of children and ensure their voices are heard in decision-making processes related to environmental policies and projects.

Partnerships and Solidarity:

To encourage collaboration between governmental agencies, the private sector, and civil society, particularly environmental organisations and Roma organisations, to address environmental injustices, with a commitment to building solidarity and fostering inclusive solutions.

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Environmental Equity, Compensation, and Reparation for Roma Communities:

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Advocate for the equitable distribution of environmental benefits and burdens, addressing historical and ongoing environmental racism Roma communities face. Work towards rectifying past injustices through a comprehensive approach that includes advocating for fair and just restitution, compensation, and mechanisms to address environmental damages.