

Metropolitan Council

Climate Action Plan

Land Use Advisory Committee
May 20, 2021





Today's discussion

- Foundations for the plan
- Project purpose and integration
- Climate change in MN and key terms
- Project approach and timeline
- Current state process and consultant
- Question on environmental justice

Purpose



The Climate Action Plan

will unify our efforts across the Council to reduce our climate impacts and prepare for a changing climate.

It will define strategies that will strengthen our ability to plan and deliver services to the region through leadership, collaboration, and stewardship.

- **Purpose** – Unify climate action efforts across the Council
- **Why a climate plan** – Climate impacts Council infrastructure, operations, and planning
- **What is included** – Current efforts and commitments to future actions
- **Who is involved** – All Council divisions
- **Timeframe of the plan** – 3 to 5 years

Integrates with Council policies and initiatives

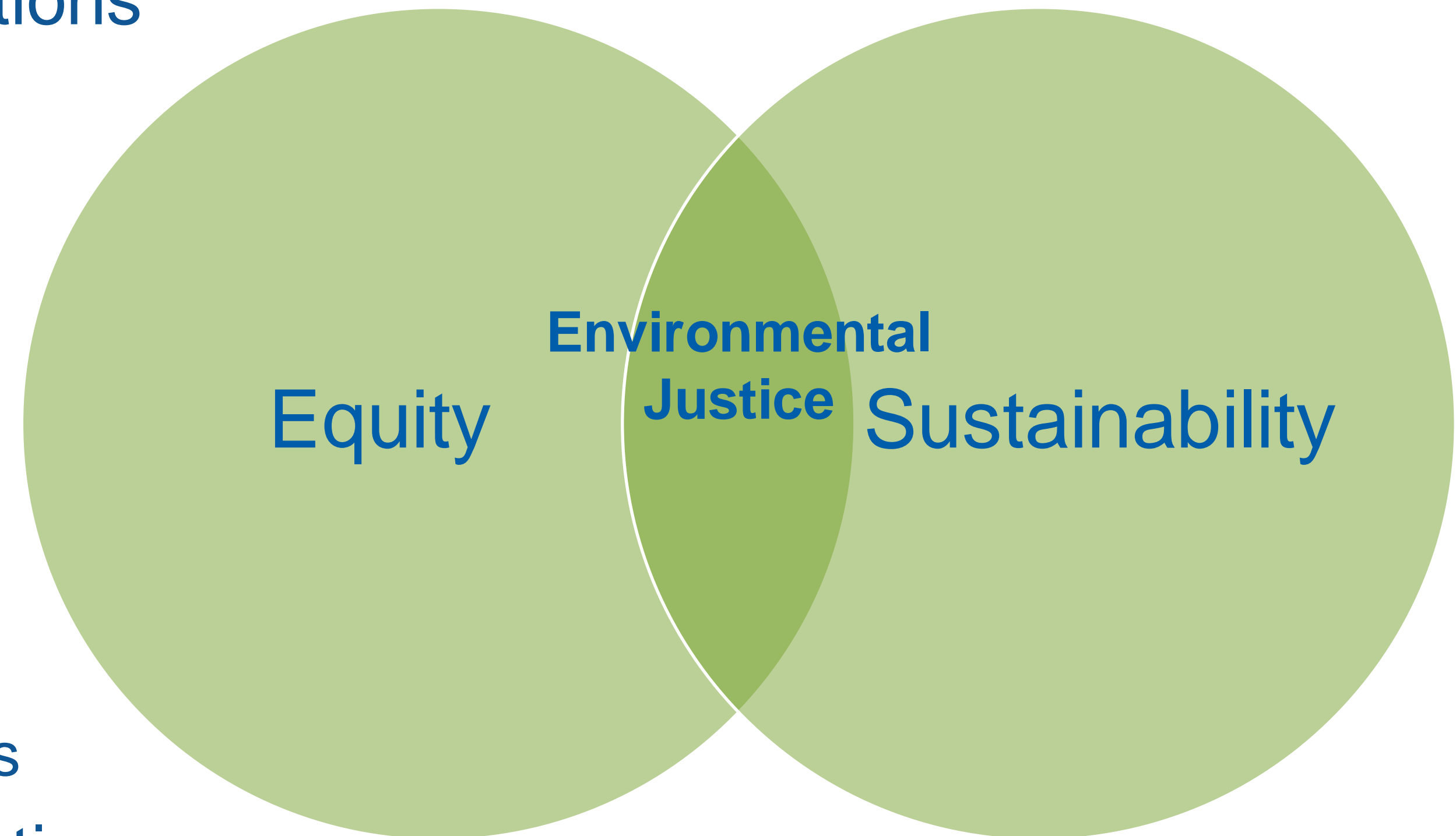


Sustainability

- Protecting our regional vitality for generations to come
 - Lead by example in operations
 - Partner with customers and stakeholders

Equity

- Recognizing nuanced institutional and systemic barriers that affect marginalized communities
 - Appropriately create access and opportunities
- Environmental Justice (EJ) is the intersection of equity and sustainability



Environmental Justice example – Land Use



EJ action example – Land Use

Legacy of Environmental Racism

- Historically **redlined areas** have **higher temperatures**, more **brownfields** and closer **proximity to toxic waste sites**
 - Lower quality of life and property values
- People of Color twice as likely to live near facilities that increase risk of potential chemical exposure
 - Majority Black and Latinx
 - Incidents have **1 in 6 chance of occurring in a community of color** compared to 1 in 11 for white communities

EJ action example – Land Use

Current Health Disparities

- Chance of living in a community with air pollution-related above health guidelines
 - 46% for low-income
 - 91% for communities of color
- Disproportionate asthma rates People of Color twice as likely to live near dangerous chemical facilities
 - High school students – 21% Native American, 22% Black, 15% white
 - Mortality rates – 4x higher among Black adults and 3x higher among Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) adults compared to white adults

EJ action example – Land Use

Solutions and Unintended Consequences



- Create green spaces and access to parks
- Install solar panels on rooftop buildings, electric vehicle charging stations and cooling facilities
- Increased quality of life and property value
- Lead to **gentrification, displacement, loss of culture, potential homelessness**

EJ action example – Land Use

Environmental Justice Solutions

- **Build relationships with communities most harmed** by environmental racism and land use practices
- Have **communities share visions to guide project**
- Collaborative action with communities
 - **Share and provide resources** as needed
 - Act with **cultural competency**
 - **Be mindful of harm** organizations caused or contributed to

Climate change in Minnesota

<i>Climate Changes</i>	<i>Projections Through 2099</i>	<i>Confidence in Projected Changes</i>
Warming winters	Continued loss of cold extremes and dramatic warming of coldest conditions	Highest
Extreme rainfall	Continued increase in frequency and magnitude; unprecedented flash-floods	
Heat waves	More hot days with increases in severity, coverage, and duration of heat waves	High
Drought	More days between precipitation events, leading to increased drought severity, coverage, and duration	Moderately High
Heavy snowfall	Large events less frequent as winter warms, but occasional very large snowfalls	Moderately Low
Severe thunderstorms & tornadoes	More “super events” possible, even if frequency decreases	

“The region has gotten much wetter and warmer, driven by more frequent heavy precipitation and warmer winters.”

- K. Blumenfeld, Senior Climatologist, MN Dept of Natural Resources



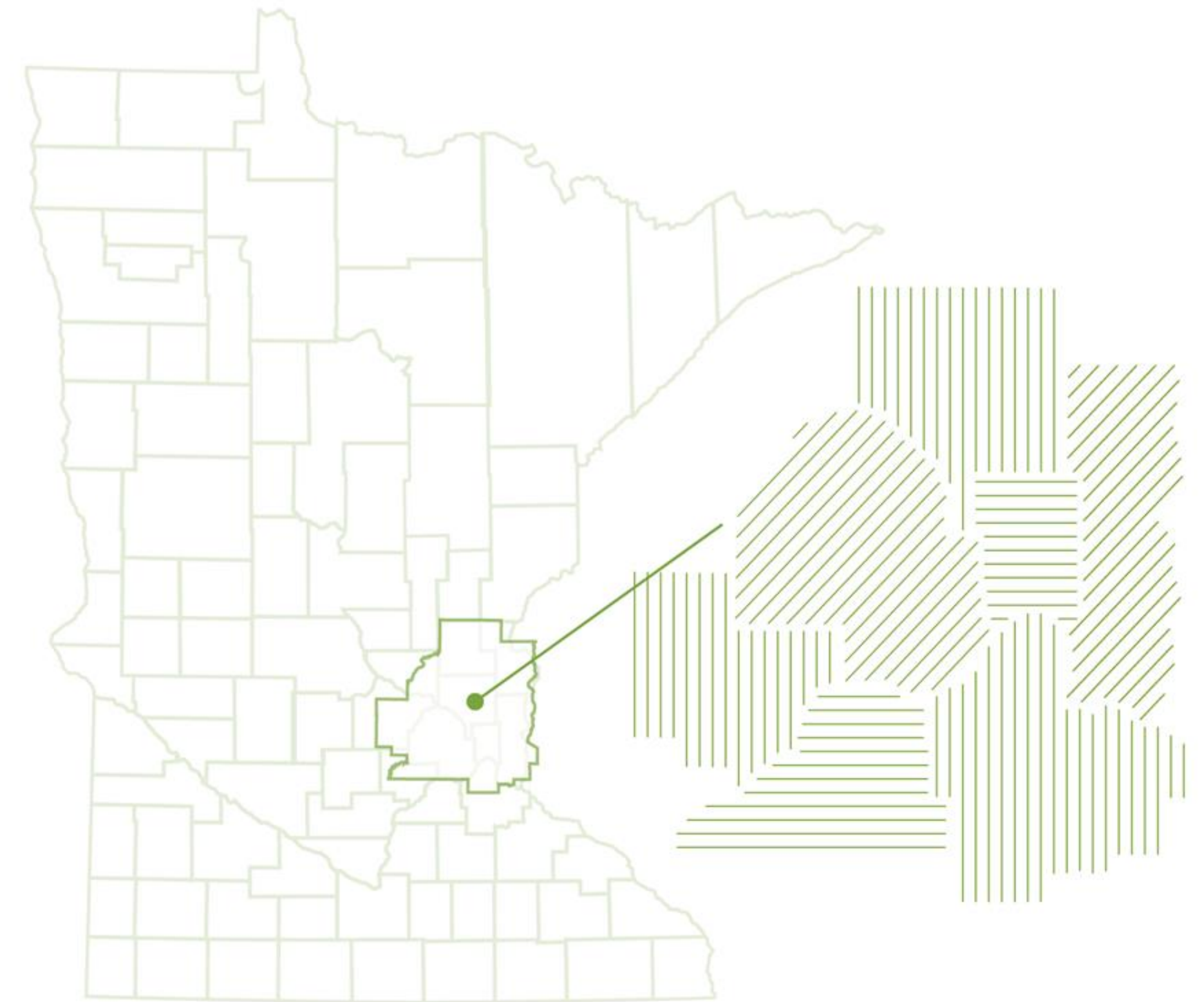
Key terms

Actions

- **Mitigation** – actions that reduce the rate of climate change
- **Adaptation** – the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects

Outcome

- **Resilience** – outcome that increases our flexibility to thrive regardless of how climate change develops



Project Phases



PROJECT TIMELINE



Current state information

- CAP Project Team is conducting work group interviews across all divisions of the Council:
 - Document current climate change work
 - Identify current partners
 - Detail the drivers of the work within different divisions
- Current state purposes:
 - Identify gaps in our work, potential for new and continued commitments
 - Establish foundation for plan strategies

Mitigation – Environmental Services

Planning, Infrastructure, and Operations

Reduce emissions and energy use

- *Process optimization*
- *Building optimization*

Energy recovery and renewable

- *Combined heat and power*
- *Steam and digester gas*
- *Heat recovery from effluent*
- *Solar*

Electrification: *Electric vehicles*



Regional Partnerships, Tools, and Resources

Local Government Community Solar Collaborative
Green partnership with Xcel Energy



Environmental Justice Question

How can environmental justice inform the desired outcomes of the Climate Action Plan, and how can a focus on environmental justice help us reach our desired outcomes?

QUESTIONS?

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