

PLANNING LAND USE STRATEGIES: MEETING BIODIVERSITY, CLIMATE AND SOCIAL OBJECTIVES IN A CHANGING WORLD

D1.1 – CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR JUST AND EQUITABLE LAND USE CHANGE IN EUROPE

WORK PACKAGE 1, TASK 1.3

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List of Abbreviations

Term	Description
EGD	European Green Deal
EJ	Environmental Justice
EJAtlas	The Global Environmental Justice Atlas
EU	European Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
TD	Transdisciplinary
WP	Work Package



Executive Summary

This Deliverable is part of Task 1.3 "Ethics, equity and justice in project activities and results" within Work Package 1.

Justice is increasingly recognised as a priority of the European Union within various environmental and social policy frameworks (e.g., <u>European Green Deal</u>). Such frameworks regulate the ways decisions are made about land use, for example: urbanisation processes, the creation of natural reserves, and the conversion of farmland. Foregrounding justice means to make sure that the benefits and burdens of land use decisions are fairly distributed among all communities, particularly among groups who are marginalised and vulnerable.

Decisions about land use are taken in situations where many actors – from community representatives to land use planners and policy makers – need to work together and consider multiple factors. Embedding justice in land use decision-making processes thus implies a clear mandate to understand how to bring individuals, communities and organisations together to fight climate change and stop biodiversity loss in more just and equitable ways. However, there is scarce knowledge and little guidance on how to integrate principles of justice and equity into how different actors work together for more sustainable and just futures in Europe.

This Ethics Handbook fills both the knowledge and the guidance gaps. First, it **integrates knowledge from different disciplines and societal contexts** (i.e., from research, activism, and policy) about how to deal with ethical issues of equity and justice in land use change. Second, it **makes this knowledge usable for the different actors** working on issues related to land use. The main goal of the Handbook is to support actors within land use decision-making to **identify social and environmental injustices that arise from uneven access to resources and decision-making power**.

The results presented in the Handbook emerged from multiple activities in the Horizon Europe funded project "Planning Land Use Strategies: Meeting biodiversity, climate and social objectives in a changing world" (PLUS Change). The Handbook is equipped with visual aids, examples and exercises that will help actors across diverse contexts **identify**, **analyse**, **and address issues of justice and equity in their work**. It is structured in three main parts, summarised below, with an introduction and concluding reflections.

PART 1: Understanding (in)justice in land use

This section integrates knowledge from multiple academic disciplines and social movements on issues of environmental and social justice. Readers can learn how to understand and think about (in)justice in land use change through:

- The concept of environmental justice and the history of the environmental justice movement in different geographies.
- A vocabulary for justice-related work in land use research and practice that clarifies how to make use of terms signifying different aspects and



Figure 1: A Justice Lens as a tool to identify, analyse and plan for action

make use of terms signifying different aspects and dimensions of justice (such as distributive, recognitional, procedural, restorative, intergenerational, more-than-human).



• A Justice Lens tool that integrates and visualises the different aspects and dimensions of justice which can be used to identify, analyse and plan for action.

PART 2: Navigating (in)justice in land use



This section presents a stepwise process that different actors involved in decision-making on land use change can follow when aiming to generate more just processes and outcomes. The steps follow the structure of the Justice Lens from Part 1 in drafting an Equity and Justice Plan. This process seeks to ensure that research and planning activities are sensitive to the justice implications of the work they are proposing in relation to land use change. The main steps are:

- Creating awareness of what (in)justice in land use change may mean and how (in)justice manifests.
- **Identifying justice situations** in the specific (geographic-social-cultural-institutional) contexts of work.
- Analysing justice situations, using the aspects and dimensions of justice presented in the Justice Lens.
- **Planning for action**, when working on land use change in contexts with complex and contextual justice situations.

Figure 2: Overview of the stepwise process

PART 3: Inspiring through examples from PLUS Change

This section presents examples from PLUS Change that illustrate ways of approaching justice in land use research and practice. It aims to exemplify and to inspire by:

- Overviewing the justice issues that manifested in the work of 22 partners, common trends and relative importance of justice dimensions in partners' work.
- Showcasing the differing framings of justice in land use processes across different geographical, socio-cultural and political contexts in Europe.
- Exemplifying how three partners used the Justice Lens.



Figure 3: Word cloud derived from the names of partners' justice situations

The Ethics Handbook also includes an Annex with Equity and Justice Plans by 22 partners in PLUS Change which detail specific challenges and opportunities that the partners faced in their work. These plans illustrate that one of the **main challenges** consists in reaching out to those sectors of the population who are most vulnerable and affected, for example, by climate change, but who are often neither represented nor heard in decision-making processes related to land use. The design of the processes, different kinds of bias (e.g., in theoretical frameworks, methods, interpretation of results), rigid institutional rules, language barriers and power



dynamics are mentioned as factors hindering equity and transparency. At the same time, the plans show that **important opportunities** emerge when leveraging existing partnerships that build trust and support mutual learning.

The Ethics Handbook presents general guidelines meant to inspire and structure justice work, in the form of tools, steps, and recommendations. Necessary reflection and adaptation depend on the people involved and contexts where equity and justice issues are addressed. Given the difficulty and discomfort of justice work, the Ethics Handbook can help to structure and orient a learning process, generating outcomes that contribute to a better world.

Content alignment with other PLUS Change deliverables

The PLUS Change project encourages collaboration and exchange between partners and Work Packages. The content of this Deliverable has been developed in alignment with a WP1 colleague and project coordinator Julia Leventon (CzechGlobe) and builds on the joint work of the PLUS Change partners as part of the first series of three interactive Ethics webinars. This Deliverable will inform D1.2 (a planning toolkit for land use decision- and policymakers, due at the end of PLUS Change, M48) by providing generalisable guidance on navigating ethics, equity and justice issues in land use research and practice in Europe. The process of aligning the two Deliverables will be evolving in the course of the project depending on the needs and emerging results. This Deliverable has also taken inspiration from Milestone 1 – Transdisciplinary roadmap of the project created in the early stages of the project. The Transdisciplinary roadmap and related activities allowed to create the conditions for collaborative work and ensure fair and inclusive processes, including safe spaces and opportunities to reflect on one's own positionality within the boundaries of the PLUS Change project.

The following table lists the deliverables/milestones that were input for this deliverable and the upcoming deliverables/milestones that this deliverable will contribute to.

Input	Output
D1.1 – Challenges and opportunities for just and equitable land use change in Europe	D1.2 – Planning toolkit
Milestone 1 – Transdisciplinary roadmap of the project	D1.1 – Challenges and opportunities for just and equitable land use change in Europe



Preface

Why an Ethics Handbook?

Justice is increasingly recognised as a priority of the European Union within the European Green Deal (EGD), such as through the Just Transition Mechanism fund or the European Climate Pact (EU 2020). In the implementation of the EGD, there is a clear mandate to understand how to bring individuals, communities and organisations together to fight climate change and stop biodiversity loss in more just and equitable ways. Attending to issues of equity and justice in land use research and practice in Europe is crucial to ensure that nobody is left behind. It is central so that marginalised and vulnerable people have the freedom and the capacity to achieve their own well-being and that of their communities. In this respect, it is essential to make sure that the benefits and burdens of land use decisions are fairly distributed among all communities, particularly among marginalised and vulnerable groups (EEA 2023).

Yet, embedding ethical issues of equity and justice in situations where many actors have to make decisions and take action about land use is not easy. Many works have highlighted the need for knowledge and guidance about how to integrate principles of justice and equity into how different actors - from community representatives to planners and policy makers - work together for more sustainable and just futures in Europe (Juhola et al. 2022; Lager et al. 2023). Foregrounding justice and equity in the way decisions are made about land means to be able to see the challenges that are in the way as well as to seize the opportunities that emerge.

This Ethics Handbook makes existing knowledge about equity and justice (from research, activism, and policy) usable for the different actors working on issues related to land use. The main goal of the Handbook is to support these actors to address the challenges and harness the opportunities to prevent the exacerbation of social and environmental injustices that arise from uneven access to resources and decision-making power. The Handbook will help them to integrate and mobilise justice and equity considerations when fostering processes that combine environmental sustainability (e.g., meeting net zero through the EGD) and social justice (e.g., through the recognition of marginalised voices).

A Handbook for whom?

This Handbook will support individual researchers (e.g., working on land use) and practitioners (e.g., land use managers and planners, policymakers, citizen groups, NGOs) as well as teams of researchers and practitioners (e.g., collaborative teams) working in land use. The work presented here will help them to identify, reflect on, analyse, and consider ethical issues of justice and equity in their work. Yet, the Handbook does not provide guidance on how to engage and work with specific marginalised or vulnerable communities. It should rather be used by those who are already familiar with the ethics and methodologies of collaborative, participatory, and action-oriented research and practice (e.g., action research or transdisciplinary research) and who wish to foreground issues of justice and equity. So, this Handbook can guide researchers and practitioners in ...

- ... research contexts, helping to foreground issues of ethics and justice, e.g., by using a Justice Lens to reflect on the research questions asked, methodologies chosen, ways of data collection and interpretation, dissemination of results.
- ... practice contexts, supporting decision-making and actions, e.g., by developing Equity & Justice Plans to decide about the kind of stakeholders one is engaging to ensure that 'no one is left behind' or to design collaborative processes.



Introduction

Origins of the Ethics Handbook in PLUS Change

The Horizon Europe funded project PLUS Change was launched in June 2023. The consortium of 23 partners in the project aims to create strategies and decision-making processes for more sustainable and climate-friendly land use. Following the mandate of the EU Commission to prioritise ethical issues of justice in the EGD, the project foregrounds justice issues in decision-making and action on land use that benefit both the environment and communities. The ethical focus on equity and justice implies the need to focus on the systemic issues that need addressing (i.e., justice) when aiming to offer equal access to opportunities and means for everybody in society (i.e., equity) (Figure 4). This Handbook emerged from multiple activities in the project that aimed at fulfilling this mandate and at providing guidance on how equity and justice considerations can inform collaborative processes and their outcomes in land use planning and management.

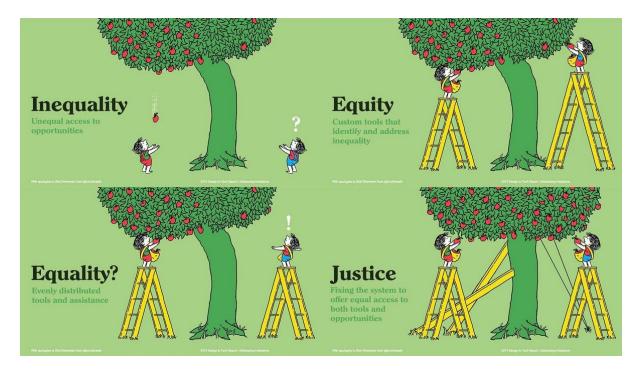


Figure 4: Metaphorical visualisation of the concepts related to (in)equality, equity, and justice. The visualisation of equity emphasises the importance of considering people's tools and opportunities and that of justice foregrounds the need to think in systems. Image source: https://achievebrowncounty.org/2021/05/defining-equity-equality-and-justice/

PLUS Change is a 'transdisciplinary' project, which means that the project is collaborative (involving different actors) and action-oriented (having impact on planning and policy). The project engages researchers and practitioners in collaborative work from the very beginning when issues to be addressed are formulated. It aims at drawing on participants' knowledge and expertise to develop meaningful solutions for practice as well as new knowledge and



methodologies for research¹. Collaboration between researchers and practitioners in PLUS Change takes place primarily within Practice Cases in diverse geographic areas covering urban, rural, and peri-urban contexts. These Practice Cases represent multi-actor hubs where researchers engage with planning authorities, land managers, and citizens on topics of land use change and interventions. In this process, the partners will learn to recognise diverse needs and values associated with land use, consider the consequences of interventions and governance strategies, and take a long-term, dynamic perspective to land use. One of the results of this collaborative work will be the co-production of a range of tools and interventions. The *outcomes* emerging from this joint work are intended to inform how land use decisions are made by citizens, planners and policy makers.

Important objectives of PLUS Change consist in reflecting on and learning together about (i) how issues of justice are considered in land use change processes, (ii) how to develop a shared understanding and language in relation to justice issues in the project and (iii) how to build capacities to act on them. The first step towards addressing these interlocking objectives has been the development and delivery of three interactive webinars. All PLUS Change partners (from academia, policy and practice) took part in these activities. The webinars focused on the "social objectives" of the project through the lens of discourses and practices related to (social-environmental) justice in processes of land use change and in relation to biodiversity and climate change². The first three webinars in PLUS Change took place online between February and April 2024, each dedicated to the following topics:

- I. Understanding (in)justice in land use change based on Environmental Justice
- II. Analysing and navigating own cases/research through a Justice Lens
- III. Developing Equity and Justice Plans for partners' work in PLUS Change

Each webinar combined theoretical parts and various interactive activities. The webinars resulted in the development of relevant methods and tools through activities and conversations where all partners brought in their perspectives about equity and justice in the context of land use change. One of the first important results of these webinars were Equity and Justice Plans developed by each partner organisation outlining concrete steps towards recognising justice issues and embedding them into practice (see the Annex of the Handbook for details).

² This ambition is implemented through one of the project tasks (T1.3: *Ethics*, *equity and justice in process activities and results*) as part of Work Package 1 (WP1: *Transdisciplinary knowledge integration*). Next to these webinars, a baseline survey was run to capture existing (and changing) understandings of and experiences with (social-environmental justice) in PLUS Change to complement and support reflexive and capacity-building efforts in the webinars.



¹ For the use of this Ethics Handbook, 'transdisciplinary' can be more broadly understood as collaborative and action-oriented research (although their academic notions are not equal). There are many (academic and beyond) resources that explore what transdisciplinary research is, how it can be designed and implemented, what the benefits and challenges are. In the following, you will find references to existing resources, tools and networks that might guide you in the process of understanding and putting TD research into practice.

The content and insights generated during the webinars laid the foundation for this Handbook in terms of its key sections, issues covered along with the conceptual and practical tools developed.

Objectives

This Ethics Handbook is a practical guide for identifying ethical issues of equity and justice in land use research and practice. This Ethics Handbook is meant for those working in land use research and practice who intend to:

- develop awareness about the challenges and opportunities of foregrounding equity and justice in land use change, such as in dynamics of inclusion, exclusion, and (dis)empowerment
- foster reflexivity for practitioners or researchers interested in addressing challenges and harnessing opportunities emerging when dealing with justice in their work
- provide practical guidance about how to do that, such as by presenting tools like the 'Justice Lens', and
- build capacity for equity and justice work in relation to land use change both within the project and beyond.

What can you find in this Handbook?

This Handbook covers different phases of thinking of and working with ethical issues of equity and justice in land use research and practice: from understanding (in)justice in land use change and relating it to own work to operationalising this understanding and using theoretically informed tools to support the navigation of justice issues in your research and practice. This Handbook is informed by the early results of and our joint reflections on the ongoing process of incorporating equity and justice considerations in PLUS Change. The Handbook is structured in three main parts with an introduction opening it and concluding reflections (Figure 5):



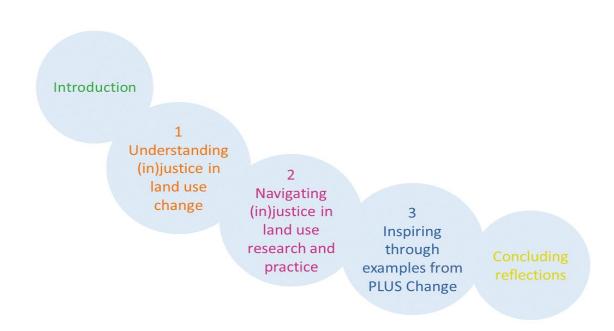


Figure 5: Overview of the structure of the Ethics Handbook

PART 1: Understanding (in)justice in land use

In Part 1, we introduce a way of understanding and thinking about (in)justice and (in)equity in land use based on the Environmental Justice (EJ) movement and its theories. This is followed by the introduction of a *Justice Lens* synthesising the theoretical insights and visualising multiple dimensions of justice within one image. Part 1 aims to raise awareness and develop understanding of justice issues in land use. In this section, we address questions like:

- How can you understand justice in land use research and practice through the experience, practice, and theories of the global EJ movement?
- How can you develop a shared language to understand justice in land use change through EJ theories and concepts?
- What tools can help you to frame justice issues in specific situations? How can you use the Justice Lens to think through and make sense of issues of justice in land use research and practice?

PART 2: Navigating (in)justice in land use

In Part 2, we build on the understanding of (in)justice in land use research and practice (Part 1). Part 2 aims to make this understanding operational and to support the navigation of justice issues in your own work. In this section, we cover questions like:

- How can you identify and describe justice situations in land use in your own work?
- What does the process of "navigating" (in)justice in land use research and practice look like? What are the main steps you can follow in this process?



 How can you develop an Equity and Justice Plan based on activities that address specific justice situations you might encounter in your work?

Note that we do not provide detailed guidance on how to tackle injustices and work with marginalised communities. Answering such questions are highly context specific and require considerable sensitivity. Rather, we limit our scope to helping identify situations, contexts and plan the kinds of context-specific issues that need to be addressed.

PART 3: Inspiring through examples from PLUS Change

In Part 3, we illustrate how three partners in PLUS Change identified and analysed justice situations in their own work as well as how they developed concrete Equity and Justice Plans. By providing a synthetic overview of the work done on justice by the 22 partners in the project, this part aims to make more tangible the different ways in which justice situations manifest themselves and may be approached. By presenting three of these examples in more detail, Part 3 also aims to inspire different ways of doing this, depending on the specificities of contexts and actors. In this section, we present the work produced by three partners and address the following questions:

- What kind of (in)justice issues did manifest in the work of 22 partners engaged in PLUS Change?
- How do researchers and practitioners from different geographical, socio-cultural and political contexts in Europe frame (in)justice issues in their work?
- How do the partners use the Justice Lens to start planning strategies on practically addressing their concrete justice-related situations?

How can you use this Handbook?

The Handbook includes generalisable guidance on ethics concerns related to justice and how to address them, as well as specific "good practice" examples on how equity and justice issues could be dealt with in research and practice. The Ethics Handbook operates on two levels:

- Content level, focusing on equitable and just land use change. At this level, the Ethics Handbook provides structured ways to explore questions related to who benefits from land use change, who is included and who is left out, how this is determined via decision-making processes, and what some of the underlying reasons for injustices are. It allows space for considering how research and practice might be shaped by, or play into injustices. The Ethics Handbook also provides illustrative examples from Partners in PLUS Change on how to identify and address issues of justice in your own work (e.g., when piloting and trialling work on behavioural change).
- Process level, dealing with just and equitable collaboration. At this level, the central component is reflecting on how to ensure just and inclusive processes. This includes the project consortium, but also extends beyond and for the use outside of the project. The Ethics Handbook presents different activities providing practical guidance about how to build capacity for just and equitable research and practice in land use change. These processes are intended to help guide projects and collaborations towards identifying context specific justice issues and are aimed at collaborators who are working together in contexts similar to the PLUS Change project. They are not intended to inform the solving of justice issues with marginalised communities. The processes covered include



designing safe spaces for meetings, interacting with stakeholders and ensuring that different kinds of knowledge are equally represented and incorporated into knowledge co-production processes, and disseminating results to diverse audiences.

The two levels are connected and reinforce each other, as reflections on the collaborative process feed back into content-related work of the research and practice partners shaping the equity and justice outcomes of PLUS Change. Vice versa, a research focus on our understanding of justice issues in land use change improves the collaboration processes.

- If you are interested in raising awareness of and in fostering reflexivity about (in)justice and (in)equity in land use more generally, Part 1 (*Understanding (in)justice in land use change*) will help you to understand how to think through (either real or fictional) situations of (in)justice and (in)equity, make sense of them and frame your thinking for your own land use research and practice.
- If you need practical guidance or are interested in building capacity to navigate specific
 (in)justice and (in)equity situations in the context of land use research and planning, Part
 2 (Navigating (in)justice in land use research and practice: A stepwise process) will guide
 you through four consecutive steps towards achieving this goal.
- If you seek **inspiration** from real-world examples, see Part 3 (*Inspiring through examples from PLUS Change*) on the work done by the partners in PLUS Change. As part of this section, you will also learn how three different types of organisations Practice Case (Province of Lucca), Research Organisation (University of Ljubljana) and Organisation at the Science-Society Interface (Centre for Systems Solutions) in PLUS Change implemented the steps³.

Graphic elements helping in the use of the Handbook

In addition to the Tables and Figures, the following graphic elements will help you in making use of the Ethics Handbook:



Keep in mind... A box on how to adapt suggestions from this Ethics Handbook to your own contexts, what to be mindful of (e.g., audience, group size, need for facilitator or other HR resources, mindset, time, financial constraints), issues like inclusion of diverse voices/ dealing with heterogeneity, global context of EJ



Tip!

A box suggesting useful resources such as (methods, toolboxes, theoretical input, blog posts on the topic, inspiring examples from PLUS Change)

³ See their profiles in Table 3



19

Example: A green solid box providing illustrative examples from the European context meant to clarify theoretical messages



Activity... A blue box followed by a suggested practical activity/ exercise

Using the Ethics Handbook in and outside PLUS Change

This Ethics Handbook is developed for both internal use to stimulate further reflection on ethics and justice in PLUS Change and for external use beyond the project.

- *Internally* in the project, the Handbook is meant to guide PLUS Change researchers and Practice Cases in completing their work across empirical Work Packages (WPs) 2, 3, 4 and 5 in the remainder of the project. It will also be used in WP5 seminars in the second half of the project (M33, 36, 39) when piloting and trialling land use interventions.
- Externally, the Ethics Handbook is intended to support different kinds of activities in identifying and addressing equity and justice issues in land use research and practice contexts.

We hope that the reflections and resources provided in this Ethics Handbook will inspire and support those individuals, teams, and entire organisations dealing with land use planning and management. This Ethics Handbook should help them to develop awareness of the challenges and opportunities of doing justice work across diverse geographical and cultural contexts in Europe and beyond. We further hope that the Ethics Handbook will serve as a workshop-like support in your endeavours. We invite you to adapt it to your needs, to the context in which you are working, and to the time that you have at your disposal.



Understanding (in)justice in land use change

This section integrates knowledge from multiple academic disciplines and social movements on issues of environmental and social justice. Readers can use this section to learn how to **understand** and think about **(in)justice in land use change** through:

- The concept of Environmental Justice and the history of the environmental justice movement in its varied manifestations in different geographies
- A vocabulary for justice-related work in land use research and practice, that clarifies how to make use of terms signifying different dimensions of justice (such as distributive, recognitional, procedural, restorative, intergenerational, more-than-human)
- Intersectionality and decoloniality as more comprehensive approaches to understand issues of justice
- A Justice Lens as a tool that integrates and visualises in a coherent fashion the different aspects and dimensions and that can be used to identify, analyse and plan for action

1.1 Introducing Environmental Justice

Rooted in the EJ movement, the idea of EJ highlights systemic inequities where low-income and minority groups bear, for example, the brunt of pollution, toxic waste, and lack of access to green spaces. This kind of injustice stems from historical and ongoing social, economic, and political discrimination, leading to health disparities and diminished quality of life for affected communities (Steger et al. 2007; Temper et al. 2015). **Environmental injustice** thus refers to the disproportionate exposure of marginalised communities to environmental hazards and the unequal distribution of environmental benefits (Menton et al. 2020). In this respect, **EJ consists in the active pursuit and achievement of the elimination of such injustices**. Examples are the achievement of fair distribution of environmental risks and benefits and the equal participation of those most affected by environmental risks in decision-making processes.

In this Handbook, we make use of histories, experiences, concepts and theories that have emerged around the idea of EJ in order to provide framings and tools to understand issues of justice in land use change. We use an idea of EJ, that comprises multiple dimensions from the more conventional ones (e.g., distribution and recognition) to newer ones (e.g., regeneration and more-than-human) (Schlosberg 2013). We also acknowledge that EJ histories and concepts are closely connected to multiple movements and struggles based on a critique of Western and colonial world views that have shaped existing power imbalances (e.g., present over future generations, anthropocentric human interests over human societies and economies). Movements intersecting with EJ are multiple and varied, such as: the ReGeneration movement, One-earth consciousness, Ecofeminism, Ecological economics, Doughnut economics or nature-positive economics etc.

In the rest of Part 1, we first situate histories of EJ in different geographical contexts and focus on EJ in Europe and beyond (Section 1.2); then we introduce main concepts and ideas from the EJ movement in the form of a vocabulary (Section 1.3); and finally we synthesise these insights in the form of a Justice Lens that can be used to deal with injustice in land use change (Section 1.4).

1.2 Histories and geographies of Environmental Justice The origins of the Environmental Justice movement in North America

The EJ movement comprises a series of social movements that address environmental injustices - such as pollution and exposure to waste - that harm poor or marginalised communities and individuals discriminated against in the context of decisions about the environment. The origins of the EJ movement are often placed in North America and in the context of environmental racism (Martinez-Alier et al. 2016). The movement is also connected in its origins and themes to the long history of indigenous peoples that have fought for, and advocated for different land uses, against extraction and environmental harm in their own territories (Clark 2002).

Important milestones of the EJ movement in the USA were the 1982 PCB (polychlorinated biphenyls) Protests, where North Carolina locals – many of which were Black People and People of Colour – organised strong opposition to government plans to build a toxic landfill within reach of their communities, and the 1st National People of Colour Environmental Leadership Summit 1991 in Washington, D.C., resulting in the adoption of 17 <u>Principles of Environmental Justice</u> that



became a major inspiration for US and other EJ movements. Over time, the need to move beyond direct impacts (e.g., industry pollutants that affect people and, thus, cancer rates) to considering also the substantial impact of these pollutants on emission levels and looking at symptoms of existing injustice (e.g., toxicity) has become apparent. This shift includes the need for restoring and repairing in order to create conditions for social justice, such as after disasters (Bullard and Wright 2009). The EJ movement has directed increasing attention to multiple dimensions of vulnerability, including exclusion from political process, discrimination by the majority population, and marginalisation from the mainstream activities and institutions of society (e.g., social services, citizenship, etc.).

Facets of Environmental Justice in Europe

Recent policy actions in Europe have increasingly emphasised the importance of EJ, in relation to its core concepts and frameworks, especially in the context of the EGD or, more generally, through the idea of just transitions and transformations (EEA 2023; Ramcilovic-Suomien 2021). The European Parliament has recently made use of the notion of "ecocide" (i.e., unlawful or wanton acts committed with knowledge that there is a substantial likelihood of severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment being caused by those acts). In an important Report, the European Parliament has consequently instituted penalties and prison sentences for offences such as ecosystem destruction, including habitat loss and illegal logging. However, traditionally, EJ in Europe has emerged through a variety of different interests in specific social, political and geographical situations without a clearly identifiable grassroot and unified EJ movement (Köckler et al. 2017). More recently, especially in connection to the broader sustainability agenda as well as of emerging climate movements, there has been more attention to issues of intergenerational justice (Skillington 2019) and a focus on environmental injustice in urban contexts as operating at institutional, systemic and intimate levels (Kotsila et al. 2022).

In Western European countries, EJ movements and discourses have had strong ties with environmental health (e.g., the need for healthy living conditions) and have advocated for the fair distribution of environmental benefits and burdens (especially in urban contexts) (Köckler et al. 2017). EJ has also dealt with concerns related to participation of minorities and vulnerable groups in environmental decision-making. Since the late 1990s, legal frameworks have asserted the rights of all people to equal participation in environmental matters (e.g., the Aarhus Convention from 1998 on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters). Yet, these rights do not imply that marginalised and vulnerable groups have the capacity to participate. In urban contexts, for example, racialised and ethnically exclusive urbanisation, gentrification, and uneven urban regeneration and intensification create barriers to participation and justice (Kotsila et al. 2022) as well as in the context of coal phase-out in several regions.

In countries in Central and Eastern Europe, civil society and the policy world has directed increasing attention to a multiplicity of EJ issues, such as unequal exposure to pollution (e.g., because of coal or uranium mines or untreated industrial waste), differential exposure to flooding (e.g., poor communities often living in flood plains), uncontrolled dumping waste, and denied or limited access to water and natural resources with higher impacts for women and children (Steger et al. 2007).

Example: "The Roma neighbourhood of Gulács, a small village of 800 people in North-East Hungary, saw the closure of the public water well on 1 August 2017 during a summer heatwave



(..) This case is part of a wider pattern and illustrates the lack of political will to solve distributional injustice and ensure access to basic necessities for Roma in Hungary. The cases illustrate a common problem: Roma people in Hungary are regularly subjected to water closures by the service providers."

Source: EJ Atlas

One of the most explicit manifestations of environmental injustices in Eastern Europe regards Roma communities that are victims of systemic discrimination. Roma people are pushed out into marginal and polluted lands and neighbourhoods. They are deprived of access to basic environmental services and public utilities (e.g., drinking water, adequate sanitation, and waste management). As a result, Roma communities are disproportionately affected by environmental burdens, such as pollution and environmental degradation (Heidegger and Wiese 2020). This has devastating health impacts ranging from mental health issues to numerous diseases (e.g., exposure-related illnesses, such as cancer, asthma, immunological problems, and neurological disorders). Policy and legal frameworks to address these inequities are still lacking both at national and supranational scales (Mihalache 2024).

Global dimensions of Environmental Justice

Despite the differences across cultures and geographies, numerous local and grassroots as well as activist projects are addressing EJ justice issues all over the world, with many successful examples of stopping projects and developing alternatives, testifying to the existence of a rural and urban global movement for environmental justice (Martinez-Alier et al. 2016). The Global Environmental Justice Atlas (EJAtlas) documents and catalogues social conflicts around environmental issues showing the variety and distribution of EJ efforts. It is an online interactive platform coordinated and managed by a team of researchers and activists. The content and data are the result of the work of hundreds of collaborators across the world who tell their own stories of resistance or write about what they witness. The EJAtlas collects the stories of communities struggling for Environmental Justice. It aims to make their mobilisations more visible, highlighting their claims and testimonies, to make the case for true corporate and state accountability for the injustices inflicted through their activities.





Figure 6: Global Atlas of Environmental Justice (from Temper et al. 2018)

1.3 A vocabulary of Environmental Justice for land use research and practice

Core dimensions: Distributive, recognitional, procedural justice

Scholarly works have increasingly engaged with this movement supporting their struggles and aspirations (Menton et al. 2020; Temper et al. 2018). The 'mainstream' framework of EJ considers three core dimensions, to which the capability approach is often added to make clear the need to generate basic capacities and capabilities for everybody to have a fulfilling and dignified existence. The three core dimensions are:

Distributive justice

It asserts the equitable allocation of environmental benefits and burdens across all societal groups. It addresses the fair distribution of resources like clean air, water, and green spaces, as well as the equitable exposure to environmental hazards such as pollution and waste. This concept emphasises that no particular group, especially marginalised communities, should disproportionately bear negative environmental impacts.

Recognitional justice

It focuses on acknowledging and respecting the diverse identities, values, and rights of all communities affected by environmental policies and practices. It emphasises the importance of recognizing the unique cultural, social, and historical contexts of different groups, particularly marginalised and indigenous communities. This concept seeks to ensure that these communities are seen, heard, and included in environmental decision-making processes, addressing power imbalances and fostering inclusivity.



Procedural justice

It involves ensuring fair and inclusive decision-making processes in environmental governance. Key in this respect are transparent, accessible, and participatory mechanisms that allow all stakeholders, especially marginalised and vulnerable ones, to have a meaningful voice in environmental decisions. This concept seeks to provide equal opportunities for participation, aiming to rectify power imbalances and enhance accountability in environmental policymaking.

From the core dimensions to an extended vocabulary of Environmental Justice

Multiple dimensions of (in)justice have been recognised as relevant when dealing with issues related to EJ beyond the three main dimensions (distributive, recognitional, procedural). In this respect, particular attention has been paid to the need of creating "capabilities" for human flourishing. This aspect expands our understanding of justice in environmental contexts with considerations about how the distribution of various goods (e.g., natural resources or environmental services) links to an individuals' capacity to flourish (Menton et al. 2020). We can also observe extensions in the recognition and **diversification of the subjects and modes of justice** towards restorative and reparative approaches as well as towards intergenerational and more-than-human (multi-species and ecological) justice (Schlosberg 2013; Schlosberg & Collins 2014). Related to that, the following extended dimensions of justice are relevant in considerations and practices around land use:

Restorative and reparative justice

Restorative justice is an alternative justice paradigm that prioritises understanding and enacting what is needed to restore relationships in the aftermath of injustice or wrongdoing. It implies addressing harm or risk of harm through engaging those affected in reaching a common understanding on how the harm or wrongdoing can be repaired and justice achieved. Where retributive justice aims to hand out punishment, reparative justice "involves the restoration or reconstruction of confidence, trust, and hope in the reality of shared moral standards and of our reliability in meeting and enforcing them" (Walker 2001, 120). An example of restorative justice in environmental context are climate-related loss and damage processes (e.g., in small islands or after disasters). Another example in the EU context is represented by the directive in Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (CSDD), which allows those harmed to appeal and ask for reparation also through legal processes.

Intergenerational (climate) justice

Intergenerational justice highlights that that pursuing welfare by the current generation should not diminish opportunities for a good and decent life for succeeding generations. This kind of justice encompasses all core dimensions of EJ (Skillington 2019). It recognises future generation as a subject of justice (recognitional justice). It entails the attribution of responsibility for past and current greenhouse gas emissions, distribution of endowment and natural resources, displacement and imposition of types of climate risks (distributive justice). Further it implies the restoration of earth systems and humans-nature relationships through governance structures in decision-making (procedural justice).



More-than-human justice

Multi-species justice is a concept that acknowledges the interconnectedness of human and non-human species (Ethical Considerations include animals, plants, and ecosystems; recognition of the intrinsic value and rights to exist and flourish also of Non-Human Beings); challenges anthropocentric views that prioritise human interests above all others; comes from the animal rights movement. **Ecological Justice** pushes the idea further beyond species. It includes more generally non-living entities as actual or potential subjects of justice: e.g., rivers, mountains, soil. A case directly important for land use is "Soil justice" as the equitable distribution and management of soil resources to ensure sustainable agriculture, ecosystem health, and food security for all communities, which also involves addressing social and economic disparities that affect marginalised and vulnerable populations, promoting practices that enhance soil health and resilience (Shiva 2015).

Towards an intersectional and decolonial Environmental Justice

Over the years, the EJ movement has included new framings and vocabularies to understand and talk about issues related to social and environmental justice in different contexts and locations (from local to global) and as emerging from the struggles and scholarship of diverse marginalised communities (e.g., indigenous people). This extension "recognises power dynamics, complex interactions among injustices, and listens to the different 'senses of justice' and desires of theorists, activists, and other stakeholders from the Global South." (Menton et al. 2020). More recent understandings of EJ emphasise the importance of intersectionality and decoloniality.



Figure 7: Images evoking intersectional approaches to EJ: Connecting Gender Equality to Environmental Justice from IWRW and the 2020 March for Women

Intersectionality

The term intersectionality was coined by feminist civil rights activist and legal theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw and can be defined as "the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage." (Crenshaw 2013). In the face of overlapping, systemic injustices, EJ follows an intersectional approach, which aims to bring together converging issues of race, gender, migration, disability, ethnicity and other axes of difference (Malin and Ryder 2018; Menton et al. 2020). Recently, the idea of



"intersectional environmentalism" has been introduced to explicitly understand and address issues of EJ at an intersection and overlapping with the other systems of injustice mentioned above (Thomas 2022). An intersectional lens is important to be able to understand how multiple systems of injustice intersect when dealing with environmental issues, including those related to land use. Examples include women's unequal access to land rights in most regions of the world, xenophobia and racism against minorities in land appropriation (e.g., of traditional land users), hazardous waste (e.g., dumping waste in the periphery of European cities or in the countryside) (Armiero 2021), and gender disparities in health impacts due to unequal exposure (e.g., women in poor urban neighbourhoods) (Kotsila et al. 2022).

Example: "Known as Mar de Plástico (Sea of Plastic), the Campo de Dalías in El Ejido, Almería (Spain) is an enormous network of greenhouses covering 31,000 hectares, which makes it the biggest greenhouse surface in the world and even visible from space. With the development and the expansion of intensive agriculture "under plastic" (greenhouse), the first migrations in the '70s included temporary workers, mainly Spanish and Eastern European Roma, who, with the time, also settled definitively in and around Ejido. The second migration was in the early '90s, which included African migrants. Both groups suffer daily racism, harsh working conditions, environmental hazards, harms, and spatial segregation since their arrival (..) The situation in El Ejido is described as 'modern- day slavery'."

Source: **EJ Atlas**

People with mental and physical disabilities, for example, are disproportionately affected by the negative implications of environmental and climate change (e.g., in environmental disasters or when exposed to higher levels of pollution). They have also historically been disregarded in the design of the built environment. For example, urban planning has long discriminated against people with disabilities through the design of inaccessible and unwelcoming housing and streets, public and private spaces, and through inaccessible communication of information. Most people with disabilities thus suffer from situations of environmental injustice from distributive (as they are more heavily harmed), recognitional (as their needs and voices are often not heard), and procedural (as they are not part of decision-making processes about environmental issues) perspectives (Kosanic et al. 2022). However, "injustices and oppressions are also not experienced evenly; deep intersections are at play, as reflected by activist Indigenous disabled people, disabled people of colour, disabled people in the global south, queer disabled people, and disabled women and girls." (Stafford et al., 2022, 104). An intersectional lens is thus necessary to develop land use planning strategies and practices that address issues of EJ for people with disabilities.

Decoloniality

The concept of decoloniality may acquire different meanings in different contexts. Yet, there is a general agreement that **decoloniality** represents a critique of modernity as embedded in European (geopolitical and epistemological) colonialism and imperialism. "**Colonialism, first, foremost, and always, is about Land**" (Liboiron 2021, 10) and "[t]he Focus on Land – what it could be, what it might become, what it is for – does not only mean accessing Land as property



for settlement, though it often does. ... It can mean access to Indigenous Land for scientific research. It can mean using Land as a Resource, a practice that may generate pollution through pipelines, landfills and recycling plants". Thus, a decolonial project aims to dismantle, among others, modern and Euro-centric notions of development and knowledge that reproduce various forms of violence and oppression, including extractivism, racism, patriarchy, and cultural domination (Quijano 2007).

In the European context, the Sami people, indigenous to northern Europe, face significant environmental justice issues related to land rights and resource exploitation (Rights at risks: Arctic climate change and the threat to Sami culture). Their traditional lands, known as Sápmi, are threatened by industries such as mining, logging, and wind energy projects, which disrupt their way of life, including reindeer herding and fishing. Additionally, climate change disproportionately impacts the Arctic region, further endangering their livelihoods and cultural heritage.

Given the indissoluble connection between colonialism and land not only in terms of property, but also in terms of knowledge and imaginaries, a decolonial approach can also be used to identify entire world-views and cultural attitudes (e.g., Western and modernist ones) that constitute barriers for more just and equitable land use within Europe. Examples of world-views that represent barriers for more just land use also within Europe include: (i) framing 'nature' as a resource and service provider for humans, who are seen as separate from nature; (ii) dominance of technoscientific policy solutions; (iii) a limited approach to justice (Ramcilovic-Suominen 2021). Alternative world-views would for example be based on different needs, such as: (i) the need to abandon anthropocentric views and nature-human duality; (ii) the need to place "planetary" justice at the centre of sustainability and climate action versus technoscientific solutions; and (iii) the need to expand our understanding of justice to act upon climate and epistemic justice, including self-determination and self-governing authority.

1.4 Framing (in)justice in land use change: A Justice Lens Introducing a Justice Lens

The **Justice Lens** (Figure 8) that we introduce here visually synthesises the insights from the previous sub-sections and aims to make them usable and actionable in the context of land use research and practice. The Lens is structured in progressive steps (Identify, Analyse, Plan for action), which are meant to help think through concrete issues of justice in specific situations. Further, the Lens visualises multiple dimensions of justice within one image and can be used as a tool to frame justice issues without losing the complexity embedded in addressing issues of justice.

Using the Justice Lens can help both to **raise awareness and enable reflection** about situations of (in)justice in land use research and practice where justice issues emerge (see Part 2). Here we first explain the main components of the Lens. In Part 2 - *Navigating (in)justice in land use research and practice: A stepwise process* - various activities will be introduced on how to start using it.



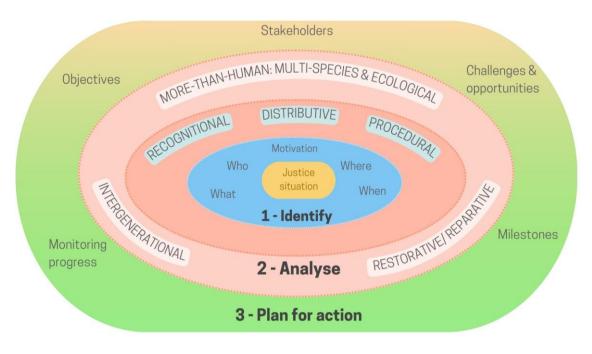


Figure 8: Justice Lens – a visual representation of different discourses and frameworks addressing justice in environmental contexts

Applying the Justice Lens

The Justice Lens centres around a core (the justice situation) and is composed of three circles: 1. Identify, 2. Analyse, 3. Plan for action. The justice situation refers to issues that are contextual and situated in a specific environment, e.g., in the urban context of a city or in an entire region. The spatial dimension is especially important here because, depending on the boundary of the situation, different actors might be involved, and specific actions need to be undertaken. Each circle presents a step needed for understanding and addressing issues of justice in land use change:

- (1) The inner circle in blue invites focusing on specific situations of (in)justice as to:
 - Why is it a justice situation and what drives you to address it? (Motivation)
 - What kind of actors were/are involved in it? (Who)
 - What exactly is the situation about? (What)
 - Where does the situation unfold geographically, so the (social/ cultural/ political / institutional etc.) context is clearer, and when, so temporal references can be made? (Where/ When)
- (2) The middle circles in pink highlight the different dimensions of justice from the core to the extended ones. Six main dimensions of justice are identified as relevant to the land use change context: 1) recognitional, 2) distributive, 3) procedural, 4) restorative/ reparative, 5)



intergenerational, and 6) more-than-human (multispecies/ ecological)⁴. The dimensions tend to overlap and interweave in reality. By bringing them together, the Justice Lens can help to raise multiple questions related to different dimensions at the same time, or to select those that are more relevant depending on the situation chosen in the inner circle (Table 1 below presents the central questions that can help to understand what the dimensions are about).

(3) The outer circle in green-yellow helps to plan for action. The key considerations in this respect include clear and feasible objectives for dealing with the justice situations, stakeholders that need to be involved, challenges and opportunities from addressing the issues of (in)justice identified and analysed, brainstorming main steps of the process (Milestones), and monitoring progress towards achieving the objectives.

Table 1: Questions supporting the framing of issues related to justice in land use research and practice

Recognitional justice	Distributive justice
 What are the needs of various population groups in society? How do existing societal structures affect vulnerable groups? How can the rights of vulnerable populations be recognised? 	 How is the distribution of benefits and costs (e.g., of potential actions or research projects) assessed? How are potential costs and possible negative effects distributed? Are responsibilities distributed across different population groups?
Procedural justice	Restorative/Reparative Justice
 Who participates in decision-making and strategy development (e.g., public/private sector, vulnerable groups)? How (if at all) do population groups participate in different design, implementation and evaluation phases (e.g., whether it includes stakeholder participation)? 	 Are past and ongoing environmental harms (historical and systemic injustices) on marginalised communities recognised (and how)? Are participation and empowerment of affected communities in decision-making processes prioritised (and how)? Are damaged relationships within communities and between communities and their environments repaired (and how)?

⁴ The definition of each dimension is presented in section 1.3. In the Justice Lens, we did not introduce the intersectional and decolonial dimensions of justice emphasised in section 1.3. This is mainly due to pragmatic reasons and in order not to overwhelm the users of the Lens, who might be new to conceptualisations and theories of justice. However, we recommend to make use of intersectional and decolonial considerations when working with the Justice Lens as we point out in Concluding reflections.



Does the pursuit of welfare by the current generation diminish opportunities for a good and decent life for succeeding generations? Are there processes in place that ensure the rights of future generations? More-than-human (Multispecies, ecological) Is the interconnection and interdependence of human and more-than-human subjects considered and respected? What ethical status do I attribute to more-than-human subjects? Are non-human stakeholders taken into consideration?



2. Navigating (in)justice in land use research and practice: A stepwise process

In this section, you will **learn how to navigate justice issues in your own work** by ...

- Establishing safe spaces and reflecting on your own positionality when preparing for justice work
- Getting familiar with a stepwise approach for "navigating" (in)justice using the Justice Lens as a tool in land use research or practice
- Applying the stepwise approach: (0) creating awareness, (1) identifying justice situations, (2) analysing them and (3) planning for action
- Learning about available resources and various tips that can help to apply these steps in practice and to adapt them to your own context

2.1 Setting the scene for navigating justice situations collaboratively

Before moving to a stepwise process that allows for navigating justice situations in specific contexts, it is important to create the conditions for collaborative work to ensure fair and meaningful processes. This implies paying attention to the creation of safe spaces and ability to reflect on one's own positionality. We note that we intend such collaboration in teams comparable to PLUS Change, working to identify and understand (in)justice relevant to their own research and practice. Engaging directly with communities facing injustices requires additional attention from trained facilitators.

Cultivate inclusive and safe spaces

Safe spaces are environments where individuals, particularly those from marginalised or oppressed groups, can feel secure, respected, and free from discrimination, harassment, or any form of harm and can express their views freely. These spaces aim to provide support, understanding, and acceptance. The idea of safe spaces emphasises the need for physical and psychological safety in the different moments of collaboration. This is particularly relevant to the collaborations that are embedded in real-world contexts, involve multiple actors, and deal with issues related to justice. Such collaborations are complex and often characterised by unequal power dynamics.

Creating safe spaces may practically mean in this case being sensitive towards specific needs of individual participants and groups, especially of the most vulnerable as well as treating opposing views, interests and values with respect. Deliberate "unlearning" is an essential part of this process. The latter can be defined as "a shared, intentional departure from previous routines and systems of meaning associated with … individual professional practices" (Alonso-Yanez et al. 2019).

The lack of a safe space may manifest in tense emotional dynamics, dominant voices taking over in the discussions, limited possibility for a constructive debate and not sufficiently appreciated partners' expertise. If resources allow, engaging professional facilitators may help to create safe spaces with an appreciative atmosphere, transparency of communication and decisions taken, and making power imbalances explicit and addressing them (Knickel et al. 2023).



Keep in mind that establishing inclusive and safe spaces in diverse groups including individuals from marginalised and oppressed communities takes time and effort. This is manifested, for example, in the need to consider ways to make the space accessible in terms of how you reach out to different groups (e.g., what communication forms, channels and languages you use in this process; how the best time to hold a meeting is selected) and how you manage the space when actors are present (e.g., how can you break physical and mental barriers that keep people from entering space?).

Creating safe spaces is a skill that requires significant time, care and sensitivity that extends beyond the scope of this handbook.





Tip! Learning from PLUS Change

As the topics of equity and justice in general and in the context of land use in particular, might be characteristic of conflicting perspectives of different actors and power imbalances, you could start activities by committing to 'safe space rules' to set the scene for the interaction.

The following "safe space principles" were introduced at the kick-off meeting of PLUS Change during an interactive session to break the ice and jointly create 'norms' of collaboration that prioritise safety, inclusivity and mutual learning. We note that in PLUS Change, we created a safe space to work together as project partners. This is not the same as working with communities experiencing injustice, where different processes are needed:

Please confirm your commitment to the following 5 principles to ensure the workshop is a safe, constructive and productive working environment for all participants:

- 1. I will be respectful of other people's opinions, even where I do not agree.
- 2. I will be conscious of the potential implicit power I have within this group of people, including (but not limited to) on the basis of seniority, race, gender and sexual orientation, and the impact this may have on how I respond, or am responded to.
- 3. I will be sensitive to the space I occupy, both physically and in terms of the time I spend talking in discussions.
- 4. I will not use language that would hurt or belittle others.
- E I am have in the enivit of constructive collaboration and discussion



Tip! Method

If you are looking for inspiration on methods and tools for collaboration between actors from research and practice tools, <u>td-net – Network for Transdisciplinary</u> <u>Research</u> is a free resource, structured along various process phases and key

⁵ These principles were shared by the project coordinator Prof. Julia Leventon and implemented by the team of Konrad Lorenz Institute when running Ethics webinars in PLUS Change.



Reflect on your positionality

The idea of positionality means that social and political context shape our identity. Each of us has multiple identities that can be manifested through race, ability, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status and more. We also identify with different roles such as professional and family roles. Reflecting on positionality is crucial for research and practice because positionality influences and biases our outlook on the world. When dealing with issues of justice in research and practice contexts, it is important to be able to reflect on our own positionality because of often-imbalanced situations of power and privilege. This becomes a personal 'lens' for what we do, how we interact, make decisions and interpret the world around us. Working in sustainability-oriented EU projects involving science-society collaborations adds an additional layer of complexity in terms of roles and responsibilities. Depending on the context and a project, researchers, for example, are often expected to juggle between roles such as topic or methods expert, project manager, knowledge broker or facilitator over time. Reflecting on our own positionality in these contexts increases our reflexivity, which can be defined as a process of examining one's conceptual baggage, one's assumptions and preconceptions, and how these affect decisions (Hsiung 2010).



Tip! Method

You can use a <u>Social Identity Map</u> to explicitly identify and reflect on your social identity. This method helps to address the difficulty that many novice critical qualitative researchers experience when trying to conceptualise their positionality. Although the Social Identity Map is targeted at researchers, it can be adapted to provide a flexible starting point for reflection about positionality to other kinds of actors as well.

2.2 Overview of the stepwise process

Part I introduced a historical perspective on some aspects of the EJ movement and built a vocabulary to talk about EJ issues with a focus on how discourses and practices have emerged at the interface of EJ and land use (sections 1.2 and 1.3). The Justice Lens provided a synthetic visualisation of the multiple dimensions of EJ and how they can be used to zoom in on specific justice situations. Here we move towards operationalising this understanding to support the navigation of justice issues in your own work.

Following the logic of the Justice Lens (moving from the inner to the outer circles), we suggest structuring the navigation process in four consecutive steps (see Figure 9 below):

⁶ See more on what positionality is here https://engineerinclusion.com/what-is-positionality/



- **Step 0: Creating awareness** of different perceptions of (in)justice and **learning to frame** it. We recommend implementing this as a **preparatory step**, especially when engaging with people who are not familiar with ideas related to EJ.
- **Step 1: Identifying** and explicitly **reflecting** on **your** justice situations using a Justice Lens (Figure 14, inner blue circle).
- **Step 2: Analysing** these situations using the dimensions of the Justice Lens (Figure 15, pink circles in the middle).
- **Step 3: Planning for action** by formulating clear and feasible objectives, identifying stakeholders, specifying challenges and opportunities, monitoring progress, and evaluation (see Figure 16, outer green-yellow circle).

In section 3.2, you can see three cases illustrating how each step is implemented by the different project partners in PLUS Change.



Figure 9: Graphic illustration of the four main steps





Keep in mind that the approach to navigating 'injustices' in land use and the insights emerging from this stepwise process will differ depending on your context. For example, depending on whether you are focusing on (in)justice from the perspective of policy, community work, activism, teaching, research, or journalism or whether you are part of a small private sector organisation or a big public sector organisation, your "justice situations" will likely differ. Remember to adapt the guidelines and activities provided in each step to your own situation.

2.3 Implementing the steps

To facilitate going through the steps described in the following, you can associate each of the steps with a project phase:

- 0: Team-building
- 1: Problem identification and framing
- 2: Problem analysis
- 3: Action

This is indicative to give you an idea of which justice considerations and related activities should be prioritised in which phase, but these can also overlap and interweave throughout a project.



Keep in mind that the approaches suggested in this Handbook have been designed in the context of a large EU-funded Horizon Europe project with 12 Practice Cases. These are real-world examples of land use decision making (also called "multi-actor hubs") in diverse geographic areas across urban, rural, and peri-urban contexts in Europe. References to available resources, methods, networks in this Handbook should also help you to make the necessary adjustments to the context you are operating in. This might include considering whether activities should be held in person or online, what venue and resources can be used, what group size and constellation would be optimal in your case, time that might be reasonable to dedicate to specific activities (e.g. per step) etc.



Step 0: Creating awareness of different perceptions of (in)justice and learning to frame it

Various creative activities can be used to start thinking of (in)justice in land use research and practice and to transition from a more abstract to a more concrete level where you and your audience can relate these notions to your work.



Activity ...

a. Explore understandings of justice

This activity can be used in participatory settings with diverse audiences having different understandings and experiences in relation to justice. The results will give you an idea of how participants imagine and conceptualise justice in a particular context 1) without asking directly and 2) doing it in a fun way. This activity is also a conversation starter: the results popping up on the screen real-time will allow for an immediate brief discussion.

b. Break the ice

This activity can also serve as an icebreaker. Before getting into a more in-depth conversation on or discussion of justice in the land use change context, you can run a simple interactive and imaginative exercise asking participants to answer two open-ended interrelated questions:

- 1. If justice in land use change were an animal, what animal would it be?
- 2. Why? Please state the animal together with the reason.

c. Using an interactive tool to discuss and record the answers

Depending on whether you are engaging in this step in person or online, you can use corresponding tools. If online, you can use a tool for interactive polls called <u>Mentimeter</u>. For basic activities, you can use a free version of the tool.





Tip! Learning from PLUS Change

<u>Mentimeter</u> was used in all three Ethics webinars to both break the ice at the beginning and explore partners' initial understandings of justice in a fun and creative way. In Webinar 1 two questions were asked at the beginning (for the results see Figure 10):

- 1. If justice in land use change were an animal, what animal would it be?
- 2. Why? Please state the animal together with the reason.

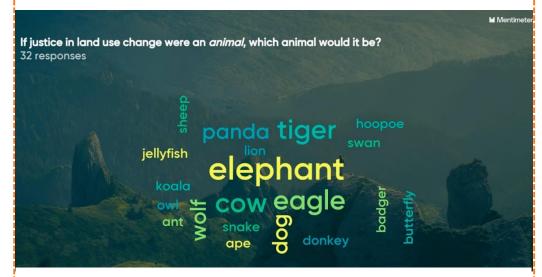


Figure 10: Mentimeter results of Question 1 posed during Ethics Webinar 1

These questions were repeated at the end of Webinar 3 to compare the answers (for the results see Figure 11), i.e., perceptions and attitudes, after the participants completed this series of the webinars.

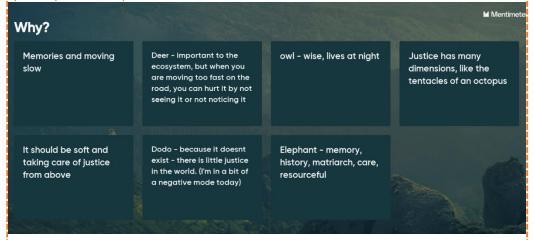


Figure 11: Mentimeter results of the follow-up question posed during Ethics Webinar 3

This exercise proved helpful in PLUS Change in this initial stage of getting familiar with equity and justice matters in the land use context.





a. Get familiar with 'injustice' in different contexts

This activity can help to get more familiar (either real or fictional) cases where (in)justice and (in)equity emerge. In the context of a participatory and collaborative project, you can ask participants to familiarise themselves with diverse cases compiled as part of the Global Atlas of Environmental Justice and the legend with categories (Figure 12). You can explore the Atlas individually and have a team discussion afterwards or start off with a team discussion right away.

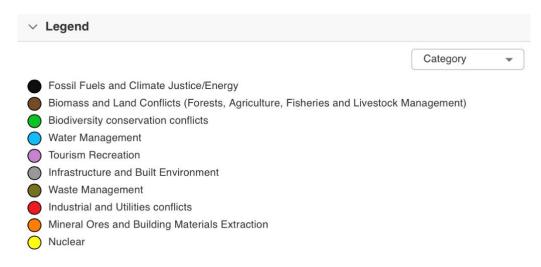


Figure 12: Legend with categories from the Global Atlas of Environmental Justice

b. Engage with concrete examples of injustice

After looking through the different examples of the <u>Global Atlas of Environmental Justice</u> globally, select one or two that caught your attention and think:

- What is the context of these justice situations? Historical, cultural, social, political...
- Who is affected? Who is benefitting?
- Is the situation relevant to land use, climate change or biodiversity? If yes, in what respect?



Keep in mind that looking at the examples of injustices from completely different contexts compared to the ones you and your team (and stakeholders) are working in might be demotivating. Once you notice that your team and/or stakeholders are not very interested in discussing 'exotic' examples, make sure to move the discussion closer to the relevant context.



c. Make sense of the examples in the Global Atlas using the Justice Lens

Working with the Atlas should help you to approach the justice situation(s) in your own work and help you frame your thinking for your own land use research and practice in the next step (**Step 1**). You can think of the examples you selected in the Atlas and look at the Justice Lens for a few minutes (section 1.4). Then, use the Justice Lens as a set of categories to make sense of the selected examples. You can focus on the kind of information you have available in relation to the situation using the inner blue circle, ask questions related to the different justice dimensions (see Table 1) in the pink circles and reflect on which dimensions from the Justice Lens are relevant to the situation you are looking at and which ones are not. Think about the interconnections and overlaps across the different dimensions.



Step 1: Identify and reflect on "your" justice situations



Tip! Learning from PLUS Change

Below is an example of how one of the small groups of participants in PLUS Change worked with the <u>Global Atlas of Environmental Justice</u> on the Miro board. <u>Miro</u> is a helpful online tool for collaborative work (e.g., brainstorming, strategising) online with basic free features.

Interactive Ethics Webinar I Miro Board **Part I** - Breakout session <u>**Group 2**</u>

Instructions

- 1. See your dedicated workspace (Group 1, ... 2, ...3 etc.)
- 2. Choose a timekeeper for this exercise (one of the participants)
- 3. Get familiar with the Atlas here: https://ejatlas.org/ Check the legend with categories and the diversity of justice issues
- 4. We presented 10 drivers of social-environmental injustice in the urban context. Now please look through the different examples of the Atlas globally. Use the following questions to guide your thinking:
 - · What's the context? Historical, geographical, cultural...
 - · Who is affected? Who is benefitting?
 - · Relevance to land use, climate change and biodiversity?
- 5. Note 3-5 relevant examples

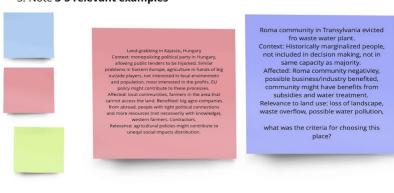


Figure 13: Example from the Ethics Webinar 1 in PLUS Change - working with the Miro board

This step is a starting point to think about issues of justice in your work and develop a shared understanding of justice situations related to land use change. But what is a *justice situation*? And how can you identify or describe it?

In this Ethics Handbook, by "justice situations" we mean situations that are or might be problematic from a justice perspective in your work. This may include a workshop/ meeting you are planning with stakeholders, a spatial plan you are developing, decision-making process on land use management, application of specific research methods etc.



Central to this step is to brainstorm and identify what might be critical justice situations in your own work, (collectively) reflect on the meaning of these situations and, ultimately, create their "profile" by describing them. See below the details of the suggested activity on how to do that stepwise.

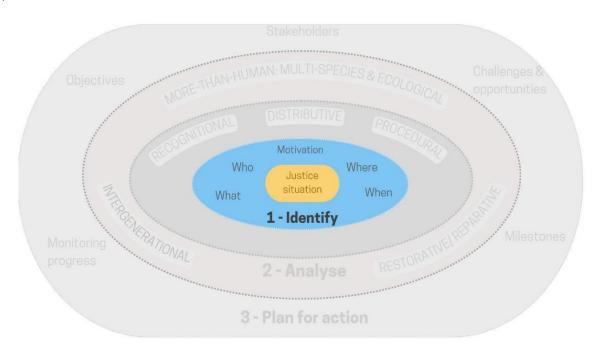


Figure 14: Step 1 of Navigating (in)justice in land use research and practice using the Justice Lens



a. Brainstorm several situations where justice issues emerge

Starting off this exercise, you can collect participants' input on situations related to land use change where questions of justice and equity play a role. At this point, the aim is to keep it open and invite a wide range of ideas. To achieve that, you can ask yourself what works best for your setting - maybe keeping in mind previous group experiences - and choose the way that is more meaningful to you and your team.

b. Reflect on your ideas and clarify your motivation

Now take a moment to think about the brainstormed ideas by reflecting on "the WHY":

- Why is this situation related to justice in your view?
- Why is it an issue? (e.g., socially, culturally, historically, politically)
- What is your motivation to address the issues of justice in this case?





Keep in mind that in this reflection you should be an active listener and mindful of the different views that might be voiced. Disagreement might arise on which justice situations are considered important. See if it is possible to select several justice situations that everyone is comfortable to work with.



Tip! Method

You can use a method called Idea tree. It is a brainstorming exercise that works well in collaborative contexts and research settings. It helps to generate ideas and prompt novel links between them and that also gives voice to each member of a group. The insights from the exercise need to be further reviewed, prioritised, refined and integrated in the collaborative process. See the detailed description of the method and further information on how to use it in the *td-net toolbox*.

c. Create a short narrative of the justice situation

Once your justice situation(s) is/are clear, you can explore it in more depth by capturing its context, places, actors, etc. in a short structured narrative.

To create such a narrative or a 'profile', you can think along the following categories and capture the ideas visually:

- Why is it a justice situation in the first place
- Why are you interested in addressing it? (use the insights from the previous part related to motivation)
- What is this justice situation about?
- When and where does (in)justice occur?
- Who is affected or involved?
- Name of your justice narrative (see Table 2 for examples of the justice situations identified by PLUS Change partners)



Tip! Method

To organise the results, you can use either an online tool like a <u>Miro board</u> or a flip chart if the activity is carried out in person to map the ideas related to each category identified above.



ou c	Name	Why is it a justice issue?	What is it about?	When and where does it occur?	Who is affected by it/ involved?
1.					
2.					

Example: If you are interested to have a look at how some of the PLUS Change partners identified their justice situations \rightarrow have a look at **Table 4 in section 3.2**.

Step 2: Analyse "your" justice situations

Before further examining the situation(s) identified, reflected upon and described in **Step 1**, you can first take a moment to think:

- What does it mean to analyse a situation as a problem?
- What are the implications of looking at a situation from a justice perspective?

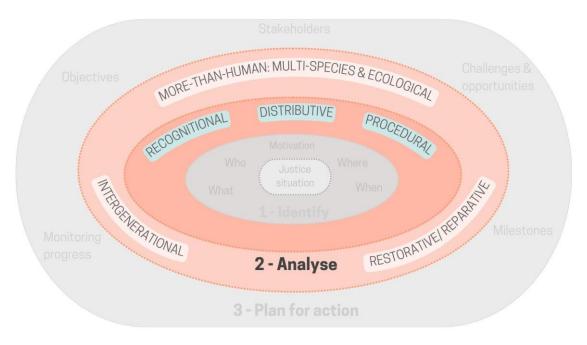


Figure 15: Step 2 of Navigating (in)justice in land use research and practice using the Justice Lens



In **Step 2**, you are invited to carry out a problem analysis of each justice situation identified in **Step 1** using a Justice Lens (Figure 15) and guiding questions (see Table 1 in section 1.4). In the activity presented below, you can see an example of how such problem analysis can be approached.



Activity ...

a. Develop a shared understanding of terms

First, ensure that participants have a common understanding of the dimensions of justice that are introduced in the Lens – from the core ones to the extended ones. Take a few minutes to have a look at Table 1 in section 1.4 with guiding questions and discuss whether the operationalised justice dimensions make sense for participants. Have a brief discussion, if required. You can use the activities in Step 0 above to stimulate this kind of conversation.

b. Apply the justice dimensions to the situation

This is a central and important step in the analysis of your justice situation through a Justice Lens. Using Table 1 in section 1.4, you can ask questions about **the issues in each situation identified in Step 1 that are related to** ...

- ... recognitional justice \rightarrow e.g., Who is recognised (e.g., marginalised actors) and whose voices, knowledge, values are heard, respected?
- \dots distributive justice \rightarrow e.g., How are benefits/burdens distributed for different population groups?
- ... **procedural** justice \rightarrow e.g., What socio-political processes are we dealing with? Is the decision-making process open to all?
- ... **restorative/ reparative** justice \rightarrow e.g., Are past and ongoing environmental harms (historical and systemic injustices) on marginalised communities recognised (and how)?
- ... **intergenerational** justice \rightarrow e.g., Does the pursuit of welfare by the current generation diminish opportunities for a good and decent life for succeeding generations?
- ... more-than-human justice/ multi-species/ ecological justice \rightarrow e.g., Is the interconnection and interdependence of human and more-than-human subjects considered and respected?



Keep in mind that in some cases only one or two justice dimensions might be attributed to a certain situation. In other, more multifaceted cases, multiple justice dimensions are relevant and interwoven.



c. Reflect and discuss

Take a step back and try to see a bigger picture of what you have just worked on together. Discuss:

- What is noticeable?
- Which dimensions are (strongly) represented? Which ones are missing?

This step should help you to 1) recognise the complexity of justice situations and 2) get a clearer picture of the situation alongside the various dimensions of justice.

Finally, you can discuss: **Who** is involved in dealing with these issues? In the project you are working in but also beyond?



Keep in mind that the Lens as presented here does not exhaust the complexity of justice situations and their analysis. For example, the Lens does not explicitly include intersectional approaches or decolonial understandings of justice (see section 1.3). Yet, these are essential in the way we understand justice issues and analyse them.



Keep in mind the potential complexity of (in)justice, which requires you to pay attention also to less obvious interconnections. When reflecting on your justice situation, be aware that interventions may come into effect not only where and how you expect them to but could affect people and places elsewhere. Using a justice approach also means to critically challenge power and questions of who carries responsibility, as those who suffer harm from e.g., environmental degradation the most are usually the ones least responsible for causing it.

Example: If you are interested to have a look at how some of the PLUS Change partners analysed their situations according to justice dimensions in the Lens \rightarrow have a look at **Table 4 in section 3.2**.

Step 3: Plan for action

After Step 1 'Identifying' and Step 2 'Analysing', you can now proceed to planning how to address the justice situations identified. You can plan for action by:

- 1. defining clear and feasible *objectives*,
- 2. identifying affected **stakeholders** and other stakeholders that ought to be involved in dealing with the (in)justice situation,
- 3. assessing challenges and opportunities associated with the justice situation,
- 4. setting out *milestones* (main steps of the process), and



5. measuring the progress.

These sub-steps of the planning for action are illustrated in Figure 16. Below, we provide guidance about how to deal with each one at a time with suggested activities.



Figure 16: Step 3 of Navigating (in)justice in land use research and practice using the Justice Lens

Sub-step: Defining clear and feasible objectives



a. Be mindful of different perspectives and priorities

Addressing issues related to (in)justice requires a good understanding of what exactly needs to be achieved. Remember that participants' perspectives and expectations regarding the identified (in)justice situations in **Step 1** and their analysis in **Step 2** might be unclear or differ.

b. Embrace the differences and explore the way forward

First, you can prompt participants to reflect on which goals might be pursued and elicit their views and expectations. Second, with certain activities you can support participants in developing clear and feasible objectives (e.g., given resources available, project timeline, leeway in adjusting the topic). Make sure it is an iterative process, maybe even a facilitated one (see section 2.1).



c. Start co-developing a roadmap

Organise and record the joint thought process in any appropriate way (e.g., using online tools, a flip chart, post-its). You can design it as a roadmap that can give orientation/ serve as a compass to commit to, but which can also be adjusted en route depending on the circumstances.



Keep in mind that knowing your team will help you design this important step according to their needs. This includes thinking about appropriate techniques such as creative or art-based methods, particular visual aids that could work well in your team, setting the scene in terms of spatial arrangements, accounting for group dynamics by choosing certain communication and facilitation techniques as well allocating sufficient time for this exercise.

Sub-step: Identifying relevant stakeholders



Activity ...

a. Map out stakeholders important for your case

Along with defining the goals, it is important to find out what groups of stakeholders are affected by the identified injustice situation, or not directly affected but need to be involved. Participatory stakeholder mapping, for example, can help your group learn about what to focus their efforts on.

b. Devise a strategy to involve those who can support your cause

You can start brainstorming either individually or within the team and capturing the ideas guided by the following questions:

- Who are the affected parties or other stakeholders that should be involved?
- Which individuals or groups in their official or non-official function have particular knowledge and important resources in relation to the identified justice issues?
- Whose support do you need to achieve the stated objectives? How are you going to
 involve these stakeholders? How can you ensure their commitment in addressing the
 issues related to (in)justice you have identified and analysed?
- Would these stakeholders be supportive or rather hinder dealing with the identified injustices?





Tip! Method

You can use one of the established methods and tools to map your stakeholders. See one of the examples with further details on how to implement it from *participatory planning*.

Sub-step: Assessing challenges and opportunities



Activity ...

a. Brainstorm the implications if integrating and NOT integrating justice into your work

Building on the kind of objectives set for the action and the identified stakeholders as well as specific ideas and discussion in the group, formulate challenge(s) and opportunity(ies) of incorporating justice in your work. And think about what would happen if you don't? Record your answers on post-its and/ or the flipchart if you work collaboratively (Miro board can be used if you work online).

b. Reflect and assess strategically

Assess those by answering the following questions:

- What opportunities do you foresee from addressing the issues you identified and analysed?
- What challenges do you foresee from addressing the issues you identified and analysed?
- Whose help do you need to capitalise on opportunities and address the challenges?



Keep in mind that it is important to explore different directions and not push for consensus prematurely. Creating conditions conducive to meaningful and equitable collaboration for exploring justice issues is paramount. Establishing safe space (including attending to power dynamics) is essential in this respect (see section 2.1).

Sub-step: Setting out milestones



Activity ...



a. Break down your plan into manageable pieces

At this moment in time, you can organise a team conversation on what the main steps of the process are that would lead to the realisation of your stated objective(s). Apart from <u>what</u> they are, try to also consider <u>when</u> they should happen.

b. Carry out a Theory of Change approach to plan out the milestones

This is one of the known approaches which helps to define not only (short- and long-term) objectives or outcomes but also allows planning out the key elements of the process. This framework allows mapping backward to identify changes that need to happen ("preconditions") to reach the stated objectives/ outcomes.



Tip! Method

You can use elements of *Theory of Change* to plan out the main steps of the process/ its milestones. Theory of Change encompasses multiple theoretical frameworks that outline and clarify various stages of transformative processes. This approach acknowledges the complex nature of socio-ecological systems, including cause-and-effect relationships, which makes it a relevant approach for land use research and practice.

Sub-step: Monitoring progress



Activity ...

a. Stay on track with your objectives

As part of this final step of planning for action, it is important to reflect within the group on the different perceptions and priorities of dealing with the identified (in)justices. A systematic and transparent approach can help you check the direction the work is taking and assess to what extent you are advancing towards achieving your stated objectives and whether they need readjustment.

b. Remain systematic, agile and reflexive in your monitoring and evaluation

Continuous monitoring and evaluation are recognised as crucial for achieving goals in collaborative work, especially in the sustainability context. In contrast to previously dominant (and considered as being more rigorous) approaches to evaluation with quantifiable indicators, there is growing recognition of the importance of embracing complexity, uncertainty, subjectivity and context specificity. The latter perspective requires very different approaches to evaluation – those that are more reflexive, pluralistic, inclusive and foster mutual learning. Various frameworks and methods exist to monitor the progress of joint work. One of the simple yet meaningful ways to do it is to initiate systematic individual and/ or team-level assessments on whether you are staying on track with your intended goals.





Tip! Method

You can use exercises called <u>"Reflexive Monitoring in Action"</u> and <u>"Most significant change"</u> to monitor and evaluate in a reflexive way whether your processes are on track and whether something should be adjusted.



Keep in mind that it is important to explore different directions and not push for consensus prematurely. Creating conditions conducive to meaningful and equitable collaboration for exploring justice issues is paramount. Establishing safe space (including attending to power dynamics) is essential in this respect (see section 2.1)

Example: If you are interested to have a look at how one of the PLUS Change partners analysed their situations according to justice dimensions in the Lens \rightarrow have a look at **Table 4 in section 3.2**.



3. Inspiring through examples from PLUS Change

This section presents examples from PLUS Change that illustrate different ways of approaching justice in land use research and practice depending on the context. The section aims to exemplify and inspire by ...

- Providing an overview of justice issues that manifested in the work of 22 partners, common trends and relative importance of justice dimensions in partners' work
- Showcasing the different framings of justice in land use processes across different geographical, socio-cultural and political contexts in Europe
- Exemplifying how three partners used the Justice Lens

3.1 Introduction to illustrative examples from land use research and practice

This section builds on the two previous sections that presented how to *understand* and *navigate* (in)justices in land use research and practice. It aims to inspire and illustrate different ways of approaching justice in land use research and practice depending both on the specificities of contexts and actors. Below, you will find:

- ... a synthetic overview of the justice situations identified in the work of 22 partners in PLUS Change (Table 2). This part makes more tangible how justice situations manifest for different PLUS Change partners showing certain common trends (more on this below). At the same time, it illustrates the diversity of justice-related issues across different geographical, socio-cultural and political contexts in Europe as well as in the kind of land use processes they are dealing with. This is captured by a word cloud (see Figure 17).
- ... detailed illustrations of how three organisations from PLUS Change addressed the larger themes related to equity and justice in the project. The organisations were selected based on the type of organisation to demonstrate how different types of organisations (Research, Practice, those working at the Science-Society Interface) operating in diverse contexts in Europe use the Justice Lens to approach their concrete justice-related situations.

If you are interested in discovering diverse examples from PLUS Change, see the Equity and Justice Plans in the Annex. The Plans illustrate how an organisation can develop strategies to navigate their concrete justice-related situations in practice following the steps outlined in section 2. These Plans also exemplify that justice can be approached differently depending on the needs, institutional setups and resources available.

Justice situations identified by PLUS Change partners

Table 2 illustrates the diversity of justice situations that the project partners have identified in their own work so far⁷. To allow for the identification of trends that might be specific to particular PLUS Change partners, we present the three types of organisations according to organisation types: Practice Cases, Research Organisations and Organisations at the Science-Society Interface. Several organisations have 'mixed roles' in the project (e.g., having a research role but also coordinating Practice Case work). For the purpose of this Handbook, we refer to them according to their more prominent role, noting that this is a simplification. The partners are colour-coded in Table 2 as follows:

⁷ The original names of justice situations have been copy-edited to increase clarity and consistency across the cases for the Ethics Handbook.



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- Green for Practice Cases which are represented by organisations such as provinces, regional development and planning agencies, local and regional governments and institutions fostering cross-border cooperation,
- Purple for Research Organisations which features research institutes and universities,
- Red for Organisations at the Science-Society Interface which, for example, includes
 a think tank focusing on urbanism, citizen engagement and communication; a network
 of designers, researchers, artists and storytellers; non-profit organisations connecting
 governments, citizens, academic institutions, and businesses; and an environmental
 consultancy.

A number of cross-cutting themes have emerged for all organisations. One of the central topics is the **need to recognise marginalised voices** - sometimes referred to as those previously marginalised, or vulnerable, or affected but not invited into discussion or decision-making, their inclusion and explicit representation in various processes and outcomes related to land use. The key concern in this respect is how to make processes of participation in workshops, approaching stakeholders (e.g., communication, data collection) and knowledge co-production more inclusive and equitable. Several factors are mentioned as hindering the processes to become equitable and transparent, such as the way such processes are designed, rigid institutional rules, language barriers and power dynamics. The importance of recognition of marginalised voices and representation of their needs highlighted in many Equity and Justice Plans is in line with the highest relative importance of the recognitional dimension of justice for partners' work (overall and per partner type, see Figures 18 and 19).

Related to that is the perception of potential bias as a cause of various injustices in land use research and practice. Several of the plans mention the role of **power imbalances** as adversely affecting justice in land use research and practice across issues, such as the development, implementation and interpretation of research methods, allocation of resources or governance of interventions. In particular, they point out the potentially inequitable distribution of decision-making power may fail to represent but a limited number of perspectives.

At the same time, the review of all Equity and Justice Plans in PLUS Change showed that certain justice-related issues are more characteristic of a particular organisational type. In **Practice Cases**, the following issues showed to be central:

- more inclusive and equitable decision-making (e.g., related to a spatial plan in the Province of Lucca, Italy, and in Green Karst, Slovenia).
- balancing different sectors and different priority areas such as ecological integrity, social
 equity and economic development (Kaigu Peatland in Latvia), careful planning of
 connections between industrial, agricultural and residential areas (Province of Lucca,
 Italy), maintaining employment and productive activity, including in densely populated
 areas (Île-de-France Region, France).
- temporal aspects of justice: past vs. present (reparative/restorative) and present vs. future (intergenerational). These aspects were captured in the situations related to acknowledgement of historical trauma, loss of livelihoods, cultural disruption, and ongoing marginalisation of affected communities (South Moravia, Czech Republic); disadvantageous policy decisions towards future generations due to short-term changes in policies (Flanders, Belgium); and the need to preserve a living environment for all and



for future generations, being mindful of the most vulnerable (Île-de-France Region, France).

Some of the situations are rather unique to the historical, political and socio-cultural context where they are identified. This is illustrated by a Practice Case in Moravia where several of the justice situations have "historical roots dating back to the collectivization era in the 1950s⁸ [...] continue to manifest in the present day through ongoing social, economic, and environmental challenges affected communities face." These situations are related to the engagement of local communities impacted by collectivisation and intensive agriculture and dealing with the legacy of environmental degradation.

In Research Organisations, the following issues emerged more prominently:

- justice situations were often related to the choice frameworks and methodologies and how these shape the outcomes; thus emphasising possible underrepresentation and required attention to equity (in CzechGlobe, Czech Republic).
- Other issues related to justice concerned whether perspectives on historical land use change are sufficiently diverse and well represented in collected data. If that is not the case, there might be bias in deciding on the key governance-intervention variables shaping land use change (Leuphana University Lüneburg).

For Organisations at the Society-Science Interface,

- justice situations tend to cover issues of access to and allocation of resources (also due to language barriers, for example)
- other justice situations were about considerations of equity, inclusivity and representation in various processes (e.g., art-based sessions, storytelling, research practices, in-person meetings) and outputs (e.g., in Centre for Systems Solutions, ISOCARP, Knowledge SRL).

Table 2: An overview of the justice situations identified by partners

Partner, country	Justice situation				
Global Change	 Sensitivity in application of research methods to ensure equitable outcomes 				
Research Institute of	Ambassadors and their inclusion in the project				
the Czech Academy of Sciences	 Risk of developing frameworks leading to underrepresentation and biased results 				

⁸ "Collectivisation refers to the forced consolidation of privately owned agricultural land and resources into collective farms controlled by the state during the communist era, particularly in the 1950s. This process involved expropriating land, livestock, and equipment from individual farmers, often under duress and accompanied by social and economic upheaval." This quote and the quote in the main text is taken from the Equity and Justice Plan of South Moravian Agency for Public Innovation (JINAG). For further info, see the Annex with all Plans.



Partner, country	Justice situation
(CZECHGLOBE), Czech Republic	
ISOCARP Institute Centre for Urban Excellence	 Language barriers in communication and dissemination Most communication work stays within the academic/ land use practice bubble
(ISOCARP), the Netherlands	Accessibility of research results
Konrad Lorenz	Creating inclusive and safe spaces in the project
Institute for Evolution and Cognition	Fostering equitable knowledge co-production
research (KLI), Austria	Foregrounding ethics, equity and justice in a large EU TD project
BIOBASED	 Whose voices are accounted for in art-based research sessions?
CREATIONS	 Ensure visibility and usability of arts and storytelling results
(BIOBASED), the Netherlands	 Being inclusive about topics and participants in art-based research processes
Institute for	 Equitable allocation of housing in Zaanstreek-Waterland
Environmental	Meadow Birds Preservation
Studies at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Stichting VU), the Netherlands	Winners and losers of rural area transition(s)
Plan4All (P4ALL),	 Digital gap – access to plans, maps and decision tools only in digital form
Czech Republic	 Algorithmic Bias in Land Use Modelling
	 Partial representation of interests and stakes in Kaigu peatland Practice Case
Baltic Studies Centre (BSC), Latvia	 Balancing fair and transparent research outcomes with stakeholder relationship management
	 Balancing ecological integrity, social equity and economic development
University of	 Potential in the representation of values in media analysis
Ljubljana (UL), Slovenia	Potential bias in creating and interpreting scenarios
	 Ensuring equitable access to resources for all practice cases
KNOWLEDGE SRL,	 Equitable access to in-person workshops and meetings
Italy	 Awareness of potential bias in representation of perspectives and research outcomes
	 Balancing partners' needs and capacities in policy simulations
	 Ensuring just representation of perspectives in policy simulation narratives



Partner, country	Justice situation
Centre for Systems Solutions (CRS), Poland	 Equitable distribution of costs, benefits and risks in developed transition pathways
	 Different perceptions of space and time in land use change narratives
Stockholm University	Bias in the formulation of cause-effect in past land use changes
(SU), Sweden	 Lack of long-term perspective on sustainability conception and solutions
Constantine the Philosopher	 Application of research methods does not include perspectives of all relevant stakeholders
<u>University</u> (UKF),	 Needs, views and values of stakeholders are not representative
Slovakia	 Mismatch between affected and involved stakeholder groups
Leuphana University	 Possible bias in deciding on the key governance-intervention variables shaping land use change?
Lüneburg (LEUPHANA),	 Considering material and documents in local language in transnational research
Germany	 Ensuring diverse perspectives on historical land use change are represented in the selection of interviewees
	 Inclusion and representation of a wider range of stakeholders in the revision of the provincial spatial plan
Province of Lucca	 A more inclusive decision-making process on park management
(<u>Prov Lucca</u>), Italy	 Careful planning of connections between industrial, agricultural and residential areas
	 Inclusion of all affected stakeholders in the development of a regional spatial plan vs. decisions taken by municipal representatives
RRA ZELENI KRAS, Slovenia	 Improve communication to align diverse interests and promote fair resource allocation
	 Effective communication with landowners to ensure proper land management for local livelihoods and wildlife
Euregio Meuse-Rhine	 Upstream-downstream solidarity in cross-border river basins
(EMR), cross-border region of Belgium,	 Empowering (e.g., women-led) family farms in sustainable land use and supporting nature-based solutions
Germany and the Netherlands	 Accounting for interests of single land users and society at large as well as the needs of other species
Mazovian Office of Regional Planning	 Planning and implementing public communication in order to reach relevant stakeholders
(Mazovia Reg), Poland	Balancing the interests of various stakeholders
Flemish Land Agency	 High economic risk for early adopters and exclusion by mainstream farmers
(VLM), Belgium	 Ineffective land use policies disadvantaging land owners
. , ,	 Short-term decisions excluding future generations



Partner, country	Justice situation			
South Moravian	 Engaging with local communities impacted by collectivisation and intensive agriculture 			
Agency for Public Innovation (JINAG),	 Navigating conflicting perspectives on land use and agricultural practices 			
Czech Republic	 Addressing the legacy of environmental degradation and its disproportionate Impact 			
	 Access to facilities and services for the whole population 			
Île-de-France Region	 Preserving a living environment for all and for future generations, being mindful of the most vulnerable 			
(Region), France	 Maintaining employment and productive activity, including in densely populated areas 			
Verein Parc Ela,	Bias in who gets to participate in workshops			
Switzerland	Sustainable authentic local food that is affordable to all			
Surrey County Council (Surrey CC),	 Identification and inclusivity of stakeholders in community engagement processes 			
UK	 Opportunity for change needs to be distributed equitably 			

The word cloud illustrates the keywords relevant to the diverse justice situations identified by PLUS Change partners. It has been generated based on the justice situations and derived from all Equity and Justice Plans received from PLUS Change partner.



Figure 17: Word cloud generated based on the names of the justice situations. The situations are taken from partners' Equity and Justice Plans



Dimensions of justice and their relative importance in partners' work

The two charts below (Figures 18 and 19) show the frequency of mentions of each justice dimension—recognitional, distributive, procedural, restorative/reparative, intergenerational and more-than-human (multispecies/ecological)—in all submitted partners' Equity and Justice Plans.

Figure 18 shows the relative importance of justice dimensions, which was achieved by counting the overall frequency of mentions in all Equity and Justice Plans received⁹. Recognitional justice is mentioned most (25% of registered justice dimensions) followed by distributive (18%) and procedural justice (17%). These are the *core* justice dimensions presented in the first ethics webinar. As for the extended dimensions, intergenerational dimension has been most prominent in the justice situations identified by the partners at this point of the project (15% mentions) followed by more-than-human (multispecies/ ecological) (13%) and restorative/ reparative justice (12%).

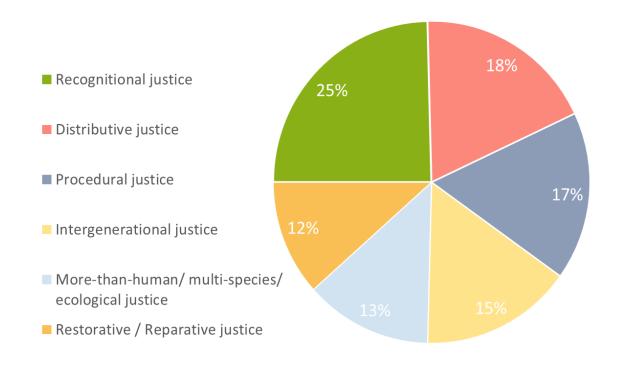


Figure 18: Justice dimensions: Frequency of mentions in partners' Equity and Justice Plans

⁹ The justice dimensions were coded according to the analysis carried out by each partner in their Equity and Justice Plans.



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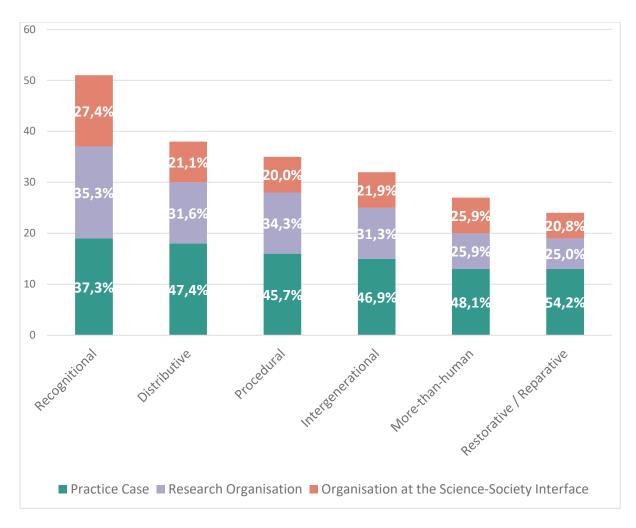


Figure 19: Justice dimensions: Frequency of mentions in partners' Equity and Justice Plans per type of partner organisation

Figure 19 further differentiates between mentions in Equity and Justice Plans per type of organisation considered (Practice Case, Research Organisation, Organisation at the Science-Society Interface). The distribution of justice dimensions per type reflects the unequal ratio of the organisations considered (a total of 22 Equity and Justice Plans were examined for analysis, consisting of 9 Practice Cases, 8 Research Organisations and 5 Organisations at the Science-Society Interface).

3.2 Examples of stepwise navigation of (in)justice in land use research and practice

This section aims to elucidate how researchers and practitioners from different geographical, socio-cultural and political contexts in Europe frame (in)justice issues in their work. More specifically, in the following you will learn about how three different types of organisations - Practice Case (Province of Lucca), Research Organisation (University of Ljubljana) and Organisation at the Science-Society Interface (Centre for Systems Solutions) build capacity to identify and reflect, analyse, and plan for action regarding specific (in)justice and



(in)equity situations in the land use context. First, the three illustrative cases are briefly presented in Table 3, featuring their name and profile, geographic location, their key goals in PLUS Change and their role in the project.



Table 3: Profiles of three different types of organisations used as illustrative cases

PRACTICE CASE



PLUS Changer: PROVINCE OF LUCCA, ITALY

About: Local, intermediate authority representing 35 municipalities in Northwest Tuscany

Goals: To collect data on crop types and climate change impacts to foster a better understanding of land-use planning interactions

Project role: Sharing economic and social data related to land use planning, engaging local stakeholders in spatial planning & governance consultations

RESEARCH ORGANISATION



PLUS Changer: UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA

About: Research group examining landscape as a living environment, focus on the interplay between landscapes & society

Goals: To offer insights into future landscape possibilities & support the creation of strategies for a sustainable society

Project role: Integrating & upscaling Practice Case scenarios into EU-wide scenarios, understanding and aligning different spatial development visions

ORGANISATION AT SCIENCE-SOCIETY INTERFACE



PLUS Changer: CENTRE FOR SYSTEMS SOLUTIONS (CRS), POLAND

About: Non-profit organisation linking theory & practice by applying diverse ranges of system tools

Goals: To develop new flexible and innovative tools to foster practice that respects both scientific analysis & public discourse

Project role: Guiding PLUS Change partners in co-creating policy simulations to explore possible "pathways" of transformation to sustainable land use



Aspects of the steps

PROVINCE OF LUCCA, ITALY

Inclusion and representation of wider stakeholders in the revision of the provincial spatial plan

UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA



Potential bias in creating and interpreting scenarios

CENTRE FOR SYSTEMS SOLUTIONS, POLAND



Ensuring just representation of perspectives in policy simulation narratives

STEP 1: IDENTIFY AND REFLECT ON "YOUR" JUSTICE SITUATIONS

Why is it a justice issue?	•	Need for a balance between several "justices": economic, social, human, environmental and health-related	•	Ensuring consideation of values & goals of those who generated the scenarios in data interpretation & scenario integration		Different voices/ perspectives should be justly represented & balanced, while ensuring that nothing (or minimal) is lost in translation
What is it about?	•	Periodical update of the planning document regulating land use & development of human activities	•	Biases can appear or be reinforced via multiple «filters» of interpretation applied to the scenarios created by practice partners	٠	Development of land use and transformation narratives
When and where does it occur?	•	During the document revision in accordance with policy decisions; Lucca provincial territory	•	During the harmonisation and integration of the scenarios in the PLUS Change project		Within and throughout the PLUS Change project
Who is affected by it/ involved?	•	Province of Lucca, directly affected actors such as citizens, economic & environmental organisations, sanitary system	٠	Project partners (e.g., Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Practice Cases, Biobased, ISOCARP) and future users of the results		All PLUS Change partners, including Practice Cases and their stakeholders

STEP 2: ANALYSE "YOUR" JUSTICE SITUATIONS

Relevant	
dimensions	of

Distributive justice – The decisions are taken by a small number of actors while potential costs and

Intergenerational justice – Scenarios will be based on current needs and values. How will the scenarios impact future generations?

Intergenerational, recognitional, more-than-human justice – How can we ensure that we have justly



justice; Who is involved?	negative effects fall on various population groups - usually the least represented		represented all (or at least the most critical) perspectives?
		STEP 3: PLAN FOR ACTION	
Objectives	 Improve decision-making process by creating citizen-participated focus groups 	Truthfully represent scenarios & consciously document possible sources of bias	 Fairly represent discourses and 'reality'
Stakeholders	 Involving those who will be affected by changes to the spatial plan 	 PLUS Change practice and research partners, other relevant stakeholders 	All Practice Case partners and their stakeholders
Opportunities	 Considering long-term social, environmental & economical impact instead of a system based on 'representation by numbers' 	 Actors engagement and trust in each other's knowledge 	Gaining trust between PLUS Change partners & CRS as an essential component
Challenges	 Changes in document preparation procedures are needed, e.g., via citizen consultation approaches 	 Concerns whether generalised scenarios can meaningfully relate to individual cases Possibility of "upscaling" conclusions 	 Personal & work bias Complexity focus may seem difficult to understand
Milestones	 Analysing the previous territorial plan Deriving best practice examples to change consultation process & evaluation criteria Carrying out capacity-building seminars 	 Establishing common language to avoid procedural misunderstandings & misinterpretation of outcomes Collecting workshop outcome data, recording limitations/ biases in reporting 	 Reviewing simulation narratives and policy propositions throughout the process Finalising base simulations & initiating customisation Developing Practice Cases policy simulations
Monitoring progress	 Timely implementation of actions In-depth assessment upon completion of consultation process & review approval 	 Iterative validation of outcomes amongst project partners involved in the scenario creation 	 Using the Justice Lens as a tool to reflect on each of the Pathways workshops of the Practice Cases

Table 4: Stepwise navigation of (in)justice situations by PLUS Change partners



In Table 4, you can see how the partners in each of these cases understand and frame (in)justice issues in their work, analyse the justice-related issues and start planning concrete strategies to address them using the Justice Lens as a tool. To do that, the partners followed the steps presented in Part 2 'Navigating (in)justice': 1- Identify and reflect, 2- Analyse, and 3- Plan for action. By detailing three of these examples, this section aims to inspire different ways of addressing (in)justice situations depending on their particular contexts, for example actors' priorities, needs, constellations and mandates, resources available and individual and institutional capacities.



4. Concluding reflections

This Ethics Handbook emerged from the activities of PLUS Change and its main insights were tailored to the people, processes and contexts in the project. Some of the limitations of the Ethics Handbook can be traced back to still ongoing and further developing processes aiming to provide orientation to work that is intrinsically contextual in terms of places, people, and issues involved. This process has implied constantly traversing and bridging (a) **general theories and principles of ethics and justice** (i.e., related to ethics, equity and environmental justice that were presented and discussed in the Interactive Webinars), (b) **examples and cases from multiple parts of the world** that capture very different situations of (in)justice (e.g., those from the EJAtlas that partners worked through), and c) the heterogenous situations and needs of 22 partners in the context of a Horizon project such as PLUS Change (i.e., synthetically presented and exemplified in Part 3 and presented in the Annexes).

We see this process of traversing and bridging across these dimensions and levels as a mutual learning process that is still ongoing (as the work related to justice and ethics will further develop in PLUS Change over the upcoming years). From the Equity and Justice Plans it is possible to highlight the main challenges that research and practice partners encounter when invited to foreground issues of justice and equity in their work. For example, the relevance of recognitional (in)justice for most partners highlights that one of the main challenges consists in reaching out to those sectors of the population who are most vulnerable and affected, for example, by climate change, but who are often not heard in the decision-making process related to land use. The design of the processes, different kinds of bias (e.g., in theoretical frameworks, methods, interpretation of results), rigid institutional rules, language barriers and power dynamics are mentioned as hindering factors to equity and transparency. At the same time, the plans show that important opportunities emerge when leveraging existing partnerships that build trust and support mutual learning.

Such a learning process might even be never-ending (as it will always depend on the situation, contexts, and people involved). The results and guidance presented in the Ethics Handbook thus capture an initial stage of a mutual learning process involving all partners in PLUS Change. It allows one to see the challenges more clearly and seize the opportunities that emerge in these mixed research-practice contexts. This also means that the material presented comes with different kinds of limitations that need to be acknowledged in order to be able to also leverage its potential. We invite readers and users of this Ethics Handbook both inside and outside PLUS Change to consider that:

- The perspectives provided in the Ethics Handbook on complex and contextual issues are not (and maybe cannot be) exhaustive. For example, the need to include intersectional and decolonial aspects became increasingly clear in the course of the development of the Justice Lens. Yet, these perspectives for time and pragmatic reasons were not fully included in the Lens as used by the partners (see Annexes).
- The tools, steps, and recommendations presented in the Ethics Handbook are meant as general guidelines to inspire justice work and help structure necessary processes. From the perspectives in the Justice Lens to the different steps, we provide suggestions prompting reflection and necessary adaptation depending on the people involved and contexts where equity and justice issues are addressed. The Ethics Handbook assumes the will to develop capacities (of individuals, groups and entire organisations involved) to deal with issues of ethics and justice in own work. Given the amount of work, reflection, and discomfort of justice work, this Ethics Handbook can



help to structure and orient a learning process, in ways that also generate outcomes that contribute to a better world.

In the upcoming years of the project, the Justice Lens and the whole Ethics Handbook will be further developed in iteration with the partners. We will have focus groups (group interviews) with some of the partners to get feedback and learn more about the challenges they had in working with the Lens and developing the Equity and Justice Plans. We will involve the PLUS Change Ambassadors (through feedback and further interactions) in the further development of the Handbook and conduct various activities to stimulate mutual learning on issues of ethics and justice in PLUS Change. Through all these activities, we will then produce an updated Ethics Handbook that will embed the rich reflections and experiences of all partners in the PLUS Change. Hopefully, this work will inspire other projects and endeavours to further deal with the never-ending process of pursuing and shaping just sustainability transformations through research and practice.

5. Acknowledgements

We thank all the partners in PLUS Change for their cooperation and willingness to attend the Webinars as well as to creatively, critically, and constructively engage with concepts and ideas of justice through their work on the Equity and Justice Plans.

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6. Additional resources

Global Atlas of Environmental Justice

Reflexive Monitoring in Action

Td-net Toolbox

The Systems Thinking Playbook

Theory of Change



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8. Annex: Equity and Justice Plans of PLUS Change partners

Annex 1: Template used by the partners for developing own Equity and Justice Plans

Webinar 3: Developing an Equity and Justice Plan for Partners in PLUS Change

Rationale, Aim and Expected output

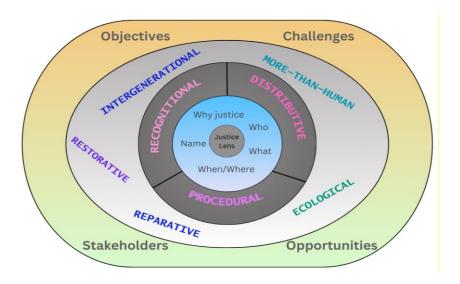
Building on the work in the three Ethics webinars in spring 2024, the plan is meant to help incorporate a justice lens to shape partners' research / practice and foster their capacity to recognise and navigate justice-related issues on a daily basis.

The plan will be developed following the steps below. Each Partner in PLUS Change will develop an *Equity and Justice Plan*. Those participating in Webinar 3 will serve as **ambassadors** for the partner organization they belong to and will be involved in the drafting of the plan for all those participating in PLUS Change from their organization.

By the end of Webinar 3, participants are expected to produce a good draft of the plan, which includes: (1) Identification and reflection on justice situations, (2) Problem analysis of each justice situation; (3) and actual plan. We will work on the three stepwise in Webinar 3.

We will follow the logic of the **Justice Lens below**. In the development of the plan, we move from the inside circle towards the outside.

- Step 1 (Inner circle): Identification and reflection on justice situations
- Step 2 (Grey circles): Problem analysis of each justice situation
- Step 3 (Outer circle): Drafting of the plan





Step-by-step development of a plan

Identification and reflection on justice "situations"

Identify up to three "situations" that are or might be problematic from a justice perspective in your work in PLUS Change (e.g., a specific Task in the project, a workshop you are planning, research you are engaging in, activities planned, application of specific research methods).

You are for now the *ambassadors* for justice on behalf of your organisations. You will check with the others involved before submitting the overall plan.

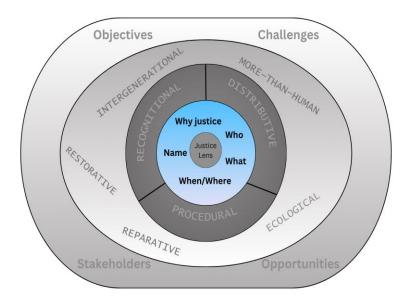
Note: You also started thinking of 'cases' of (in)justice in Webinar 2 → see the Miro board

Brainstorm these justice situations and write them up in the table below:

	Name of the situation	Short descriptions
1.		
2.		
3.		

Provide a 'profile' of the justice situation as to: What is the place in PLUS change? What is the context? Who is involved? When? Where? Use the justice lens (the inner part) to think about it and the table below to write it up.





	Name	WHY justice?	What?	When / Where?	Who?
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					

Problem Analysis of each justice situation

Use the Justice Lens to be reminded of the different dimensions of justice, from the core ones to the extended ones. The table below summarizes questions related to the different dimensions presented during Webinar 1 and Webinar 2.

Recognitional justice	Distributive justice
-----------------------	----------------------



- What are the needs of various population groups in society?
- How do existing societal structures affect vulnerable groups?
- How can the rights of vulnerable populations be recognized?
- How is the distribution of benefits and costs (e.g., of potential actions or research projects) assessed?
- How are potential costs and possible negative effects distributed?
- Are responsibilities distributed across different population groups?

Procedural justice

- Who participates in decision-making and strategy development (e.g. public/private sector, vulnerable groups)?
- How (if at all) do population groups participate during different design, implementation and evaluation phases (e.g. whether it includes stakeholder participation)?

Restorative/Reparative Justice

- Are past and ongoing environmental harms (historical and systemic injustices) on marginalized communities recognized (and how)?
- Are participation and empowerment of affected communities in decision-making processes prioritized (and how)?
- Are damaged relationships within communities and between communities and their environments repaired (and how)?.

Intergenerational

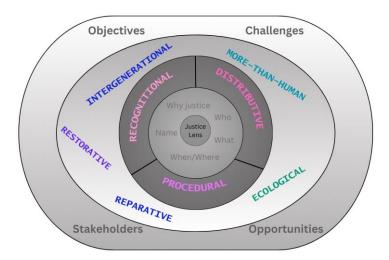
- Does the pursuit of welfare by the current generation diminish opportunities for a good and decent life for succeeding generations?
- Are there processes in place that ensure the rights of future generations?

More-than-human (Multispecies, ecological)

- Is the interconnection and interdependence of human and more-than-human subjects considered and respected?
- What ethical status do I attribute to more-thanhuman subjects?
- Are non-human stakeholders taken into consideration?



Justice situation 1:

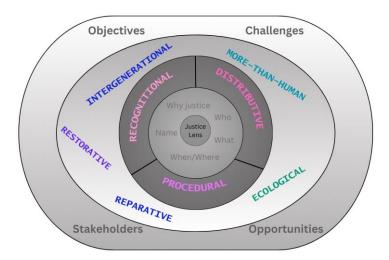


Ask yourself: What are the issues related to recognitional / distributive / procedural / restorative / intergenerational / more-than-human justice in each situation? Who is involved in dealing with these issues in PLUS Change?

Ask yourself: Whose input might be missing to ensure that your analysis is appropriate?



Justice situation 2:

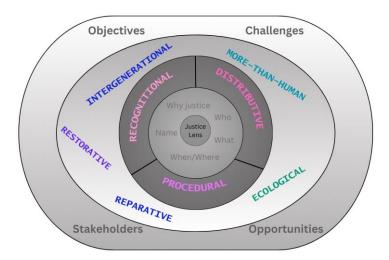


Ask yourself: What are the issues related to recognitional / distributive / procedural / restorative / intergenerational / more-than-human justice in each situation? Who is involved in dealing with these issues in PLUS Change?

Ask yourself: Whose input might be missing to ensure that your analysis is appropriate?



Justice situation 3:



Ask yourself: What are the issues related to recognitional / distributive / procedural / restorative / intergenerational / more-than-human justice in each situation? Who is involved in dealing with these issues in PLUS Change?

Ask yourself: Whose input might be missing to ensure that your analysis is appropriate?



Drafting the plan

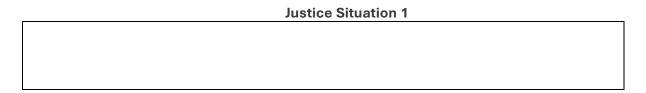
Using the identified justice situations (Step 1) and relying on the analysis you made of them using the different dimensions of justice (Step 2), in this last step, you will develop the actual plan by: establishing objectives and identifying relevant stakeholders (in 3.1), assessing challenges and opportunities (in 3.2), creating a timeline (in 3.3), and making a formative evaluation plan (in 3.4).

You will develop the first draft of the plan during Webinar 3 and share it with the other people in your partner organization who are involved in PLUS change before submitting it.



3.1 Establish Objectives and identify relevant stakeholders:

- What?
 - Define clear objectives for addressing issues related to (in)justice that you have identified and analysed.
 - Are these objectives realistic and feasible?
- Who?
 - O Who are other stakeholders or affected parties that should be involved?
 - Whose support do you need to achieve these objectives? How are you going to involve them?
 - How can you ensure their commitment in addressing the issues related to (in)justice you have identified and analysed?
- Use the boxes below to summarize answers.





Justice Situation 2
Justice Situation 3
3.2 Assess challenges and opportunities:
 What opportunities do you foresee from addressing the issues you identified and analysed?
 What challenges do you foresee from addressing the issues you identified and analysed?
 Whose help do you need in order to capitalize on opportunities and address the challenges?
Chancinges:
 Use the box below to summarize your answers.
Justice Situation 1
Justice Situation 2
Justice Situation 3

3.3 Create a timeline

- What are the main steps of the process that would lead to the realization of your objective?
- In M33, 36, and 39, we will have a second series of Interactive Ethics Seminars.
 Use M33 as a main milestone where you will present your reflections on how you have dealt with and addressed justice-related issues in your work.





Annex 2: Examples of Equity and Justice Plans in PLUS Change



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