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# CLIMATE JUSTICE GATHERING 2022

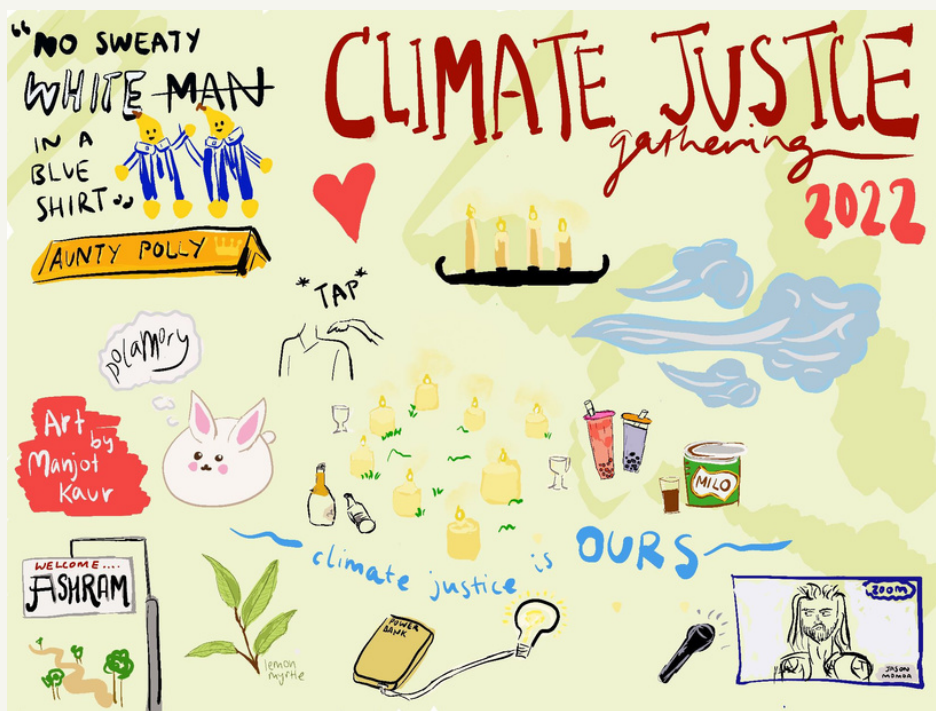
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DEMOCRACY IN  COLOUR



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, and culture. We pay our respect to Elders and acknowledge the Traditional Owners who have cared for the Country since time immemorial. Sovereignty over this land was never ceded – it always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.



Art by Manjot Kaur

We thank our donors for supporting this retreat. The Sunrise Project, The Next Generation, Greenpeace Australia Pacific, Orange & Sardines, Climate Action Network Australia (CANA)

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# CLIMATE JUSTICE INTRODUCTION

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**“If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. If you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”**

**Aboriginal Activists Group, Queensland, 1970**

This report shares the community and solidarity built between First Nations, Pasifika and People of Colour\* (FNPPOC) climate leaders in Australia following the first Climate Justice Gathering held 21-23 November on Gadigal land, 2022.

This gathering was a tremendous moment connecting FNPPOC climate leaders, using a decolonial led approach to relational organising and building movement power. The gathering created an enabling space that allowed us to deeply listen to each other’s stories.

Together we understood our histories of colonialism, genocide, exploitation, persecution, violence, racism and migration that shapes our diverse identities and weaves the common threads that connect us to each other. We have a deep understanding of how the climate crisis is perpetuating systems of colonial, capitalist, racist and patriarchal oppression that are disproportionately impacting our people in

Australia, in the Pacific, in Asia and across the Global South.

The retreat sought to embed practices of self-care, community-care and collective leadership for all participants. Our common climate justice advocacy is grounded in First Nations sovereignty, racial justice, economic justice, protection of environment and biodiversity, gender and human rights. We believe in the leadership of FNPPOC-led climate justice campaigns to be critical to developing just and equitable solutions to the climate crisis. This gathering has set the foundation for building the power of an intersectional FNPPOC movement and advocating for rights-based climate justice.

The purpose of this report is to share FNPPOC climate priorities; the challenges we encounter in pursuing rights based climate justice and garner a commitment to paving a pathway to build our solidarity with each other and with the wider climate movement.

This work was led by a team of FNPPOC leaders from the Tomorrow Movement, United Workers Union, Democracy in Colour, Multicultural Leadership Initiative, Sydney Alliance - Voices for Power, Environmental Justice Australia and supported by The Sunrise Project.

*\*For the purpose of this report, "First Nations, Pasifika and People of Colour" is used to refer to summit participants, based on the three groups who held caucus at the summit. We note that identity is complex, can overlap, and is different for each person and community.*

# BACKGROUND

The Sunrise Project commissioned Kavita Naidu for a 6-month mapping project to help identify the Australian Energy Transformation Program's long-term climate justice campaign priorities. The climate justice scoping project explored how rights-based advocacy grounded in First Nations sovereignty, racial justice, economic justice, gender and human rights can scale FNPPOC-led energy justice campaigns to build movement power while winning stronger government policies on affordable clean and efficient energy.

The project collaborated with Democracy in Colour, Voices for Power - Sydney Alliance, Tomorrow Movement, United Workers Union, (initially First Nations Clean Energy Network), Environmental Justice Australia and the Multicultural Leadership Initiative.

The scoping project involved desktop research and wide-ranging interviews with climate and human rights activists, unionists, lawyers and academics across Australia to understand rights-based climate advocacy for First Nations and marginalised communities in urban metropolitan and rural remote areas.

Organisations interviewed include Sweltering Cities, Healthy Homes for Renters, 350.org, GRATA Fund, ACCR, United Workers Union, Australian Progress, The Climate Council, Climate Action Network Australia, Oxfam, Action Aid, Edmund Rice Centre, Australian Conservation Foundation, Human Rights Law Centre, Sydney Policy Lab, Climate Justice Union, Castan Centre for Human Rights Law, Amnesty International, Australian Lawyers for

Human Rights, Environmental Justice Australia, Environmental Defenders Office, Hands Off Our Charities, Greenpeace Australia Pacific, WWF-Australia, Pacific Climate Warriors, Climate Justice Programme, Edith Cowan University, University of Sydney, University of Monash, Doctors for Environment, etc.

The interviews shared the diverse climate activities and campaigns of various organisations while the lawyers and academics were able to contextualise the legal and political challenges and opportunities of climate advocacy, human rights and litigation.

The main findings of the scoping project identified the lack of intersectional and racial diversity in the mainstream climate movement as a structural and systemic problem. A lack of intersectional representation - especially in decision-making roles - of gender, class, disability, age, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, place, and more is a direct result of intergenerational structural and systemic discrimination within Australian society.

In turn, the underrepresentation of these groups within the mainstream climate movement upholds and reinforces colonial systems of power, acting as a barrier for impactful work and meaningful action.

White supremacy in the mainstream climate movement suppresses the voices of disproportionately affected FNPPOC communities in urban, rural, regional, and remote Australia.

The human rights impacts such as the right to health, safe and adequate housing, secure employment, self determination, access to land, water, healthy environment and culture are at significant risks for FNPPOC from escalating heat distress, bushfires, floods, droughts, ocean acidification and coastal erosion.

**The increasing cost of living further compounds the burden of injustice and inequality experienced by FNPPOC communities.**

The scoping project aimed to identify the agency and knowledge of FNPPOC communities with lived experiences to meaningfully engage, mobilise and influence just climate action.

First Nations peoples have lived in harmony with nature and land for at least 65,000 years while Pasifika communities are at the forefront of global climate justice campaigns. Australia's diverse POC communities have helped build this economy, form the foundation of its labour force and enriched Australian culture.

The ancestral homelands of POC communities across the Global South are the sites of climate injustices on a global scale. We have the knowledge, and we have the power, to contribute meaningfully to tackling the climate crisis, from the local, to national, to regional levels. We also have relationship accountability towards our various communities, creating a heightened sense of responsibility and stewardship in fighting the climate crisis.

Our challenge is that we do not have the resources, institutional support or the representation within the mainstream climate advocacy movement to fully realise our potential to effect systems change.

# WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- Brought together for the first time, a group of diverse FNPPOC climate leaders in Australia. The enthusiasm was infectious and solid relationships were forged in this space together. We let our guards down, we built trust, shared laughter and tears and felt we were seen.
- Built the foundations for an alliance for continuing collaboration between FNPPOC communities, who are the most impacted by climate justice. This alliance centres empowerment, trust and self-determination rather than outcomes reporting, allowing meaningful and powerful connections.
- Identified common challenges within our work, as well as common strengths and hopes for the future.
- Identified priorities to work on towards climate justice, and what this work might look like.
- Held campaign clinics, identifying areas for future collaboration based on shared goals.
- Paused, reflected, and listened deeply to one another, acknowledging the incredible value of the expertise within the room based on tens of thousands of years of knowledge from our powerful, diverse and thriving communities.

# CLIMATE JUSTICE GATHERING 2022

The first recommendation of the scoping project was to resource a FNPPOC climate retreat to build solidarity with each other; collaborate with and consolidate solidarity between First Nations, Pasifika and POC communities.

## Overall Goals

- To establish an ongoing formal network of Australian POC climate leaders and a space for dialogue, co-learning and sharing experiences between FNPPOC climate leaders.
- To achieve well-resourced climate justice interventions led by FNPPOC climate communities at scale that are supported by the 'mainstream' climate movement and philanthropy for the long term.



## Retreat Goals

- To establish a formal network of Australian POC climate leaders who are willing and able to organise and mobilise POC communities in solidarity with each other; and to collaborate with and to consolidate solidarity with First Nations and Pasifika communities.
- To establish a space for dialogue, co-learning and shared experiences between FNPPOC climate leaders.
- To establish an ongoing space where FNPPOC climate leaders can lead and develop strategies for climate action that reflect our demonstrated power and further potential for winning climate justice campaigns and leading in the Australian climate movement.
- To establish a framework by which POC climate justice leaders might ensure their work supports First Nations climate justice goals, centring sovereignty and human rights"
- Identify what's required to build a bridge between FNPPOC climate communities with the 'mainstream' climate movement and philanthropy, to build a shared understanding of the need to support this work at scale, for the long term.

## Method

There was no single silver bullet on how we organise. The space recognised that we have power and we can use that power for creating this space for us to articulate it together to build a foundation to hold us together in our common goal for seeking climate justice.

We agreed that the concept of outcomes was not needed in this dialogue. We needed to sit together in this space to uphold our ideas rather than fall into the colonial model of pushing outcomes. We have the connection and the divine knowledge to understand who we are and how we take up space and how we can be together.

### **This was the beginning of an ongoing process.**

We chose to begin with solidarity work in this retreat. Post retreat we continue with solidarity and start building on action.

### **Self-care practices and building solidarity**

**A large part of unlearning the usual style of 'conferences' and 'retreats' was to involve the participants to lead their creative expression, art, performance, story telling, knowledge of nature and group activities.**

Guy Ritani, Creative Director - PermaQueer & Campaigner - Pacific Climate Warriors played the piano and organised creative breaks using practices such as somatic dancing and breathing that supported participants and organisers to have an embodied, nurturing experience.

Katelyn Jones held spaces with other First Nations participants to debrief, share stories and provide anonymous feedback to summit organisers.

Aimee Mehan took us around the retreat grounds, sharing First Nations knowledge about the benefits and use of various traditional plants, fruits and trees.

Jacynta Fa'amau, Guy, TJ and Fleur led a decolonised Pasifika session incorporating story and humour on climate justice. Jacynta Fa'amau held space and led a powerful Affirmation Circles exercise to close the retreat.

## Strategy

Overall the strategic alignment is understanding that much of the Australian climate movement does not represent the true diversity of Australia, which in turn makes FNPPOC leadership limited and lacking impact.

Sunrise's most recent Australian climate movement mapping survey found that more than half (54%) of the organisations surveyed had no People of Colour on staff, and only three groups employed more than five People of Colour, and most groups who participated in the survey (83%) employed no First Nations people.

In the same survey, diversity was highlighted as the area most in need of work and with the biggest potential for impact - this was defined as both the diversity of people leading, participating in and speaking for the movement, as well as the diversity of those who are defining the issues that the movement works on.

The retreat is part of a broader emerging Theory of Change to influence the mainstream climate



# 54%

of organisations in the climate movement have no POC on staff

narrative to counter market-driven, techno-scientific and patriarchal solutions over First Nations knowledge systems, First Nations science, systems of governance for Caring for Country, social equality, and justice for people in vulnerable and disadvantaged positions because of structural racism and colonialism in Australia and across parts of the Global South.

The mainstream climate movement's advocacy and campaigns prioritise mitigation as a winnable campaign.

**However, diverse and marginalised communities at the forefront of climate impacts recognise the urgency of adaptation and averting and minimising loss and damage as also critical areas of climate advocacy.**

The retreat sought to bring together the right minds, relationships and access points into alignment as a mechanism to catalyse a new alliance from which to design and deliver campaigns and projects that will strengthen the Australian climate movement.

The outcomes of the retreat will be led in solidarity between FNPPOC climate leaders to accelerate real solutions-oriented climate public policy and industry action through collective organising and mobilising.

The Climate Justice Retreat continued the foundational work begun by First Nations and Pasifika climate movements to include People of Color climate leaders in solidarity to demand rights-based, diverse and inclusive climate justice.

## Limitations

Despite the best efforts of the retreat working group, we recognise the following limitations:

- Inability to secure the attendance of FNPPOC from Western Australia.
- Limited budget restricted the number of participants to only 1-2 per organisation.
- Short timeline to organise and host the retreat.
- A number of FNPPOC leaders were not available in November due to prior commitments to various other meetings and COP27 in Egypt.
- The true diversity and intersectionality of Global South originating climate actors in Australia has to be mapped more comprehensively over a longer period of time so that we can include voices that were missing such as Torres Strait Islanders, Muslims, people with disabilities; greater representation of Global South peoples particularly from Central Asia, Africa and Latin America.

# RETREAT AGENDA AND OUTCOMES

The retreat was designed to be a safe and enabling space to host a rights-based climate justice conversation for FNPPOC climate leaders to share, connect and build solidarity with each other.

The sessions explored and synthesised complex climate narratives from diverse groups to understand what our common climate justice demands are; including the barriers and opportunities that we as a group can tackle and build from together.

As a group, we surfaced clear pathways on strengthening climate justice work in Australia, including amplifying the solutions and stories of FNPPOC rights holders who are

disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis.

We learned from each other on how to embed decolonial practices of self-care, community-care and collective leadership for all stakeholders engaged in this work, recognising that many of us carry existing and inter-generational trauma from colonialism, racism and discrimination.



# DAY ONE

## The Path of Many Colours

*Exploring each other's climate leadership, deep diving on relational solidarity, induction to rights-based climate justice.*

### Welcome

Uncle Allan Murray opened the retreat with Welcome to Country sharing the importance of the First Nations peoples First Nations knowledge systems and custodianship in protecting and preserving the environment.

### Climate Journey of 3 Leaders

“Climate Justice is Aboriginal people getting access to their traditional food over corporations. Aboriginal people go to jail for accessing traditional food, while Corporations are given seafood access.”

***Dr Keely Boom, Executive Director, Climate Justice programme, Aboriginal woman***

“Colonisation is still affecting the Pacific. We need to make room and understand First Nations sovereignty and the importance of customary law. We don't just bring diversity but innovation. And we have to resist bullying and racism.”

***Fleur Ramsay, Head of Litigation and Climate Lead - Pasifika Program, Environment Defenders Office, a First Nations Pacific Islander***

“Despite working in the climate movement for nearly two decades, I can count on one hand the times I was in the same room as other people of colour.”

***Rathana Chea, CEO, Multicultural Leadership Initiative, a Cambodian POC***



## Caucus Reflections

### First Nations

Climate justice is First Nations Justice. We are fighting to preserve our culture and heritage. Cultural justice, cultural protocol and cultural responsibilities to each other are critical to First Nations demands.

**Colonisation took so much, and is still dispossessing us. We have to protect and care for Country.**

We must live in a safe environment, stay connected to Country, and protect our safety and health. Climate is not all external, it is also within us. It is here and it is us. Our systems are being eroded. This is about our survival and not leaving people behind. We must build diverse power and knowledge from the regions to counter extractive capitalism.

Fossil fuel companies need to be held responsible. The wrong people are making the wrong decisions, for example geo-engineering as a solution. We recognise the need for decentering Western solutions and recognising sovereignty, lore, community connectedness and First Nations knowledge systems. Redistributive justice will ensure that the wealth gap doesn't keep growing and exploiting us to grow richer. Our demand for reparations to be paid back where it should be. We have to challenge the existing power imbalances.

“Our responsibility is to mother earth – climate action is not about profit or personal benefit – that’s why we need a rights and justice based lens. Redistribution of power back to mother nature and away from man.”

**Dr Keely Boom**



## Pasifika

The Pacific diaspora recognise that decolonisation is key because it's the State that's sanctioned our loss of culture and displaced and dispossessed our people. Stories are our sovereignty. We have lived through storms, floods, nailing windows, boarding up shutters, moving belongings to higher grounds, collecting rations for families through flooded rivers, being rescued by a surfboard and arriving in Australia trying to connect with a country.

"Our respect for nature and all living things is deeper than our rage. We choose to protect everyone."

**Jacynta Fa'amau, Regional Pacific Campaigner, 350 Pacific**

## People of Colour (POC)

Invisibility of the climate issues that impact POC is frustrating and hurts. Parts of Asia (and Global South) underwater (facing climate disasters) and (barely) nothing on the news. White suffering from climate change is seen as a problem, but coloured problems are invisible. The responsibility that we hold as POC/migrants living in a safe democracy to do this work because of the privilege we have. We cannot take for granted that we can do this work here because of issues of representation - who gets to make the decisions about our communities? Who gets to be at the table? We're all diverse and have had different struggles, but also some of us struggle to a lesser extent. How do we find spaces to ground each other in deep connection even if we don't have the same experiences?

How do you articulate a POC politics— POC is such a broad group so how do we break it down

into one POC politics given there are different groundings from each community with diverse experiences. We have to work out a way to articulate a POC politics grounded in solidarity. We must tackle the divide and conquer that exists between different communities because white structures don't want POC and FN to get together and stand in solidarity. We must recognise the racism and prejudice in our own communities towards each other is a barrier, for example, racism in Asian communities against First Nations people.

## The Wall of Challenges

### Key Takeaways

The dominant white influence, organisations, recruitment, spaces, processes, movement and campaigns are creating barriers for the meaningful participation, leadership, knowledge and voices of First Nations, Pasifika and POC. The narrow focus on mitigation, renewable energy, 'elections' and 'market-driven' campaigns lack 'justice' and rights-based community driven climate solutions.

“They don't want us to tell each other's stories. They don't want us together.”

**Anonymous**

There is a strong underlying recognition and awareness that we ourselves are tackling challenges internally - psychosocial, mental, emotional, by reason of our gender; from our histories of colonisation, migration and injustices as well as having to fight 'externally' for our identities, roles and responsibilities as FNPPPOC climate activists in a settler colony.

Unfortunately, over 250 years of colonial policies and practices in Australia have led to building systems, including within the mainstream climate movement that has led to unequal representation, distribution of power and resources.

The solution is complex, but includes commitments at a minimum to:

- recognise and value the diverse knowledge and lived expertise of FNPPPOC in all work. For example, by prioritising FNPPPOC representation in paid roles, particularly in positions with decision making power and at executive levels.
- working 'with' and not 'for' communities, centering self-determination.
- uplift our voices, our perspectives, and our solutions - including opening up doors so we are involved in discussions and decisions that we are often excluded from.
- provide practical support and equitable access to resources, including information, networks and donor funds.



## The Wall of Solidarity and Hope

### Key Takeaways

We are different, diverse, intersectional and strong with our own unique and common histories of genocide, colonialism and structural racism but we believe that if we stand together in openness, kindness, respect, compassion and with curiosity to listen and learn from each other we can build our power to share hope that our peoples and our communities have every right to lead and fight for climate solutions that work for all of us.

“Movements are more important than lawyers. We need movements to change the atmosphere, to create the spirit so that politicians and decision makers will feel that spirit and make change.”

**Aunty Polly**

# DAY TWO

## A Seat at the Table or Creating Our Own Table?

*First Nations, Pasifika and POC caucus discussions on our communities strengths, challenges, climate justice priorities and exploring what collaboration would look like*

### What do we think should be prioritised in the journey towards climate justice?

#### First Nations Justice

First Nations sovereignty:

- Climate action must be Intersectional and culturally appropriate, working towards a world without systems of oppressions and reimagining systems based on sovereignty and collaboration.
- Get back to old lore and ways to communicate. Get back on Country to heal.
- Decolonising across systems - working towards treaty.
- Move beyond white economic solutions.
- Stop digging coal - communities to come together and say no.
- First Nations led environment law organisation that is global and well funded.

What needs to happen to get us there:

- First Nations work must be First Nations led and grounded in self-determination. The movement must prioritise First Nations recruitment, retention, while ensuring workplaces are culturally safe.
- Pathways for First Nations, Pasifika and POC scientists, lawyers and others into organisations in positions with decision making power. Quotas in organisations for FNPPOC leadership.
- Every climate/environment organisation to have a First Nations justice strategy (internal and external) centreing self-determination and valuing lived expertise.
- Multidisciplinary collaboration. Opportunities for First Nation, Pasifika and POC lawyers, artists, academics and other disciplines to come together for climate justice.

#### Climate Narratives

Messaging and Storytelling:

- Messaging centering strengths and self-determination is essential, changing the narrative to embed human rights into climate action.

- We need a meta-narrative, focussing on data and what joins us, to shift movement and build power to disrupt dominant narratives by climate deniers.
- Encourage First Nations, Pasifika and other POC traditional knowledges and sciences.
- Messaging should be tailored and diverse, so that it works for our different communities.
- Power of art tell stories of a better future - a green, regenerative, beautiful, just and shared future where we can live with less.
- Media training and support that is culturally safe
- Support young people to share bold and true stories

#### Education:

- Changing our education systems, reevaluating how “knowledge” is valued and sits within a colonial hierarchy.
- Education should be free and accessible for all, including education on FNPPOC culture, history and the environment.
- Education which grounds young people in who they are and gives them hope for the future.
- Teach people how to listen, support, show up, and step back when needed.

## Systems Change

#### Legal, Politics and Human Rights:

- No climate solutions that exacerbate climate injustices domestically or globally.
- Hold government and corporations accountable.
- Centre human rights and meet all human rights demands.
- Feminists led gender-just, care-work. Women leadership using intersectional knowledge from the Global South.
- Open borders for affected communities - refugees big climate issue - the challenges of immigration - free movement of people .

#### Capitalism:

- Prioritise people over profit.
- Tackling over-consumption.
- Climate movement to advocate for economic justice looking at root causes.
- Symbiotic relationship to the planet and maximise human happiness.
- Abolish capitalist economic systems.
- Critical feminist BIPOC think tank to develop alternatives.

#### Reparations:

- Talk and action on reparations domestically and globally, centering FNPPOC.



## Climate Issues

### Climate Jobs:

- Just transition - create millions of unionised jobs.
- Get movement to own climate jobs campaign .
- Distributed Climate Jobs guarantee for communities, e.g. every coal miner paid out for lifetime (not become block for political change)

### Land, Biodiversity and Food:

- Community empowerment in food systems - Food is our connection to the environment. We are interdependent and come together learning learning about environment systems and ecology.
- Joint work on ecocide, domestic and international crimes committed by corporations and governments, extinction crisis and multi-species justice
- Spend time on country, upholding First Nations farming techniques.

### Adaption:

- Resilience, disaster risk reduction. Giving resources to frontline communities to respond.
- Just solutions with tangible benefits for communities and nature - e.g. safe and sustainable housing.
- Continue aiming for 1.50C - adaptation is not a reason to give up on mitigation.

### Energy Policy:

- Better energy systems which are sustainable, affordable, and community owned and led.
- Transparency in renewable energy industry - energy democracy.
- Rights based energy revolution.

## Building a New Centre of Movement Power

- Solutions driven by those most affected, centring climate, racial justice and human rights. We must move forward collaboratively as an FNPPOC network, providing agency at every level and addressing systems of power within our own communities.
- POC leadership - coalition of lawyers, campaigners, activists, artists with communities of colour to be well funded and resourced.
- Decolonise system to recreate, realign with the law of the Earth, land and river as guardian.

### Movement Building:

- System change. Address issues of power within movement so we can dismantle them within society. Build campaigns to make movement more accessible.
- Massive campaign on one target to take on fossil fuel giants.
- Connecting with climate activists all around Australia, making sure voices who are often excluded are heard.

## Movement Culture:

- Internal change:
  - Abolish white supremacy within the movement, including challenging the ideas of the traditional “meritocracy”, “productivity”, “professionalism”.
  - FNPPOC must be in executive and decision making positions. Value lived expertise, not as a “nice to have” but as an absolute necessity if we are to have impact.
  - Focus on sustainable high impact work which is inclusive and does not lead to burnout.
- Make the movement safe for and value the expertise of groups, not just for FNPPOC but also all people with disabilities or who are neurodivergent, and other groups who are excluded from the mainstream movement.

## Leadership:

- Leadership of FNPPOC - recognise and value cultural expertise at the same level as other types of expertise.
- Build BIPOC organisers in all communities - rural, urban, etc.
- More of this gathering - keep continuing.
- Deep listening.
- Creating spaces and opportunities for where people are at to pathways to leadership.

## Funding:

- Collaborative/united resourcing to create diversity and facilitate mass action. E.g. Distributive campaign supported between FNPPOC for our communities - fully funded for 5 years.
- Funding based on what FNPPOC say is needed, including building foundational blocks that movement is currently missing.
- Fund community building and power.
- Look at solutions from a responsibility lens - strategy driven not funding driven.

## People Power and Community

- United front - community driven solutions which empower communities to change the system, built on regenerative systems of care.
- Recognise communities are the experts and work with, not “for” them, so people can make decisions about issues which impact them.
- Public access to public information and spaces - protecting civic space and democracy.
- Small scale distributed model to get information to community.
- Diverse and vibrant communities working on climate - abundance based - look at all we have and all we are doing.
- Climate anxiety and mental ill health - provide immediate relief for people most affected in communities.

## Key Takeaways

There is no climate justice without First Nations sovereignty in a settler colony. The tenets of climate justice include racial, gender, environment, biodiversity and economic justice. Energy democracy, the right to nature and basic human rights such as the right to life, the right to secure housing, food, water, education, employment, cultural practices, land, safe and healthy environment must be secured in a less consumer driven world so that power and access is redistributed to those who have been deliberately marginalised from oppressive colonial systems.

**The government and the fossil oligarchy owe a climate debt to all of us. They must be held accountable for the continued addiction to fossil fuels and a market driven economy. Profits must be redistributed as reparations and compensation for the harm they have caused our communities in Australia and across the Global South.**

There is a long road ahead, but we believe together we can achieve climate justice. We acknowledge and value the leadership and agency we bring into the climate movement. We have the knowledge, skills, experience, solutions and capacity to build power and organise our communities, listen to the needs of our communities and mobilise our communities to radically transform existing capitalist systems to one based on a gender-just, regenerative and care based economy. We have the means to communicate our messages and share our stories in a way that connects our communities to understand how climate injustices impact our lives.

## First Nations Plenary

The plenary was led by Karra Kinchela and Aunty Polly, Gomeroi women, MEHI Centre. We listened to their stories of massacre, the White Australia Policy, stolen generations, sacred land and customs, stories of love, pain, loss and ongoing resistance to mining on their lands. We learned about the power of the Gomeroi community in standing up against SANTOS.

“People of other colours helped make us survive. They understood what they escaped from and stood with us. This was 150-200 years ago and yet we continue to blame the Chinese people for destruction. But it’s the white people who have always been the oppressor.”

**Aunty Polly**

"Sit in gratitude for the generosity of being here - how you have held this space and so much to share with such staunch compassion and welcome us to the space - you call us mob. So thankful for all the work you have done to do this to help us understand what allyship and solidarity can look like."

**Guy Ritani**

"I didn't think I was worthy of needing this healing. I recognise this reflection - to be educated in First Nations justice so we know what is the right way to do this work together."

**Anna Song**

## Reflection Space for Centering First Nations Justice

The space for reflection allowed all of us to sit with the knowledge and pain of the violence that First Nations peoples have and continue to experience in Australia.

**This space was held for us as non-indigenous peoples to figure out how we can better stand in solidarity with First Nations and Pasifika peoples climate justice demands.**

We discussed that we must centre relationships - heritage, kinships, community and care, and how we can bring this into our work.



## Deep Dive Conversations



### Group One: Climate and Energy Justice Narrative with Sapna Solidarity

Sapna Solidarity has been running workshops on how renewable energy (RE) is and can create similar (negative) dynamics to fossil fuel corporations, harming First Nations people and local communities.

What are the existing dominant RE narratives in the Australian climate movement? What values and principles sit under them?

- Super power, race to be powerful - wanting to preserve the status quo. "Same marketing but different products to fossil fuel"
- Enforcing neoliberalism, making capitalism more accessible for everyone - "everyone will get more prosperous"

What first principles should rather inform these narratives?

- Community led and owned, countering faith in big corporations, empowering communities, our liberation is tied together.

- Care, love and joy, just and restorative justice, fairness, security, responsibility and accountability, stewardship, collectivism, sustainability, accessibility, FN justice, free, prior and informed consent, human rights based, circular economy, equity, resilience.

### Key takeaway

Energy democracy, energy justice, democratic development, community consent, sovereignty and land rights, livelihoods and security, human rights

## Group Two: First Nations Justice

- We need chances to work together and connect with each other to heal from historic injustices.
- Reciprocity between movements - especially in how we support First Nations and Pasifika work.
- Prioritisation of knowing and respecting the Lore in the land.
- To listen, learn, create, fight and be strong together.
- Cultural centres in all communities.
- Create a First Nations justice framework in all organisations, created by First Nations people. Funding to make this happen.
- Funding to create a safe space and build necessary foundations. Funding currently only goes towards KPIs or “outcomes” that non-First Nations people set.

## Group Three: Climate Justice and Meta Narrative

Climate justice is... Compassion | Redistribution | Truth telling, human rights | Responsibilities | Healing | Humanising & compassion | Ours | Connecting back to each other and where we are | Accountability | Balance | Care for Mother Earth| Restorative | Not forgetting anyone | Deeply felt | About love

- Grounding in decolonising and truth-telling.
- Resolving and acknowledging impacts of trauma - through storytelling as healing.
- Place for everyone to voice their thoughts and feel heard. Trusting space.
- Leadership of communities who have been historically oppressed because of patriarchy, colonialism, capitalism—margins are at the heart.
- Know that the next moment is taking us closer to undoing colonialism and capitalism.
- Cultural & psychological safety - take care of ourselves and our community so we can take action together.



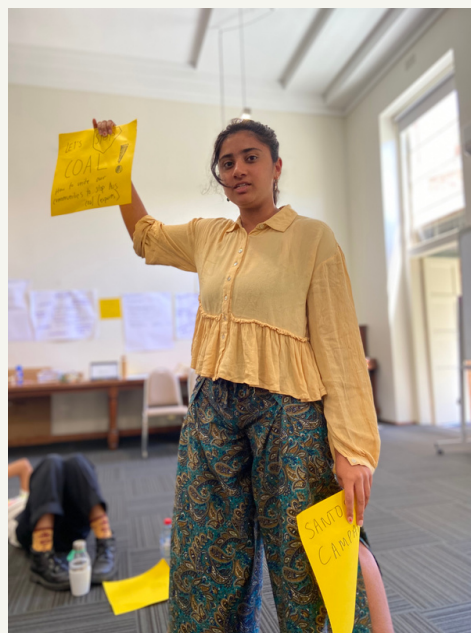
## Group Four: Move Beyond Coal and Gas

Map the work that is already being done (mitigation)

International - Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on State Obligations to respond to Climate Crisis

- Make it a national moment for climate justice - build on each person's work - cultural storytelling.
- How do we identify, get behind, support and learn from each other? Amazing work already done:
  - Adani campaigns
  - Community mobilisation happening in Western Sydney
  - Sapna Solidarity - North/South storytelling - diaspora stories

- Climate and finance: cost of living, just and equitable transition for all impacted industries.
- We need to guarantee secure jobs. We can grow this in regional communities particularly for generational coal workers.



## DAY THREE

The Power of Me, the Power of You and the Power of Us. Talk is Cheap, Action is expensive.

*Diversity, Inclusion, Leadership and Solidarity. Finding funding for our initiatives*

### Demystifying philanthropy and Democratizing Access

Philanthropy is a white space but things are changing.

### Alliance building the Pasifika way

"Flexing our muscles with art and activism, then we have to rest. Rest is another form of activism."

**TJ, Pacific Climate Warrior**

# NEXT STEPS

## Continue Building Our Alliance of FNPPOC



- A new working group led by youth leaders will hold this space, build our alliance and strengthen FNPPOC power in the climate movement.
- Connect with philanthropy to:
  - build a shared understanding of the need to support this work at scale, for the long term
  - Find funding and resources so that the working group is adequately remunerated and resourced to develop establish and support this alliance
- Larger forum in 2023-2024 including more and diverse communities - to build power in this movement we must connect and work together.
- Finding balance, time and capacity to

ensure this alliance and space is a place of trust, healing and growth.

- Collaborate to provide leadership and guidance to the Australian climate movement to work towards climate justice by centering First Nations sovereignty, racial justice, economic justice, gender and human rights.
- Build a new centre of power bringing to the forefront the agency, solutions and stories of FN, Pasifika and POC climate leaders and their communities.
- Establish a POC Climate Justice framework centering First Nations sovereignty and human rights.



## Establishing New Sub-Groups

Three sub-groups were formed from this retreat that are meeting regularly to build their unique

strategies from the deep dive conversations on how to continue building on justice campaigns.

- Lawyers - the lawyers from this retreat are working to accelerate legal and policy advocacy centering First Nations rights, gender, human rights, biodiversity, right to healthy environment and climate justice within existing and international legal frameworks that Australia has ratified.
- Next steps might involve knowledge tools, research, written articles, and capacity building within the climate movement relating to advocacy of climate justice in national, regional and international spaces, encouraging greater engagement with international processes.
- Meta-narrative - this group seeks to understand what is the space behind the climate movement to support solidarity. It will identify emergent ways of decentering to understand the common threads and develop a story telling narrative of shared and diverse messaging. This process is fully led and owned by the communities that will be involved in developing the meta-narrative.



## Communication

- Launching this report with video interviews on various platforms to share the findings of our retreat.
- Using the report as an advocacy tool within organisations to strengthen equity, diversity, inclusion and FNPPOC justice narratives.
- Developing communication strategies centering First Nations justice at all levels of climate advocacy, planning and organising.
- Within our work finding the collective power from within our alliance to counter the dominant white saviour 'mitigation - only' focus, fundraising and charity narratives to rights-based climate justice narratives.





# CONCLUSION

Climate justice for First Nations, Pasifika and POC would challenge the dominant market based, patriarchal and techno-scientific solutions that do not centre First Nations sovereignty, racial justice, economic justice, gender and human rights as core tenets of holding the government and corporations accountable. The expanding fossil fuel economic dependency is causing irreversible loss and damage for our communities.

This is a critical time for grassroots and local communities to mobilise in shaping climate solutions that would address existing structural inequality and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Respecting that First Nations and Pasifika have their own spaces, frameworks and timelines - as an alliance between diverse climate leaders we seek to join in solidarity with First Nations and Pasifika climate movements to lead the transition to a clean, gender-just, regenerative and equitable future.



**Climate justice is...**

**Climate justice is joy. Climate justice is powerful. Climate justice is my life. Climate justice is flourishing not surviving.**

**Climate justice is 1.5 degrees. Climate justice is intersectionality. Climate justice is dinner at 6pm. Climate justice is us as Australia. Climate justice is belonging**

**Climate justice is fighting climate crisis with black brown joy. Climate justice is mana. Climate justice is reparations.**

**Climate justice is accountability**

**Climate justice is truth, responsibility and balance. Climate justice is redistribution of power and wealth. Climate justice is past, present and future. Climate justice is systems change.**

**Climate justice is fighting for what's actually needed not half measures. Climate justice is solidarity**

**Climate justice is ours.**