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Report finds First Nations, Pasifika and People of Colour have power to win climate solutions but face exclusion from mainstream climate movement.

In November 2022 the Climate Justice Gathering for the first time brought together First Nations, Pasifika and People of Colour (FNPPOC) climate leaders working in Australia.

The mainstream climate movement in Australia is largely white dominated and FNPPOC are often working at lower levels, unpaid volunteers or excluded entirely, reflecting the exclusion of our communities from wider climate narratives, solutions and discourse.

A report summarising the experiences and findings of the gathering of 30 FNPPOC has found:

1. The lack of intersectional and racial diversity in the mainstream climate movement is a structural and systemic problem and is a direct result of intergenerational structural and systemic discrimination within Australian society.
2. The underrepresentation of FNPPOC within the mainstream climate movement upholds and reinforces colonial systems of power, acting as a barrier for impactful work and meaningful inclusive action.
3. 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 communities from existing inequality and discrimination.
4. We acknowledged the agency, expertise and knowledge from our powerful, diverse and thriving communities to build a rights-based climate justice narrative
5. Building solidarity and relationships with each other is key to our empowerment, and the self determination for First Nations people as the foundation for the well being of all people and the environment in Australia
6. There is a lack of funding, resources and institutional support within the mainstream climate movement to support frontline grassroots organising work of FNPPOC.

CJG Organiser Des Cai, The Tomorrow Movement said: "If we want to win climate justice, our climate movement needs to be as diverse and representative as the communities across this country. Amplifying the voices and power of people of colour, Pasifika and First Nations communities is a winning strategy for the whole climate movement, we can't win without centring climate justice.

"We need to keep making the space to build connections, skills, relationships and trust within the climate justice movement to dream together, and win a safe and just future that works for all of us."

First Nations CJG Organiser Katelyn Jones, Environment Justice Alliance said: "The summit brought together people with monumental strength and diverse experiences while highlighting that the barriers we face in doing impactful work are so similar - and so are the solutions.

“I hope to see a shift in how the movement values lived expertise, prioritises self-determination and prevents experiences of re-traumatisation and burnout so we can take action towards climate justice together.”

CJG Organiser Kavita Naidu said: “In Australia, it was time for a new centre of movement power to be built with the leadership, inclusion and diversity of First Nations, Pasifika and People of Color climate leaders who could collectively challenge colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy as systems of oppression fueling inaction on the climate crisis.”

“My hope is that together we define an era of climate justice grounded in First Nations sovereignty, racial, gender and economic justice and human rights. The Gathering shared the strength and spirit of our determination to work together to confront climate injustices.”

CJG Organiser Marcella Brassett, Democracy in Colour said: “First Nations, Pasifika and People of Color together can build a strategy for achieving powerful climate solutions that meet the urgent challenges our communities face on the front line, and scale our work towards net zero.”

“Our communities are the key to building critical mass to win for a safe climate, but we are excluded from power. Now we need leaders in the climate movement to recognise their own bias and exclusion and that doing transformational work towards meaningful justice is the solution.”

CJG Organiser Steph Cunio, United Workers Union said: “Planning and being at the inaugural First Nations, Pasifika and People of Colour climate justice, being in a room with people who have a shared experience of isolation and frustration in mainstream climate spaces was life changing.

“The experience of solidarity was so different from anything I have experienced in my three decades as a political activist. And due to that solidarity many of us are now backing each other’s progressive change together.”

ENDS

[Climate Justice Gathering Report 2022](#)

[Videos and images from Climate Justice Gathering.](#)