

Climate Justice Alignment



“Strategies and Tools to Build Community Resilience in low-income communities of color”

*National Adaptation Forum, Denver, Colorado
April 2, 2013*

Impacts on Frontline Communities

- Local, regional, state and national community based action has built local leadership capacity at every level of local decision making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.
- The dominant “cowboy” economic paradigm, now nearly ubiquitous at both global and local levels, that places rapid economic growth, the quest for corporate and individual accumulation of wealth, and a planet-wide race to exploit natural resources, at the top of institutional, and national aspirations.
- Extreme energy based economy is the root cause of climate change and a lack of sustainability exacerbate social and ecological variables that effects the ability of families to prepare, respond, and recover from climate catastrophes and/or natural disasters.

Uniting Frontline Communities

Chicago

Black Mesa

Richmond

Los Angeles

Vermont



New York

Oakland

Boston

Appalachia

New Mexico

Just Transition Campaign Meeting – Detroit, September 2012

Climate Justice Alignment

Advocates for Environmental Human Rights, Alliance for Appalachia, Asian Pacific Environmental Network, Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative, Black Mesa Water Coalition, Communities for a Better Environment, Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy, East Michigan Environmental Action Coalition, Little Village Environmental Justice Organization, Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, Grassroots Global Justice Alliance, Global Justice Ecology Project, Grassroots International/US Food Sovereignty Alliance, Indigenous Environmental Network, Institute for Policy Studies, Just Transition Alliance, Jobs With Justice, Labor Community Strategy Center, La Via Campesina, Little Village Environmental Justice Organization, Movement Generation, Movement Strategy Center, Rising Tide North America, People Organizing to Demand Environmental & Economic Rights, Right to the City Alliance, Ruckus, Smart Meme, Southwest Organizing Project, Southwest Workers Union and many others

Vision

Climate Justice Alignment vision, strategy and work are based on principles, declarations and documents by People's Assemblies including: the 17 Principles of Environmental Justice, the Rio & Rio + 20 Conferences, and the Cochabamba People's Accord.

Adaptation Strategy

- A trajectory that builds upon our strengths as a Grassroots Organizing Sector, building local power towards a national (and international) climate strategy that leads back to community engaged leadership, adaptation planning and community resilience.
- Grassroots organizations have built community resilience for decades - organizing to protect and improve the conditions of the most politically, economically and environmentally vulnerable communities and in the process improved conditions for everyone.
- We have organized state, regional, national and international networks that reflect the diversity upon which a true democracy should be forged.

Climate Adaptation Strategies

- Grounded in Local Victories and People's History's
- Organized to Scale with Broad Movement Convergence Coalitions
- Confronting Root Causes
- Building Democratic Control As a Stepping Stone Towards Local Living Economies
- Build Community Resilience

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ZERO WASTE



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



CLEAN COMMUNITY ENERGY



EFFICIENT, AFFORDABLE, DURABLE HOUSING



ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION & STEWARDSHIP



COOPERATIVE ECONOMICS



RIGHTS TO LAND, WATER & FOOD SOVEREIGNTY



CLIMATE JOBS
COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Goals of Just Transition

1. **Mitigate GHG Emissions** and co-pollutants that are highest in Communities of Color, those who are least responsible but most effected, including stopping all fossil fuel extraction in the next 20 years
2. Work with those on the ground in communities least responsible, but most effected to **Adapt to Climate Change**
3. Millions of **New Climate Justice Jobs** will be created, especially among our Brothers & Sisters least responsible but most effected by Climate Change
4. Work to **Build a National Mass Movement** with all who are in struggle to fundamentally change the political economic system that is the root cause of the increasing economic and environmental crises.

Just Transition

- Builds resilient communities and a good quality of life in the places most affected by environmental damage and economic disruption
- Creates good, stable jobs that sustain – rather than destroy – the natural systems on which our lives depend
- Seeks genuine involvement and collaboration among affected workers and communities
- Requires strategic long-term investment and partnerships with many places, players and institutions to make it successful

CJA Background

UNITED STATES SOCIAL FORUM



ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE ★ ANOTHER U.S. IS NECESSARY ★ JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2007, ATLANTA GEORGIA



2011



GRASSROOTS SOLUTIONS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE NORTH AMERICA

CANCUN DELEGATION 2010

WHO WE ARE

WE ARE GRASSROOTS AND ALLIED ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTING RACIAL JUSTICE, INDIGENOUS RIGHTS, ECONOMIC JUSTICE, IMMIGRANT RIGHTS, YOUTH ORGANIZING AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITIES ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN CLIMATE JUSTICE ORGANIZING. OUR ORGANIZING STRATEGY PRIORITIZES:

- 1) INVESTING IN GRASSROOTS ACTION AT FRONTLINE STRUGGLES TO WIN THE VICTORIES THAT BUILD OUR POWER, IMPROVE OUR COMMUNITIES AND STOP CORPORATIONS FROM CAUSING CLIMATE DISRUPTION;
- 2) PRIORITIZING LOCAL ORGANIZING TO BUILD THE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES, ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES, AND POLITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE THAT WE NEED TO WEATHER THE CLIMATE CRISIS; AND
- 3) SUPPORTING SOLIDARITY WITH GRASSROOTS MOVEMENTS AROUND THE WORLD, TO LINK OUR STRUGGLES, AND TO CRAFT THE INTERNATIONAL POLICIES AND STRUCTURES WE NEED TO APPLY OUR LOCAL SOLUTIONS GLOBALLY.

WE WILL WIN CLIMATE JUSTICE BY SUPPORTING THE HUNDREDS OF COMMUNITIES AROUND THE COUNTRY WHO ARE TARGETING THE CLIMATE POLLUTERS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES, WHETHER THAT IS AN ENERGY SOURCE, A TOXIC INDUSTRY, A DIRTY PORT, A BIG BOX CHAIN, A FREEWAY OR A DEVELOPER DRIVING GENTRIFICATION. WE WILL WIN CLIMATE JUSTICE BY WINNING BACK OUR ABILITY TO ROOT OURSELVES IN PLACE, IN ANCESTRAL KNOWLEDGE, AND IN THE RESILIENCE OF OUR COMMUNITIES.

SOLUCIONES DE LOS PUEBLOS PARA LA JUSTICIA CLIMÁTICA NORTEAMÉRICA

DELEGACIÓN DE CANCÚN 2010

QUIÉNES SOMOS

SOMOS ORGANIZACIONES DE BASE Y ALIADAS EN NORTEAMÉRICA QUE REPRESENTAMOS COMUNIDADES DE MIGRANTES, JÓVENES, BAJOS INGRESOS, GENTE DE COLOR, E INDÍGENAS, ACTIVAMENTE INVOLUCRADAS EN ORGANIZAR SOBRE LA JUSTICIA CLIMÁTICA. NUESTRA ESTRATEGIA ORGANIZATIVA DA PRIORIDAD A:

- 1) INVERTIR EN ACCIONES COMUNITARIAS Y LUCHAS LOCALES PARA GANAR VICTORIAS QUE AUMENTAN NUESTRO PODER, MEJORAN NUESTRAS COMUNIDADES Y PREVIENEN QUE LAS CORPORACIONES CAUSEN TRASTORNOS CLIMÁTICOS;
- 2) LA ORGANIZACIÓN LOCAL QUE CONSTRUYA COMUNIDADES RESISTENTES, ECONOMÍAS JUSTAS, Y LA INFRAESTRUCTURA POLÍTICA QUE NECESITAMOS PARA RESISTIR LA CRISIS CLIMÁTICA; Y
- 3) AL APOYO SOLIDARIO CON LOS MOVIMIENTOS SOCIALES ALREDEDOR DEL MUNDO, CONECTANDO LAS LUCHAS, Y CREANDO POLÍTICAS INTERNACIONALES Y LAS ESTRUCTURAS QUE NECESITAMOS PARA APLICAR NUESTRAS SOLUCIONES LOCALES GLOBALMENTE.

GANAREMOS LA JUSTICIA CLIMÁTICA APOYANDO LAS CIENTOS DE COMUNIDADES EN EL NORTE QUE ESTÁN COMBATIENDO A LOS CONTAMINADORES, YA SEA UNA FUENTE DE ENERGÍA, UNA INDUSTRIA TOXICA, UN PUERTO SUCIO, LA EXTRACCIÓN DE PETRÓLEO EN AGUAS PROFUNDAS, LA MINERÍA DE CARBÓN, UNA CADENA DE TIENDAS, UNA CARRETERA, O UN DESARROLLADOR INMOBILIARIO QUE ESTE IMPULSANDO EL ABURGUESAMIENTO. GANAREMOS LA JUSTICIA CLIMÁTICA POR MEDIO DE GANAR NUESTRA HABILIDAD DE ENRAIZARNOS EN NUESTRO LUGAR, EN EL CONOCIMIENTO ANCESTRAL, Y EN LA FUERZA DE NUESTRAS COMUNIDADES.

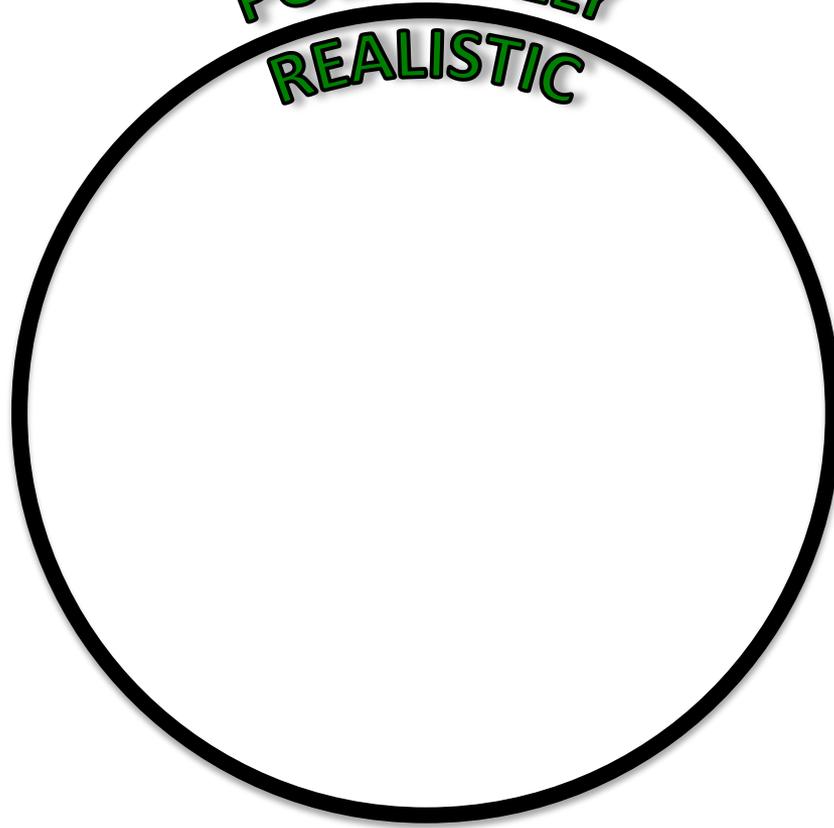


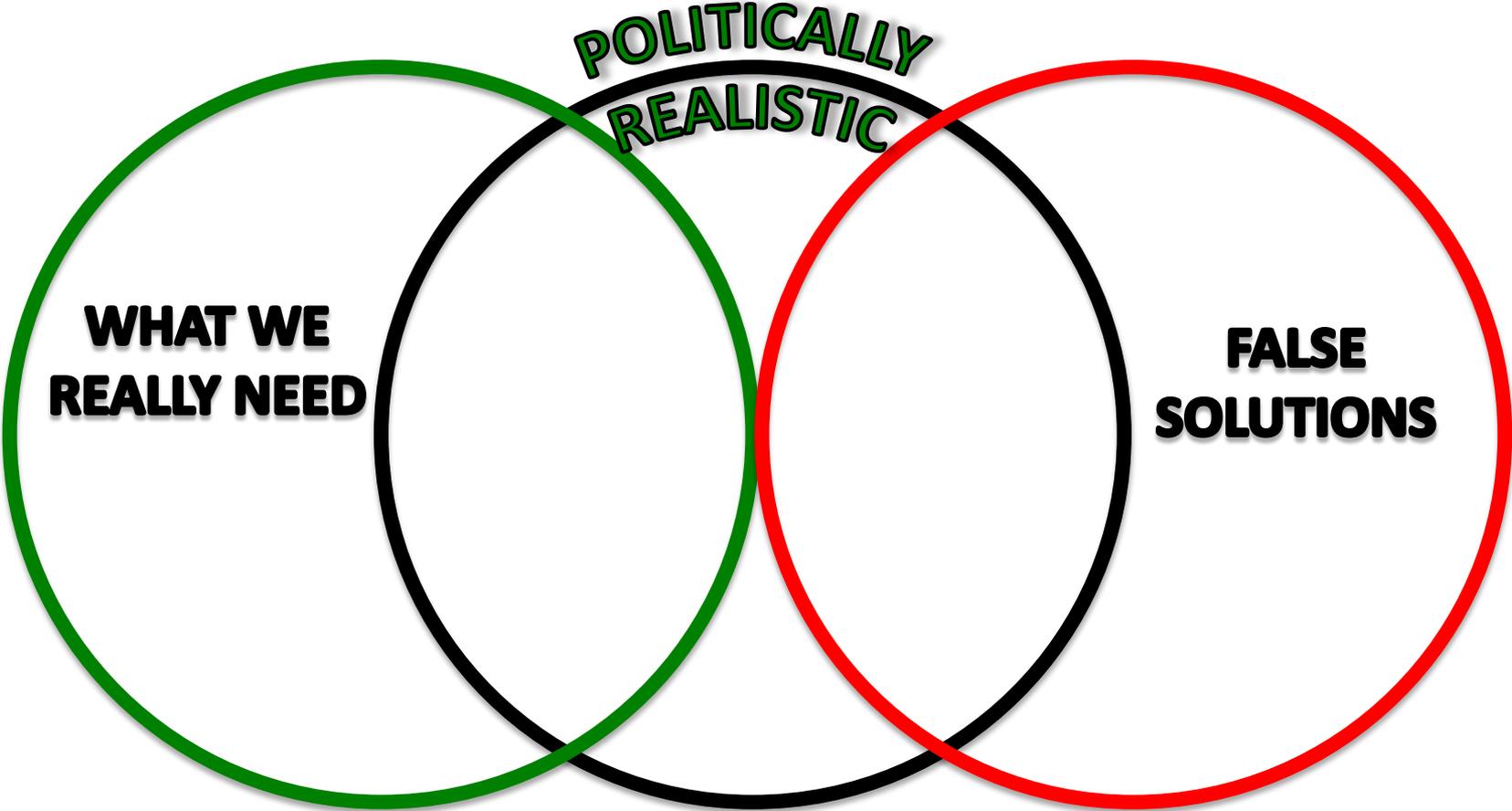
WWW.GRASSROOTSCLIMATESOLUTIONS.NET

Detroit USSF



**POLITICALLY
REALISTIC**





**WHAT WE
REALLY NEED**

**POLITICALLY
REALISTIC**

**FALSE
SOLUTIONS**

**POLITICALLY
REALISTIC**

**WHAT WE
REALLY NEED**

**FALSE
SOLUTIONS**

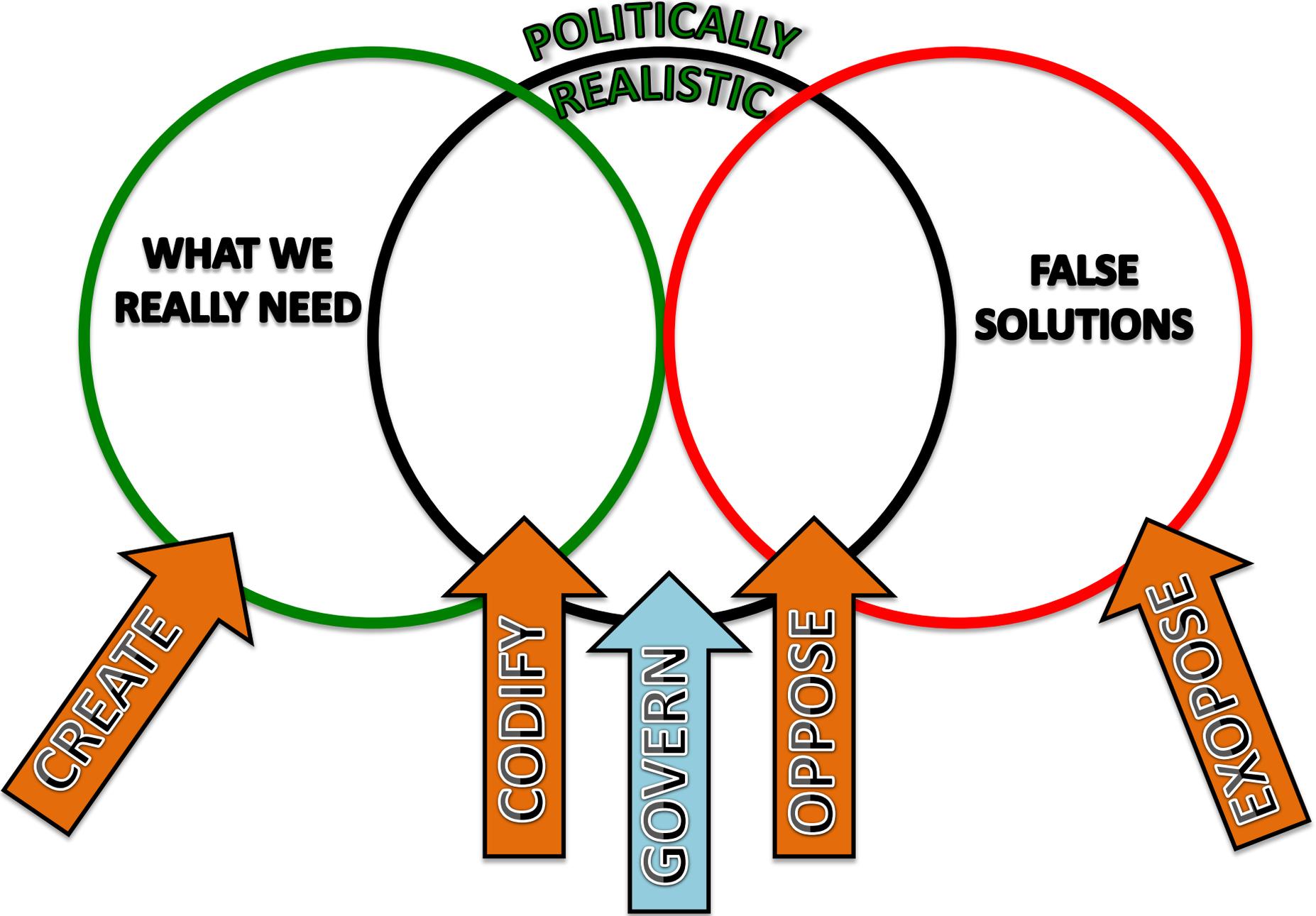
CREATE

CODIFY

GOVERN

OPPOSE

EXPOSE



Demonstrate Real Solutions Where We Have Immediate Leverage!

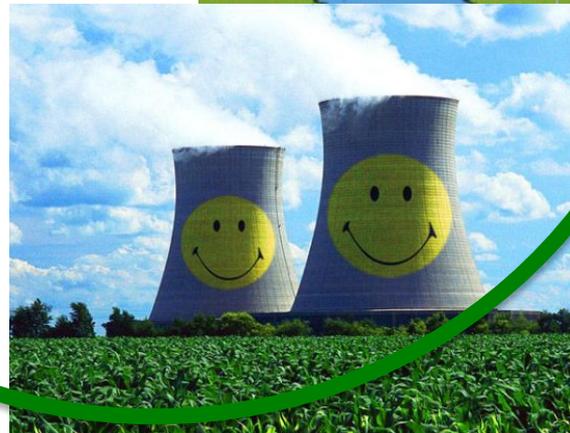
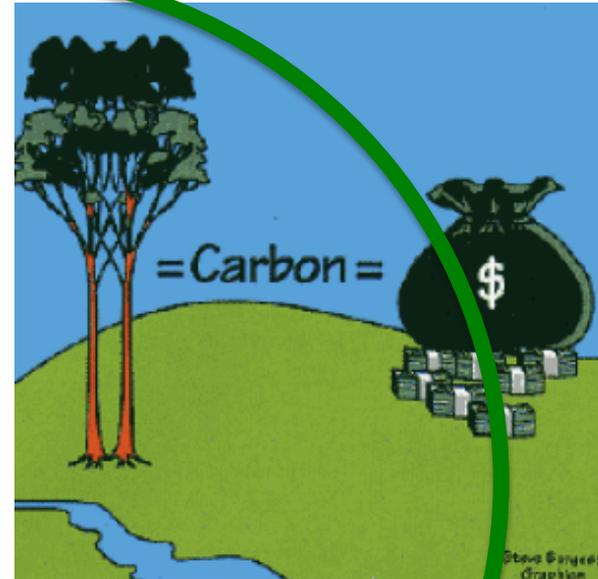
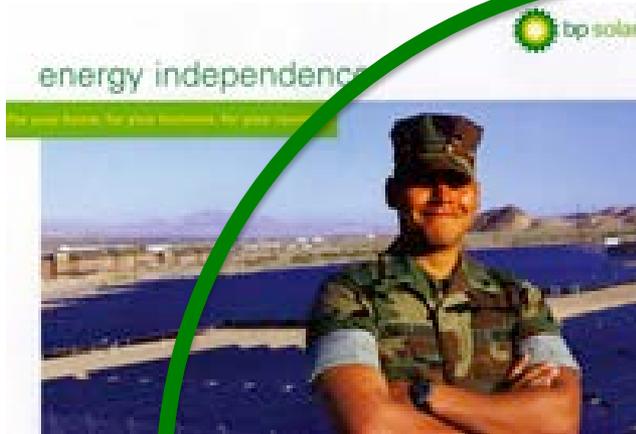


Start where we have Power:
Municipal, Local, Regional, and State

Name the Real Solutions



Name the False Solutions



Change is the new Status Quo:

Our key organizing question has become:

What Will Change Look Like?

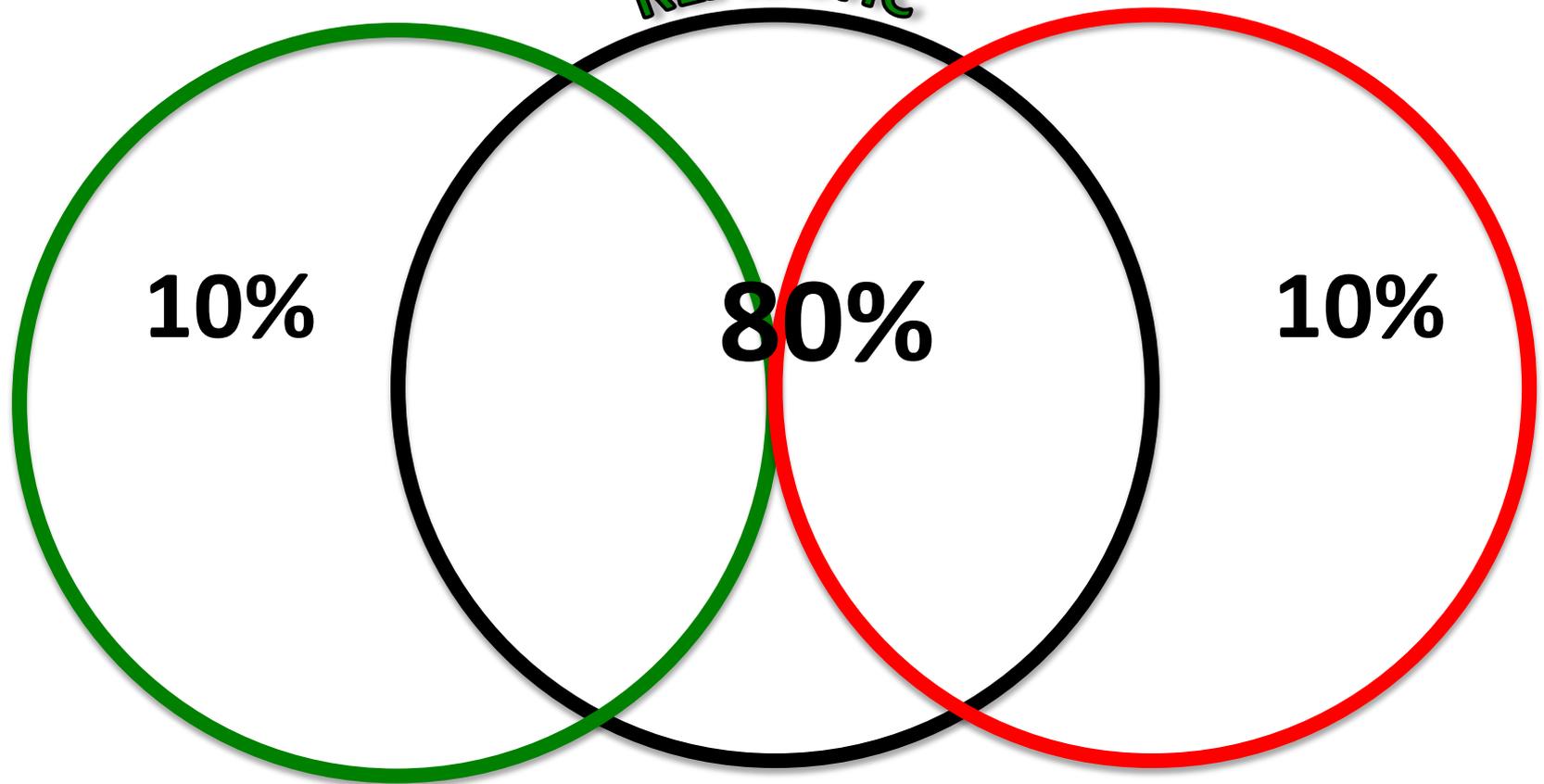


**Intentional
Transition?**

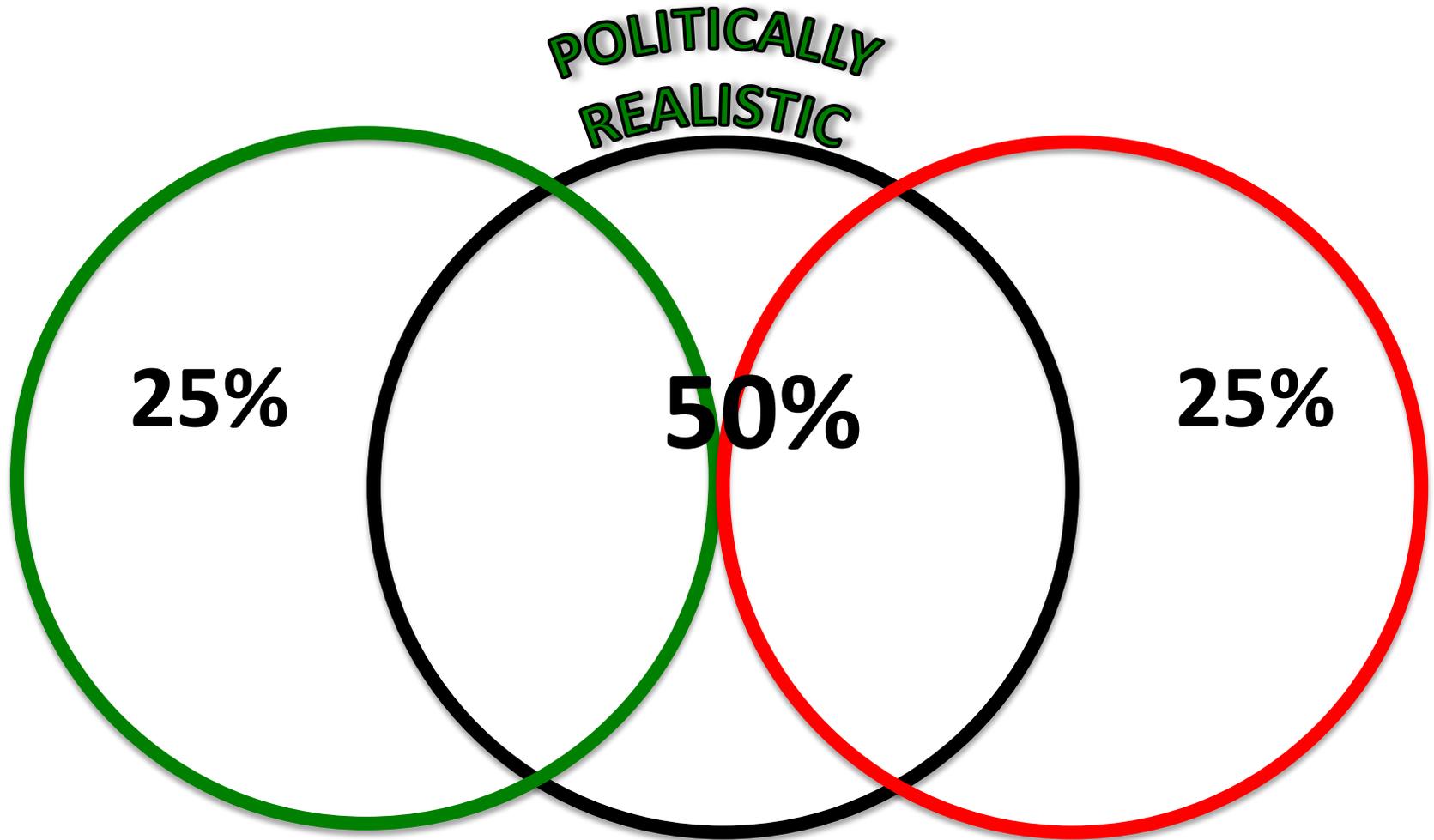


Collapse?

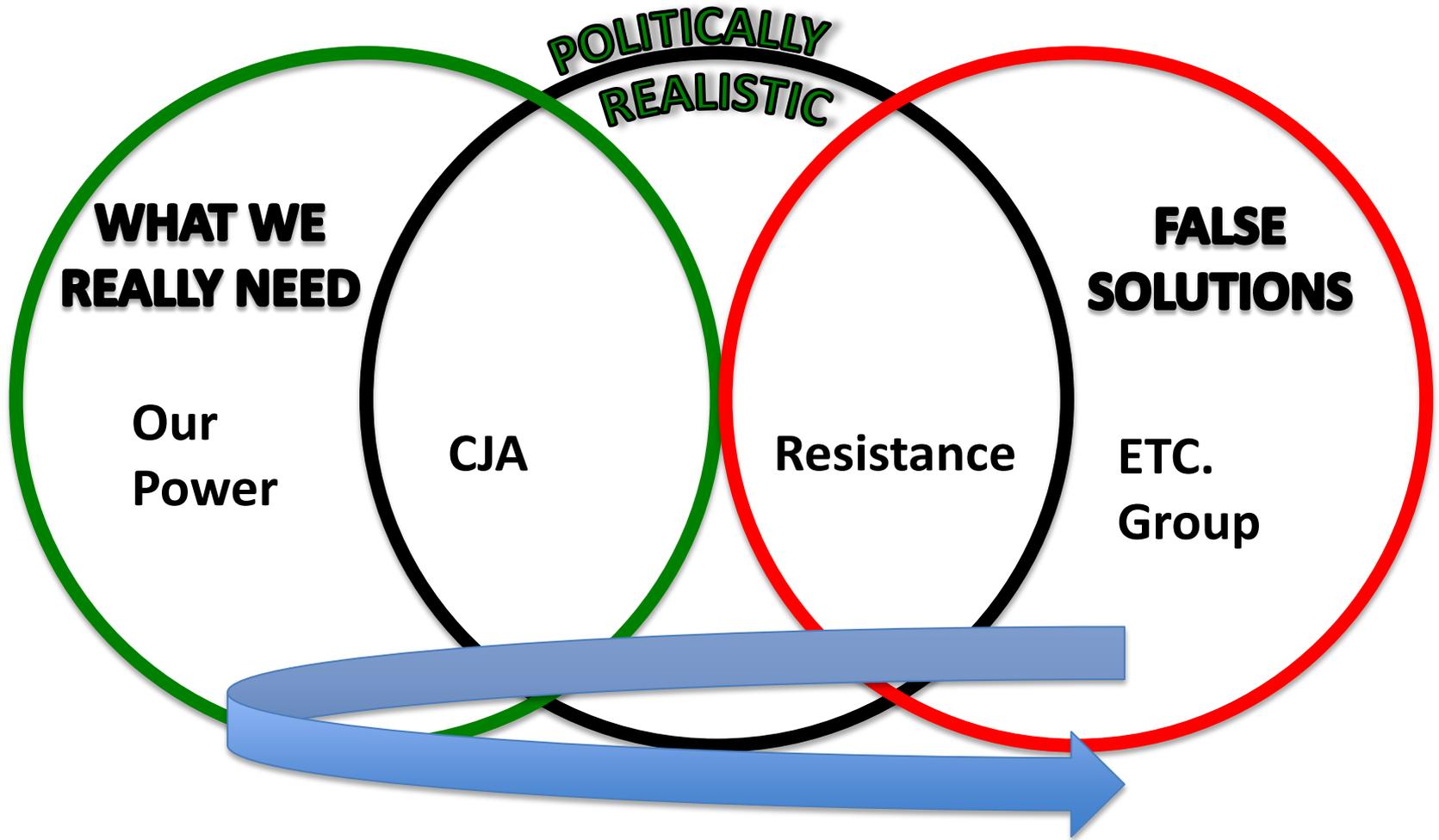
**POLITICALLY
REALISTIC**



**HOW ARE WE INVESTING IN
GOVERNANCE? *Something like this?*
TIME, ATTENTION and RESOURCES?**



...but what if it looked more like this?



Shared Vision; Strategic Alignment; Common Goals

Roberto Nutlouis,
Black Water Mesa Coalition,
www.blackmesawatercoalition.org

Black Mesa, Arizona

Nile Malloy

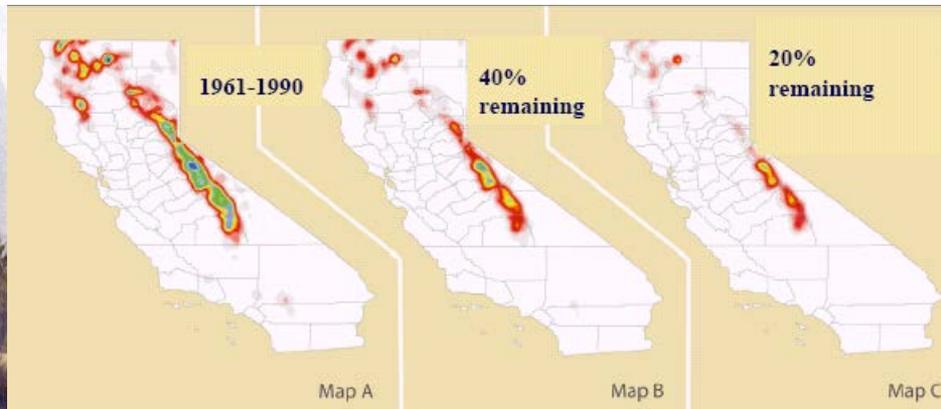
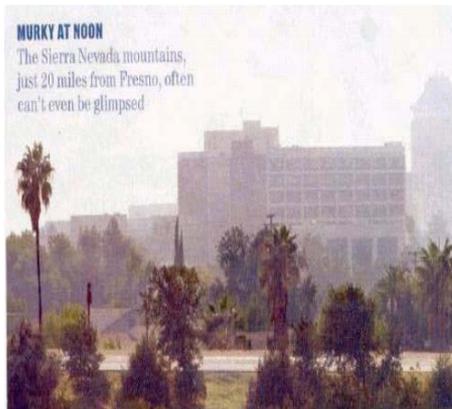
Communities for a Better
Environment

www.cbecal.org.org, @CBECaI

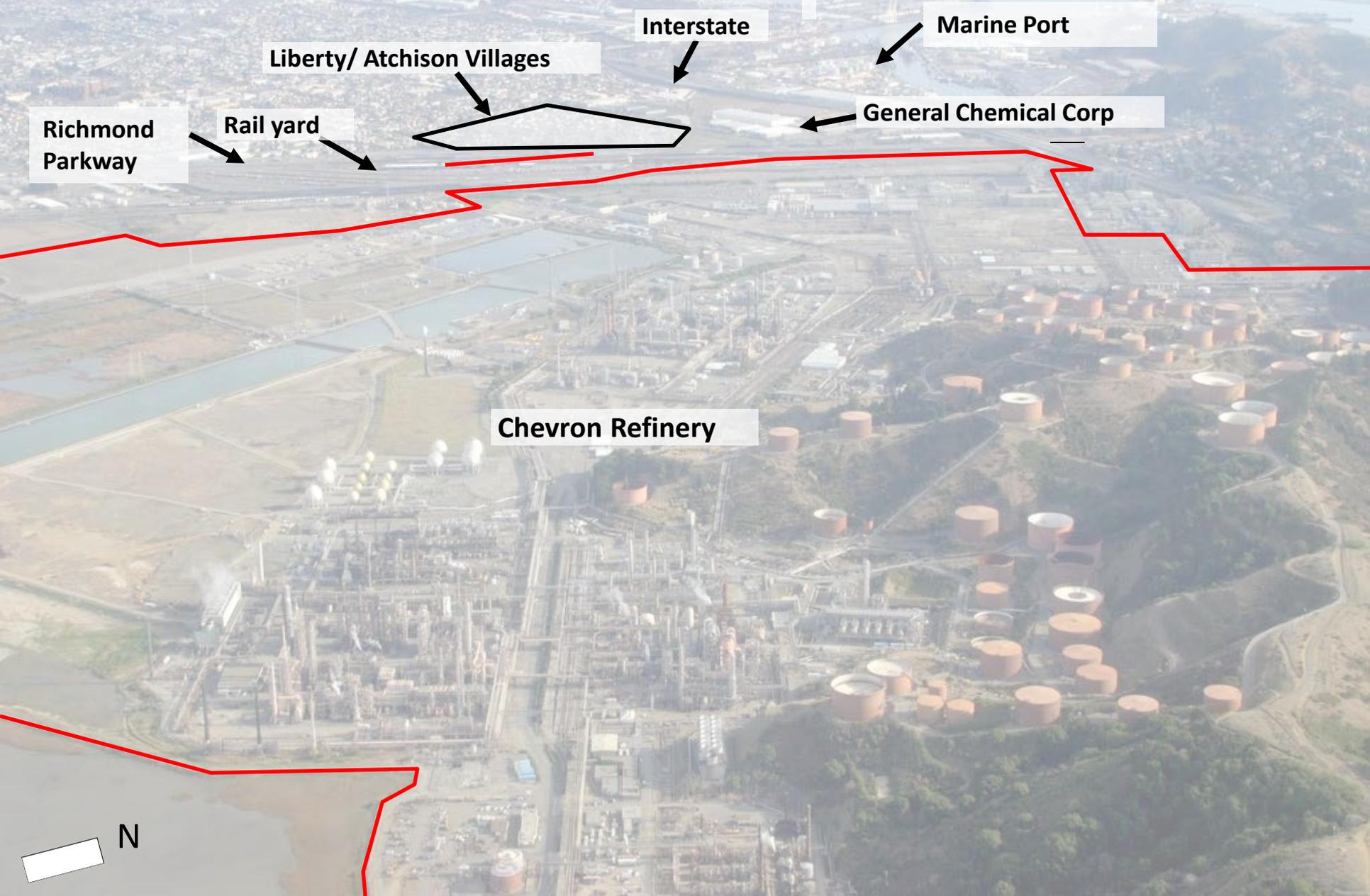
Richmond, California

California from Fossil Fuel Use & Environmental Injustice

- California cities already dominate the list of US' s top 25 worst for air pollution
- Climate Change will increase the number of “bad air days” by 75%, by the end of the century (with medium warming),
- California will lose its snowpack water supply, and heat wave deaths runaway wildfires will drastically increase



Our health is affected by ... Neighborhood Air Pollution



Richmond Parkway

Rail yard

Liberty/ Atchison Villages

Interstate

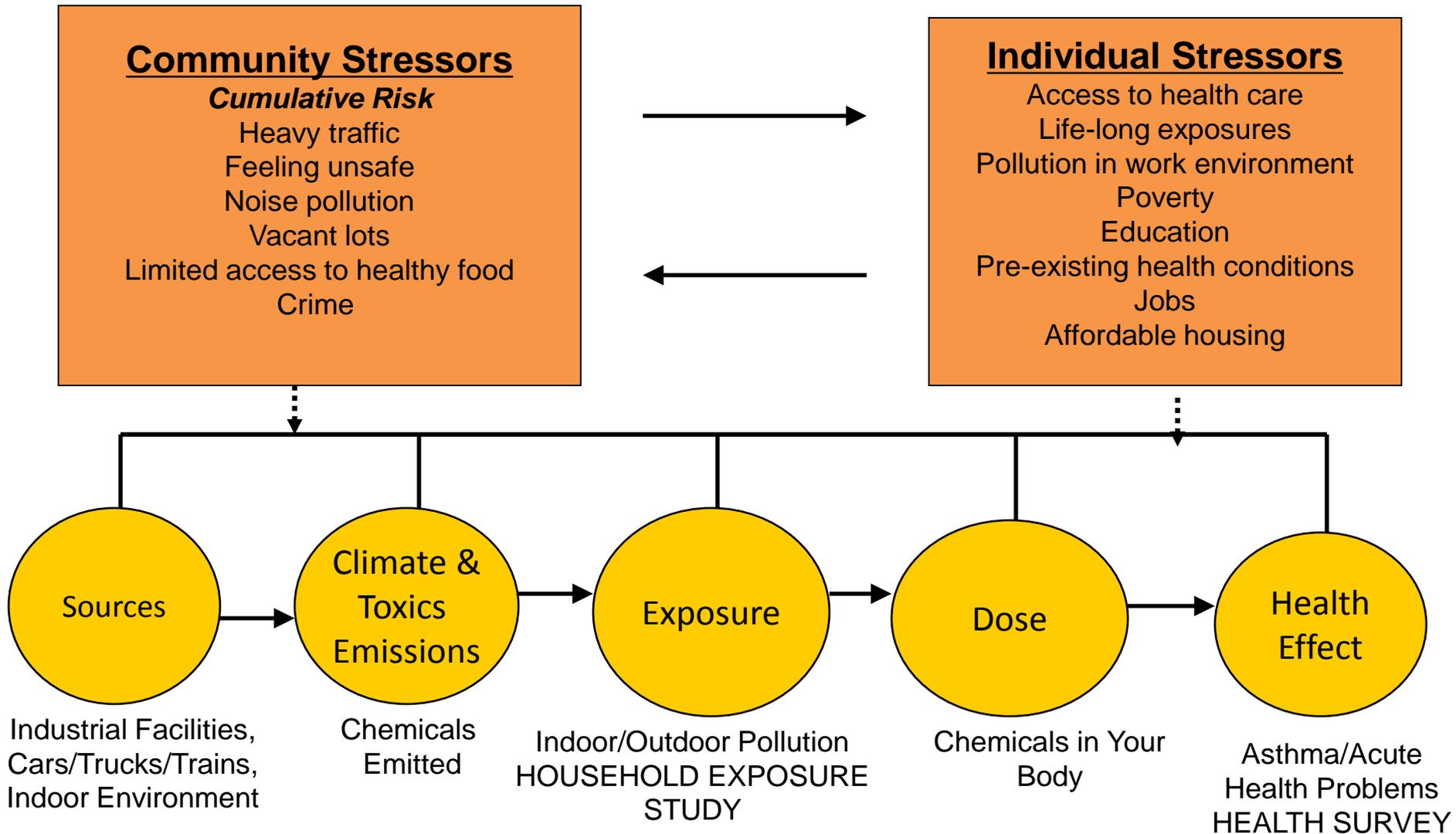
Marine Port

General Chemical Corp

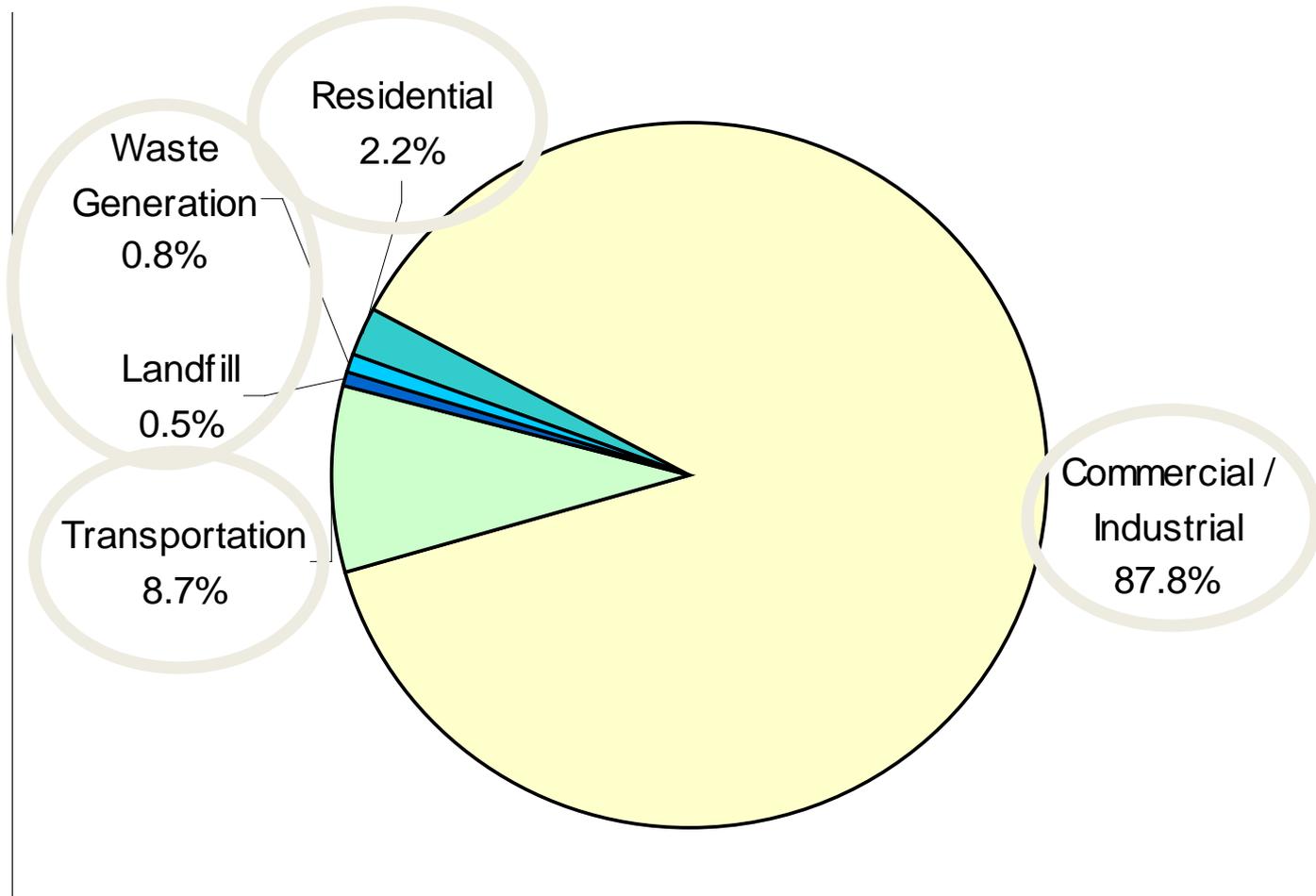
Chevron Refinery



The Big Picture: Richmond's Community Health



Richmond GHG Emissions by Sector



5,853,020 metric tons of CO₂e

OUR WORK

- **Climate and Renewable Energy**

- Passed Community Choice Energy in Richmond
- Energy and Climate Action Plan
- County-wide Climate Action Plans
- Regional Climate Planning
- AB 32 defense
- BAAQMD Regional Dirty Oil Emissions Rule
- Public Utilities equity



- **Land Use and Sustainability**

- Passed our participatory and community organizing - General Plan – 15 year city document
- Change Land Use and zoning for community resilience projects on food justice and industrial impacts
- CEQA protection



The Richmond refinery fire moments after ignition, 6 Aug. 2012



Photo credit: Fototaker.net

- **6 workers injured**
- **20 barely escape fire**
- **15,000 residents
overfilled emergency
rooms**
- **Emergency alarm failed**
- **Regional air district air
monitors failed**



Photo: CBE Freedom to Breathe Campaign

Sulfur corroded the pipe that ruptured in August 2012

U.S. Chemical Safety Board evidence



Response to Fire

- Community Organizing and Townhall's
- Labor and Community Collaborative Formed
 - Protect community and workers health and safety
 - Climate change and prevent tar sands oil in the region
 - Air monitoring near industries
 - Emergency preparedness trainings for future catastrophe
- Governor's Refinery Task force formed
- Cal Osha - Chevron pays highest allowed by state of nearly \$1 million for safety violations
- Two Legislative Bills
- US Chemical Safety Board Make Chevron an example

Sunyoung Yang

Labor Community Strategy Center

www.thestrategycenter.org

Los Angeles, California

Recommendations

- Grassroots organizing is the center to community resilience and residents
- Local planning processes need to involve communities most vulnerable to harm when developing appropriate preparation and adaptation strategies.
- The particular needs of vulnerable communities, and appropriate adaptation policies, are best identified and developed through processes in which the affected communities are at the center of decision making.
- The complex intersection of diverse factors of vulnerability, such as access to transportation, legal residency, income, and language abilities, produces a context in which the people living in these communities can best elaborate how to take proactive measures to prevent disproportionate harm.

Recommendations

- Communities have a rich history of activism planning local, regional, state and national climate adaptation planning processes can be strengthened by engaging impacted communities as equal partners at every level of decision making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.

Contact Information

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