**Speaking Notes: An economy that cares for our Common Home**

**Bronwyn Lay**

**What is ecological justice?**

“We have to realise that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach: it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”

*Pope Francis Laudato Si.*

**Ecological Justice** is the unity of social and environmental justice as intertwined and interdependent. It involves deep structural changes in social ecological systems to prevent harmful and to restore and regenerate healthy relationships with eco-systems and human communities. Original and longest practitioners of ecological justice are First Nations communities.

**Jesuit Social Services is a social change organization with 40 years experience working at the hard end of social justice.**

* Values: Courageous, Welcoming and Discerning.
* Areas of engagement: Justice and Crime Prevention, Settlement and Community Building, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Men’s Project, Education, Training and Employment.

**Commitment to Ecological Justice grounded in our Jesuit Heritage:** 2008 GC 35 Reconciliation with Creation, 2011 Healing a broken world, 2015 Laudato Si: Care for our Common Home.

* Justice that is relational and restorative.
* Human roots of the ecological crisis.
* A response that prioritises those at the margins.
* A response that is integral, recognising that “everything is interconnected” (social, environmental, cultural, economic).
* Requiring transformation at the level of personal ecological conversion and our systems and institutions.
* Challenge to integrate social and environmental justice
* Iterative, evolving and responsive transformational journey
* Includes just transitions, economic decision-making and commitment to healthy energy systems
* Everything is interconnected: our responsibility to the marginalised in other countries, eco-systems far away.

**Jesuit Social Services Ecological Justice Program**

Organisational Change

Program Delivery

Policy and Advocacy

**Impacts of ecological injustice.**

* **Primary** – social and ecological systemic disasters, degradation, depletion, dysfunction, disruption, and destruction.
* **Secondary** – scarcity of essential ecological goods, infrastructure failures, governance fragility, financial risks
* **Tertiary** – legal liabilities, increased compounded vulnerabilities: i.e. food, housing, trauma, violence, labour markets, civic unrest, population displacements

*“The rich will find their world to be more expensive, inconvenient, uncomfortable, disrupted, and colourless – in general, more unpleasant and unpredictable, perhaps greatly so. The poor will die” (Smith, 2008: 1).*

The fair distribution of healthy ecological and energy relationships as climate change action.

Ecological injustice as a trauma multiplier: listening to the cry of the poor!

* Vulnerability doesn’t fall from the sky. (Rickards)
* DOTE – Social indicators of disadvantage expanding into ecological indicators.
* Distribution of ecological privileges exacerbating vulnerabilities: (cry of the poor)
* Necessity to examine distributions of power and those abandoned during CC impacts
* Degraded eco-systems vital to address for social justice outcomes. (cry of the earth)

**A Way of Proceeding towards Ecological Justice.**

3 Domains.

* Business Processes – Achieving ethical balance of Mitigation and Adaptation towards Transformation? Organisational survival due to resource constraints and risks
* Human Spirit – deepening understanding of context, influences, pre-conditions of healthy relationships.
* Ecology Practice – ecological literacy, community sector collaboration, ecological social work development, demonstratable projects,

**This changes everything!**

**Climate Change Transformation**

CCT is both adaptation and adaptation that changes the fundamental attributes of a *socio-ecological system* in anticipation of *climate change* and its *impact* addresses the root drivers of vulnerability and marginalization.

Climate change transformation involves deep structural changes in social-ecological and economic systems to prevent harmful climate change impacts and to regenerate and nourish these same systems.

Responding to climate change impacts with climate change transformations:

* Beyond the social into the ecological: organizational cultural change extending our relational approach.
* Stretching into unfamiliar territory: mitigation, economic and energy nexus, amplifying healthy ecological relationships
* Creating new coalitions: Environmental groups, health organisations, researchers, insurers,
* Re-orientation of employment, education and training in response to Just Transitions.
* Amplifying voices of excluded communities which can get lost in the urgency of the Climate Emergency.
* New categories of marginalization. Mobility and immobility
* New areas of concern: ecological justice as crime prevention
* Dominance of spectacular disaster responses and reduced slow violence responses of Community services sector.
* Radical reorientation of practice to account for CC impacts but rate of change incremental

**New Awareness = new obligations + a new way of working**

To minimise the **unfairness inherent** in climate change and environmental degradation, increasing attention is being paid to just transitions which are :–

a proactive approach to avoid widespread disadvantage and inequity from poverty, social unrest, exclusion, alienation and marginalisation as a result of the necessary transitioning of industries, economies, and societies towards a healthy relationship between human communities and the eco-systems within which they live.

**How? Eco-conversion.**

How to make decisions within complexity and uncertain and ambiguous environments?

“It became clear to me that *how* we live, *how* we organise, *how* we engage in the world – **the process** – not only frames the outcome, it is the transformation. *How* molds and then gives birth to the present. The *how* changes us. *How* is the theoretical intervention. It can fundamentally change modes of production.”

*Leanne Betasamosake Simpson “As we have always done”*

**Ways of equitable transitions:**

* Place based responses to transitions
* Listening, participating in decision making,
* Building community resilience,
* Socio-ecological decision making including Sustainable Development Goals
* Systems thinking and complexity/relational mapping
* Transformative scenario planning.

**Institutional response-ability**

“If everything is related, then the health of a society’s institutions has consequences for the environment and the quality of human life. Every violation of solidarity and civic friendship harms the environment. Within each social stratum, and between them, institutions develop to regulate human relationships. Anything which weakens those institutions has negative consequences, such as injustice, violence and loss of freedom.”

Pope Francis Laudato Si