

State of Vermont
Environmental Justice Interagency Committee

Environmental Justice Interagency Committee Unified Response to the Environmental Justice Advisory Council's Environmental Justice Complaint Report Recommendations

August 15, 2025

The Environmental Justice Interagency Committee (“IAC”) appreciates the recommendations provided by the Environmental Justice Advisory Council (“AC”) to the covered agencies’ 2024 environmental justice complaint reports. The covered agencies provide this joint response.

To begin, the covered agencies reiterate and recommit to the response provided to the AC on August 15, 2024.

Regarding the recommendation that “environmental justice complaint” should be defined, the IAC agrees with this recommendation. Developing a shared understanding of this term is a priority for the covered agencies. The IAC welcomes the AC’s input on what an appropriate definition should be¹.

As to the AC’s concerns about the anthropocentric nature of environmental justice, the IAC would welcome more information about these concerns to better understand them and how it (or the Vermont General Assembly) could potentially help address them.

The IAC looks forward to engaging further with the AC about environmental justice complaints at our next joint public meeting.

¹ The IAC notes that at least one covered agency included a definition in its report. The Vermont Public Utility Commission defines “environmental justice issue complaint” as “a complaint alleging that an individual or individuals, because of their race, color, income class, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ethnicity or ancestry, religious belief, or English language proficiency level, were not afforded equitable access to and distribution of environmental benefits; equitable distribution of environmental burdens; or fair and equitable treatment and meaningful participation in decision-making processes, including the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” While this is just one covered agency’s interpretation of this term, it is based on the definition of “environmental justice” in the Environmental Justice law and could serve as a straw proposal for the AC to provide comment on.