6.1 - How Does This Framework Define Sustainability?

Key Guiding Questions (expanded)

How does this framework define sustainability?

Black ecologies views sustainability not just as ecological stability, but as an antiracist, **abolitionist**, and autonomous reality where Black life and communities can flourish with political and economic agency, respectful, reciprocal, and generative ecological relationships, reconnecting with land, and building collective wellness rooted in a vibrant tradition of mutual aid and insurgent knowledge.

What vision is being seeded or sustained? (who benefits and who is harmed by sustaining this vision?)

It envisions an end to antiblackness, environmental racism, and ecocidal capitalism, “while passing on cultural traditions, ecological and world-sustaining knowledge, and zones of refuge that allow us to imagine and produce beauty and joy in our environments.” – Hosbey et al 2022

“Black ecologies are an abolitionist vision of futures rooted in multispecies kinship, freedom, ecological stewardship, racial justice, Black repair, and social equity” – Moulton and Salo 2022

In Black ecologies there is an explicit liberatory vision for racialized communities of color, particularly Black communities, and the places they draw sustenance from, both of which have been historically and systemically subjugated by white supremacy, colonialism and racial capitalist power structures. In terms of costs (contamination and environmental destruction), this framework dissipates costs by calling for the dismantling of dominant power structures that perpetuate environmental and social injustices upon poor, working class, and communities of color as well as interrupting the processes that end in wastelanding, pollution, and extirpation of large tracts of ecosystems.

Who is defining/driving this vision?

There has been a long tradition of Black ecologies (despite the recently coined term) and Black geographies for centuries, but more recently, Black ecologies is a framework carried forth by Black scholars, community organizers and leaders, as well as practitioners, and other allies / accomplices. Refer to the ‘Voices of Black Ecologies’ section.

> **abolitionist** : Ruth Wilson Gilmore states that “abolition is a constant becoming” that “interrupts harm perpetuated by policing, incarceration, and detention of racialized, ciminalized and undocumented communities to build infrastructures that reduce harm without relying on oppression and violence” (Snider 2022, Simpson center). In addition to Wilson Gilmore, prominent writings include works by Mariame Kaba and Angela Davis.

> Hosbey, J, Lloréns, H, and JT Roane. 2022. Introduction: Global Black Ecologies. Environment and Society: Advances in Research 13: 1-10 10.3167/ares.2022.130101

> Moulton, AA and I Salo. 2022. Black Geographies and Black Ecologies as Insurgent Ecocritism. Environment and Society: Advances in Research 13: 156-174 10.3167/ares.2022.130110

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