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Presentation Title: Addressing Social Injustice In the Context Of Climate/Energy Projects

Abstract: Many efforts to engage audiences with climate solutions run up against society's most challenging realities pertaining to racism, discrimination, injustice, and inequality. The production, distribution, and use of resources has been the site of egregious violations of human rights, and their costs have been disproportionately born by racial and economic minorities. While climate change has become of great concern to people of higher social status, less privileged people have been confronted with environmental injustice for generations. In many settings, attempts to work on climate issues bring forth these complex and painful histories, which must be listened to, acknowledged, understood, and addressed. To try to circumvent them is to perpetuate systemic oppression. To address them is an imperative step toward creating an environment of trust and collaboration, and engaging diverse audiences with climate solutions. How can we tackle this vast challenge in the context of our work? While many of us are expert in science, technology, or policy, we have limited training in working with individuals or groups amidst complex, endemic, and painful societal issues. In this talk, I will discuss best practices for working with social injustice in the context of environmental projects, and share key learnings from my facilitation practice using case studies and examples from the field.