



Coalition for Environmental Justice

Reg. Number: 060-537-NPO
49 Arnold Street, Observatory, 7925
Email: cejcoordinator@gmail.com
PO Box 12919, Mowbray, 7705
Phone: 083 363 0622

In Support of Education Initiatives for Community-based Organisations

CEJ is a platform that brings together community based organisations, NGOs and trade unions to work together to find common solutions to continuing environmental degradation. Year 2011 will be remembered by activists in the struggle for environmental justice in South Africa in particular as the time that the issue of climate change gained ascendancy in the political agenda. Away from the high-profile platforms ordinary people began to debate the issue of climate change with an intention of not only to draw linkages between ongoing practices and the cause but also ways of responding to the looming crisis. As an organisation that gives voice to grassroots organisations in the historically marginalised communities, CEJ holds the view that more needs to be done to deepen the understanding of ordinary people about climate change. A number of civil society organisations played a significant role in raising awareness on issues of climate change, mainly in preparation for engaging with the COP17 processes. The Climate Train, organised by Indalo Yethu, is a case in point. However, the outcome of our reflection meeting in early 2012 clearly shows that activists are in need of more education on the issue.

It is also undeniable that much has been done in terms of research and other forms of producing knowledge on environmental justice. It has been our observation that much needs to be done to make this knowledge useable, since that most of it is presented in highly technical language and published in English. Organisations like Green Connection have taken an initiative of unpacking these publications and make the content more accessible to speakers of other languages. Many organisations gave a positive feedback on this step as they could manage to understand the significance of searching for sustainable alternative sources of energy and draw linkages between what is written and their everyday experience. Various organisations are increasingly participating in various activities ranging from engaging with policy-makers to maintaining the wetlands. This process has so far helped various groups to organise themselves around various practical activities to be undertaken to promote environmental sustainable. From the point of view of CEJ, constant provision of information and various education related activities will serve to sustain the momentum of searching for practical sustainable solutions or responses to climate change. Therefore, without education all the hard-earned gains of the past years will be undone.

Regards
Siviwe Mdoda
(Chairperson – CEJ)