

Eco-Justice Collaborative 2024 Annual Report

PYM Program Support Committee

Collaborative Annual Report 2024

Queries

1. What do you want the PYM body (all 10,000 of us in PYM membership) to know about your Collaborative?

The Eco-Justice Collaborative consists of seventeen highly skilled and passionate climate justice activists, organizers, and experts. Their experience includes Friends with extensive expertise in policy/legislation, monetary systems, climate science, energy, food, land, education, media, law, bio-diversity, carbon forests, resilience, and activism. EJC is a collaborative of professionals who represent different concerns and experiences, but who consider each other's work as crucial as their own and each works to advance the goals of the whole collaborative. We recognize we are not alone in this work within the yearly meeting, and we rely on many friends within PYM to either support us or lead the way on our shared work to save the planet.

The EJC continues to publish a monthly newsletter, which PYM distributes through the Peace and Justice Network to more than 2,000 subscribers. Sections on Action, Upcoming Events, Good News, and Resources provide Friends with information and inspiration to support their work on the existential challenges of climate change, environmental injustice, agriculture, and biodiversity loss. The opportunities for involvement in climate issues are categorized according to the five action areas listed in the Climate Change Sprint Report: advocacy, education, finance, lowering carbon footprint, and mourning loss and instilling hope. All sections include links to articles, reports, workshops, and websites where Friends can find more information. We also try to highlight resources, actions and events that show what other Quakers in the Yearly Meeting and Quaker organizations beyond the YM are doing so that readers can connect to the wider community.

2. How does your group meet and how frequently?

The whole collaborative gathers at a regularly scheduled meeting each month. However, small ad hoc subcommittees meet more often to address particular actions or monitor continuing projects.

We have been meeting by Zoom well before the pandemic because our members are widely distributed across PYM, and we have a strong desire to reduce our travel impact on the planet.

3. How is the work of the Collaborative being shared with the PYM community?

- a. EJC publishes a monthly newsletter, distributed by the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting staff. EJC produces regular webinars on important climate and climate justice topics. EJC also connects to the YM through presentations at Monthly Meetings and Quarters and at workshops at sessions. In the past year and a half, EJC has been compiling a presentation of Monthly and Quarterly Meeting work on Eco-Justice specifically climate, environmental racism, and biodiversity.
- b. You can subscribe to the Eco-Justice Newsletter <https://go.pym.org/l/791983/2019-08-27/gmg> People have to select Peace and Social Justice to receive the EJC newsletter.
- c. Throughout the year we provided educational webinars on issues we were addressing at the time. We recorded all our webinars, and they are available on the Eco Justice Collaborative webpage (<https://www.pym.org/eco-justice-collaborative/>). In the previous year, some of the topics included Greening Sacred Spaces (a four-part series), The Inflation Reduction Act and funds available for climate projects, Climate and Money, and others.

4. How does your Collaborative remain spiritually grounded through its work?

EJC begins every meeting with worship, acknowledging the spiritual foundations of our work because we are members of the Religious Society of Friends and without spiritual grounding, we grief and burnout would overwhelm us. We follow worship with check-ins which allows members to share their joys, their grief, their hopes, and their current work. Though grief, hope, and deep spirituality are individual emotional conditions, sharing them is a spiritual exercise in humility and trust. We believe unity is possible when the community is strong and deeply committed to each other. In all our work, we try to find ways to articulate our reverence for creation while simultaneously using whimsy to lighten our communication and remind us of our humanity.

5. If possible, please provide a report showing the requested budget vs actual expenses.

NOT YET AVAILABLE

6. What are the major accomplishments for the year? How do they compare to the goals identified in your funding request?

Since the adoption on the Climate Sprint report in 2021, EJC has been serving the yearly meeting by engaging the five action areas proposed in the report. There is

considerable crossover among the action categories and our choice of categories for particular actions is sometimes arbitrary.

- a. Advocacy: During 2023-2024 EJC Friends appreciated the creation of a Quaker lobbying group, Quaker Action Mid-Atlantic Region (QAMAR). We are grateful that there is an organization that will assist and educate Friends on critical public policy.
- b. Education: Webinars, including one to support friends' access to funding from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). This was followed up by preparation and distribution of documents and information from the IRS on the availability of funds. Recent work includes a partnership with Concord Quarter Climate Action Working Group to educate Friends about the crucial need to create ecologically diverse habitats in sacred spaces. Currently Eco Justice and the Concord Quarter Climate Action Working Group have been co-hosting the Greening Sacred Spaces Series.
- c. Reducing our Carbon Footprint: We are in the process of finding ways to support John Munro's carbon forest project, while encouraging Monthly Meetings to increase their use of their property for carbon capture.
- d. Finance: EJC has carried a concern for toxic corporate banking systems and has continued to advocate for public banking. Members of EJC often work with EQAT to confront energy and finance institutions that have negative environmental practices. We have a deep concern about political and economic systems that are so inequitable that the power and influence needed to save the planet is increasingly unavailable to a democratic process.
- e. Mourning Loss and Instilling Hope: In order to address the frightening reality of global warming and assess the work we need to do, we will first have to understand what is lost, mourn that loss, adapt to it, and then begin again with the necessary response.

7. What are the things that are stopping/hindering your mission, if any?

- a. The PYM Lobbying Policy. Public policy, the legislative process, and regulatory capability of government are crucial to making any difference in our threatened planet.
- b. We are concerned about our inability to maintain a dynamic up-to-date webpage on the PYM website.

8. Would you like additional support from PYM staff, the Quaker Life Council Clerk, your Program Support Committee liaison, or the Program Support Committee?

We appreciate the assistance of Claire Kinnel, the PYM Engagement Coordinator. She has helped us with professionalism, enthusiasm, and competence. Her support has been invaluable.