



New York Sea Grant has developed an online mapping tools guide that will provide a data-driven support for community interest in environmental justice

Empowering Communities Through a Justice-Oriented Online Mapping Tools Guide

Online mapping tools are a powerful way to visualize various disparities in a community. In 2020, COVID-19 provided another example of how long-standing systemic health and social inequities negatively impact people from low income and racial and ethnic minority groups at higher rates. Environmental justice (EJ) recognizes the relationship between race, class, and environmental health, and how some communities are associated with higher exposure to environmental risks and have less capacity to adapt to climate risks.

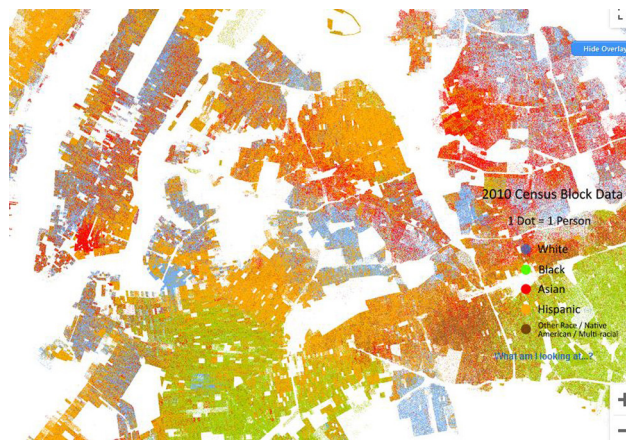
In 2020, New York Sea Grant (NYSG) created an Environmental Justice Mapping Tools Guide that highlights more than 22 free, publicly-accessible, and easy-to-use online mapping tools to help users access a variety of data through the lens of EJ. These tools cover a range of data that communities, educators, students, and environmental practitioners can use to define and plan EJ-focused projects.

This new guide creates a useful, data-driven framework that acknowledges long-standing systemic inequities and the complex ways that human health is impacted by the environment. It helps to make EJ-focused data and information more accessible to the public and is being used by groups ranging from teachers to community-based organizations to include EJ in interdisciplinary ways.

An "Introduction to Environmental Justice Mapping Tools" webinar (52 minutes) with EJ background information and demonstrations of several of the mapping tools (Neighborhoods at Risk, How's My Waterway...) featured in the guide is posted on the NYSG Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion webpage at www.nyseagrant.org/deiresources.

Two hundred forty-nine (249) participants from across the state representing 81 organizations participated in the live webinar. Organizations included local, state, and federal government, community-based organizations, consulting firms, educators, and representatives from the health and transportation sectors. Of 105 completed evaluations, 97% of participants found the webinar content helpful, and 93% of those participants indicated they were interested in future webinars to explore the tools in more depth.

This NYSG-developed resource will serve as a data-driven tool to facilitate community knowledge or interest in environmental justice, helping communities to access information to become more resilient and adaptable to climate change.



The Racial Dot Map is one of the many resources in the new Environmental Justice Mapping Tools Guide published by NYSG in 2020. Image Copyright, 2013, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia (Dustin A. Cable, creator)

The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is Resilient New York Communities and Economies.

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA.
Contact: New York Sea Grant Extension, 112 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; www.nyseagrant.org.

Project summary was written by Hudson Estuary Specialist Jessica Kuonen, 845-340-3983, jak546@cornell.edu.