The background of the slide is a photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a body of water, possibly a river or a large pond, with a small figure of a person standing in the water. The middle ground shows a line of trees and vegetation. In the background, there are hills or mountains under a cloudy sky. The overall tone is somewhat muted and naturalistic.

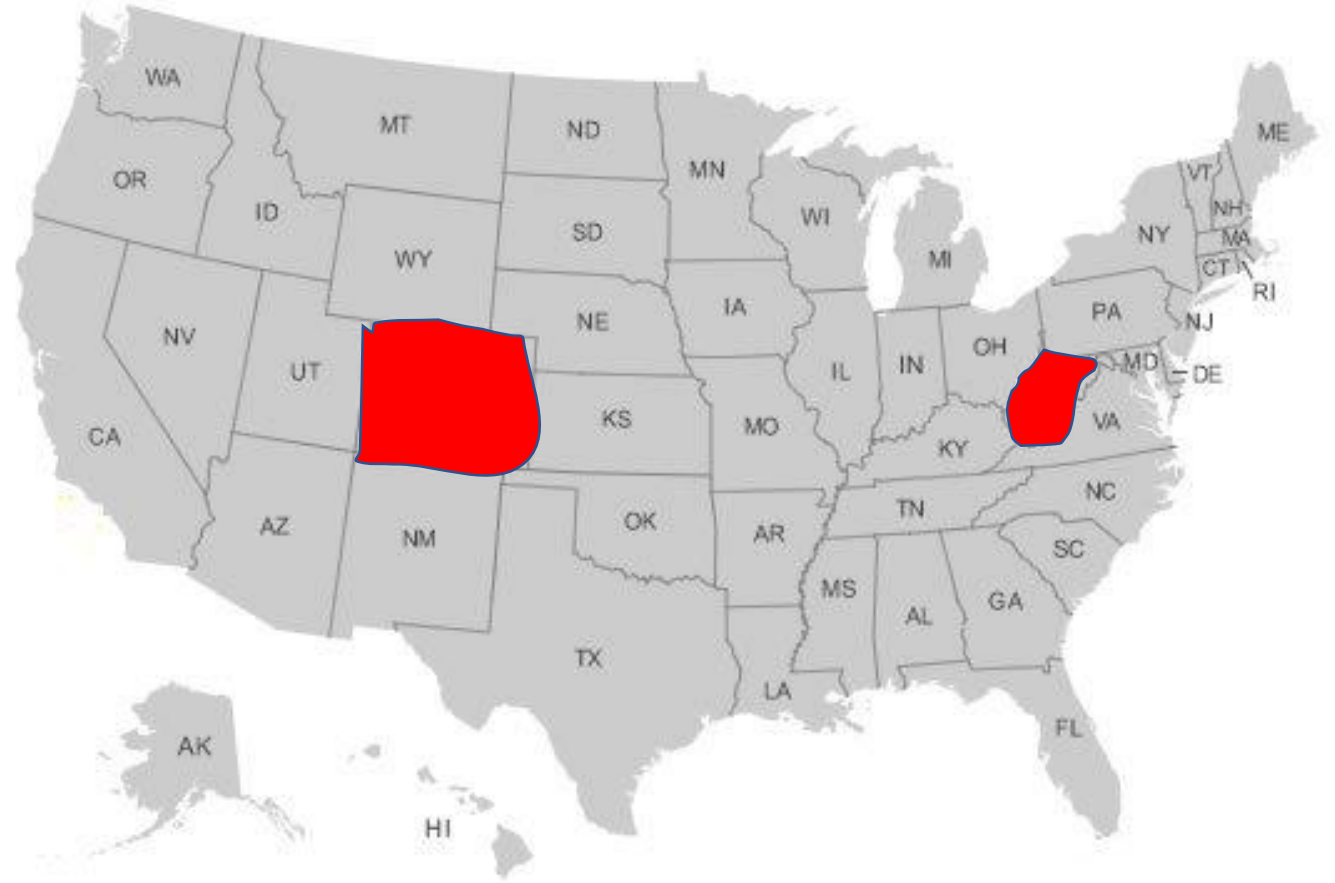
# “Those who are *responsible* for it should *pay*!”: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Perceptions of Justice in Watershed Management

Pranietha Mudliar, PhD

IRISE Post-doctoral Fellow in Environmental Justice and Sustainability

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# A Tale of Three Watersheds



# Research Question

Can institutions (rules, norms, and strategies) for environmental governance be re-conceptualized as institutions for environmental justice?

# Environmental Justice

- **Procedural Justice:** Meaningful inclusion of socially marginal groups in decision-making processes (Adhikari & Lovett, 2006; Andersson & Agrawal, 2011; Kurian & Dietz, 2004).
- **Distributive Justice:** Distribution of benefits equitably among the community of resource users (Adhikari & Lovett 2006; Anand & Sen 2000; Jacobs 1989; Poteete, 2004; Sunam & McCarthy, 2010)
- **Interactional Justice:** Fairness, honesty, and dignity in social and personal interactions, conduct, or treatment (Cropanzano, Prehar, & Chen, 2002; Cohen-Carash & Spector, 2001; Wutich, Brewis, & York, 2013).



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# Cross-site comparison

Feature	Karnataka, India	West Virginia, US	Denver, US
Water Issue	Water quantity	Acid Mine Drainage	<i>E.coli</i> contamination, non-point source pollution
Citizen-led Watershed Planning Group	Yes	Yes	No
Group by-laws	Yes	Yes	No
In-group socio-cultural difference	Yes (5 Lingayats, 9 Scheduled Castes)	Yes (11 White, 6 African-American)	NA
Perceived success in achieving improved environmental outcomes	Yes	On-going	?
No. of interviews	14	17	1

# Karnataka, India

“In the initial days when MYRADA would conduct their meetings on community building, we were told not to put out chairs either for them or for the Lingayats. They told us to bring out the carpets and spread it out so that everyone can sit together. **They sat down with us like equals.** We sat on the same land together for the first time. It would have been so different if the Lingayats sat on the chair, and we sat on the ground. **The meetings are one place where feelings of high caste and low caste are not considered, even though the rules in the village may make us behave otherwise.**”  
(Scheduled Caste, Male, 36).

Benefits: Soil and water conservation, community pride.



# West Virginia, US

“The group sees great value in the participation of the African-American ladies that do not consider themselves to be ‘experts’ in anything, but they play **supporting roles such as cooking food** for events.” (White, male, founder, 70).

“If someone is not seen for more than two days, someone will go look at their mailbox or knock on their doors, just to make sure that they are okay. Others don’t understand our need to rely on each other, but we know that if we don’t have a community to look out for each other, that’s the end of us.” (African-American, Female, 73).

Benefits: Feeling of community, community pride.





# Denver, US

“I am a white male when I say this, but for Latin Americans taking care of the creek is not a high priority. Now, most of them are Hispanics who are taking their kids to parks and I see the kids break and uproot plants, they break branches, and their parents don’t tell them that its not okay to do that. **Maybe it’s the cultural influence, or maybe they were never taught to take care of the creek, and they have no understanding of the environment and we can’t tell them anything. They are *responsible* for it, and should *pay!*”** (White, male, 63).



# Discussion

- RQ: Can institutions (rules, norms, and strategies) for environmental governance be re-conceptualized as institutions for environmental justice?
  - Notions of justice are context specific.
  - Social norms and attitudes towards injustice may be stronger than rules that create justice.
  - Institutions for environmental governance can be re-conceptualized as environmental justice, but they *may not necessarily* create environmental justice.
- Future research: Why do unjust norms and attitudes persist and how can they be reformed?

Thanks!