

# Conservation Standards: Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Approaches

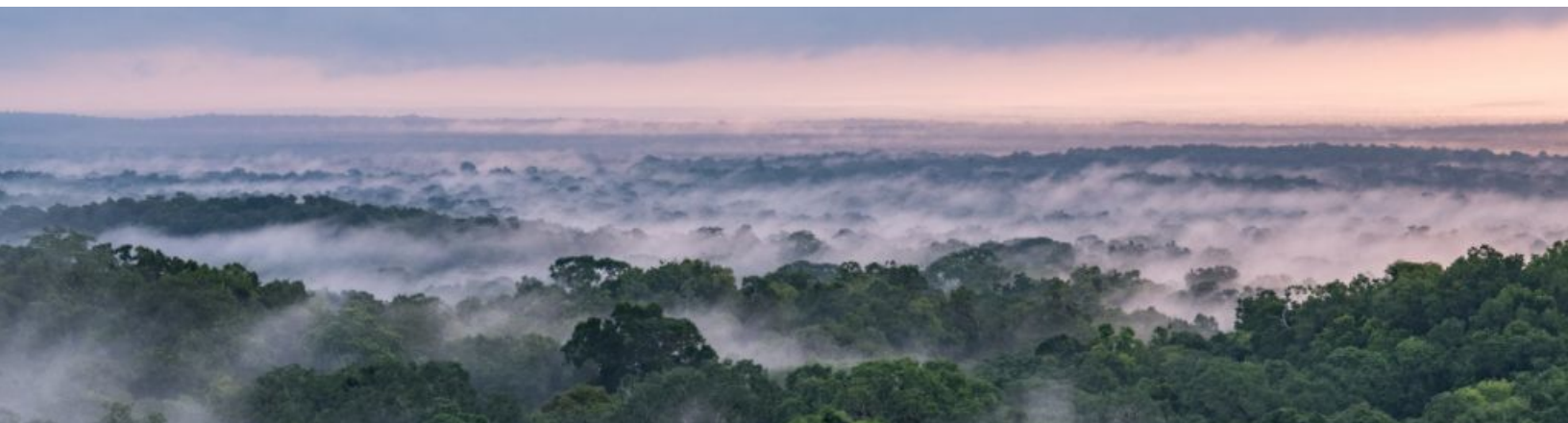


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## Executive Summary

The Conservation Measures Partnership, Foundations of Success, and Lacy Consulting Services collaborated to discover how conservation organizations around the world are incorporating Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) into conservation planning and implementation. To accomplish this, Lacy Consulting Services conducted 12 semi-structured interviews. The tips and advice provided in this report are intended to help conservation practitioners when they apply JEDI during each step of the Conservation Standards.

### **General Findings**

JEDI was explained as the combination of actions to engage marginalized or underrepresented communities with the intent of improving wellbeing. JEDI principles aim for inclusiveness and equality for environmental services to all individuals from various identities such as religion, gender, and sexuality. Conservation groups have had varying degrees of success in incorporating JEDI into conservation planning and implementation. Those that show success were fully supported by leadership and had funders aligned with their desire to incorporate JEDI. Much of the JEDI work that the interviewed organizations had implemented to date revolved around cisgender women, socioeconomic class, and Indigenous identities. While this provides opportunities to share resources on best practices to engage these groups, it shows a lack of consistent engagement in the multitude of minority or oppressed identities.

### **Guiding Questions and Considerations**

To make this report easy to digest for practitioners, the report is divided into the 5 steps of the *Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation (Conservation Standards)*. The steps are further categorized by topic and each topic has guiding questions and considerations for practitioners to review as they engage with each step of the Conservation Standards. This is the first time that a collection of guiding questions has been provided to practitioners that are attempting to incorporate JEDI into the Conservation Standards. With the accompanying considerations, this is a powerful tool for every conservation practitioner.

### **Recommendations to Overcome Challenges**

The report provides a list of recommendations that were provided by the interviewees on the typical challenges that surface while implementing JEDI. This section provides practitioners an opportunity to possibly avoid failures that have been experienced by other organizations.

### **Learning**

JEDI learning is a life-long endeavor and there are many opportunities to discover new approaches. Conservation is not keeping up with the pace of social change in the world and can stay relevant by continued growth in JEDI. A starting list of resources to consider are in [Appendix 2](#).

### **Challenges**

Practitioners face many challenges in implementing JEDI. This report summarizes some of the common challenges and provides advice from practitioners that are implementing JEDI around the world. Many of these challenges are centered on engagement and relationship building with various stakeholders. Time is a limiting factor that contributes to the success of incorporating JEDI into planning and implementation. Addressing these challenges now should help practitioners prepare for overcoming these barriers before they arise.

Using these approaches can help you and your organization in your pursuit of incorporating JEDI into your conservation planning and implementation throughout the steps of the Conservation Standards.

Photographs by Jason Houston



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# Introduction

The Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP) is assessing how they can improve the implementation of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) in conservation programming. With funding from the Moore Foundation, CMP hired Lacy Consulting Services, a research consultant, to interview organizations around the world to determine how they are undertaking this critical and impressive work. These interviews were an initial step to better understand how JEDI is being implemented in conservation programming by practitioners. We used their experiences to develop a set of guiding questions for practitioners to consider in implementing the steps of the *Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation* (hereafter Conservation Standards). This document is meant to be easy to use and accessible to all practitioners. This initial effort by CMP is also intended to provide input into future efforts to gather information and develop guidance.

The results of this project were intended to highlight how JEDI can be integrated into conservation programming to help practitioners work with diverse communities. Integration of JEDI is seen as a critical need for improving the wellbeing of people, ensuring diverse voices are present during decision-making, and laying the foundation for conservation efforts to be sustainable into the future. However, organizations find it difficult to integrate JEDI when the organization is not applying these values internally. Time needs to be spent building internal capacity and knowledge in an effort to enter this space with an open mind and willingness to learn. We have compiled a list of starting resources available in [Appendix 2](#).



# Key Terms Used in the Report

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Nation People</b>	Refers to people that originally stewarded the land before colonization. This word can be regionally specific.
<b>Aboriginal</b>	Refers to people that originally stewarded the land before colonization. This word can be regionally specific.
<b>Gender</b>	Includes the spectrum of gender identities such as male, female, non-binary, and gender-nonconforming.
<b>Inclusion</b>	Fostering a sense of inclusion where all identities feel welcome
<b>Indigenous</b>	Refers to people that originally stewarded the land before colonization. This word can be regionally specific.
<b>JEDI</b>	Or Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion - Refers to the combination of actions to engage marginalized or underrepresented communities with the intent of improving wellbeing. JEDI principles aim for inclusiveness and equality for environmental services to all individuals from various identities such as religion, gender, and sexuality.
<b>Rights-Based Justice</b>	Another term used by conservation organizations when speaking about JEDI. Often referred to when speaking about work with Indigenous people. It refers to ensuring that governing rights, laws, and policies are considered when conducting activities with Indigenous people.
<b>LGBTQ+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and beyond - References the spectrum of sexual identities and genders
<b>Social Safeguards</b>	Set of principles put in place by organizations as their standard to protect human wellbeing during projects.
<b>Socioeconomic</b>	Status of an individual or community based on the combination of social and economic indicators.

# Methodology

Lacy Consulting Services interviewed 12 organizations that work at scales ranging from neighborhoods to national landscapes. A list of qualifier characteristics was developed to help narrow the field of interviewees.

Lacy Consulting prioritized interviews with CMP member organizations first in order to better understand the JEDI approaches already being undertaken by the community. The list was then broadened through a request in the Conservation Coaches Network listserv. Finally, some organizations were identified through working relationships with Lacy Consulting Services. We summarized the different programs identified by respondents and then chose the organizations that best fit the qualifier characteristics. We then applied the Snowball Methodology, asking interviewees for organizations they knew had strong JEDI approaches, to determine if other organizations fit the qualifier characteristics. By the end of the interviews, new organizations were not being recommended. This may be a result of limited knowledge of other organizations that were involved in incorporating JEDI into conservation outcomes and strategies. The full interview guide is available in [Appendix 1](#).

# General Findings

## **Conservation organizations have varying levels of experience with JEDI**

The organizations interviewed have implemented JEDI for varying lengths of time. However, there are roughly three categories of timelines: 1) Founded as an organization that implements JEDI in conservation programming, 2) began to implement JEDI ~15-20 years ago, or 3) began to implement in 2020. The conservation organizations that were founded on JEDI principles had a significant depth to their approach; they described multiple examples of successes and failures from implementation. Those that began ~15-20 years ago have had varying degrees of success in implementing JEDI depending on the commitment of their leadership. The organizations that began implementing in 2020 highlighted the murder of George Floyd, various other atrocities, and the global protests that followed as the catalyst for their current commitment to developing an approach to implementing JEDI.

## **Leaders & funders can drive organizational commitment to JEDI**

Leadership was a significant determinant of whether or not the organizations interviewed were able to fully implement JEDI. Interviewees stated that active leadership was the key to their ability to effectively participate in bringing JEDI into conservation programming. The other key factor is funders. Funders seemed to drive organizations to begin exploring JEDI as a means of financial survival. Funders are increasingly looking for grantees to define their approach to JEDI and the intended results in their request for proposals. However, if the funder does not require JEDI, then conservation organizations often consider themselves absolved of having to implement it. While funders are making a push for JEDI, they also impose restrictive timelines which deny opportunities for effective implementation and long-term monitoring. Monitoring the results of JEDI allows an opportunity to reevaluate your approach and pivot in new directions as new data surfaces.

## **There are two main overarching approaches to incorporating JEDI into conservation work**

The organizations interviewed take two general approaches to JEDI - a focus on rights-based engagement and/or a focus on equitable outcomes. Rights-based work ensures that everyone has a seat at the table for decisions that impact their livelihoods. For example, Indigenous people that are often excluded from the very rights afforded them by the government and their governing nation. The other focus is on equitable conservation and equitable justice. This approach attempts to ensure that the most vulnerable communities and individuals are prioritized when considering conservation and justice actions. This includes both ensuring that benefits are realized by those marginalized communities while also taking all necessary actions to avoid negative consequences. There are likely other ways that organizations approach JEDI. For both of these approaches, there has been greater focus on cisgender women, socioeconomic class, and Indigenous communities within conservation. Some organizations interviewed are beginning to create social safeguards around these identities to help guide practitioners during projects. We have compiled a list of resources available in [Appendix 2](#).

## **JEDI considerations are incorporated more frequently in early Steps of the Conservation Standards**

In interviews, we asked questions related specifically to implementing JEDI in each of the 5 steps of the Conservation Standards. Most of the organizations felt confident that they are implementing JEDI in the Assessing and Planning steps. However, fewer organizations felt they have yet fully incorporated JEDI in the Implement, Analyze and Adapt, and the Share steps.





# Guiding Questions and Considerations to Implement JEDI in the Conservation Standards

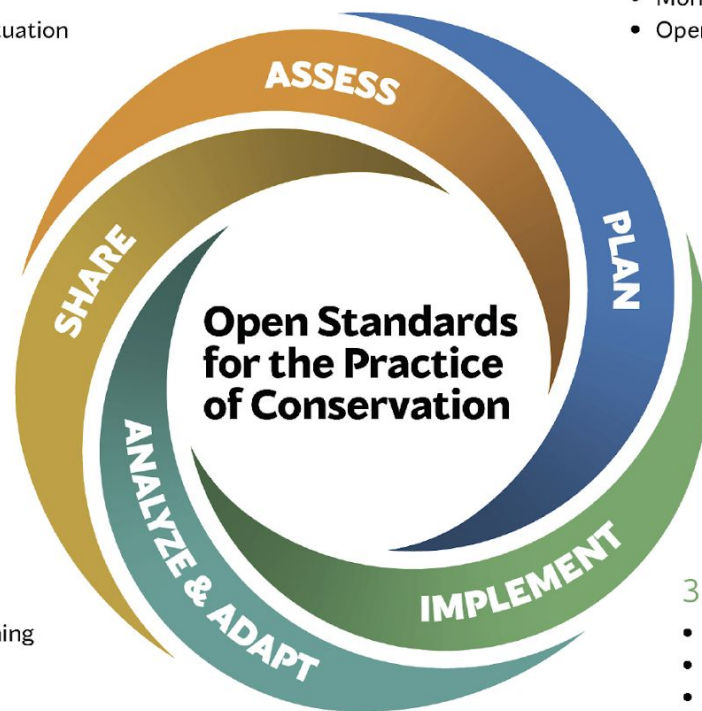
Based on the findings from interviews, consultant's expertise, and a review of resources ([Appendix 2](#)), we provide a list of guiding questions and considerations in implementing JEDI. The lists are organized under the 5 steps of the Conservation Standards. Organizations can use these guiding questions in all 5 steps of the Conservation Standards to ground their framework for including JEDI. These suggestions are intended to be adapted to your own process through creativity and inclusiveness.

## 1. ASSESS

- Purpose & team
- Scope, vision, & targets
- Critical threats
- Conservation situation

## 2. PLAN

- Goals, strategies, assumptions, & objectives
- Monitoring plan
- Operational plan



## 5. SHARE

- Document learning
- Share learning
- Foster learning

## 3. IMPLEMENT

- Work plan & timetable
- Budget
- Implement plan

## 4. ANALYZE & ADAPT

- Prepare data
- Analyze results
- Adapt plans



## Assess

In the assessment step, it is important to think about the core team's composition while also determining the scope, vision, and conservation targets. This is where you have the opportunity to explore both the conservation and social context with a JEDI lens. Because of the quantity of helpful questions in this phase, we have broken them into two sections: 1) Internal JEDI capacity assessment and 2) Community JEDI needs assessment. Each section is further divided into categories of questions with subsequent considerations. This will be the format for the rest of the report. Here are some questions to think about as you explore this step:

### Internal JEDI capacity assessment

#### **Are you currently incorporating JEDI in your programs?**

- If not, you might ask if your programming could potentially be adding to the injustice of marginalized identity groups. Consider if JEDI seems daunting or beyond your team's expertise. Reducing uncertainty about the JEDI needs of your project's target audiences during the assessment phase could pay off in the long term by avoiding critical mistakes, building social capital, and increasing local buy-in.
- You may want to work with your leadership to create buy-in and develop a plan for systemic change in your conservation practices to incorporate JEDI.

#### **Do you have sufficient JEDI expertise on the team?**

- To build the capacity of staff, there are many contractors available to conduct JEDI training. Paying for trainers that have lived experiences similar to the marginalized populations you tend to serve is a great way to give back to that community and gain a concise education on applying JEDI approaches.
- You may consider joining a network that has experience in assessing both social and environmental landscapes. Organizations such as the Conservation Initiative on Human Rights (<http://www.thecihr.org/>) may provide guidance.
- Consider partnering with a human rights or development organization to conduct the assessment.
- If your team doesn't yet have the needed expertise, you may want to consider bringing in a consultant with JEDI expertise onto the team. You might also consider collaborating with college students with this expertise.

- To increase your capacity, think about having external partners that serve as your accountability partner. An accountability partner is someone that you have a formal or informal agreement with that will call you out when your team is not staying true to your agreed JEDI approach throughout the project. Ideally, this would be an organization or group that is reflective of the identity groups you are serving.
- The team that is assessing the conservation and social landscape should be reflective of the diversity found in the area. You might consider hiring temporary employees from the region. Check your process for hiring bias based on socioeconomic class, education, and language. Many times this means hiring an external team to audit where you are posting, the language in your job descriptions, and ensuring that you are not making unnecessary requirements for hiring. Some unnecessary requirements for hiring can include asking that the employee have a graduate-level environmental degree for an entry-level position or not being clear about the salary range for the position.

## **Community JEDI needs assessment**

### **Are you clear on the problems that can be addressed by implementing JEDI?**

- It is important to be clear about the issues you are tackling. There may be many JEDI-related issues to address through conservation strategies, and unless you have the budget and time you will need to prioritize.
- Many groups in need of support are going to hear about the great work you are doing and will want you to help them. Being clear about your scope of beneficiaries now will set expectations.
- Implementing JEDI is centered around the idea that some individuals cannot fully participate without addressing particular issues. Systemic change may be required to allow full participation in conservation. Assessing national or local policies can help the team understand potential barriers or opportunities for systemic change to benefit marginalized groups and in turn free up time for them to engage more deeply in conservation.

### **Do you have trusting relationships such that you can understand the situation?**

- Local governments are important allies (or can be major roadblocks!). Find out the needs of the local government and how your JEDI approach will help them address local needs.
- It is important to talk with marginalized community members to determine if and how they would be interested in participating in the assessment phase. Even if you can only ask a few key members of oppressed identities, while it is not representative, it can be informative.
- Trust building takes time and intentional strategies. Bringing in consultants early with specific expertise in trust building can be helpful.
- Hiring local staff to help with the assessment can provide a deeper understanding of different identity groups through their perspectives.

- Seems obvious, but getting out and walking around the community and having conversations can lead to important insights and build trust.
- Ensuring that marginalized communities have an opportunity to discuss how the assessment is conducted and getting their feedback is another way of getting input early on.
- Consider co-collaborating on the vision with the specific identity groups you hope to serve. Look online for resources that are specific to co-collaboration. You may consider hiring outside expertise.

### **Are you considering a diversity of identities in your assessment?**

- It is important to ground-truth your assumptions regarding marginalized identity groups with local individuals. Keep in mind that, because a particular group is marginalized in one community does not mean they are in another.
- Bringing in voices from local churches and business bureaus can help you understand the spiritual, economic, and social wellbeing of diverse community members.
- It may be helpful to identify after school programs or social justice institutions that focus on women, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and youth identity groups.

### **Are you taking measures to ensure that your assessment is not only mining information but also restoring communities?**

- Consider creating a list of ways to be non-extractive. This could include hiring from within marginalized identity groups, paying people for their time, and ensuring that the local community has the chance to review and comment on the final results of project assessments.
- Think about structuring your project governance in a way that ensures that individuals not only have a seat at the decision-making table but also feel comfortable speaking up safely and in their native language. It is not enough to quantify your JEDI success by the number of diverse bodies at the table. Take special care to cultivate empowerment among individuals.



## Plan

The team selects strategies, and develops goals and objectives in the planning step. You also create your monitoring and operational plan in preparation for the next two steps. There are many opportunities in the planning step to engage various stakeholders.

The questions to consider are very similar to those in the Assess phase. We are restating and rewording some questions because not all readers are coming to this process following the Conservation Standards step-by-step. If you have gotten this far and have already engaged marginalized communities in the Assess phase, this is a good time to re-evaluate your relationships and make sure you have the right people at the table. If not, you are starting on the wrong foot and may need to go back and do the Assess phase again. If you are starting at this stage after completing the Assess on your own, you may want to slow down and take the time to do more community engagement. Remember that you may have a harder time engaging because you didn't include these marginalized communities in your Assess phase:

### **What JEDI strategy planning tools do you already have experience with in your organization or within your broader network?**

- This is a great time to use your network to find other organizations struggling with the same problem. Perhaps they can share insights and tools. You can also review resources in [Appendix 2](#).

### **Do you have a good representation of your beneficiary community in your planning process?**

- It is important to ensure that individuals feel safe participating. Opening the meeting with an acknowledgement that not all voices may feel safe at this table but that your team is committed to providing resources and time to help all participants feel safe could be a great first step towards letting others tell you what they need to be safe.
- Local leaders that have built trust and relationships with diverse community members should have buy-in and are the gatekeepers to conversations and resources within marginalized communities. Lean on them to help you make in-roads and build the right relationships. They can provide insight into what strategies, goals and objectives are realistic within the local context.
- At the same time, sometimes leaders represent the dominant culture and by relying solely on these leaders your team may inadvertently further the marginalization of

oppressed or minority groups. Consider how you can also incorporate other systematically oppressed voices into the planning process.

### **How will you ensure transparency in the planning process?**

- Teams may find it useful to set up a communication plan for their various stakeholders. You can bring in your marketing and communications teams to help create a transparent process.
- Consider different ways to best reach your stakeholders. You will need a communication strategy that does not simply talk at members of marginalized communities and ignores their input. You should consider different approaches for two-way sharing of information and feedback, including holding a town hall if necessary.
- Being realistic with your social goals to ensure you do not overextend yourself and overpromise results to communities. Being clear now will save you headaches down the road. It is not yet common for conservation organizations to focus on JEDI issues and other nearby communities may want you to provide services for them as well. If it is not in your scope, it may degrade the quality of assistance you can provide in your targeted area.





# Implement

This step is where you put boots on the ground and implement your strategies. You may be creating a work plan and associated timetable. This a chance for your team to have a clear understanding of your budget and start working from your implementation plan.

## **What steps are you taking to address historically-marginalized community concerns?**

- Individuals have the right to reject your project if they feel it is harmful to their community. You should not force your project because you think it is best for communities. Consider how you will respond if a community rejects your project.
- Human rights concerns often bring scrutiny to conservation work. To be sure your strategies will not violate human rights, The Free, Prior, and Informed Consent manual is a great place to start ([Appendix 2](#)). This tool provides you with the resources to work equitably with Indigenous, 1<sup>st</sup> nation people, and aboriginal communities. It is protected by international human rights standards. You may also want to reach out to human rights organizations that work in the region of your proposed project.
- Conflict can arise between organizations and systematically marginalized groups during implementation. Creating a memorandum of understanding, or another document that describes the steps each party can take when addressing conflict in the project, can alleviate these conflicts when they happen. To work, the mechanism must be transparent, fair and accessible to all parties.

## **How will you empower local communities to ensure sustainability?**

- When you are gone, someone has to keep the project moving forward. Hiring local staff may support JEDI, but you should also help communities develop a financial or business model that will allow them to continue working to sustain the project.



## Analyze and Adapt

In this step, you have the opportunity to determine how implementing JEDI is impacting the project. By gathering and preparing data you can begin to see patterns. After analyzing the data, you can start to adapt your plan to ensure a better alignment of social and ecological goals. This section is broken into Analyze and Adapt for ease of reference. Here are some questions to consider in this section:

### Analyze

#### **Do you have what you need to analyze the data coming out of your project implementation?**

- It is difficult to know if you are having a measurable impact on JEDI without analysis. However, without funding it may be impossible to analyze data and adapt your JEDI actions. You will want to speak with leadership in the early stages of the project to determine how you will address funding this critical step in the process. Similarly, you will need to allocate sufficient staff time to data analysis in your work plan to ensure JEDI gets the adequate attention it deserves.
- You may need a social scientist, environmental economist, and/or anthropologist to help you monitor and evaluate the JEDI components of your work. Your analysis of the impacts of the JEDI components of your project should have the same level of rigor as your ecological analysis. This requires a specialized skill set. If your team does not have experience with this type of analysis you should consider how to fill that gap early. You will need to have a strong understanding of the analysis process to make sure that you are designing your indicators and data collection in a way that will be meaningful.
- Think about the meaningful ways to disaggregate your data to determine how marginalized groups may be impacted by the project. Lumping all individuals without breaking them down into identity groups denies you the opportunity to ensure that the work you are doing is impacting everyone equitably. If part of the community is overwhelmingly wealthy and the status quo remains intact while marginalized individuals are further ostracized, then you have not effectively applied JEDI. Considering this early will allow you to collect meaningful data from the start.



### **What is your plan for self-assessment?**

- Self-assessment is a critical component of learning and adapting your JEDI approach. You should have regular meetings (at least annual) to reflect on your implementation. Consider asking yourselves some of the following questions:
  - Are systematically marginalized groups able to participate fully now that JEDI has been addressed in the project? Why or why not?
  - Have you provided ample opportunity for the oppressed groups in the community to provide you with feedback on the progress of the project? How has that feedback been incorporated into implementation?

### **How have donor requirements influenced your analysis of the JEDI approaches and outcomes?**

- Sometimes funder's timelines are unrealistic for understanding the outcomes of implementing JEDI. If possible, your team may want to request an extension or work with the donor to decide on what a realistic reporting framework might look like.

## **Adapt**

### **Based on your analysis, are there places you need to adapt or change your strategy?**

- Perhaps you misunderstood the needs of the community in your initial assessment, or perhaps new groups rose to the surface as needing assistance in order to fully participate in the project. Do what you can to reach these individuals before ending the project.
- Through planning and implementation you should have been hearing a lot of feedback from marginalized identity groups. New information may have arisen during your conversations that changes your original assessment of the situation or strategies. Consider looking back across your documentation for feedback that may have been overlooked.



## Share

It is important to fully document your JEDI approaches from beginning to end to help your organization and others replicate your success and also learn from failure. For this step, you may consider where and how you are going to share your results internally, with local communities, and with external organizations. Sharing both your successes and failures will exponentially help raise awareness and implementation of JEDI principles in conservation programs. Here are some questions to ask yourself in this step:

### **Have you shared your findings with the local communities you were determined to help?**

- This is one way to ensure you are not being extractive of marginalized groups. So many communities are never given the chance to review the final report or provide feedback to ensure that their voices were accurately reflected.

### **How do you plan to share your findings with other organizations focused on people and nature outcomes?**

- There are many organizations that need to hear about your successes and failures, so they do not continue to reinvent the wheel. You have critical information that needs to be shared with the world no matter how small. Consider which networks you are a part of, or you could share with, to extend your reach. You can even consider sharing directly with organizations you know are working on similar projects or strategies.
- When you start your project, you may want to set yourself up for success by looking ahead at conferences that bring together a wide variety of conservation groups and then present your approach. You may want to look outside of the traditional ecological or conservation conference. There are conferences for environmental social science and economics. If your project centered on an issue such as equitable health outcomes, you may consider attending and presenting at a health conference. They may also learn from your JEDI approach.

### **Have you reported to the funder about the benefits and challenges of implementing JEDI?**

- Your funder may require this. If not, it may also be helpful for the funder to understand whether they are setting unrealistic timelines or if more funding is needed to truly integrate JEDI into conservation planning and implementation.

# Recommendations to Overcoming Challenges in Implementing JEDI

The following are some recommendations to overcome common challenges that interviewees expressed in their organizations' efforts to implement JEDI in conservation programming.

## **Internal shifts**

Some organizations are constantly in flux and changing priorities. The necessary time must be given to JEDI in the conservation process. Triggering events such as those of the year 2020 caused some organizations to quickly pivot. However, if there is no systemic change, then the organization may be on to the next internal shift based on the popular topic at the time.

## **Lack of Funding**

Funders are driving a large part of this process. However, funders are also applying tight timelines and are not funding critical pieces of the process such as analyzing, adapting, and sharing. Based on interviews, without appropriate funding, the data analysis and shared learning did not tend to happen. Interviewees suggested in the future they should have a separate JEDI monitoring fund that is supported by specific donors.

## **Reports not published**

There is a lot of great work happening in this space, but reports are not being published or shared. The conservation community would benefit from a repository of reports and resources. Not every report needs to go through a rigorous peer-reviewed process. Documented work is critical at this stage and practitioners would benefit from any examples instead of recreating the process from scratch due to lack of access to reports and resources.

## **Lack of government support**

Access to critical data and leadership buy-in can sometimes lay in the hands of local government. To effectively work in certain countries, it is imperative to have government support. Their access to data and local knowledge can play a critical role in understanding the social landscape. They can also provide a different perspective of marginalized communities.

## **Lack of support from the community**

As stated previously, if you plan to engage and help local communities then your team should provide opportunities for buy-in and consent. You cannot force a project onto a systematically oppressed individual simply because you think it would be best for them. The community should be a collaborator in the process. However, it is important to remember that sometimes you must address certain social barriers before certain individuals can participate equitably and safely.

## **Lack of capacity and power (empowerment)**

It would be a shame to come back to your project after 10 – 20 years just to find that the marginalized groups are in worse shape and that the conservation efforts have been derailed.

This can happen if you apply your expertise to a problem and dramatic change happens without empowering and building capacity within the oppressed identity groups. Without others in the community that can expertly sustain the work you have done, there is a chance for the complete failure of your efforts over time.

### **Strategies being abandoned**

Many strategies never get to implementation due to the organization being unprepared, under-resourced, and having a lack of partners. Implementing JEDI can be a massive undertaking and should not be taken lightly. To effectively work in this space, you need external experts that can help you determine the right amount of time, staff, and funding needed to be effective.

### **Not creating both tangible and intangible benchmarks**

It is not enough to have a tangible benchmark such as 50% of decision-makers in the project are female. You must have intangible benchmarks such as “women feel safe to speak up” or “women feel empowered to teach others about the project”. Intangible benchmarks can be measured effectively with the right experts, such as social scientists, on your team.

### **Lack of organizational presence**

It is critical to have local partners open doors for you if you have not historically worked in a particular area. Your historic lack of presence can lead individuals to perceive that you have weak authority. Partnering with local government and community leaders will help buffer the lack of trust from marginalized members that have not heard of you before.

### **Race, ability, and LGBTQ overlooked**

There are plenty of opportunities to expand on the number of identities to engage in a given community. Identity groups such as race, ability, and sexual orientation are often overlooked in favor of cisgender women, socioeconomic class, and Indigenous people. Not only does this continue to further highlight the discrimination of these groups, but it also takes away from the ability of an organization to think about the intersection of all these identities and how they work together. There is diversity within diversity.

# Conclusions

The implementation of JEDI in conservation practice is growing but at a very slow pace. Practitioners are currently working in silos and the sharing of successes and failures is not keeping up with the pace of social change in the world. Fear of failure and the desire to “get it right the first time” are hindering conservation organizations from engaging in the complexity of human dimensions around JEDI.

Active engagement and support from leadership are required to avoid a disjointed patchwork of efforts. Coordinated efforts with the support from leadership have a higher chance of tackling systemic change. Along with this support, staff should consider looking online to build internal capacity by taking courses and reading books. Your team’s learning from JEDI should be applied to all aspects of your work. All projects are steeped in bias, perceptions, and assumptions. It is more dangerous if your team consists of only the dominant culture of a region. Without help, it is more likely that your organization will do more harm than good.

Creating a network of external partners and collaborators can keep organizations accountable and provide support. A network is a great support system that organizations can draw on to help navigate the complexities of implementing JEDI. This network should include specialists that understand how to implement JEDI in conservation practice, how to effectively engage marginalized communities, can analyze social data, and have the ability to promote your project to other organizations in need of learning.

Much of the focus on diversity is centered around cisgender women, socioeconomic class, and Indigenous people. Organizations interviewed are still working to bring in the complete picture by also focusing on youth, LGBTQ+, veterans, and others diverse identities. Within all of these groups, individuals who have multiple diverse identities can help project teams determine if there are unique challenges within a subset of identities. For instance, a female youth from a privileged background sees the challenges in her community differently than an older, lesbian from an Indigenous group. These diverse views are critical to assess the full ecological and social landscape.



# Appreciation

Lacy Consulting Services and the Conservation Measures Partnership would like to give appreciation to the following organizations for participating in the interview process.

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San Francisco Bay Joint Venture

The Nature Conservancy

Coalition for Delaware River Watershed

World Wildlife Fund U.S.

World Wildlife Fund International

United Nations



# Appendix 1. CMP JEDI Learning Initiative Questionnaire

## Intro questions (The why)

1. Roughly, how long has your organization worked on integrating principles of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (from now on I will just call it JEDI) in conservation?
2. What experiences moved your organization to work on or improve JEDI approaches in conservation?
3. How would you describe the audiences that are impacted by your approach?

## JEDI practices (The what)

4. Could you please describe the JEDI approach/practices? (If too many, can they point you to a guide if they have provided, and tell you about the once ).
5. There are 5 phases of project management in the Conservation Standards: Assess, Plan, Implement, Analyze and Adapt, and Share. Which of these phases best benefit from your approach? For which phases have you integrated approaches/practices for JEDI?
6. Although your approach/practices may not touch all 5 phases, do you have any recommendations for how to integrate JEDI practices in the other phases?

## Experience (The how and how many times)

7. For the phases where you have integrated JEDI, could you please provide any experiences from implementing your approach/practices? Please include both success and failures
8. If you had any failures in implementing JEDI practices, if you could go back and do it over again what would you do differently?
9. For your successes, what would you do better next time to strengthen your outcomes?
10. What advice would you give to a practitioner that is going to use your approach for the first time?

## Snowball Methodology

11. Do you know of other individuals or entities that have integrated JEDI in conservation?

# Appendix 2. Starting Resources to Consider

## **Governance**

[Site-level Assessment of Governance and Equity \(SAGE\)](#)

## **Assessment tool**

[Social Assessment for Protected and Conserved Areas \(SAPA\)](#)

## **Project examples**

[Nepal, Hariyo Ban](#)

[Tunisia, REDD+](#)

## **JEDI articles**

[Links between environmental degradation and violence against women](#)

[The what and why of JEDI](#)

## **Networks and Resources**

[Conservation Coaches Network](#)

[Conservation Measures Partnership Equity Team](#)

[Conservation Initiative on Human Rights \(CIHR\)](#)

[The Management Center](#)

## **Tools and approaches**

[Free, Informed, and Prior Consent](#)

[Human rights approach \(Conservation International\)](#)

[Human rights guide \(The Nature Conservancy\)](#)

[DEIJ Toolkit for organizations](#)

## **Social safeguards**

[World Wildlife Fund](#)

[The Nature Conservancy](#)

[Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund](#)

