

Intersection of Toxics Use Reduction and Environmental Justice

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Hello! Nice to meet you.

- A trip to UMass Lowell in 2009
- Opportunity to work on toxics and furniture flammability standards
- Department of Toxic Substances Control: hazardous waste law enforcement, permitting, cleanups, safer consumer products
- Three generations of family harvested food in California' San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys
- During pandemic: started sourdough and raising chickens

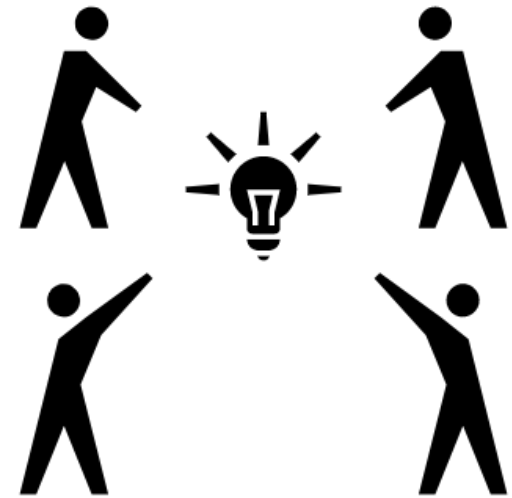
Agenda + topics

- Terms
- Why equity? Why environmental justice?
- Legacy of redlining
- Community engagement spectrum
- Guidance/frameworks on environmental justice and racial equity
- Toxics use reduction and equity



Center your thinking...

- Talking about (in)justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, implicit bias can be...
- Keep an open mind
- Accept/embrace messy
- Better engaging with workers and communities on environmental justice involves a lot of self awareness and self-work!



Culture

- A system of behaviors, values, ideologies, and social arrangements
- Learned, transmitted in a social context, and modifiable
- We present ourselves, our identity, our cultures in many ways. Some are visible, some are not
- I am: Sister, Chicana, regulator, scientist, tree-hugger, hardworking, guitarist, Brown Bear 2X

Terms

- **Diversity:** All the ways people differ. Race, ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, physical appearance, and diversity of thought.
- **Inclusion:** Creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate regardless of their role or rank.

"How we interact with each other as an organization shows up in how we interact with communities."



Terms

- **Equity:** Providing individuals and groups with the appropriate resources and support for their particular situation that will allow them to experience similar opportunities and outcomes as other groups.

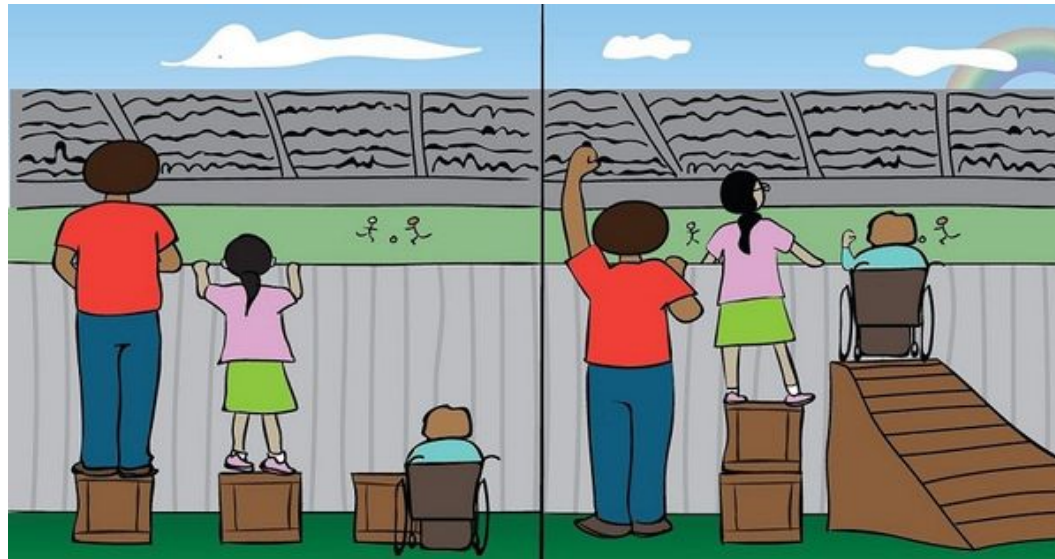


Image credit: Maryam Abdul-Kareem

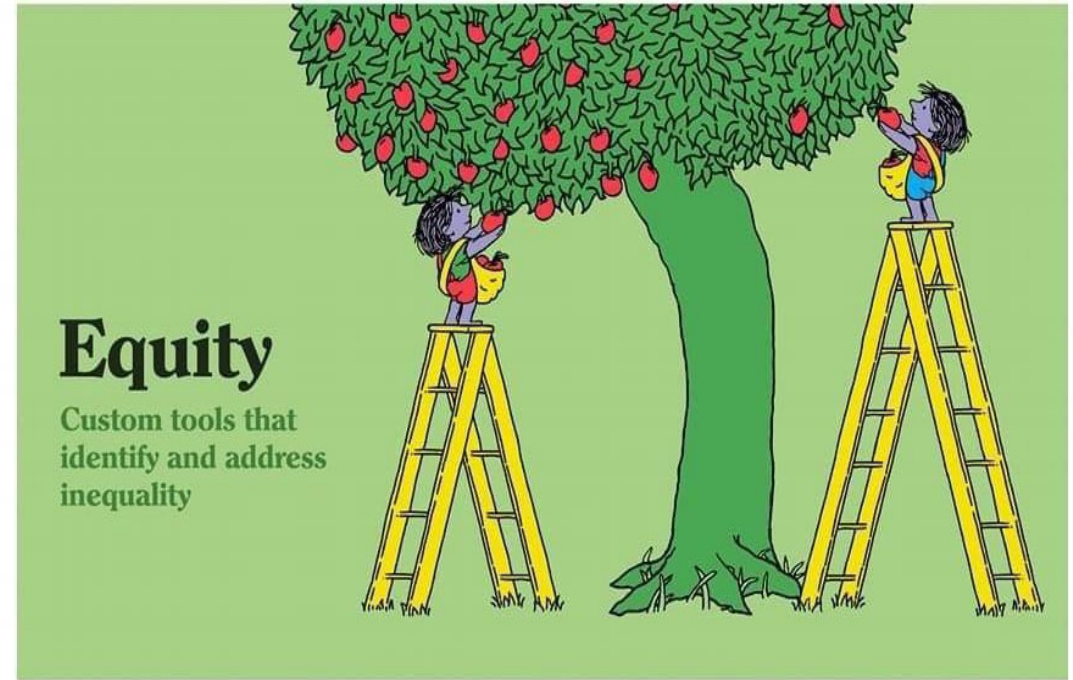
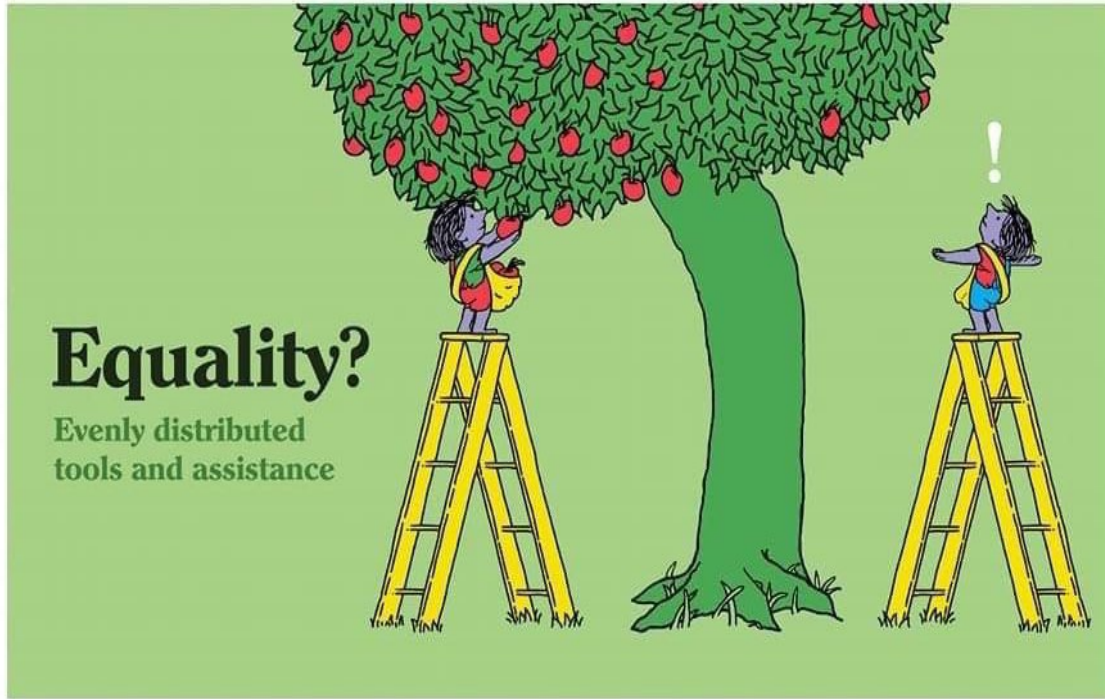


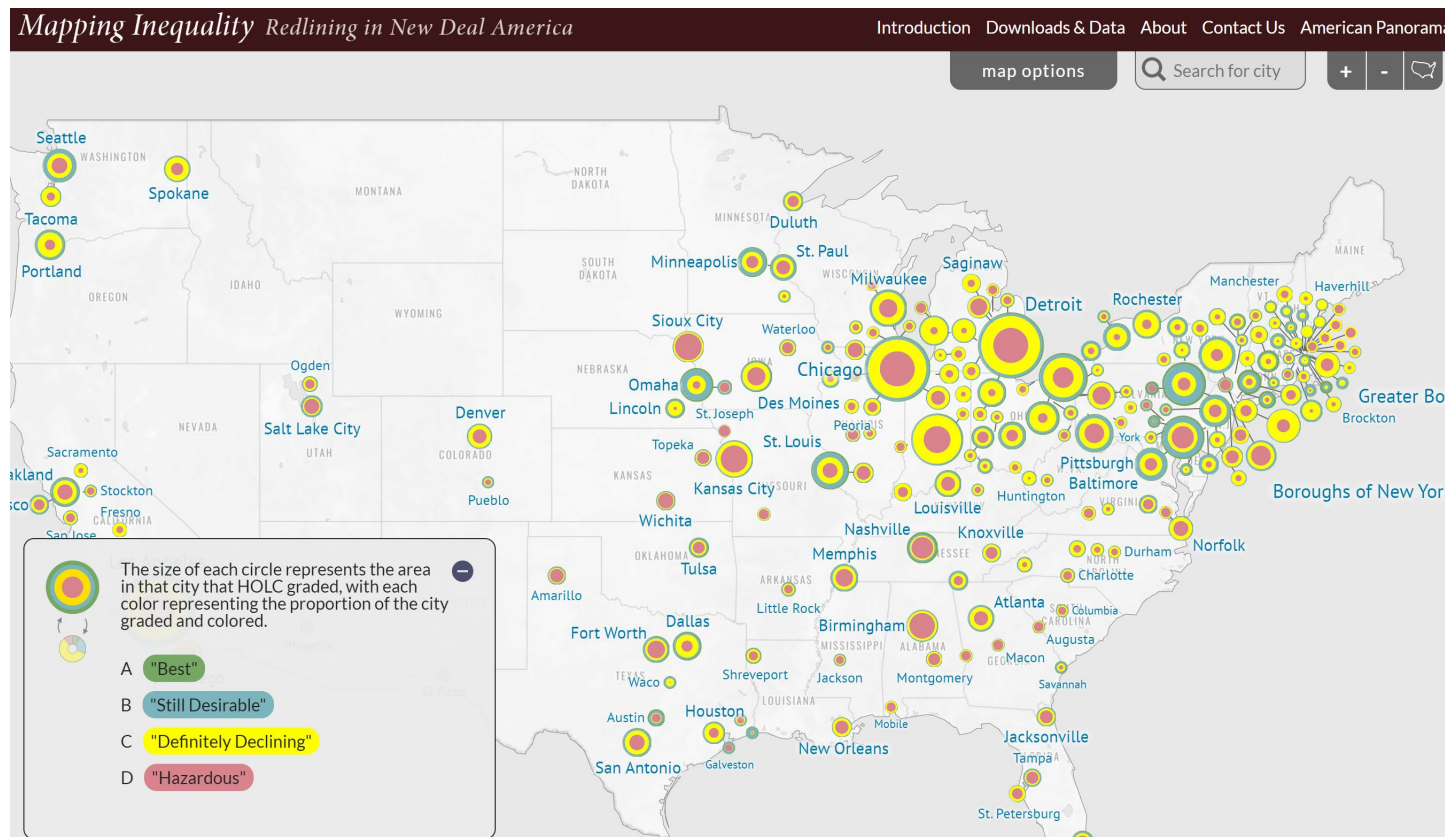
Image credit: Tony Ruth

Terms

- **Racial equity:** Achieved when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes, and that outcomes for all groups are improved (e.g., reducing pollution or contamination exposure pathways to help improve health outcomes)
- **Environmental justice:** Refers broadly to a social justice movement that was developed in response to environmental racism
 - Dr. Robert Bullard refers to environmental racism as “any policy, practice or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages (where intended or unintended) individuals, groups or communities based on race.”

Why equity? Why environmental justice?

- Go to: <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/>



Legacy of redlining affects generations

- Go to <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/>
- Find the city you grew up in OR where you currently live:
 - What's the highest percentage of scores/grades? (green, blue, yellow, or red?)
 - Read through “Selections from Area Descriptions”
 - Read through “Clarifying Remarks”
- What about where your business is located?
- What about where you grew up?

Pollution and prejudice

- Unpacking the relationship between redlined neighborhoods and present-day environmental injustice (CalEPA, <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/f167b251809c43778a2f9f040f43d2f5>)
- Urban heat islands—the increase of land surface temperature due to urban design and land uses—are more intense in formerly redlined neighborhoods than in areas with other grades. (Climate 2020, 8(1), 12; <https://doi.org/10.3390/cli8010012>)

Reflect

- Was there a difference between the redlining history of where you live and where your business is located?
- How did redlining affect the area you grew up in?
- How can present day environmental injustices that align with historic redlining be remedied?



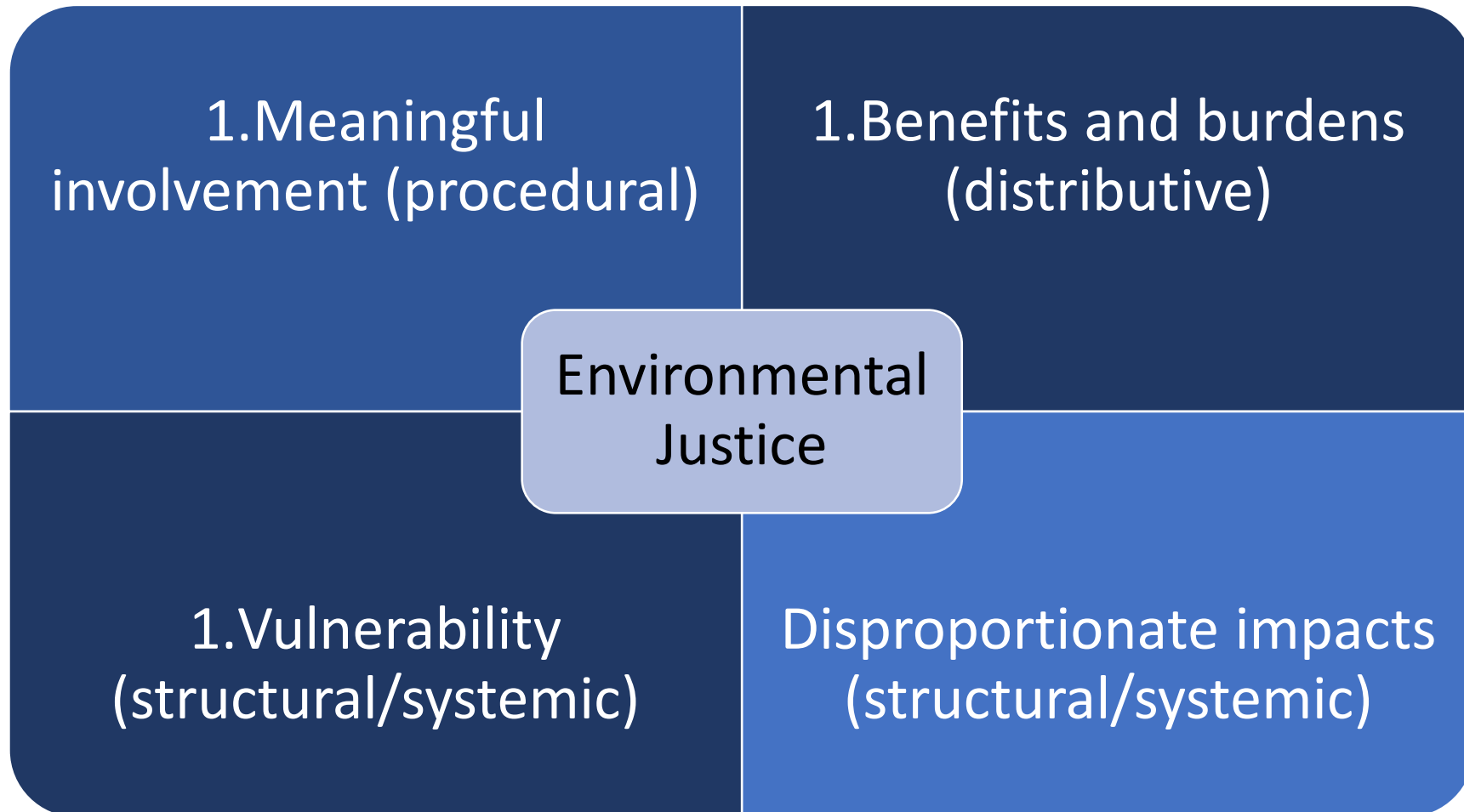
Stance towards community	0 IGNORE	1 INFORM	2 CONSULT	3 INVOLVE	4 COLLABORATE	5 DEFER TO
Impact	<i>Marginalization</i>	<i>Placation</i>	<i>Tokenization</i>	<i>Voice</i>	<i>Delegated Power</i>	<i>Community Ownership</i>
Community Engagement Goals	Deny access to decision-making processes	Provide the community with relevant information	Gather input from the community	Ensure community needs and assets are integrated into process & inform planning	Ensure community capacity to play a leadership role in implementation of decisions	Foster democratic participation and equity through community-driven decision-making; Bridge divide between community & governance
Message to community	<i>“Your voice, needs & interests do not matter”</i>	<i>“We will keep you informed”</i>	<i>“We care what you think”</i>	<i>“You are making us think, (and therefore act) differently about the issue”</i>	<i>“Your leadership and expertise are critical to how we address the issue”</i>	<i>“It’s time to unlock collective power and capacity for transformative solutions”</i>
Activities	Closed door meetings Misinformation Systematic disenfranchisement Voter suppression	Fact sheets Open Houses Presentations Billboards Videos	Public comment Focus Groups Community Forums Surveys	Community organizing & advocacy House Meetings Interactive Workshops Polling Community forums	MOU's with Community-Based Organizations Community Organizing Citizen Advisory Committees Open Planning Forums with Citizen Polling	Community-Driven Planning Consensus building Participatory Action Research Participatory Budgeting Cooperatives
Resource allocation ratios	100% systems admin	70-90% to systems admin 10-30% to promotions and publicity	60-80% to systems admin 20-40% to consultation activities	50-60% to systems admin 40-50% to community involvement	20-50% to systems admin 50-70% to community partners	80-100% to community partners and community-driven processes that ideally generate new value and resources that can be invested in solutions

Environmental justice + racial equity

- Executive Order 12898 "Federal Actions To Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations" (1994)
- Executive Order 13985, "Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government" (2021)



4-point framework on environmental justice



Intersection + guiding questions

- Promote environmental justice by preventing harm and protecting the most vulnerable
- Guiding questions
 1. Who will experience any burden based on the decision?
 2. Who will experience its benefits?
 3. What strategies might mitigate or avoid direct, indirect or unintended consequences for EJ/underserved/marginalized communities?
 4. Who has been brought to the decision-making table, and who is absent?

How can toxics use reduction promote equity and environmental justice?

- Meaningful involvement
 - Planning/reporting
 - What more can you do? How do you involve EJ communities?
- Benefits and burdens
 - Decreasing overall toxics burden. What more can you do?
 - How can you contribute to environmental and energy benefits?
- Vulnerability
 - Socioeconomic, environmental, and structural
 - Be aware, recognize and mitigate your biases
- Disproportionate impacts
 - Historical trends and policy decisions – how can you be a part of closing the equity gap?

Disproportionate impacts

- Understanding and operationalizing the concept of disproportionate impacts are critical to the next generation of EJ practice

Confronting Disproportionate Impacts and Systemic Racism in Environmental Policy. Environmental Law Reporter,

https://www.eli.org/sites/default/files/docs/elr_pdf/51.10207.pdf

Cumulative impacts

- Exposures, public health or environmental effects from the combined emissions and discharges, in a geographic area, including environmental pollution from all sources, whether single or multi-media, routinely, accidentally, or otherwise released. Impacts will take into account sensitive populations and socioeconomic factors, where applicable and to the extent data are available

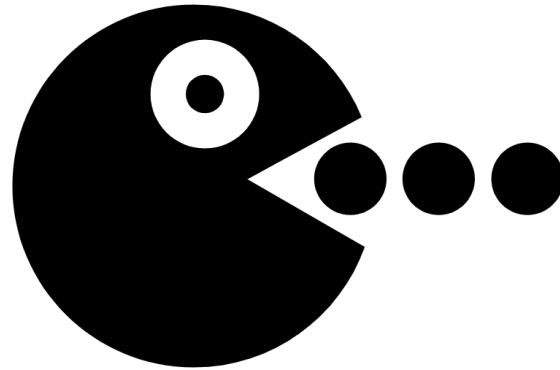
CalEPA Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (2005)

<https://calepa.ca.gov/publications/>

As of March 26, 2021 in Massachusetts....

“Environmental justice principles”, principles that support protection from environmental pollution and the ability to live in and enjoy a clean and healthy environment, regardless of race, color, income, class, handicap, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ethnicity or ancestry, religious belief or English language proficiency, which includes: (i) the **meaningful involvement** of all people with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies, including climate change policies; and (ii) the **equitable distribution of energy and environmental benefits and environmental burdens**.

“Culture eats strategy for breakfast.”



Thank you!

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