

Climate Change, Race, and Migration

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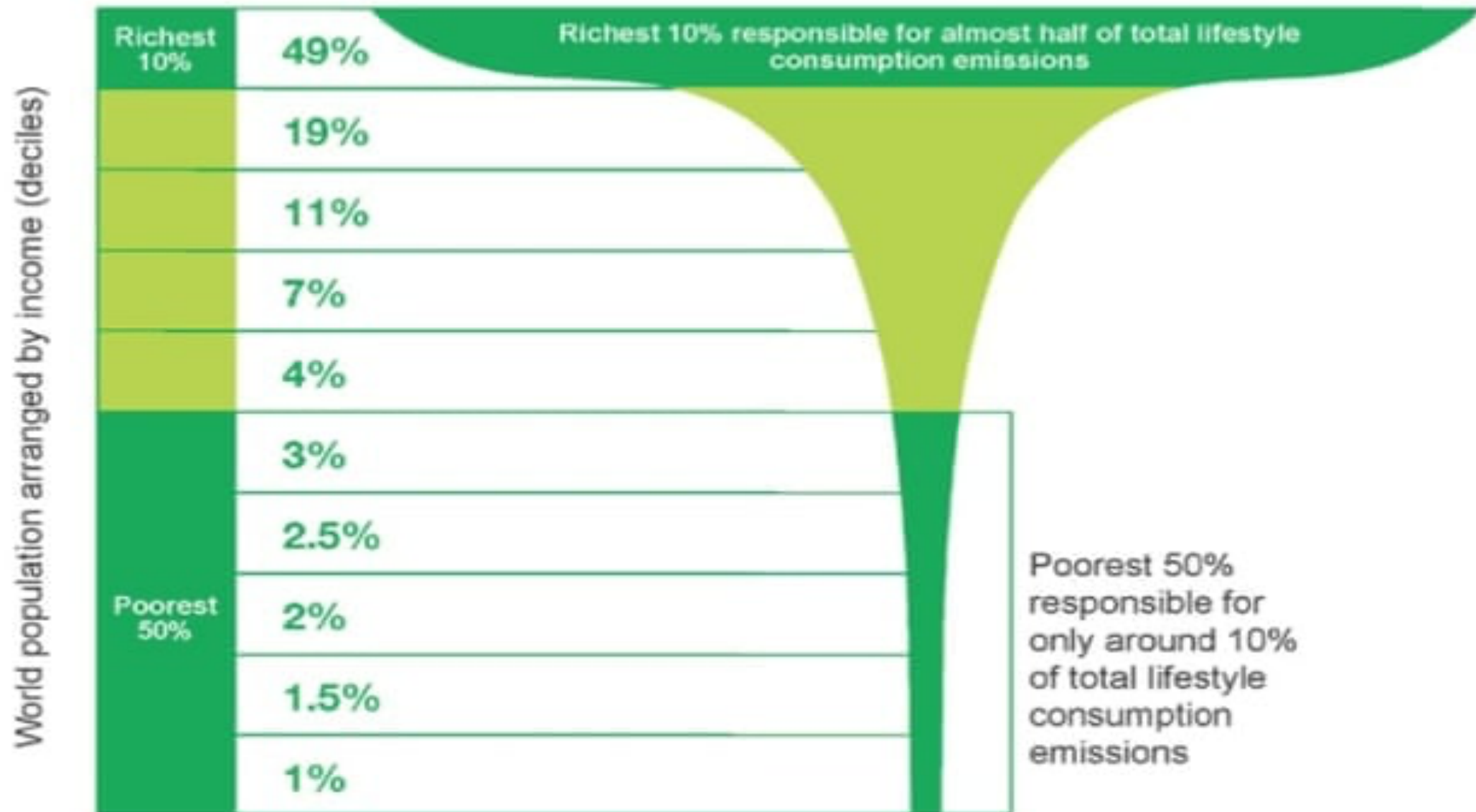
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Climate change-induced displacement

- Between 25 million and one billion people displaced by 2050
- No legal status under international law for climate-displaced persons who cross international borders

Percentage of CO₂ emissions by world population



Racism

- Dehumanization and objectification
- Based on a variety of factors, including skin color, indigeneity, ethnicity, immigration status, language, culture, religion, geographic origin
- Historically contingent

Race and Place:
Stigmatized
geographic
locations

- Ghettos
- Reservations
- Prisons
- War zones
- Refugee camps
- Sacrifice zones of the fossil fuel economy

Race and the life cycle of fossil fuels

- Colonization, genocide, and slavery
- The “slow violence” of fossil fuel industry
- Resource wars: invasion, occupation, exploitation
- Climate change-induced displacement

Ruth Wilson
Gilmore,
Golden Gulag
(2007)

Racism is not merely bias or prejudice but “state-sanctioned or extralegal production of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death.”

Emerging Legal and Policy Approaches to Climate Displacement

- National Security Approach (enhanced border control)
- Humanitarian Approach (Nansen Initiative)
- Migration Management (International Organization for Migration)

What are
climate-
vulnerable states
and peoples
demanding?

- Self-determination
- Adaptation financing
- Reparations
- Migration with dignity
- Ex-situ reconstitution of the state or self-governing community on the territory of another state
- Resources to support migrants' mobility decisions

Who benefits from status quo?

- Defense contractors, security firms, and for-profit detention facilities
- Security apparatus of the state
- Those who exploit migrant workers
- Human traffickers
- National elites who use racism to manipulate poor white voters

Racism and climate change

- Racism as a form of social control
- Jonathan Metzler, *Dying of Whiteness* (2019)
- Arlie Russell Hochschild, *Strangers in Their Own Land* (2016)