

ESF Evaluation of the Global Justice Report (2026)

Name: Global Justice Report: A Plan for Equality and Prosperity Within Planetary Boundaries

Origin: World Inequality Lab (2026)

Primary Focus

A comprehensive global strategy for achieving socioeconomic equality, climate stability, democratic reform, and sustainable prosperity through redistribution, public investment, sufficiency, and global institutional transformation.

ESF Score: 17.5/20

Introductory Context

The Global Justice Report represents one of the most comprehensive contemporary attempts to reconcile social justice and ecological sustainability within a single global framework. Building upon decades of work on inequality by Thomas Piketty and colleagues, it proposes a long-term pathway towards global income convergence, wealth redistribution, climate stability, expanded public services, gender equality, and democratised international governance.

Unlike many sustainability frameworks that focus primarily on carbon emissions, the report places inequality at the centre of the transition challenge. It argues that reducing concentrations of wealth and power is not merely desirable but necessary if humanity is to remain within planetary boundaries while ensuring dignified lives for all.

From an ESF perspective, the report demonstrates exceptional systemic ambition but remains predominantly focused on structural, economic, and institutional dimensions of flourishing.

ESF Domain Assessment

Domain	Score / 5
Natural Environment	4.5
Circular & Regenerative Economies	5.0
Cultural Values & Identity	3.5
Human Capacities & Potential	4.5
Total	17.5 / 20

1. Natural Environment (4.5/5)

Environmental stewardship forms one of the report's central pillars.

Key strengths include:

- Explicit commitment to remaining below 2°C warming.
- Rapid decarbonisation of energy systems.
- Reforestation and restoration of forest cover.
- Reduced material throughput.
- Dietary transformation.
- Recognition of planetary boundaries as non-negotiable constraints.

The report moves beyond narrow climate policy towards a broader conception of ecological sufficiency and long-term habitability.

The primary limitation is that nature is largely framed as a biophysical system rather than as a source of meaning, belonging, identity, reciprocity, or intrinsic value.

2. Circular & Regenerative Economies (5/5)

This is arguably the strongest domain.

The report proposes:

- Reduced concentration of wealth.
- Global wealth taxation.
- Global income taxation.
- A World Sovereign Fund.
- Investment in long-term public goods.
- Universal access to education and healthcare.
- Reduced working hours.
- New international monetary arrangements.
- Reform of trade and financial systems.

The framework strongly aligns with regenerative economic thinking by questioning the assumption that prosperity requires perpetual material expansion.

It successfully integrates distributive justice, economic resilience, and ecological constraints.

3. Cultural Values & Identity (3.5/5)

The report recognises the importance of:

- Gender equality.

- Democratic participation.
- Global citizenship.
- Equal political voice.
- Collective responsibility.

However, culture is largely treated as an enabling factor for institutional change rather than as a domain of flourishing in its own right.

There is relatively little exploration of:

- Meaning and purpose.
- Belonging.
- Identity formation.
- Indigenous worldviews.
- Spiritual traditions.
- Intercultural dialogue.
- Arts and creativity.
- Narratives of human flourishing.

The report assumes that institutional redesign will generate cultural transformation but devotes limited attention to the deeper worldview shifts required to sustain such changes.

4. Human Capacities & Potential (4.5/5)

The report places extraordinary emphasis on:

- Universal education.
- Universal healthcare.
- Gender equality.
- Reduced working hours.
- Expanded leisure.
- Human development opportunities.

These align strongly with ESF principles concerning human flourishing and developmental opportunity.

However, human development is primarily understood through:

- Education.
- Health.
- Income.
- Leisure.

There is little discussion of:

- Inner development.
- Psychological maturity.
- Wisdom.
- Contemplative practice.

- Relational capacities.
- Ethical development.
- Transcendence.

The report addresses human wellbeing but not the full developmental spectrum represented within the ESF Framework.

Seven Levels of Human Motivation

Level	Assessment
Security	Strong
Relationship	Moderate
Independence	Strong
Engagement	Strong
Fulfilment	Moderate
Contribution	Strong
Growth	Limited

Security

The report strongly supports security through income, healthcare, housing, education, and climate stability.

Relationship

Some attention is given to gender equality and democratic participation, but social connection and belonging receive limited treatment.

Independence

The framework strongly supports personal agency through education, economic security, and reduced inequality.

Engagement

Expanded leisure, participation, and democratic reform contribute positively.

Fulfilment

Purpose and meaning are largely assumed rather than explored.

Contribution

The emphasis on social justice and global responsibility aligns strongly with contribution.

Growth

The least developed level.

Questions of consciousness, wisdom, inner transformation, spirituality, and human maturation are largely absent.

Key Strengths

The report:

- Successfully integrates climate and inequality.
- Provides a coherent long-term vision.
- Challenges growth-dependent economic assumptions.
- Places justice at the centre of sustainability.
- Emphasises democratic legitimacy.
- Prioritises universal education and healthcare.
- Offers quantified pathways rather than aspirational rhetoric.
- Recognises the importance of sufficiency alongside technology.

Key Gaps

The report pays comparatively little attention to:

- Values formation.
- Worldviews.
- Meaning and purpose.
- Cultural regeneration.
- Community life.
- Indigenous knowledge systems.
- Spiritual development.
- Human consciousness.
- Social trust.
- Intergenerational relationships.
- Relational wellbeing.

These omissions limit its ability to fully explain how the proposed transformation might become socially and politically possible.

Recommendations

To strengthen alignment with Ecosystemic Flourishing, future editions could:

1. Incorporate measures of belonging, meaning, and relational wellbeing.
2. Include Indigenous and non-Western conceptions of prosperity.
3. Explore the role of values and worldviews in societal transformation.
4. Develop indicators for inner development and human maturation.
5. Examine cultural and spiritual dimensions of sustainability.
6. Include measures of social trust and civic participation.
7. Consider intergenerational flourishing as an explicit goal.

Concluding Assessment

The Global Justice Report is among the most sophisticated and comprehensive proposals currently available for integrating economic justice and ecological sustainability at a planetary scale. Its treatment of inequality, climate stability, democratic governance, and public investment represents a major contribution to contemporary debates about the future of humanity.

From an ESF perspective, however, flourishing requires more than redistribution and institutional reform. Long-term societal transformation also depends upon shifts in values, worldviews, relationships, identity, meaning, and consciousness. These dimensions receive comparatively limited attention.

Consequently, the report can be understood as an exceptionally strong framework for **structural flourishing**, but a less complete framework for **human and cultural flourishing**.