

Tenth Biennial Rosenberg International Forum on Water Policy
Sustainable Groundwater Management: The Path Forward

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Dolce Hayes, San Jose, California, USA

Participant Bios

Hoori Ajami, University of California, Riverside, USA

Dr. Hoori Ajami is an Assistant Professor of Groundwater Hydrology in the Department of Environmental Sciences, University of California Riverside. She received her PhD in Hydrology from University of Arizona and her BSc and MSc in Environmental Sciences from Isfahan University of Technology and Tehran University, respectively. Prior to joining UCR, she was a postdoctoral fellow with the National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training in Australia.

Newsha Ajami, Stanford University, USA

Newsha K. Ajami is the director of Urban Water Policy with Stanford University's Water in the West program. She is a leading expert in sustainable water resource management, water policy, innovation, and financing, and the water-energy-food nexus. Dr. Ajami received her PhD in civil and environmental engineering from UC Irvine, and an MS in hydrology and water resources from the University of Arizona. She is a gubernatorial appointee to the Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Kamal Azari, Foundation for Community Government & Entrepreneurship, USA

Kamal Azari is the principal organizer of the Foundation for Community Government and Entrepreneurship. The Foundation advises on the need for decolonization of our environment through community organization.

Christina Babbitt, Environmental Defense Fund, USA

Christina Babbitt manages the California Groundwater Program at the Environmental Defense Fund. She and the rest of the California Groundwater Program are working to advance water trading policy in California and launch replicable groundwater sustainability pilot projects across California's Central Valley. In these efforts, Christina works to build partnerships among NGOs, agencies, water districts, and agricultural partners, and contributes technical expertise on water governance structure and design. Christina holds a PhD in natural resources from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, an MSc in environmental science from Florida International University, and a BA in international relations from Rollins College.

Karen Bakker, University of British Columbia, Canada

Dr. Bakker is Professor, Canada Research Chair and Director of the Program on Water Governance at UBC. Her research areas include water security and technological innovation. The author of more than 100 publications (9000+ cites, H-index 41), Dr. Bakker is a Trudeau Foundation Fellow and member of the Royal Society of Canada's College of New Scholars. She obtained her PhD from Oxford University

(where she studied as a Rhodes Scholar), and was the recipient of Stanford University's Annenberg Fellowship in Communication in 2015/2016. Karen regularly acts as an advisor and consultant to national and international organizations, including the UNDP, OECD, and IISD. Her public engagement has included teaching a MOOC on the Harvard edX platform, and extensive media contributions (Policy Options, Globe and Mail, Hill Times, Toronto Star, New York Times, Huffington Post, Guardian, Sunday Times).

Marcela Brugnach, University of Twente, The Netherlands

Marcela Brugnach is a multidisciplinary scientist, with doctoral studies in both Ecology and Bioresources Engineering from Oregon State University (USA), and and MSc in Computer Sciences from the Universidad Nacional del Centro (Argentina). Adding to this education, she has two decades of international experience, including the global south, working in interdisciplinary projects connecting engineering, modelling and social sciences with policy and decision-making. Presently, she works at the University of Twente (The Netherlands), in the Water Engineering and Management group where she researches and teaches in the field of water management and governance. Her research focuses on the topic of uncertainty in collective decision-making processes, paying particular attention to issues of ambiguity.

Ellen Bruno, University of California, Berkeley, USA

Ellen Bruno is a Cooperative Extension Specialist in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at UC Berkeley. She is developing a research and outreach program on policy issues relevant to California's agriculture and water resources. Her current research compares the economic impacts of different policy instruments for managing water. Ellen obtained her PhD in Agricultural and Resource Economics from UC Davis.

Dora Carreón Freyre, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico

PhD in Engineering Geology, School of Mines of Paris, France. Researcher at the Center of Geosciences, UNAM Mexico. Chair of the UNESCO Land Subsidence (LS) International Initiative (LaSII), Chair of the Mexican LS Working Group, CONAMEXPHI.

Henrique Chaves, EFL - University of Brasilia, Brazil

Agricultural engineer (Univ. of Brasilia), MSc and PhD in Soil & Water Conservation Engineering (Purdue University), currently professor of Watershed Management, School of Technology, Univ. of Brasilia. Formerly hydrologist, National Water Agency. Consultant for national and international organizations.

Alvar Closas, International Water Management Institute, Egypt

Alvar Closas is a political scientist and human geographer working in research for development in the fields of irrigation, water resources development and agriculture, with a focus on groundwater management and governance. He is currently the Acting Office Head in the MENA region for IWMI in Cairo, Egypt, overseeing the research portfolio in the region. Part of his research has focused on the role of state policies and the problems with regulation and rule enforcement in groundwater abstraction for irrigation leading to the depletion of groundwater resources. More broadly, he is also interested in

multi-disciplinary and systemic approaches to water resources governance and policy analysis, and the interaction between society, environment, and technology.

Heather Cooley, Pacific Institute, USA

Heather Cooley is Director of Research at the Pacific Institute. Prior to joining the Pacific Institute, she worked at Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory studying climate and land use change and carbon cycling. Ms. Cooley received a BS in Molecular Environmental Biology and a Master's degree in Energy and Resources from the University of California, Berkeley.

Helen Dahlke, University of California, Davis, USA

Helen E. Dahlke, PhD, is an Associate Professor in Integrated Hydrologic Sciences at the University of California, Davis. Helen Dahlke obtained a PhD degree in Environmental Engineering from Cornell University. Helen's current research interests include surface water – groundwater interaction, water resources management, vadose zone transport processes, and applications of DNA nanotechnology in hydrology. One of her main research efforts focuses on testing the feasibility of using agricultural fields as recharge sites for groundwater banking.

Lucia De Stefano, Universidad Complutense de Madrid & Water Observatory - Botín Foundation, Spain

Dr. Lucia De Stefano is Associate Professor at Complutense University of Madrid (Spain) and Deputy Director of the Water Observatory of the Botín Foundation, a Spanish think-tank. She has worked as a consultant for USAID, The World Bank, University of Oxford and Oregon State University. She has been senior researcher at the Botín Foundation and postdoctoral researcher at Oregon State University, USA. Previously she worked as a policy officer for World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and as a water management specialist in the private sector. Hydrogeologist by training, she holds an advanced degree in Geological Sciences from University of Pavia (Italy), and a PhD on water policy evaluation from Complutense University of Madrid. Her main fields of interest are multilevel water planning, drought management, groundwater governance, transboundary waters, and the assessment of good governance attributes.

Russell Detwiler, University of California, Irvine, USA

Russ Detwiler is an Associate Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at University of California, Irvine. His current research focuses on flow and transport in porous and fractured media with particular interest in coupled hydraulic/chemical/mechanical processes at scales ranging from pore-scale to field-scale. He received his PhD in Civil Engineering from University of Colorado, Boulder and was previously Deputy Group Leader for the Experimental Geophysics Group at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

Ariel Dinar, University of California, Riverside, USA

Ariel Dinar is a Distinguished Professor of Environmental Economics and Policy at the School of Public Policy, University of California, Riverside. His work addresses various aspects of economic and strategic behavior associated with management of natural resources and the environment. Dr. Dinar received his PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Since then he spent 15 years in the World Bank working

on water and climate change economics and policy. In 2008, Dr. Dinar assumed a professorship at UCR. Dr. Dinar founded the Water Science and Policy Center, which he directed until 2014. Dr. Dinar is an International Fellow of the Center for Agricultural Economic Research of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel since November 2010; a Fulbright Senior Specialist since 2003; and was named a 2015 Fellow of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association.

Guillermo Donoso, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile

Guillermo Donoso is an Agricultural and Natural Resource Economist specializing in Water Economics, Water Allocation Mechanisms, and Water Management. At present, he is a Full Professor of Agricultural Economics Department and Water Law and Management Center of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. He previously held the position of Dean of the Facultad de Agronomía e Ingeniería Forestal of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile from 1998 to 2007.

Maria Donoso, Florida International University, USA

Dr. Maria C. Donoso is the UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Water Security and the International Programs Director for the Institute of Water and Environment-Florida International University. BSc and MSc in Civil Engineering from the People's Friendship University, Russia, MSc in Ocean Engineering from the University of Miami, USA, and Doctorate Degree from the Universidad Federico Villarreal (Peru). Her research and professional interests are in integrated water resources management, water security and global changes impact on water and society. Former World Water Council Board Director and present member of the National Academy of Science US National Members Organization for the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA). She has been a lecturer at scientific and professional conferences and has over 40 numerous publications.

Daniel Dooley, New Current Water and Land, LLC, USA

Principal in New Current Water and Land, LLC, a strategic water consulting company. Formerly, a California water lawyer, and Senior Vice President of the University of California System.

James duBois, Driscoll's, USA

James duBois is the Global Environmental Lead for Driscoll's.

Antonio Embid, Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain

Antonio Embid is international authority in waterlaw. Currently a Professor in the Faculty of Law, University of Zaragoza. Researcher in the March Foundation and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. He is doctor honoris causa for three Universities of Argentina and has the Gran Cruz de Alfonso X el Sabio.

Claudia Faunt, US Geological Survey - California Water Science Center, USA

Claudia Faunt, a USGS hydrologist since 1988, has led studies focusing on regional groundwater flow systems, including the Central Valley, California. Her research has specialized in water availability and hydrogeologic framework modeling. Claudia received her Doctorate in Geological Engineering in 1994 from the Colorado School of Mines and currently leads USGS/CAWSC's Groundwater Availability and Use section.

Ashok Gadgil, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, USA

Dr. Gadgil is a Senior Faculty Scientist, and Co-lead for the Water-Energy Initiative for the Energy Technologies Area at LBNL. At UC Berkeley, he is a Distinguished Chair Professor of Safe Water and Sanitation in Civil and Environmental Engineering. He is the PI and Faculty Director of Development Impact Lab and of the Clean Energy Research Center for Water Energy Technologies. He has a PhD in physics from University of California, Berkeley. He has more than 125 refereed archival journal papers, 130 conference papers, and several patents. His work has won national and international recognition with several prestigious honors and awards.

Devin Galloway, US Geological Survey, USA

Devin has been a hydrogeologist with the U.S. Geological Survey for 40 years. His principal research interests are in groundwater sustainability and land subsidence related to groundwater extraction. He is the author or co-author of more than 80 published peer-reviewed articles. He is a past Chair of the UNESCO Working Group on Land Subsidence, and Chair of the ASCE Committee on Land Subsidence. Devin has participated extensively in international hydrogeology studies and programs in Asia, Europe and North America.

Alberto Garrido, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Spain

Professor of Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics and Vice-Rector for Quality and Efficiency at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM). Has a Bachelor Degree (with MSc recognition) in Agricultural Engineering (1989); a Master in Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics from the University of California, Davis (1992) and a Doctoral Degree in Agricultural Economics from the UPM (1996).

Cheikh Bécaye Gaye, University Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal

Professor Cheikh Bécaye Gaye holds a PhD in Hydrogeology. He has been Professor at Cheikh Anta Diop University (Dakar, Senegal) where he started working in 1977. He has worked for 7 years (1999 – 2006) as Isotope hydrology expert at the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna (Austria) and ended his professional life as Director General of Research at the Ministry of Higher Education of Senegal (September 2014 - December 2016). Prof. Gaye was elected at the National Academy of Science and Technology of Senegal in 2007. He is author or co-author of more than 120 scientific publications in scientific journals and conference proceedings.

Andrea Gerlak, University of Arizona, USA

Andrea K. Gerlak is an Associate Professor in the School of Geography and Development and an Associate Research Professor at the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy at the University of Arizona. Her research agenda examines the causes of— and innovative solutions to— some of our world’s most pressing water problems. She studies cooperation and conflict in water governance, including questions of equity and access, and institutional change and adaptation to climate change.

Steven Gorelick, Stanford University, USA

Steven Gorelick holds the Cyrus F. Tolman Professorship in the School of Earth, Energy, and Environmental Sciences and is a Senior Fellow at the Woods Institute for the Environment at Stanford

University. A faculty member since 1988, he directs the Global Freshwater Initiative, which employs an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing water-supply vulnerability in developing nations.

Negin Hayatbini, University of California, Irvine, USA

Negin Hayatbini is a PhD candidate at the Center for Hydrometeorology and Remote Sensing, University of California Irvine. She is conducting her PhD research under supervision of Professor Soroosh Sorooshian. Ms. Hayatbini studies how 'Big Data' science techniques can improve rainfall estimates and forecasts based on satellite imagery of the Earth's clouds.

Paul Hirt, Arizona State University, USA

Paul Hirt is an environmental historian and Senior Sustainability Scholar at Arizona State University, specializing in water, energy, and natural resources. He has published two monographs and dozens of articles and book chapters on environmental policy and conservation, including the recent “Water Consumption and Sustainability in Arizona: A Tale of Two Desert Cities.”

Glenda Humiston, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, USA

Dr. Glenda Humiston has 25 years of experience working on agriculture, natural resources, sustainability, and economic development in rural communities. Prior to joining the University of California, Dr. Humiston was the California State Director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development, appointed to this position by President Obama in 2009.

Helen Ingram, University of California, Irvine, USA

Helen Ingram is a Research Fellow at the Southwest Center at the University of Arizona and a Professor Emerita at the University of California at Irvine. She has written widely on water politics and policy, and in recent years has specialized on fairness and equity.

Michael Kiparsky, University of California, Berkeley, USA

Michael Kiparsky is the founding Director of the Wheeler Water Institute within the Center for Law, Energy & the Environment at the UC Berkeley School of Law. Under his leadership, the Institute has grown into a widely recognized voice on a range of California water issues. He has published on a range of topics including governance and policy in complex water systems, climate change impacts and adaptation, water innovation, and science for decision-making. His work has appeared in media outlets including The Sacramento Bee, the San Francisco Chronicle and the Los Angeles Times, and through his engagement activities is regularly used by state and local decision-makers.

Rosemary Knight, Stanford University, USA

Rosemary Knight is the George L. Harrington Professor of Earth Sciences in the Department of Geophysics at Stanford, and the founding director of the Center for Groundwater Evaluation and Management (GEM Center) (gemcenter.stanford.edu). Through the GEM Center, Knight’s research group partners with water agencies to develop and demonstrate new ways of using satellite, airborne and ground-based geophysical methods for groundwater applications. Knight’s research interests range from laboratory experiments to large-scale field experiments, all designed to explore new ways of remotely imaging hydrologic properties and processes.

Leonard Konikow, US Geological Survey (retired), USA

Leonard Konikow received a PhD in Geosciences from Penn State University. He is an Emeritus Scientist with the USGS after 42 years as a research hydrologist. His research interests include the development and application of groundwater simulation models, and assessing groundwater depletion. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering, Fellow of AGU, and served on several committees of the National Research Council and in leadership positions in several professional societies.

Nikahang Kowsar, GCCAC/New Iran, USA

Nikahang Kowsar is an award winning journalist, producer and geologist who has been raising awareness about Iran's water crisis since 2001 when he warned the Islamic Republic of Iran's president Khatami of the outcome of his administration's water management policies. He has been quoted both by the State Department as well as NYT's Tom Friedman on the devastating situation of Iran's current crisis. As the son of Iran's leading watershed management scientist, he started learning aquifer management through floodwater irrigation and recharge years before entering college. Nikahang is currently working on 'Waterless' his first feature documentary on water scarcity and finding solutions.

Neno Kukuric, IGRAC, The Netherlands

Dr. Neno Kukuric is a hydrogeologist with about 30 years of experience gained in more than 20 countries worldwide. His professional interest is international water cooperation and application of informed management, encompassing technical, socio-economical, institutional and political aspects of water-related issues. Neno Kukuric is particularly involved in a global assessment and management of transboundary groundwaters. Since 2011, he's served as a director of IGRAC, the International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre of UNESCO.

Kaveh Madani, Imperial College London, United Kingdom

Kaveh Madani is an environmental scientist, Iran's former Deputy Vice President as the former Deputy Head of the country's Department of Environment, the former Vice President of the UN Environment Assembly Bureau, and a Reader in Systems Analysis and Policy at the Centre for Environmental Policy of Imperial College London. His core experience and research interests include integrated water resources policy, management, and diplomacy. Madani has worked on different water resources management problems in Middle East and has played a major role in raising public awareness about water and environmental problems in his home country, Iran.

Tara Moran, Stanford University, USA

In her current role as Program Lead for Stanford University's Water in the West Sustainable Groundwater Program, Tara's research interests focus on the technical requirements of sustainable water management, including data collection, sharing and integration. She is particularly interested in understanding the role of data and information in water management decisions and the governance structures to support them. She works with interdisciplinary research teams to develop solutions to the legal, technical and governance challenges of sustainable groundwater management under recently enacted legislation regulating groundwater management in California. Tara has published many peer-review publications, white papers and book sections on a variety of water-related topics, including groundwater modeling, water isotopes, geophysical methods, data visualization, and groundwater

science and policy. She holds a first-class honors BSc in Environmental Science and a PhD in Geography from the University of Calgary, Canada.

Hamidreza Mosaffa, Shiraz University, Iran

Hamidreza Mosaffa is a PhD candidate of Water Engineering at Shiraz University, Iran and currently he is a visiting researcher at CHRS in UC Irvine. Since he started university (in 2007), he has worked on different projects. In his cross-disciplinary research, he focus on water management, crop modelling, hydrologic modelling and flood forecasting.

Aditi Mukherji, ICIMOD, Nepal

Dr. Aditi Mukherji is a Theme Leader, Water and Air, at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Nepal since April, 2013. Prior to joining ICIMOD, she was a Senior Researcher at the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), based at Colombo, Sri Lanka and then at New Delhi, India. She has over 18 years of experience working on policies and institutions of water resources management with a special focus on water-energy-food nexus. Her areas of specialization are groundwater governance, energy-irrigation nexus and community management of water resources.

Doug Parker, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, USA

Doug Parker is the Director of the California Institute for Water Resources and Strategic Initiative Leader for UC Agriculture and Natural Resources' Water Quality, Quantity, and Security Strategic Initiative. Previous experience includes Associate Professor and Extension Specialist, Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Maryland and Cooperative Extension Economist at UC Berkeley. Doug obtained his PhD in Agricultural and Resource Economics, UC Berkeley and Bachelor's Degrees in Economics and Environmental Studies, UC Santa Barbara.

Debra Perrone, University of California, Santa Barbara, USA

Debra Perrone is an Assistant Professor of UCSB's Environmental Studies Program. Deb integrates research methods from engineering, physical science, policy science, and law to inform water sustainability and public policy. She is co-authoring an undergraduate textbook that focuses on (1) global water challenges and opportunities and (2) provides a foundation in water science and policy.

Ayman Rabi, Palestinian Hydrology Group, Palestine

Dr. Ayman Rabi, the Executive Director of Palestinian Hydrology Group, Palestine. He holds MSc and PhD in Water Resources Engineering and has MBA in Business Administration. He has more than 30 years of water and environmental related experience. He participated in several local, regional and international EU funded water and environment related research, such as Med Water Policy, HUPHAT, WASAMED, EMPOWERS, MELIA, GABARDINE, SEARCH, RKNOW, etc. He is an author and co-author of more than 30 publications. He is a member of the advisory board of the Rosenberg International Forum on Water Policy and he is the national representative for Palestine within the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS).

Jerry Reaugh, J Lohr Vineyards and Wines & EPC Water District, Paso Robles, California, USA

Jerry Reaugh has been involved in groundwater issues in the Paso Robles Area for 8 years as well as being a wine grape grower for 18 years. He was the driving force in the formation of the EPC Water District, a "California Water District". He serves on the EPC Water District Board of Directors as Secretary/Treasurer and was an executive member of the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance Board of Directors.

Melissa Rohde, The Nature Conservancy, USA

Melissa M. Rohde is a Groundwater Scientist for The Nature Conservancy and uses her expertise in biology, hydrology, and water policy to advance sustainable groundwater management. Her research focuses on understanding how Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems function and what conditions are necessary to maintain ecosystem health. Her scientific research is being used to advise policy and management of Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems under California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014. Her musing on water, climate change, and the environment can be found on her blog: www.reflectionsonwater.org.

Soroosh Sorooshian, University of California, Irvine, USA

Soroosh Sorooshian is the Director of the Center for Hydrometeorology & Remote Sensing (CHRS) and Distinguished Professor of Civil & Environmental Engineering and Earth System Science Departments at UC Irvine. Prior to 2003 he was a faculty at the University of Arizona for 20 years. His area of expertise is Hydrometeorology, water resources systems, climate studies and application of remote sensing to earth science problems with special focus on the hydrologic cycle and water resources issues of arid and semi-arid zones. He is a member of the US National Academy of Engineering (NAE), the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) and fellow of TWAS. He is the current Chair of UC Rosenberg International Forum on Water Policy.

Ingrid Verstraeten, US Geological Survey, USA

Dr. Ingrid Maria Verstraeten currently is the Senior Science Advisor of USGS Programs with Europe, Russia, Central Asia, Circum Arctic, and International Organizations, Office of the Director, International Programs, US Geological Survey. She started her career with the USGS in 1991 as a hydrologist and physical scientist. She served as Vice Chair for the Working Party on Biodiversity, Water, and Environment (WPBWE) of the Environmental Policy Committee of OECD and is the US lead on several bilateral Working Groups including the US-Italy Working Group on Earth Sciences and the US-Kazakhstan Working Group on Data for Improved Natural Resources Management. She also is the USGS lead for the USGS-INGV scientific and technological cooperation and engages in the empowerment of women in water resources in Central Asia. She has participated in the US Water Working Group for many years and has engaged internationally in water resources for more than 10 years. She is the co-founder of the Central Asia and Afghanistan Women and Water Association in 2016 and is member of the International Advisory Committee since 2017. Her degrees are in hydrogeology, geochemistry, geology, and soil science obtained from the University of Nebraska (PhD and MS) and the Catholic University of Leuven (Licentiaat and Kandidatuur), Belgium. Dr. Verstraeten is an active member of scientific organizations,

participated on scientific review panels (US and EU), convened special sessions, and has been an associate editor. She has published numerous scientific peer-reviewed papers and book chapters.

Yanxin Wang, China University of Geosciences, China

Dr. Yanxin Wang is a Professor of Hydrogeology at China University of Geosciences (CUG) and the President of CUG at Wuhan. In the past 30 years, he has been an active researcher, graduate supervisor and international collaborator in hydrogeological studies, with a focus on safe and sustainable groundwater supply. His research work has been funded by national and international funding agencies. He has published more than 150 peer-reviewed papers in international journals of hydrology, geochemistry and environmental science with more than 4000 citations, 5 books and book chapters, and IAHS Publication 341.

Margaret Wilder, University of Arizona, USA

Margaret Wilder is associate professor in the School of Geography and Development and the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Arizona. She is an expert on water governance in Mexico, desalinization and environmental sustainability, and transboundary water resources, climate adaptation, and community resilience in the US-Mexico border region. She is an appointed member of the US EPA's Good Neighbor Environmental Board, advisory to the President on US-Mexico border environment issues. Dr. Wilder has published in numerous peer-reviewed journals, including *Water International*, *World Development*, *Ecology and Society*, and the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, among others. Dr. Wilder is currently working on a book project on the human right to water in Mexico.

Sonya Ziaja, California Public Utilities Commission, USA

Dr. Sonya Ziaja is a geographer and lawyer working on climate governance at the California Public Utilities Commission in San Francisco. She was previously the Research Lead for the Water-Energy-Climate Nexus at the California Energy Commission in Sacramento. Ziaja is a lead author of California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment. Her recent research focuses on reservoir and hydropower planning models as they relate to their legal and political contexts, and the role of scientific tools in facilitating collective decision making for sustainable groundwater management. PhD, University of Arizona; JD, University of California – Hastings Law; MSc, University of Oxford.