

CLIMATE ACTION IN AMERICA: INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS FOR A RAPID RESPONSE

NEW PARTNERS FOR SMART GROWTH™ CONFERENCE

The story of how climate action – when done well – can serve as a conduit for addressing layered vulnerabilities. Personal stories of courageous leadership and technical savvy support solutions for our built environment and social injustice.

Climate action is rapidly evolving across the country. A growing understanding of our need to address climate adaptation and mitigation in an integrated manner, along with the need to meaningfully incorporate social-equity and environmental-injustice concerns is changing best practices and bringing forward a new group of leaders in the climate-action arena. Along with this shift toward holistic or systems-thinking approaches, the emergence of the private sector leading climate action also provides new opportunities for growth and advancement. This session will kick off off the Climate Change track with a series of vignettes illuminating the technical and personal side of adaptation and mitigation from across the country.



Kit Batten

Climate Resilience Chief, Pacific Gas and Electric Company

Dr. Batten is a recognized expert in climate change policy with fifteen years of sustainability leadership. As part of the Corporate Sustainability team at Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), Dr. Kit Batten leads a company-wide initiative to increase the climate resilience of PG&E's operations and infrastructure, as well as the resilience of the communities PG&E serves.

Prior to her role at PG&E, Dr. Batten served as Executive Director at the University of California, Davis Policy Institute for Energy, Environment, and the Economy, where she leveraged the university's expertise to inform California's energy, climate and transportation policies—bringing together scientific researchers and policy-makers. Dr. Batten also served as the Global Climate Change Coordinator at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), where she led the agency's efforts to implement climate-resilient, low-carbon sustainable development programs in more than 40 countries.

Dr. Batten has also served as senior science and policy fellow and program director at the H. John Heinz III center for Science, Economics and the Environment; as science advisor to the Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior; and as senior fellow/managing director for energy and environmental policy at the Center for American Progress. She has also held positions in the offices of Senator Dianne Feinstein and Senator Joe Lieberman. Dr. Batten earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Oberlin College and master's and doctoral degrees in ecology from U.C. Davis.



Joyce Coffee

President, Climate Resilience Consulting

Joyce Coffee, Climate Resilience Consulting founder, has 20 years of domestic and international experience in the corporate, government and non-profit sectors implementing resilience and sustainability strategies, management systems, performance measurement, partnerships, benchmarking and reporting. Current projects: Rockefeller Foundation Financing Urban Resilience; Regional Plan Authority Resilience Trust Fund; National Science Foundation Urban Resilience to Extremes Experience; USAID's US-Asia Environmental Partnership, World Bank, MWH, Farr Associates Architecture and Urban Design, City of Chicago, Edelman, Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative. Advising: Global Adaptation and Resilience Investment work group, American Society of Adaptation Professionals, National Center for Atmospheric Research Engineering for Climate Extremes Partnership, the ISO TC 207/SC7 Adaptation External Expert group and the National Science Foundation's Urban Resilience to Extremes Sustainability Research Network. Education: Masters City Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; BS Biology, Asian Studies, Environmental Studies Tufts University



Rev. Amanda Therese Ford

Director of Eco-Ministry for Equity and Justice, Take Care Institute for Equity and Justice

Amanda is a compassionate and experienced environmental justice consultant and facilitator who has spent the past 20 years designing and implementing social justice program initiatives, customized trainings, and NPO strategies to engage diverse leaders and communities on complex socio-ecological issues around the globe. Her portfolio includes community-healing and environmental-peacebuilding projects spanning four continents, serving a variety of marginalized communities in over 20 countries. In addition to being an ordained Multifaith minister, she has her Master's Degree in Sustainable International Development from Brandeis University. She is a United Nations-trained conflict mediator and a UNESCO Living Values trainer and mentor. She currently works as the program director for Klamath Riverkeeper. Originally from Detroit, she appreciates a good uprising and a good Coney Dog.

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Michael McCormick

Senior Planner, California Governor's Office of Planning and Research

Michael McCormick, AICP was appointed to the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) in May 2011. OPR serves the Governor and his Cabinet as staff for long-range planning and research, and constitutes the comprehensive State planning agency. Michael's work at OPR, along with recent work with NOAA and the White House Council on Environmental Quality, is focused at the nexus of high level climate change goals and local implementation. His focus is on institutional transformation by leading the development of partnerships, tools, resources, guidance and programs that support strong action on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing community resilience to the impacts of a changing climate. Michael was one of the leads on the new 2017 General Plan Guidelines, co-founded the California Adaptation Forum, founded the CivicSpark AmeriCorps Governors Initiative and was on the founding Board of Directors of the Alliance of Regional Collaboratives for Climate Adaptation. Michael has a Bachelors in Sociology and Masters in Urban Regional Planning from Florida State University.



Jake McKenzie

Regional Climate Protection Authority

I've been involved with NSPG as a host since its invention almost 20 years ago in San Diego. Born and educated in Scotland, I emigrated in 1962 to Oregon State University where I obtained a MS & PhD in the esoteric discipline of Weed Science (no not that Weed!). 30 of my 35 professional years were spent with US EPA as a Pesticide Regulator. Since 1996 I've been a Councilmember and 5 time Mayor of Rohnert Park, CA. This has enabled me to become Chair of various Organizations - LGC, NCRP, SCWA advisory committee, SCAPOSD advisory committee, SCTA/RCPA, RRWA and currently MTC. I also serve on the boards of SMART, GA and ABAG (acronyms translated upon request). I was one of the founders of the nationally-recognized Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority and its first Chair. In 2008 & 2009 I attended COP 14 & COP 15 as part of the California delegation. My story leans heavily on a belief in process and government. The human side I'll attempt to elucidate as one of the teller of tales here today.



Manisha Patel

Vice President for Environmental Policy, WSP

Manisha D. Patel is Assistant Vice President for Environmental Process and Policy at WSP, one of the world's leading engineering and professional services firms. Prior to joining WSP, Ms. Patel served as the Deputy General Counsel for the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Ms. Patel provides critical strategic advice to clients to best position their projects for accelerated environmental reviews and expedited permitting approvals. She is a nationally recognized expert on environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and environmental regulations under the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act. She has contributed to the development and promulgation of the fundamental federal environmental regulations and policy of the last decade, including several Executive Orders and Presidential Memoranda. Her demonstrated understanding of governmental processes and superior skills for leading change and building consensus have led to the successful development and implementation of innovative and effective policies and initiatives to foster economic growth in environmentally sound ways.



Beth Gibbons

Executive Director, American Society of Adaptation Professionals

Beth Gibbons is the Executive Director of the American Society of Adaptation Professionals (ASAP). ASAP helps build essential climate resilience for communities across the country by focusing on connecting and supporting the climate change leaders, while advancing innovation and excellence in the field of practice. ASAP provides a platform for climate leaders to interact, share what's working, and collaborate with their colleagues. Beth has over ten years of experience in community development, translational research and climate adaptation. She holds a masters degree in Urban Planning from the University of Michigan.

