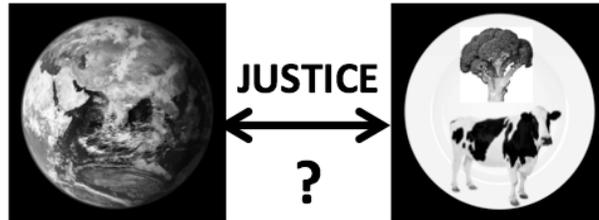


# ***What's on your plate?***

## ***Linking food justice & climate justice***



A conversation at the Environmental Studies 45th reunion, UCSB,

Sat, April 25, 10:30-11:30 a.m.  
Marine Sciences Institute seminar room (1302)

**Introduction.** One of the biggest challenges we face is fixing our global food system—although it feeds us, in the process it contributes much to hunger, disease and environmental damage including climate change. A major cause of this is a supply-side food strategy that emphasizes increasing production, technology, economic growth, and food for profit. This strategy is based on the assumptions that current trends in increasing consumption will continue into the future, and that food can be produced to satisfy that increasing consumption while still mitigating climate change to avoid catastrophe. Those assumptions are not well supported.

Diet change for food and climate justice offers an alternative solution for the global food system fiasco can improve health, reduce environmental damage, and increase equity. To achieve the potential of diet change, people and advocacy groups need the relevant scientific information, the policies and practices of companies and governments that control so many of our food choices need to change, and there needs to be more discussion about diet change as an obligation toward others and future generations. There are many opportunities to be involved in working for change.

The panelists will each briefly describe how they engage with food and climate issues related to social justice in their work. Then we will open up discussion with the audience. Our goal is a lively conversation among panel and audience members with different experiences that relate to food and climate justice issues.

Questions to think about for the panel discussion:

- What's the purpose of food?
- What opportunities are there for people who want to be more involved in working for food and climate justice?
- How does the concept of limits to human consumption relate to the links between food and climate justice?
- What kinds of diet change best promote food and climate justice?
- What kinds of grassroots movements can promote food and climate justice?
- What kinds of policies can promote food and climate justice?
- What motivates citizens to change their behaviors in ways that promote food and climate justice?
- What are the tradeoffs for individuals between personal and social well-being?
- What are the tradeoffs for universities, businesses, and governments between short-term and long-term survival and profit?

**Organizer and Moderator: David A. Cleveland** is Professor of Environmental Studies, and affiliated member of the departments of Geography, and of Ecology, Evolution & Marine Biology, at UC Santa Barbara. He is a human ecologist whose research and teaching focus is small-scale, sustainable food systems. He has worked with farmers around the world, including in Ghana, Mexico, Zuni, Hopi, Pakistan, and the United States. He is currently focused on the potential contributions of diet change and local food production to climate change mitigation, improved nutrition, and food sovereignty, as well as the determinants of individual and collective actions for diet change. His newest course is *Diet and Global Climate Change*. His book, *Balancing on a Planet: the Future of Food and Agriculture*, was published in 2014 by UC Press. Email: [cleveland@es.ucsb.edu](mailto:cleveland@es.ucsb.edu).



**Panel members:**

**Melissa Ilana Cohen** has spent the past 11 years of her life dedicated to stewarding and cultivating community resiliency and healthy food access from the ground-level of the 43-year strong Isla Vista Food Co-op in the college town of Isla Vista, CA. Her work in the past 3 years has focused on bridge-building between the Co-op and other local and state-wide food justice organizations and resources to highlight the relevancy of high-quality food in conversations about food security. Melissa is also well known for her project management at the Burning Man and Lucidity Festivals, facilitating the integration of cooperative organizational structures and sustainable food access solutions into highly participatory temporary and transformative environments. Melissa is also an Advisory Board member of the Santa Barbara County Food Action Plan.



**Ken Cook** is president and co-founder of Environmental Working Group, and widely recognized as one of the environmental community's most prominent and influential critics of industrial agriculture, U.S. food and farm policy and the nation's broken approach to protecting families and children from toxic substances. Under Cook's leadership over the past 20 years, EWG has pioneered the use of digital technologies to expose the harms done by misconceived crop subsidies, crop insurance and runaway agricultural pollution. EWG has empowered American families with tools to help reduce their exposure to potentially harmful ingredients in foods, drinking water, and other products, and has worked to change federal policy to regulate pesticides and label GMOs. EWG has been called "the tip of the green movement's spear when it comes to agriculture and food policy."



**Sigrid Wright** has 25 years of experience in non-profit environmental management. She oversees the Community Environmental Council's public outreach and fundraising teams and leads the annual Earth Day Festival production team. On energy/climate related issues, she is co-author of CEC's Regional Energy Blueprint and editor of more than a dozen CEC policy documents, including those that address liquefied natural gas, solar energy, and waste-to-energy technologies. She is also program facilitator for the South County Energy Efficiency Partnership (SCEEP). On food system issues, she is on the executive teams or advisory boards of the countywide Food Action Plan, the Santa Barbara Food Alliance, and the Sustainable Seafood Coalition. She is on the board of Leading From Within, and a commissioner for the Santa Barbara County Commission for Women.

