

EMPOWERING SUSTAINABILITY

CONNECTING LEADERS, FOSTERING ENGAGEMENT

6th Annual

Empowering Sustainability Gathering

University of California, Irvine

July 18-22, 2016

Summary Report

Created by Juliana M. Zanotto

September 1, 2016

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1. Introduction

The 6th Annual Empowering Sustainability Gathering took place at the University of California Irvine from July 18 to July 22, 2016. The twenty-six participants (sustainability fellows) from ten countries represented a broad variety of disciplinary fields, expertise, and experience, ranging from undergraduate students, to scholars, practitioners, and activists.

Sustainability fellows participated in panels; attended workshops and presentations; and engaged in group discussions. Fellows had the opportunity to dialogue with presenters, to exchange knowledge and information, to share experiences, to network, to brainstorm project ideas, and to socialize during coffee breaks, lunch, and dinner.

The gathering started with a presentation that welcomed the participants and explained the trajectory of the Empowering Sustainability initiative as well as its mission and objectives. On Monday afternoon, seven fellows delivered short and dynamic presentations called PIP Talks. These presentations focused on personal experiences, something important to them, or a project they have been working on.

On Tuesday, five fellows delivered longer presentations focusing on sustainability issues that transcend disciplinary and geographical boundaries. These presentations aimed at fostering reflection and stimulate discussion among fellows.

On Tuesday, the female fellows participated in the “4th Annual Empowering Women Luncheon,” where they engage in facilitated conversations with women from Orange County. The community of local women represented members of the university faculty and staff, businesswomen, and philanthropists. Around their tables, fellows and the local women were asked to reflect upon and share their experiences as they related to women empowerment.

Throughout the week, fellows participated in workshops led by sustainability fellows and invited guests. These activities focused on helping fellows acquire skills or learn methods and tools they may use in their professional or personal development. Workshops included hands-on activities where fellows got to practice using or reflecting upon the skills, methods, or tools presented to them.

On Thursday morning fellows attended seminars focusing on California’s Coastal Resilience, organized by UCI O.C.E.A.N.S., The Newkirk Center, and the Empowering Sustainability initiative. In the afternoon, fellows chose to either continue to attend the seminars or to plan parallel activities according to their individual interests.

Group discussions occurred mostly on Thursday and Friday. On Thursday, fellows brainstormed ideas for a) a complementary currency system and b) a proposed fellows' exchange grant application to help fund and encourage fellows visiting each other. On Friday, group discussions focused around a) forming groups to develop the two aforementioned projects; b) sharing experiences and ideas about the Empowering Women luncheon; and c) providing feedback on the 6th Empowering Sustainability Gathering and suggesting ideas for next year's conference. Notes from the feedback sessions are provided on Part 4 of this report.

2. Fellows and Contact Information

- ★ 26 fellows:
 - 19 returning, 7 new
 - 17 women, 9 men
- ★ 10 countries
 - New countries represented: Jordan and Hungary

*Additional information about each participant is available at our [website](#)

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	COUNTRY	ORGANIZATION	POSITION	EMAIL ADDRESS
Alexandra	Sprague	USA	FOUR PAWS International	Development Assistant	alex.sprague@gmail.com
Cambria	Hibbert	USA		Student	lulubug1010@gmail.com
Chace	Warmington	USA	University of California, Irvine	Community Engagement	chace.warmington@gmail.com
Kathleen (Charli)	Hibbert	USA	United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Post-doctoral researcher	kathleen.hibbert@gmail.com
Chelsea	Biklen	USA	City of Cupertino	Environmental Programs Assistant	biklen.chelsea@gmail.com
Daniel	Penteado	Brazil	ICMBio, Ministry of Environment	Regional Coordinator	danielbpenteado@yahoo.com.br
Debjeet	Sarangi	India	Living Farms	Managing Trustee	debjeet2002@gmail.com
Erik	Wood	USA		Sociologist	erikjameswood@gmail.com
Jennifer	Lentfer	USA	IDEX - International Development Exchange	Director of Communications	jennifer@idex.org
Jeremy	Lambeth	USA	Dartmouth College	Information Manager	jeremy@jeremylambeth.com
Jesse	Baker	USA	Ecofficiency	Founder	jesse@ecoefficiency.org
Josefina	Ruiz Catalan	Chile	CODESA- Corporación para el desarrollo de Aysén	Lawyer and Director	mjosefinaruiz@gmail.com
Juliana	Miranda Zanotto	Brazil/ USA	UCI	Graduate Student	jzanotto@uci.edu

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	COUNTRY	ORGANIZATION	POSITION	EMAIL ADDRESS
Karla	Cordoba	Costa Rica	Sustainability School	Independent Consultant	muguika@gmail.com
Ligia	Martins	Brazil/ USA	Baruch College of City University New York	Master Student in Public Administration	ligmartins@gmail.com
Logan	Strenchock	USA/ Hungary	Central European University	Environmental and Sustainability Officer	StrenchockL@ceu.edu
Markendy	Desormeau	Haiti	Rerendevdura	Founder	markendyd@hotmail.com
Mo	Sami	USA	UCI School of Public Health	Lecturer	mosami@uci.edu
Nicole	Chatterson	USA	Wild Communities Project	Co-founder	nikki2244@gmail.com
Nicole	Swedlow	Mexico	EntreAmigos	Founder and Executive Director	nicole@entreamigos.org.mx
Olfat	Haider	Israel	Beit Gaefen	Program Director	ulfat4@yahoo.com
Ranulfo	Paiva Sobrinho	Brazil	Sustainability School	Writer and Founder	ranulfo17@gmail.com
Rocio	Carranza Maxera	Costa Rica		Actress and Independent Activist	rocicarranza@gmail.com
Sofia	Gomez Vallarta	Mexico	Costa Salvaje A.C./Wildcoast	Program Coordinator	sofia@costasalvaje.com
Vivian	Saiz	Cuba	University of Havana	Professor	vivian@ceted.uh.cu
Zein	Nsheiwat	Jordan	Amman CIEE Study Center	Resident Director of the Diplomacy and Policy Studies Program	zein.nsheiwat@gmail.com

3. Conference Program

Monday

9:00-10:00 a.m. **Conference opening and welcome: About the Empowering Sustainability Initiative.** Juliana M. Zanotto, PhD. Candidate in Planning Policy, and Design at University of California, Irvine.

10:00-10:15 a.m. *Coffee Break*

10:15 a.m.-12:00 p.m. **Fellows' PIP talks**

The Identification and Role of Non-Chemical Stressors as Modifiers of Chemical Exposures that Lead to Changes in Health and Well-Being in Children - *Kathleen (Charli) Hibbert, Post-doctoral researcher at United States Environmental Protection Agency (United States)*

The Work of “Food for the Hungry” in the Dominican Republic and the Creole Pig Project in Haiti - *Markendy Desormeau, Founder at Rerendevdura and livelihood Specialist at Food for the Hungry Dominican (Haiti)*

Learning New Approaches to Empower Sustainability in Mexico - *Sofia Gomez Vallarta, Program Coordinator at Costa Salvaje A.C./Wildcoast (Mexico)*

Sustainability Education and Activism in Israel - *Olfat Haider, Program Director at Beit Gaefen (Israel)*

12:00-1:30 p.m. *Lunch Break*

1:30-2:30 p.m. **Fellows' PIP talks**

Arab Uprising & Climate Change: A Different Perspective - *Zein Nsheiwat, Resident Director of the Diplomacy and Policy Studies Program at Amman CIEE Study Center (Jordan)*

Wild Kids: Building Community Through Activism - *Nicole Chatterson, Co-Founder at Wild Communities Project (United States)*

Environmental Awareness: The Role of a University Professor - *Vivian Saiz, Professor at University of Havana (Cuba)*

2:30-5:30 p.m. **Workshop: Social Styles.** Rick Kahn, Senior Communication Trainer and Coach at GrahamComm.

5:30-6:30 p.m. *Dinner Break*

7:00 p.m. **Informal Get Together and Presentation on Travel Grant Project.** *Jeremy Lambeth, Information Manager at Dartmouth College*

Tuesday

9:00-10:00 a.m. **Presentation: Reclaiming our Sovereign Food System for a Sustainable Future.** *Debjeet Sarangi, Managing Trustee at Living Farms (India)*

10:00-10:15 a.m. *Coffee Break*

10:15-11:30 a.m. **Presentation: Religion of Science.** *Jesse Baker, Founder at Ecoefficiency (United States)*

12:00-2:00 p.m. **4th Annual Empowering Women Luncheon**

3:30-4:30 p.m. **Presentation: Degrowth-in-Practice.** *Logan Strenchock, Environmental and Sustainability Officer, Central European University and Organic Garden Team Member, Zsomboki Biokert (Hungary)*

4:30-5:30 p.m. **Presentation/Book Launch: New Money for Sustainability.** *Ranulfo Paiva Sobrinho and Karla Córdoba-Brener, Co-Founders at Sustainability School (Brazil and Costa Rica)*

Wednesday

9:00-10:30 a.m. **Workshop: Strategic Communication.** *Jennifer Lentfer, Director of Communications at IDEX – International Development Exchange (United States)*

10:30-10:45 a.m. *Coffee Break*

10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. **Workshop: Teal Organizations.** *Karla Córdoba-Brener, Co-Founder at Sustainability School (Costa Rica)*

12:00-1:30 p.m. *Lunch Break*

1:30-2:30 p.m. **Free Time**

3:00-6:00 p.m. **Off campus activity: Kayaking in the Newport Back Bay**

6:30 p.m. **Fellows Organized BBQ**

Thursday

(Parallel activities)

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. **California Coastal Resiliency: Communities in Action.** Organized by UCI OCEANS Initiative.

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. **Fellows-organized group discussion**

Developing a Fellows' Travel Grant, Jeremy Lambeth, Information Manager at Dartmouth College (United States)

How to Create our Own Money for Sustainability, Ranulfo Paiva Sobrinho, Writer and Co-Founder at Sustainability.School (Brazil)

12:00-1:30 p.m. *Lunch Break*

(Parallel activities)

1:30-5:30 p.m. **California Coastal Resiliency: Communities in Action.** Organized by UCI OCEANS Initiative.

1:30-5:30 p.m. **Fellows-organized group discussion**

Disruptive Tools for Working Together: Slack and Asana, Karla Córdoba-Brener, Independent Consultant and Co-Founder at Sustainability.School (Costa Rica)

Strategic Communications: A Balancing Act, Jennifer Lentfer, Director of Communications at IDEX - International Development Exchange (United States)

5:30 p.m. **Conference celebration: Live music by Hedgehog Swing**

Friday

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. **Workshop: Leading from Inside/Out.** *Hank Fieger, President of Hank Fieger Assoc., an international management consulting, training & coaching organization.*

12:00-1:00 p.m. *Lunch Break*

1:00-3:30 p.m. **Group Discussion**

3:30-3:45 p.m. *Coffee Break*

3:45-5:30 p.m. **Group Discussion: Feedback and Wrap Up**

4. Feedback from Fellows (from Group Discussion)

Feedback on 6th Annual Gathering

(Notes taken by Juliana Zanotto)

- ★ Get Saturday back (which one?)
- ★ FOOD!!!
- ★ Contribution to the University and the Irvine community (talk to students, for example)
- ★ More active research about the group
- ★ Improve the barbecue, eating too late
- ★ More diverse luncheon, include more diverse women from OC
- ★ This year we were better at including everybody, were more connected – maybe the first workshop helped
- ★ Liked the Kayak
- ★ Learn about/from local programs
- ★ More diversity within our group – we need to ask more diverse people
- ★ Having gym was great!
- ★ Good diversity of activities in the program
- ★ We need to know more about the university
- ★ Learn some artistic talents
- ★ Women from UCI in luncheon did not know about ES
- ★ Appreciate the PIP Talks
- ★ Liked to have discussion sessions in Arroyo Vista (AV)
- ★ As amiable introvert is not easy to join this group, we could facilitate this differently, do better job at introductions
- ★ There are different pedagogies to help us in the learning process
- ★ Love the schedule, the PIP talks were helpful to learn about people, skills workshop were beneficial
- ★ Schedule the free time a little better (Charlie can help with that)
- ★ Homework before the conference so we can have more time during the week to build something together – we need to think about this, how to do this
- ★ Loved the workshops, talked to the group despite its diverse interests and needs
- ★ Have icebreaker activity in the very beginning
- ★ Improve communication during the week (message board? Whataspp group?)
- ★ Missing cultural competency (in a workshop maybe?)
- ★ Activity where people talk about how they solve problem where they come from
- ★ Love workshops, more off campus activities, see what good things are being done here
- ★ Not easy to be included in a group that has been together for a long time
- ★ Have not gotten as much from a conference as this one for years
- ★ Love that most resources are coming from the group
- ★ Not nice when people are late to presentations, it may feel as if their presentation are not as important

- ★ Love the beach
- ★ Markendy says he LOVES Pippin!!!!
- ★ Being strict on time was better
- ★ PIP Talks were great, workshops were great
- ★ More organization of free time
- ★ We need to do a better job at recycling in AV
- ★ Like the workshop a lot, more than presentations
- ★ Love the kayak
- ★ Being outside more!!!
- ★ Do not understand the Empowering Women Luncheon
- ★ We need to do something (a project) as a group, we are inspired during the week, but we lose it during the year
- ★ Liked the organization
- ★ Liked the PIP Talks
- ★ Better time management
- ★ Loved the workshops, provided tools to be used in our work
- ★ Liked the Empowering Women Luncheon, had more profound conversations
- ★ Organize free time better
- ★ New people have some difficulty being included, need introductory icebreaker
- ★ Move group project conversations to the beginning of the week (instead the end)
- ★ The changes in the conference were a process, maybe we needed to start from where we started to be where we are now
- ★ Best conference we have had, good interactions, good amount of content vs. free time
- ★ Important to show up on time
- ★ Why are we taking the photo with everybody????
- ★ Know more about Irvine, the people, the programs, the students
- ★ Need to get to know what each other does, or have done in the last year – would like everyone to have a few minutes to show photos or talk about what he/she has done in the past year
- ★ Would love to bike more
- ★ Jesse offered to do a bike ride
- ★ Would love to have everyone talk about their work for a couple of minutes or show photos of what they did during the last year
- ★ Make it a vegetarian week
- ★ Have bikes for the fellows
- ★ Have the bus schedule for the fellows to use
- ★ Really liked the workshops
- ★ Some topics were over my head, maybe we can explain better what each presenter is presenting about, we can take a look at the topic before hand
- ★ Message board in AV
- ★ Contact list
- ★ Grateful to be invited
- ★ As a new person, the discovery process was fun
- ★ Appreciated access to gym

- ★ Suggestion: Spark talks (5 minute talks)
- ★ Liked kayaking, liked workshops, like to get to know everybody
- ★ Information of logistics needs to go out earlier, it is too confusing
- ★ Can't find information at UCI website
- ★ Should do a better job advertising the conference
- ★ Workshops are great
- ★ The new people should present so we know them
- ★ Liked sessions in AV
- ★ Would like to know about the local reality
- ★ Love the travel grant idea
- ★ Old ES website is still online, shouldn't be
- ★ People could bring their own challenge to flesh out with the conference
- ★ Do a fellow – funder speed dating (talk to Mo about it)

5. Feedback from Fellows (from Online Survey)

About the respondents

- ★ 21 participants completed the feedback survey online
- ★ Half of those respondents have been fellows since 2013, one third are new fellows who attended the ES Gathering for the first time.

About the p.i.p. talks

- ★ **All** respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. The topics of the PIP Talks were interesting
 - b. PIP Talks should be maintained in next year's program
- ★ Over **90%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statements:
 - a. The talks allowed me to learn about sustainability issues around the world
 - b. The information shared was relevant to my professional or personal endeavors toward sustainability
 - c. The time allocated to presenters was appropriate
 - d. The time allocated for questions was appropriate

Comments by respondents:

- ★ I thought having short presentations were an interesting way to introduce information, and at the same time not overload us with it. I thought that more time should be allowed for the questions, especially since they are so short. I enjoyed all the PIP talks.

For next year if anyone does an exchange visit having them do a PIP talk would be awesome.

- ★ What dislikes me was the lack of time for the presentation. We should have more time to present.
- ★ Perhaps grouping the discussions together by theme more would encourage a more structured discussion afterwards.
- ★ The information shared in the PIP Talks was relevant to my professional performance. I recommend this kind of presentation for the next year.
- ★ All of them were interesting and as a person who attended the gathering for the first time it was very important to get to know what others do, at least part of what they do and it was a chance to introduce myself as well.
- ★ Maybe we should have had some written warnings in the room we were before pip talks, remember that at the next period will be a pip talk at the specific place.
- ★ It would help if there was a prepared format hand-out for follow up questions keyed to the major points of the talk by later e-mail contact.
- ★ Can drill deep into one topic/initiative.
- ★ I liked the PIP talks because they were short presentations about important topics that conveyed the most crucial aspects of a current situation. A little more time for questions would have been nice.

About presentations followed by discussions

- ★ **All** respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statements:
 - a. The topics of the presentations were interesting
 - b. The presentations allowed me to learn about and reflect upon sustainability issues around the world
- ★ Around **90%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. Presentations followed by discussions should be maintained in next year's program
- ★ Over **80%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statements:
 - a. The presentations were of high quality
 - b. The information shared was relevant to my professional or personal endeavors toward sustainability
 - c. The time allocated for discussions was appropriate
- ★ A little over **75%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. The time allocated to presenters was appropriate

Comments by respondents:

- ★ I thought all of the presentations were great. They all presented their information well, and had in depth knowledge of their subject. I didn't dislike anything. I thought Debyeet's presentation was amazing and could be a TED talk. Also Logan's presentation was very well put together. I always think there can be more time for questions, but I understand the reality of time constraints.
- ★ Specifically Karla's topic Debyeet because they need to explain a little bit more so we can understand clearly.
- ★ I think space for longer discussions is a good thing, but the themes could perhaps be linked to a more constructive dialogue, open discussion format so that in the future the group is not necessarily just sitting and listening for a longer amount of time. Perhaps the time of the longer format discussions could be reduced a bit and the presenter be requested to develop a few prompts/questions/a mini workshop which the rest of the participants then reflect upon. This would ensure that the format resulted in a constructive dialogue as opposed to a one sided lecture.
- ★ Every speaker spoke well from the context of their individual activity. Reporting of facts in the talks was granular yet integrated. Insights were both delivered and inferrable. (Accompanying slide sheets in a sidebar with spaces for notes (the SCORE briefing format) would always allow for a more careful attention to the speakers as they deliver talks.)
- ★ I specially liked the presentations of Karla about Teal organizations and Logan with the Degrowth in practice! I suggest that the next year we have more time allocated for discussions.
- ★ These presentations were of good quality and length for all aspects of the topic to be discussed or at least touched upon. There was a good amount of time allotted to questions as well.
- ★ I thought the presentations were a bit too long. I think a little less time would have still given the presenter ample time to give a complete presentation and it would allow the discussion to start earlier -
- ★ I would enjoy more time for discussion following the presentations.
- ★ We need more time for discussion and questions. It is better if all presenters use visual support (photos, slides, video..) it helps to maintain people's interest on the presentation.
- ★ These were much too long and not always well thought out. The format turned into the men dominating the Q&A.
- ★ Keep it doing it. Invite experts from UCI.

About the workshops

- ★ All respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. The content of the workshops were interesting
 - b. Workshops should be maintained in next year's gathering program
- ★ Around **85%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statements:
 - a. The workshops were of high quality
 - b. The workshops taught me relevant skills
 - c. The time allocated for the workshops were appropriate

Comments by respondents:

- ★ I thought these workshops really taught us about ourselves. Learning our styles and more about ourselves was very informative. I don't have anything I disliked about them. The Social Styles and Inside/out workshops were a highlight of the conference, and in my opinion one of the best additions to the program in the 4 years I've been going. I'll let you guys decide the training, but I think the broader the topic, the better. When they get too specific people tend to disengage.
- ★ I like the workshop specially the Inside/Out workshop. I would like a training about how to apply for grant.
- ★ Most of the workshops were catered towards business/research working environments. Some of us work in completely different environments (in projects/hands on projects, with different ages, educational backgrounds, available resources). We should aim to include a completely different workshops style (i.e. perhaps something with physical aspect, team work, problem solving, etc) in order to break us out of the "solving office-style work problems" mindset.
- ★ Two of the workshops were truncated versions of the facilitators' larger introductory workshops, and all would have benefitted, both as a group, and individually, from a more full length exposure. This also enhanced communication and more self-disclosure from those from closed social origin states.
- ★ I strongly agree with the workshops, because we had effective interactions between all the participants from different countries and we learned relevant skills.
- ★ The Communication workshop was great, I think we should have gave it more time than the others. Social styles and inside/out for me were more relevant to get to know the group better than anything else.
- ★ The workshops were a great activity for all of us to better get to know one another on a more personal level. I wish more time was allotted for such activities because they were so enjoyable as well as educational for us. These types of workshops should definitely be kept for next years conference. And trainings that allow us to learn more about ourselves and how we fit in a group to better work together are always helpful.

- ★ Jennifer's communication style (in general- not just her workshop) was brilliant. I would love to have her present on how fellows can better "brand" themselves and their work. She seems extremely knowledgeable in how to advance visibility (like blogs and websites and such) - and how to gather support for causes.
- ★ Engagement. Practical activities. Also, good information. Suggestions: training about design of new types of money; how to make decision based in our values
- ★ I absolutely LOVED these !!!!
- ★ These were all fantastic!!!
- ★ Great, loved these ones.
- ★ Too many white men. Let's decolonize our speakers.
- ★ Best part of the conference. We had the chance to learn and practice real skills. Next year a workshop should be the first thing on the agenda to serve as an icebreaker to get everyone learning and working together.
- ★ Workshops is what I like the most this year. Maybe we could have more workshops and less presentations.

About the empowering women luncheon

(This activity separated men and women; therefore their responses are shown separately below)

Female respondents:

- ★ Over **90%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statement:
 - a. The presentations during the luncheon (by Olfat and Josefina) allowed me to learn more about the work, concerns, and struggles of some of our female fellows.
- ★ Around **75%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statement:
 - a. The facilitated conversation around the table allowed me to share my stories, ideas, concerns, and/or viewpoints.
- ★ Around **70%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statements:
 - a. The facilitated conversation around the table allowed me to learn more about the work, concerns, and struggles of women from the Orange County community.
 - b. Getting to know the community women and sharing experiences with them was valuable to me.
 - c. I think male fellows should participate in the luncheon.

Male respondents:

- ★ Over **85%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statement:
 - a. I see value in meeting separately with male fellows to discuss women empowerment issues.
- ★ Around **75%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statements:
 - a. The conversation with other male fellows was constructive.
 - b. The conversation with other male fellows allowed me to reflect upon Women Empowerment.
- ★ Around **25%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statement:
 - a. I would like to be included in the Luncheon with the female fellows.

Comments by respondents (men and women):

- ★ The actual lunch is always a highlight (Pippen wears on us). The discussion was alright, but without Gonen it didn't feel focused. We were not nearly as productive without him, so for next year I hope to have him back. If not we should think about assigning one of the men to act as the facilitator for this discussion, so we can actually get something out of it, instead of just a free lunch.
- ★ Women should get their own space to discuss among each other. So we should keep it the same.
- ★ If we want the male reflective session to have more of a point we should reflect on the discussion in a more constructive manner, as this was mostly a discussion over lunch with no follow up afterwards.
- ★ The male group was somewhat dismissively left without an agenda, as if there was nothing of consequence that husbands and fathers of daughters and brothers of sisters could meaningfully discuss. As a result, most discussion devolved into small group sports-event talk by the more macho members present. (A key opportunity passed under utilized.)
- ★ I agree with all above. I just think that there is a limitation of time for us to learn a lot note about their concerns and they learn more about ours. However, the facilitation process made the conversation more Meaningful and insightful.
- ★ I liked the facilitation process around the table because allowed me to share my stories and to know the different point of views of women from different origins and jobs.
- ★ It was a good chance for us to shine in front of the community. I don't think they really care about my struggle/situation and there is no way they can help with that. It was a nice chat though that I didn't mind at all and thought the facilitated conversation was very helpful for us and the women to make it less awkward. I think we should try to

make the men part of that, at least try it out next year, if the women don't like it then we will have them out the year after

- ★ Get more diverse local community attendees
- ★ I liked that members of our conference could present their stories to an outside group; they were a joy to listen to. Yet I felt the great disparities between the backgrounds of all the women in the room hindered us truly understanding one another. The discussions we had around the table I felt strayed from the point of the conference in terms of sustainability. Different food for the Luncheon would be nice.
- ★ This year the women's luncheon (with the facilitated conversations) felt like a success to me. It was the first time I "connected" with the OC women instead of feeling the divide and confusion in the room (that has been there in the past)
- ★ I think this is an important element to the conference ... er, gathering. Maybe there should be an integrated approach, meaning that there should be some points of reflection that are related, so that we can come together later in the conference, and productively discuss the covered topics. Either way, I think it's valuable to have a separate time and space to discuss, but I feel it might be more impactful, if we then came together later, and discussed issues together. I don't know how to do this.
- ★ I think it went very well at my table. I would continually remind all of us empowering sustainability women to sit apart from each other and really concentrate on engaging with intention with the women visiting because we are the hosts. Even if our kindness and caring is not reciprocated by women attending- I think it is very important that we act with integrity and compassion and don't stick to our comfort zones talking to our own group.
- ★ To be honest, this is not my favorite part of the week. Having the opportunity to gather and talk with local people is great, but I'm not sure if it should remain as a "just-women" activity. Personally, I enjoyed a lot the space for conversation that we had one night at the dorms (when Rocío shared her story with us). Maybe we can have our "safe-empowering-space" just between fellows (women and men apart) and keep the luncheon as a social activity, maybe we can invite some men from the community too.
- ★ This luncheon was completely absurd. I felt like an exotic zoo animal being trotted out for the entertainment of paying guests, complete with a little show (the facilitated discussion). Words like "women's empowerment" and "safe-space" were carelessly thrown around like academic buzzwords. I felt that by separating men and women, the luncheon was woefully behind the times in terms of gender identity (it promoted the gender binary, which is not the modern, educated view of gender). Worse, it reinforced the misogynistic notion that women's issues are for women to solve. I despised being forced to be part of this self-congratulating, socially oblivious event.

- ★ I dislike to have to talk to some women that do not perceive us as equals, like underdeveloped... I may invite women from maybe other circles, and diversify de group... If possible

About the seminars on "fostering climate resilient coastal communities"

(Fellows were allowed to choose between attending the seminars or organizing group activities with other fellows. Therefore, a number of fellows did not attend the seminars and had no opinion on the questions asked here. The percentages shown below exclude those who answered "I don't know").

- ★ **All** of respondents who had an opinion Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - The content of presentations were interesting
 - The location of presentations was appropriate
- ★ Over **90%** of respondents who had an opinion Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statements:
 - The presentations were of high quality
 - I enjoyed the flexibility of planning parallel activities at the same time as the seminars
- ★ Around **80%** of respondents who had an opinion Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statement:
 - I gained valuable information/knowledge from the presentations
- ★ Around **75%** of respondents who had an opinion Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statement:
 - I could see application of some of the issues and/or strategies in my own community
- ★ Around **65%** of respondents who had an opinion Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - The seminars should be maintained in next year's conference program

Comments by respondents:

- ★ I thought they were interesting, and contained a lot of good data and analysis. However, they are so specific and many of us aren't around a coast or at least dealing in coastal issues, so it doesn't relate. I think it would be interesting if next year they broadened the scope of the presentations and included people from outside of California, so we could see what others are doing. Especially those communities that don't have millions of dollars to throw at the issue. Also having the parallel activities is nice, but if you decide to watch the seminars then you miss out on what 90% of the group is doing, since most

people didn't attend, and then end up feeling lost or disconnected from the issues the group has been talking about.

- ★ I didn't like some specific point in the seminar because it only referred to California or the US, what about the planet?
- ★ The seminars were interesting but it was a topic completely separate from what I normally focus on. It was interesting from a participatory perspective but I would sacrifice the opportunity to attend this type of session in honor of spending time with community based civic initiatives in the Irvine community.
- ★ More q & a time useful. Perhaps presenters should have opportunity afterwards to break-out discussion groups around the most interesting points (to the attendees) of either their discussion, or a question topic raised to develop further discussion.
- ★ The content of presentations were interesting and I acquired knowledge about the problems and strategies of this community. All of this allow me to design a similar project in my country.
- ★ I didn't have enough background about the seminar so was hard to follow, but I think having parallel activities solved the issue
- ★ more outreach to get local attendees.
- ★ The seminar was educational but brought the focus away from the topics and concerns of our fellows who traveled far to have their issues heard. I feel having parallel activities during the seminar splits us as a group when we should be sticking together to get most out of our limited time together. Also there was pressure that we should all be at the seminar for respectful reasons. Grander scale topics for the seminar would reveal how one issue affects another across the world and would then allow our fellows to feel that they and their crisis are thus included and important.
- ★ I did not attend the seminars this year - but I have in the past - and sometimes they are valuable and interesting and sometimes they are not. It is a hit or miss depending on the topics, and the fellows...
- ★ The seminars are interesting. The problem is they are specific to the California coast. In my opinion we could benefit more if instead participating in this seminar, to visit other local initiatives regarding agricultural, or technological issues that can help us to solve socioecological problems.
- ★ Sure, these are interesting, and of high quality ... but the reality, is that they are *mostly unrelated to our collective work. It seems like a waste of our time, but at least we were given a good alternate option. Thanks for that :)
- ★ I did not attend the seminars this year because I attended last year. I don't find them relevant for my work or my community so I enjoyed the option of parallel lectures/activities. I vote that we keep it as an optional part of the gathering. I would like to see experts on sustainable transportation and experts on organic farming.

- ★ I don't have any particular problem with this activity, as long as we continue to have the flexibility to attend or not, depending of our paralel activities. It is an interesting subject, but listening similar things each year can be repetitive. As a suggestion, this should be an activity that brings to CA ideas from around the world on how to deal with this coastal challenges. Maybe some fellows can recommend speakers that can give a different perspective. Or we can present case studies on the seminar so people can have a broader point of view. Can we help to improve this activity?
- ★ I don't like that inclusion of ES fellows is intended only to put people in the room. If ES Fellows are integrated into the panel discussions, it would feel more empowering.
- ★ I did not attend. There was nothing relevant to my work or interests.

About group discussions

- ★ Around **95%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statement:
 - a. I like the flexibility to re-focus discussions based on the needs/desires that arise during the week
- ★ Around **90%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. The way the discussions were facilitated was appropriate
 - b. The discussions improved group cohesion
 - c. Discussions should be maintained in next year's program
- ★ Around **80%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. The discussions stimulated reflection about issues that are important to the group
 - b. The time allocated for discussions was appropriate
- ★ Around **75%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. The locations of discussions were appropriate
- ★ Around **70%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. The discussions helped the group move forward with plans to be carried out during the year

Comments by respondents

- ★ I missed most of the discussion for the reasons stated in my reflection on Coastal Resilience. From what I saw I thought they were good, but I didn't like the fact that I had to choose between 2 things, and either way I'd miss out on something. I think parallel programming has its benefits, but since so many people chose the group discussions, it might be best to just schedule these instead.

- ★ The discussion was very good, I like the flexibility, the location and also the topic. I think we should keep it.
- ★ More time was needed. (Basically, for the whole conference.)
- ★ I specially liked the project related to design courses in the Sustainability School lead by Karla and Ranulfo. I will work with them in design courses in managerial skills and leadership.
- ★ It was a great space to share ideas, I just felt very strongly about the whole empower mentioned thing and people kept mentioning bringing native Americans/black/syrian ... etc and that sounded very inappropriate to me. I agree having a more diverse group helps us grow but let's not choose and pick! Also, discussing women empowerment specifically was very a very important topic but people didn't seem to really know what and how does that look like and was discussed from a white American male perspective
- ★ Discussion is important to allow concerns and suggestions arise at the appropriate time and place. I only felt it was a bit rushed so that everyone had a chance to speak. The dorms location is a bit far from campus to be walking on a daily basis, and we are also restricted on where we can eat when I know many wish to venture out and see more of what the city of Irvine and Orange County has to offer.
- ★ Maintain discussions about communication, money and sustainability.
- ★ It would be nice to have some discussions off campus ... we all know this is hard, but since you asked ...
- ★ It all was great. I think we should continue to revisit the food discussion. I also think we should have our focus group (grants group, food group, etc) discussions earlier in the week so we have time to plan throughout the week and come up with some deliverables. When we meet at the end we tend not to get anything done.
- ★ Great time-investment! Last year we invested a lot of time on endless discussions... without any specific outcome and I feel that this year we really improved this part, we had strong discussions, lots of good ideas, and we came up with concrete projects and tools to advance on our work as a group. Suggestion Next year we can assign two roles during these conversations: 1. Time keeper: someone can keep control of time and be sure that we don't extend too much on a single topic. 2. Goal keeper: someone that will stop the conversation when we miss direction or keep talking about the same topic over and over without any output.
- ★ I liked the idea - but there was no real "facilitation" - it was a group discussion - which is great.
- ★ I'm not sure which discussions you mean.
- ★ I love to talk and share and discussions are great to do that and to be able to go deeper on the issues and subjects that are important to us

About social activities

- ★ All respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statements:
 - a. I enjoy having time to socialize
 - b. I would like this type of social activities to be maintained in next year's gathering
- ★ Over **95%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. These activities allowed the group to build trust and share knowledge
- ★ Around **85%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the following statements:
 - a. I like when fellows get organized to plan an activity (e.g. barbecue)
 - b. The organization and logistic of the kayaking worked well
 - c. I think one afternoon and two evenings were appropriate times allocated to social activities
- ★ Around **70%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. The organization and logistic of the barbecue worked well

Comments by respondents:

- ★ I thought all of the activities were awesome, and the barbecue was great. The only thing I would change for next year is allowing a day before or after the conference for people to socialize, similar to every other year we have done it. This last year it felt as if we were being shipped in and shipped out. It would probably be best to give people an extra day cushion at the beginning of the conference so they can recover from their travels and be fresh on Monday.
- ★ I like the kayaking the most, because it was a time to relax and we had time to appreciate the river and the impact of the climate change on that river. (It seems that the amount of water was bigger).
- ★ The group sporting outing (kayaking) was a great chance to bond and relax. Perhaps a hiking activity could be including in the future, or an outdoor activity which also includes some sort of workshop/discussion? I think it would be great to hold a workshop (even one similar to the type we have indoors) in an outdoor location/natural setting. As for the food, with more planning I would enjoy working together for a group cooking night more based on non-meat dishes rather than grilled meats :))
- ★ Kayaking was inherently dividing, (solo in activity) and some attendees could not participate. Another activity that permits both (a) active members and (b) observers to (c) continuously communicate might be better choices. Irvine has a positive reputation for inventing group spectrum participation sports-like activities.
- ★ All the activities were perfect!
- ★ The dining room food was terrible, but really no need to mention that since we all agree on it. It didn't affect how much I enjoyed the conference and the conversations

- ★ Social activities allow for us to have the liberty to talk to one another in a casual setting about anything we couldn't have previously during the day or week or continue conversations from earlier. As for the barbeque, there was a significant disparity between those contributing and those who were not. So the barbeque took longer to put together. Starting it at an earlier time would really help.
- ★ I think the BBQ had good intentions but as the time neared- many fellows did not participate as they had once planned to. Maybe next year a new plan - something casual and at the dorm - but a venue that requires less ...preparation? - But YES to something-
- ★ More kayaking, beach, barbecue, dinner with live band.
- ★ More of this please ... Also thanks for including what you did!
- ★ I vote for having one more bbq! I thought this was the most fun time.
- ★ Great time! Loved the kayak afternoon, we must have another outdoor activity like this one next year! About the barbecue, food was great but the fact that we didn't have a grill next to the dorm was unpractical. I don't remember if we were asked to contribute this year with money!
- ★ The bbq was a disaster. The food was good - but there is never any organization and after a day of kayaking, there is no energy to cook in the dorm room. Hire a local food company and have them make food and share their story with fellows.
- ★ Social activities are necessary and important, but they shouldn't be so scheduled/forced. Leave time for people to do what they want to do. They will probably go out to eat or make a barbecue together, or otherwise spend time with each other. Forcing people to be social defeats the organic nature of building relationships. If this was a 2 day conference that would make sense. For this week long gathering it was exhausting.
- ★ It was great to get along together doing non academic related activities because different aspects of our personalities emerge and we are able to know each other in different aspects

About organization, logistics, and general aspects

- ★ Around **80%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. The communication with the organization team before the gathering was effective
 - b. I had all the necessary information about transportation and lodging before arriving at the gathering
 - c. Lodging on campus housing was appropriate
- ★ Around **80%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. It was very helpful to have some food/condiments/utensils in the dorms
 - b. I understood the purpose of the gathering

- c. After the gathering, I feel excited to keep working with this group
- d. I feel my participation in the gathering will positively contribute to my personal development
- ★ Around **90%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. Interactions among fellows was respectful
 - b. The gathering stimulated reflection about issues that are important to me
 - c. I feel my participation in the gathering will positively impact my work
- ★ Around **75%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. The transportation arrangements were appropriate
- ★ Around **70%** of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that:
 - a. The food (at Pippin, University Club, and conference room) was appropriate

Comments by respondents:

- ★ As I said previously arriving Saturday would be best so people can recover or socialize before the conference kicks off. Also I always believe I come away from the conference with a better understanding of the world and the issues that face it. I particularly enjoy meeting the new fellows and hearing what work they are doing.
- ★ I am working day by day on sustainability issues knowing that I am not alone because I know there's more people who are aware about the effort which should be done to have a better world.
- ★ UCI and Newport (/Laguna) area are automobile culture spread out campus areas grafted onto a resort beach city. As a result, marked maps to event venues would have helped keep on time. Also, over greater distances, access to hosting shuttle would have helped. The input of fresh perspectives was a definite assistance to all parties in expanding their concepts of options and contexts in our increasingly dynamic, one to one communicative, and participatory world. It clearly caused expansion of plans in terms of inclusive and welcoming policy statements in our future activities, as on our various executive leadership roles to promote real situational understanding.
- ★ Today I'm feeling more integrated with environmental issues in the world. I'm feeling that I have more conviction on what I do. Besides, it is good to know that I can help change things for better in others countries.
- ★ Being a person who was not lodging for the conference, it was quite difficult to find when and where the conference would take place. If I did not have the dates given to me directly by John Whiteley I do not think I could have attended because I was not able to find the event online with UCI or elsewhere easily. Having the event splashed on the front home page with UCI would have been helpful. The impact of this conference and the friends I made has given me an awareness of issues outside of my usual sightline especially since I have made a personal connection with those directly affected. It makes

me want be as active as I can be to help them and in turn others who are suffering in the world.

- ★ I don't know where I am personally with weighing the benefits and costs of attending the conference. But I believe it is a very beneficial conference to many!
- ★ This is one of the highlights of my year
- ★ Communication within the gathering was very confusing and I often showed up at places at the scheduled time and no one was there. It was a bit frustrating because it seems people don't really stick to a schedule. I also don't really think it's appropriate for people to go shopping more than once on the trip... although it is a vacation for people to come here it is also a work conference and it makes it hard to build relationships when little groups are always leaving to go do personal shopping.
- ★ As always, great coordination and logistics before-during-after conference. Thanks for the flexibility with the flight tickets. Housing is always great. And I love Pippins! (even though I now that not everyone shares the feeling). I really appreciated Mo's explanation about how Pippins handles food for UCI and I feel they serve good quality food, of course you can find better food outside, but the convenience of having good food without leaving campus is more important, I guess. Honestly, food at my university was very simple compared with the options we have at Pippins... a matter of perspective I suppose. Great group this year! I enjoyed every second and had the opportunity to have great conversations almost with everyone. Learned a lot as always! I agree that we should look for new fellows from Africa, Europe and Asia, to bring more diversity of opinions and contexts.
- ★ I love this gathering, has become a very, very important issue in my life

Some conclusions

- ★ Fellows enjoyed both the **PIP Talks and Presentations** followed by discussions, but we might want organize them by topics (as we have done in previous years). We may also think about structuring/facilitating the discussion so that they are more productive and inclusive. Time is always an issue, but the results show we improved this year. These are valuable activities that should be maintained.
- ★ The **workshops** were the highlight of the conference. Fellows enjoyed learning new skills and the exercises also allowed fellows to get to know each other, interact, and understand the dynamic of the group. We should think about other skills that might be useful to fellows (e.g. grant writing). We should seek diversity when choosing workshops leaders.
- ★ The format and content of the **Empowering Women luncheon** need to be re-imagined. We made a lot of improvements this year and the facilitated conversations were mostly

successful. A good number of fellows enjoy the event and see it as a good opportunity to network, learn, and share experiences. But a number of fellows expressed negative feelings toward this activity. We should think on how to re-structure the event to make everyone's experience positive and fruitful. Suggestions were made regarding diversifying the guest list since there is a perceived gap between the fellows and the guests. Also, while the majority of both men and women see value in separate meetings, a number of fellows feel strongly about the divide and would rather have men included in the program.

- ★ The **Seminars on Coastal Resilience** are not successful among a good number of fellows because a) they are narrowly focused on California and b) fellows don't feel they are the targeted audience and are not fully included. Some fellows who work on topics related to those discussed did enjoy the opportunity to attend the seminars. Giving fellows the option to organize other parallel activities seem to be a good compromise. Some interesting suggestions were made regarding including fellows as panelists and broadening the scope of presentations to include other geographic areas.
- ★ Group discussions seem to be important to the group but they might need to be better organized/facilitated so that they may be more productive.
- ★ While all fellows appreciate having time to relax, socialize, and get to know each other, there are different opinions on the types of activities and how/when they should be organized. Since these **social activities** are important to build trust and cohesion among fellows, they should be maintained, but we should consider a few changes, especially regarding the barbecue.