## Climate Insurance Working Group

June 23, 2023 Meeting

## Discussion of New Members - Biographies

## Proposed Climate Insurance Working Group New Members

**Newsha K. Ajami**, is the Chief Development Officer for Research at the Earth and Environmental Sciences Area (EESA) at Lawrence Berkeley National Lab. A leading expert in sustainable water resource management, smart cities, and the water-energy-food nexus, she uses data science principles to study the human and policy dimensions of urban water and hydrologic systems. In her role at LBL, she is focused on developing interdisciplinary and impact focused research initiatives across various domain within EESA.

Dr. Ajami served as a gubernatorial appointee to the Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board for two terms and is currently a mayoral appointee to the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. She is a member of National Academies Board on Water Science and Technology and serves as a Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institute. Dr. Ajami also serves on number of state-level and national advisory boards. Before joining LBL she served as the founding director of the Stanford Urban Water Policy program and a senior research scholar at the Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment.

**Dr. Michael Méndez** is an Assistant Professor of Environmental Planning and Policy at the University of California, Irvine, an Andrew Carnegie Fellow, and a Visiting Scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). He most recently served as the inaugural James and Mary Pinchot Faculty Fellow in Sustainability Studies and Associate Research Scientist at the Yale School of the Environment. Michael has more than a decade of senior-level experience in the public and private sectors, where he consulted and actively engaged in the policymaking process.

This included working for the California State Legislature as a senior consultant, governmental relations advocate, a member of the California State Mining & Geology Board, and as vice-chair of the Sacramento City Planning Commission. In 2021, California Governor Gavin Newsom appointed Dr. Méndez to the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. The board regulates water quality in a region of 11 million people.