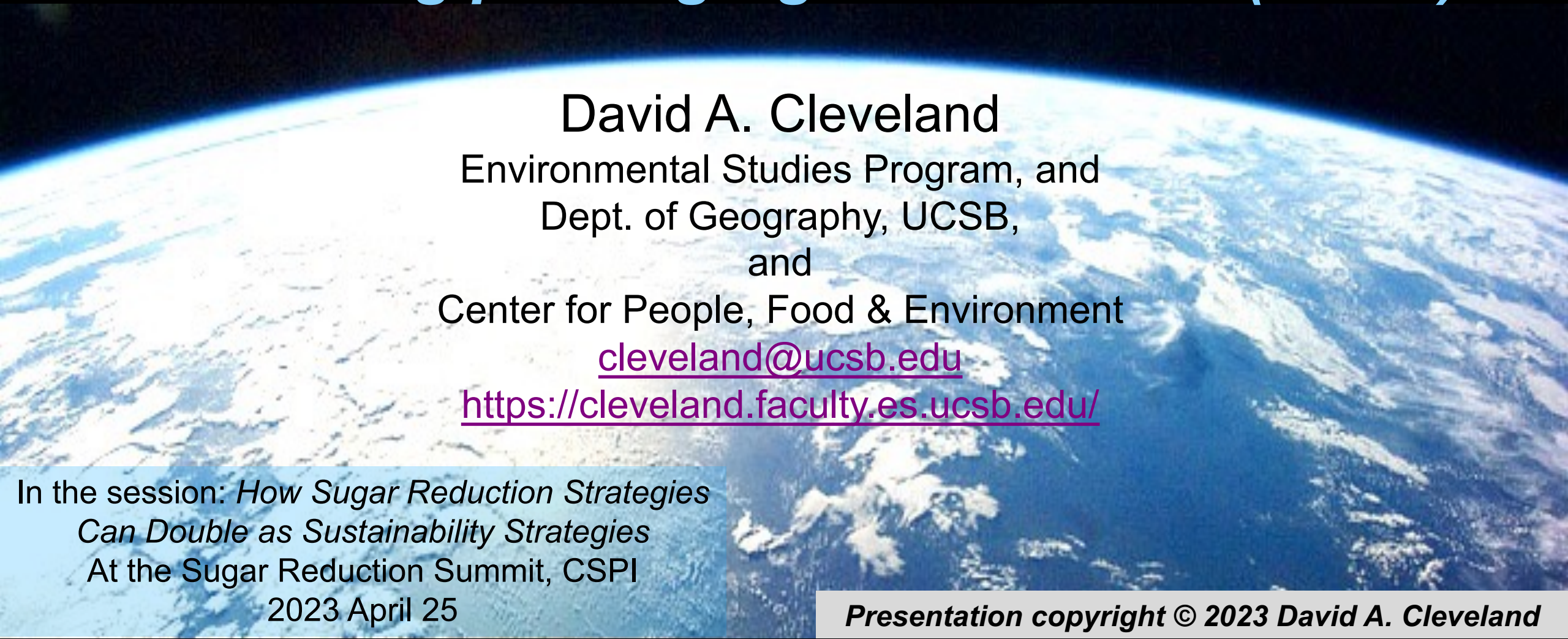
Maximizing environmental co-benefits of reducing sugar consumption by eliminating pouring rights contracts (PRCs)



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In the session: *How Sugar Reduction Strategies Can Double as Sustainability Strategies*
At the Sugar Reduction Summit, CSPI
2023 April 25

1. Why should we care about environmental benefits of eliminating PRCs?

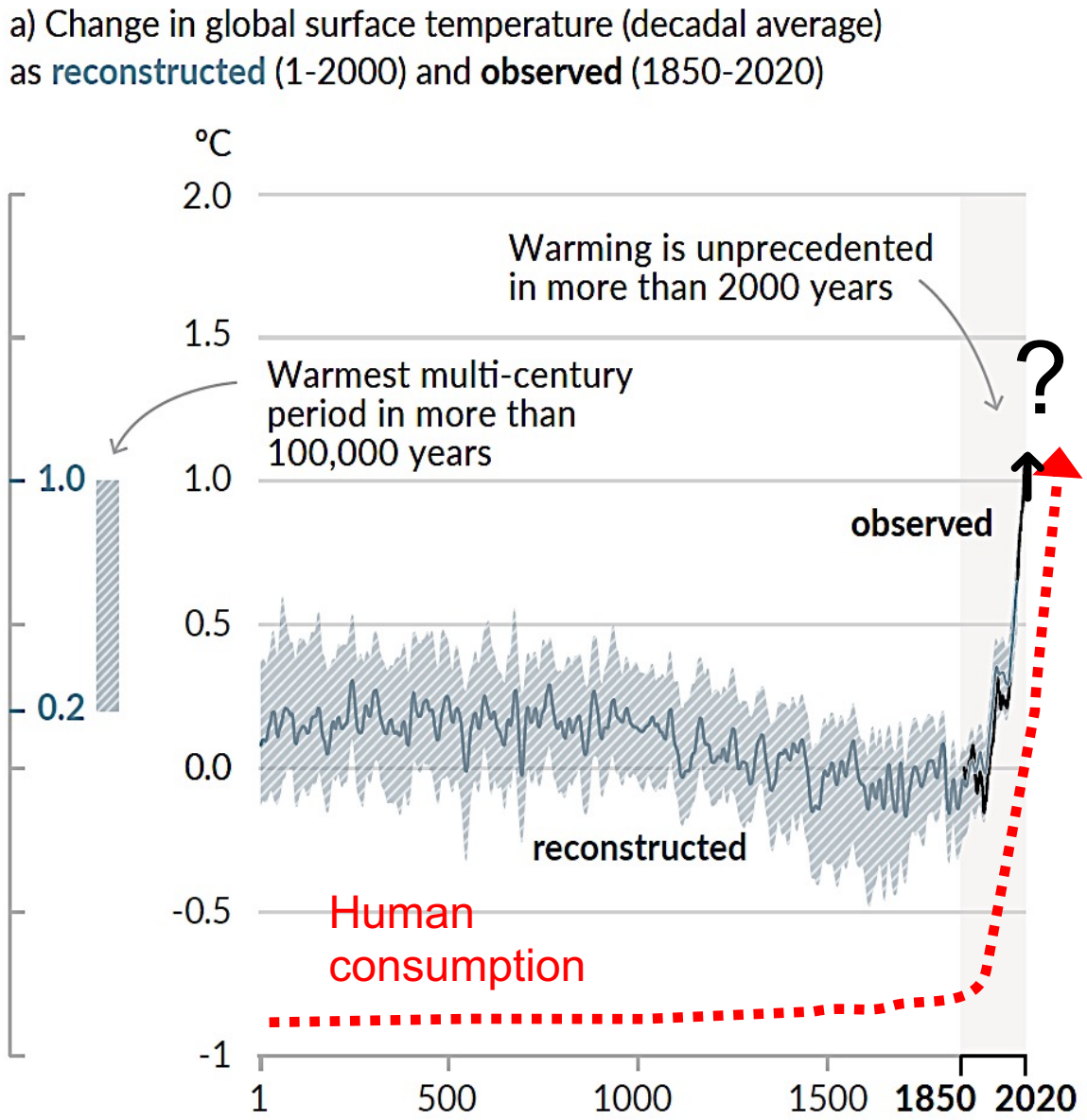
Because PRCs are exclusive contracts with Coke or Pepsi that require campuses to promote excess consumption of sugar sweetened beverages and other commercial beverages that undermines health

…and the goal of sugar reduction is optimizing human health, and our health ultimately depends on the environment, on planetary health

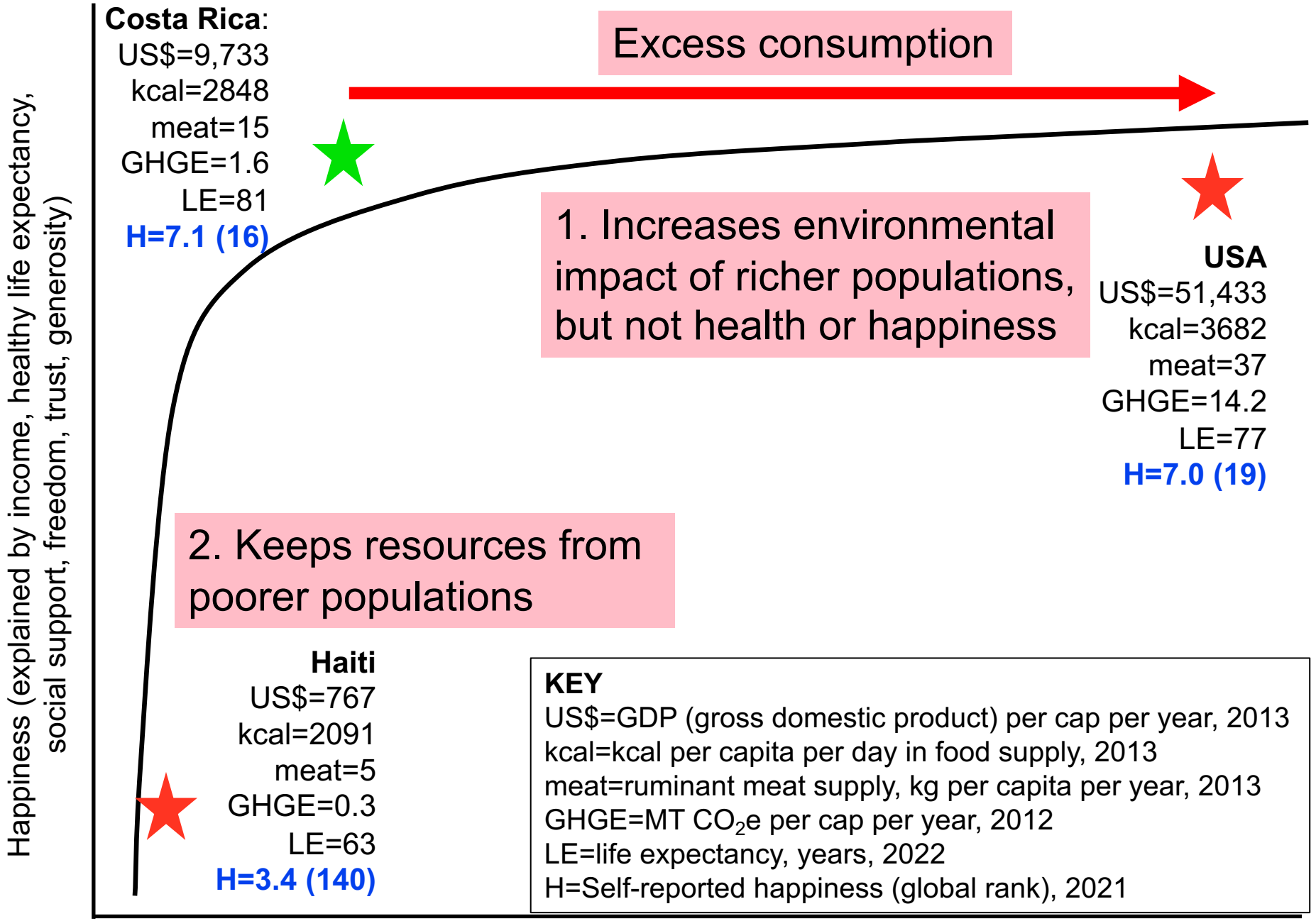
Planetary health, indeed the very livability of the Earth, is threatened by the Anthropocene crisis, viz. global climate warming

This crisis is driven by excess consumption of richer populations

The crisis is increasing super exponentially—we need to act quickly to reduce excess consumption, including eliminating PRCs



(Sources: Engels et al. 2023; Friel 2020; IPCC 2021)



What is excess consumption?

(Sources: Jackson et al. 2022; Vita et al. 2020)

2. What are the biggest environmental impacts of PRCs?

Direct environmental impacts of PRCs

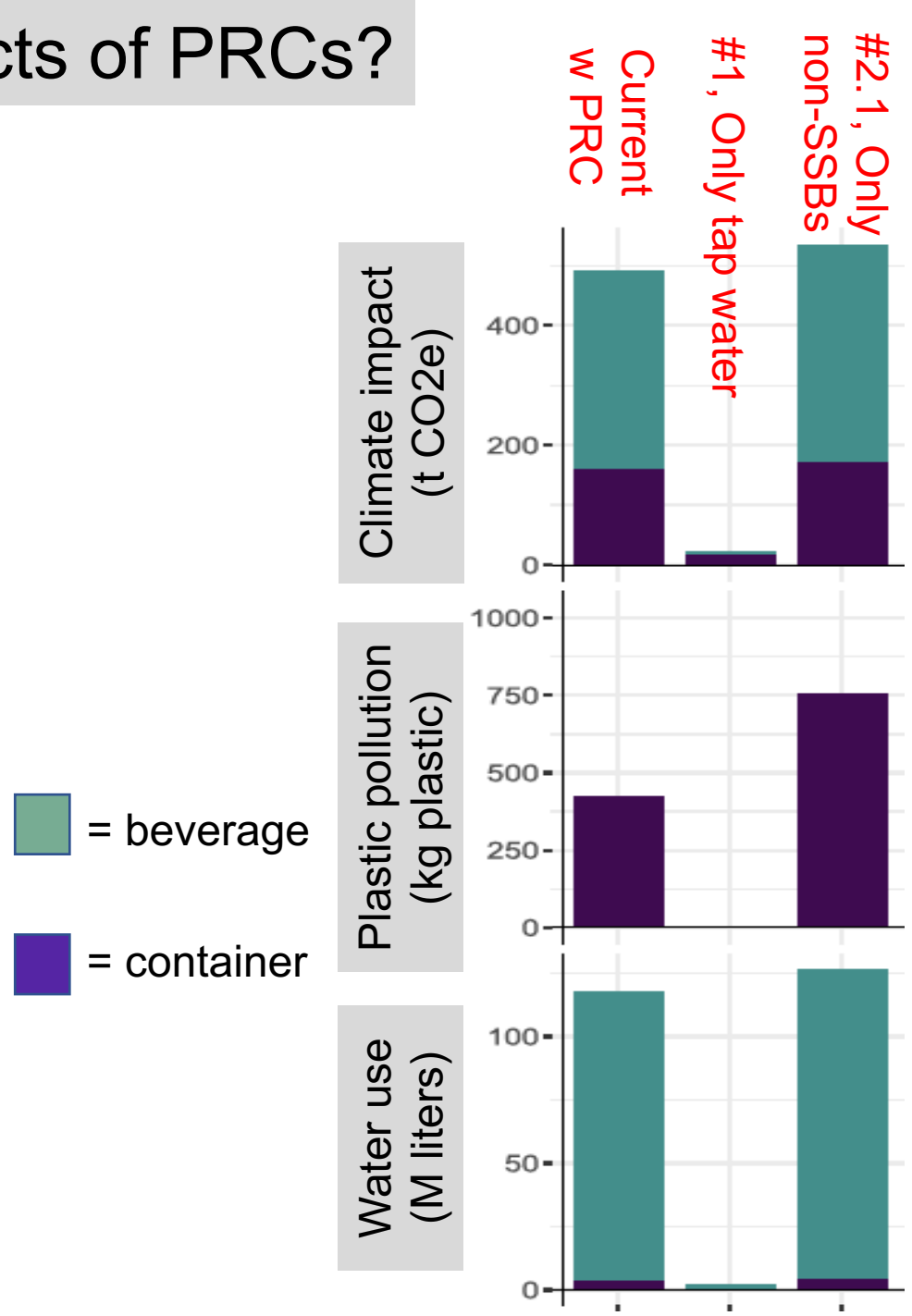
We analyzed 993,901 beverages, 1 year, UCSB

Liquid beverages have greater climate & water impact than containers, because cow milk, juice, plant milks, have high production impact

But because sugar has low impact, non-SSBs have higher impact than SSBs, and so there is no direct environmental benefit of eliminating sugar (Scenario #2.1)

By far, biggest environmental benefit was from substituting tap water for SSBs and other commercial beverages (Scenario #1)

However, indirect, systemic impacts of PRCs much greater



(Source: Meisterling et al. 2022)

PRC's systemic environmental impacts:

Result of encouraging excess consumption over lifetimes by prioritizing individual and private good values

PRCs ignore scientific evidence that the Anthropocene crisis requires reducing excess consumption

Beverage companies pretend they prioritize public and planetary health

Research shows that behaviors generated by these values decrease human happiness

PepsiCo sponsors Swipe out Hunger at UCSB, 2019

Pouring rights contract

UCSB + PEPSI

Brand loyalty, consumption over lifetime

Health

Planetary health

Money

"The **University is seeking to maximize the return to the institution…**" (UCSB-PepsiCo PRC)

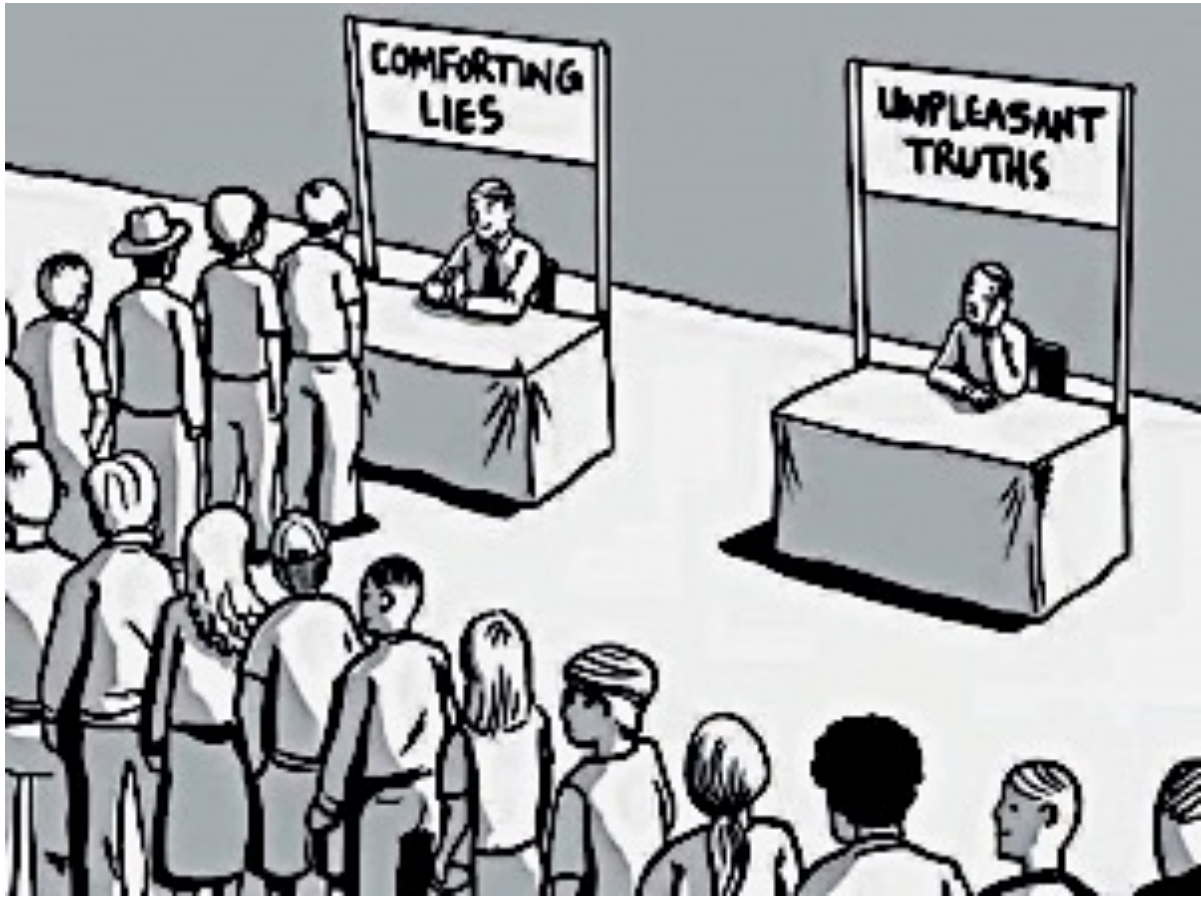
(Sources: Metti 2019; PepsiCo 2014)

3. So what's the best way of eliminating PRCs that reduces excess consumption to address the Anthropocene crisis?

Two major options

Comforting lies are the market-based solutions that continue to encourage excess consumption

Unpleasant truths are the science- and public good-based solutions that encourage reducing excess consumption



For eliminating PRCs, comforting lies are

…sugar free & more environmentally sustainable beverages promoted as alternatives to PRCs with Coke and Pepsi

(But remember, reducing sugar doesn't reduce environmental impact)

Most of these beverages are produced by companies that are funded by venture capital and private equity, so have consumer and revenue growth as the main goal

These companies encourage excess consumption, and tell us this makes us happier, but research shows it does the opposite

Constant growth, even of "healthier" excess consumption is not sustainable, and undermines planetary health, and ultimately human health

(Sources: Barkho 2022; Cleveland 2023; Hickel & Kallis 2020; Jackson 2017)

jmbean11
Worth the journey from NJ to MA? Absolutely. 🤩 @spindriftspiked Finally…a hard seltzer I enjoy 🥳 Cheers to summer! ☀️#realfruittastesbetter #spinfluencer

Spindrift's "Spinfluencers" are "known to search for hard-to-find Spindrift flavors, with some driving hours to find cans not available in their state. In turn, the company rewards their dedication with free merch and products".

For eliminating PRCs, “unpleasant” truths mean

…following science about the Anthropocene, and prioritizing the public good

Remove PRCs

Healthy Beverage Initiatives

Excess consumption

Student health

Planetary health

Colleges and universities should lead by eliminating PRCs and implementing Healthy Beverage Initiatives, because they

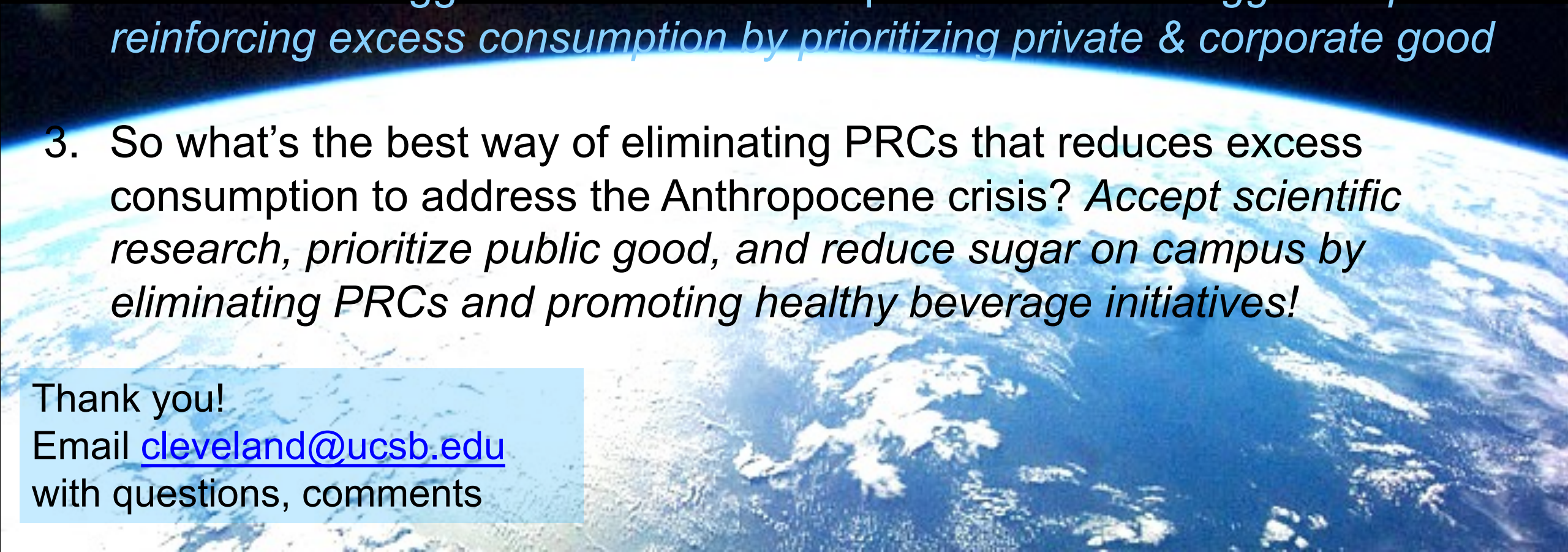
- Are centers of the research that have documented the Anthropocene crisis, and the need to reduce excess consumption
- Have mission to prioritize community and public good values
- Are centers of learning for young people: 74.5% of 18–19-year-olds; 40.6% of 20–24-year-olds
- Have public good education mission to help students understand the need to reduce excess consumption

(Sources: Cleveland 2023; Creutzig et al. 2022; Meisterling et al. 2022; Millward-Hopkins & Oswald 2023; Vita et al. 2020)

1. Why should we care about environmental benefits of eliminating PRCs? *We need to respond to the Anthropocene crisis by making our campuses, and the world, more environmentally sustainable by reducing excess consumption*

2. What are the biggest environmental impacts of PRCs? *Biggest impact is reinforcing excess consumption by prioritizing private & corporate good*

3. So what's the best way of eliminating PRCs that reduces excess consumption to address the Anthropocene crisis? *Accept scientific research, prioritize public good, and reduce sugar on campus by eliminating PRCs and promoting healthy beverage initiatives!*



Thank you!
Email cleveland@ucsb.edu
with questions, comments

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