



Newsletter

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Environmental Issues

July 2009

The Greening of U.S. Architecture: Building a Sustainable Future

Students are promoting the eco-design trend, say educators
By Lauren Monsen
Staff Writer

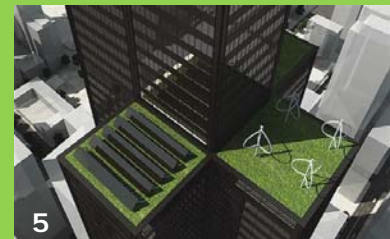
With many residential and corporate clients now requesting an environmentally friendly approach to their design needs, so-called "green architecture" has become an increasingly hot commodity, and a number of U.S. universities have responded by developing sustainable-design courses for their architecture programs.

Architecture professors Linda Keane (of the Art Institute of Chicago) and Walter Grondzik (of Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana) recently told America.gov how architecture is evolving to meet new energy requirements — and how young architects-in-training are learning new skills to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

(...)

Bringing sustainable design to urban areas can restore a sense of connection to the natural world. The most visual change has been the green roofs" that often feature grass, trees and plants.

<http://www.america.gov/st/peopleplace-english/2009/July/20090702160713GLnesnoM0.9570276.html?CP.rss=true>



ON THE FRONT COVER:

1. New plant grows on the Free Library of Philadelphia's roof before a ceremony in Philadelphia, Monday, Sept. 29, 2008. Monday officials unveiled the first "green roof" on a building operated by the city of Philadelphia. The roof uses plants to help maintain the building's temperature. (AP Photo/Matt Rourke)
2. David Hart, right, with Tremco Inc., talks with Rahn Wuest, a supervisor for the Metropolitan Sewer District of Cincinnati, on a green roof sown with plants at a sewer district station, Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2008, in Cincinnati. Hart designed the roof plan. Cincinnati wants to see green roofs on building tops and plans to offer financial incentives to property owners to replace tar and shingles with vegetation. (AP Photo/Al Behrman)
3. Contractor Guadencio Sanchez waters the Living Roof at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, Monday, April 20, 2009. The academy's green rooftop keeps the building's interior an average of 10 degrees cooler than a standard roof would. The plants also transform carbon dioxide into oxygen, capture rainwater, and reduce energy needs for heating and cooling.(AP Photo/Jeff Chiu)
4. The Living learning Center, a building that Washington University hopes to have recognized as one of the greenest structures in North America , Friday, May 29, 2009 on the grounds of the Tyson Research Center near Eureka, Mo..(AP Photo/Tom Gannam)
5. An architectural rendering of Chicago's Sears Tower (slated for "green" remodeling) shows a roof with solar panels and wind turbines. (AP Photo)

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS 8

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS IN THE UNITED STATES. U.S. Global Change Research Program, June 20098

COLONY COLLAPSE DISORDER PROGRESS REPORT. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Web posted July 8, 2009.8

2008 NETL ACCOMPLISHMENTS. U.S. Department of Energy. June 2, 2009.....8

U.S. CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS FROM ENERGY SOURCES 2008 FLASH ESTIMATE. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy. May 2009.9

FACT SHEET: COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUES (CCR) – SURFACE IMPOUNDMENTS WITH HIGH HAZARD POTENTIAL RATINGS. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. June 29, 2009.....9

TRENDS IN DUCK BREEDING POPULATIONS, 1955-2009. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. July 2, 2009.9

ENERGY AND WATER: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE LINKS BETWEEN WATER AND BIOFUELS AND ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION. U.S. Government Accountability Office. Anu Mittal. July 9, 2009. 10

IMAGES: NEW NASA SATELLITE SURVEY REVEALS DRAMATIC ARCTIC SEA ICE THINNING. National Aeronautics and Space Administration. July 7, 2009. 10

NOAA FORECAST PREDICTS LARGE “DEAD ZONE” FOR GULF OF MEXICO THIS SUMMER. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. June 18, 2009. 10

CONGRESSIONAL DOCUMENTS (HEARINGS, REPORTS, ETC.)..... 10

TWO RECENT STUDIES OF REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN THE EFFECTS OF POLICIES THAT WOULD PRICE CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS. Congressional Budget Office. July 9, 2009. 10

COST ESTIMATE FOR THE AMERICAN CLEAN ENERGY AND SECURITY ACT OF 2009. Congressional Budget Office. June 5, 2009. 11

GREENHOUSE GAS LEGISLATION: SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF H.R. 2454 AS REPORTED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Mark Holt and Gene Whitney. June 17, 2009..... 11

THE WHITE HOUSE..... 11

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION TAKES UNPRECEDENTED STEPS TO REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF MOUNTAINTOP COAL MINING, ANNOUNCES INTERAGENCY ACTION PLAN TO IMPLEMENT REFORMS. Executive Office of the President, Council on Environmental Quality. June 11, 2009. 11

THINK TANKS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS 11

AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE 11

 WAXMAN-MARKEY: AN EXERCISE IN UNREALITY. Steven F. Hayward, Kenneth P. Green. *Environmental Outlook*, AEI Online, Friday, July 10, 2009..... 11

 THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATE OF CANADA; 30 Years of Progress. Kenneth P. Green, resident scholar at AEI, and Ben Eisen, Frontier Centre for Public Policy. Tuesday, June 16, 2009..... 12

BROOKINGS INSTITUTION 12

 CARBON OFFSETS AND THE EMERGING CLIMATE COALITION. Bryan K. Mignone, Director of Research, Energy Security Initiative. Brookings Institution, July 09, 2009 12

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT LAW 12

 DISCUSSION DRAFT: ADDRESSING NANOMATERIALS AS AN ISSUE OF GLOBAL CONCERN. The Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), May 2009 12

COMMISSION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION 13

 TAKING STOCK: 2005 NORTH AMERICAN POLLUTANT RELEASES AND TRANSFERS. Commission for Environmental Cooperation. June 2009..... 13

ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP 13

 IS YOUR BOTTLED WATER WORTH IT? Environmental Working Group. July 8, 2009. ... 13

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY 13

 ASSESSMENT OF GROUND-LEVEL OZONE IN EEA MEMBER COUNTRIES, WITH A FOCUS ON LONG-TERM TRENDS. EEA, 20 Jul 2009 13

GREENPEACE 13

 POLAR OCEANS IN PERIL...AND A PLANET AT RISK. Richard Page, Lindsay Keenan et al. Greenpeace, July 21, 2009..... 13

 CARTING AWAY THE OCEANS: HOW GROCERY STORES ARE EMPTYING THE SEAS. Greenpeace, June 2009 14

 SLAUGHTERING THE AMAZON. Greenpeace, June 01, 2009 14

HERITAGE FOUNDATION 14

 WAXMAN-MARKEY: HOMEOWNERS, SMALL BUSINESSES, AND FARMERS HIT THE HARDEST. Ben Lieberman. Heritage Foundation WebMemo #2553, July 21, 2009 14

 NUCLEAR WASTE: DO NOT RULE OUT YUCCA MOUNTAIN JUST YET, SAYS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. Jack Spencer and Nicolas Loris. Heritage Foundation WebMemo #2549, July 20, 2009..... 14

 THE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE WITH CAP AND TRADE. Testimony before Committee on Foreign Relations by Ben Lieberman. United States Senate, July 8, 2009 15

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT 15
 COMPANY-LED APPROACHES TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE FOREST SECTOR. Emma Wilson. IIED, July 2009 15

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 15
 RISING TEMPERATURES, RISING TENSIONS: CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE RISK OF VIOLENT CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. International Institute for Sustainable Development. Oli Brown and Alec Crawford. May 2009..... 15

NATIONAL CENTER FOR ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH 15
 NEW NCAR SYSTEM MAY GUIDE TRANSOCEANIC FLIGHTS AROUND STORMS AND TURBULENCE. NCAR, July 07, 2009 15

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES (NIEHS) ... 16
 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PERSPECTIVES 16

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL 16
 SHELLFISH MARICULTURE IN DRAKES ESTERO, POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE, CALIFORNIA. National Research Council. July 2009..... 16

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION..... 16
 EARTH SCIENCE LITERACY PRINCIPLES. Earth Science Literacy Initiative and National Science Foundation. June 2009..... 16

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL..... 17
 COMMUNITIES TACKLE GLOBAL WARMING: A GUIDE TO CALIFORNIA'S SB 375. National Resources Defense Council. Tom Adams et al. June 2009. 17

MAKING EVERY DROP WORK: INCREASING WATER EFFICIENCY IN CALIFORNIA'S COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL (CII) SECTOR. National Resources Defense Council. Ronnie Cohen et al. May 26, 2009..... 17

ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT'S (OECD) 17
 CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION, DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Mark Davies et al. July 8, 2009..... 17

THE ECONOMICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION: HOW TO BUILD THE NECESSARY GLOBAL ACTION IN A COST-EFFECTIVE MANNER. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Jean-marc Burniaux et al. June 3, 2009. 17

PEW CENTER ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE 18
 WIND AND SOLAR ELECTRICITY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES. Dr. Paul Komor. Pew Center on Global Climate Change, June 2009 18

THE CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY: REPOWERING JOBS, BUSINESSES AND INVESTMENTS ACROSS AMERICA. Pew Charitable Trusts. June 2009. 18

PLOS ONE 18
 THE STATUS OF WILDLIFE IN PROTECTED AREAS COMPARED TO NON-PROTECTED AREAS OF KENYA. PLoS One. David Western et al. July 2009. 18

RESOURCES FOR THE FUTURE 19
 THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY POLICIES IN CLIMATE MITIGATION. Carolyn Fischer. RFF Feature, July 17, 2009..... 19

TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEM ADAPTATION. Steven Running and L. Scott Mills. RFF Feature, July 8, 2009..... 19

ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE: PUBLIC HEALTH. Jonathan M. Samet. RFF Report, June 2009..... 19

RESOURCES MAGAZINE Winter/Spring 2009 | Resources 171 19

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP) 20
 MARINE LITTER: A GLOBAL CHALLENGE. UNEP, June 2009 20

THE NATURAL FIX? THE ROLE OF ECOSYSTEMS IN CLIMATE MITIGATION. UNEP, June 2009..... 20

THE WORLD CONSERVATION UNION (IUCN) 20
 PROTECTION OF ENDANGERED GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN IN BRAHMAPUTRA RIVER, ASSAM, INDIA. Final Technical Report. Abdul Wakid, Gill Braulik. IUCN, June 2009 20

THE TIME FOR BIODIVERSITY BUSINESS. IUCN, July 2009..... 21

WILDLIFE IN A CHANGING WORLD: An analysis of the 2008 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Edited by Jean-Christophe Vié, Craig Hilton-Taylor and Simon N. Stuart. IUCN, July 2009 21

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE..... 21
 CLIMATE SCIENCE: 2008. WRI, July 2009 21

UNDISCLOSED RISK: CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL REPORTING IN EMERGING ASIA. World Resources Institute. Dana Krechowicz and Hiranya Fernando. July 2009..... 22

ENABLING ADAPTATION: PRIORITIES FOR SUPPORTING THE RURAL POOR IN A CHANGING CLIMATE. World Resources Institute. Manish Bapan et al. June 2009. 22

WHOSE AMAZON IS IT? World Resources Institute. Ruth Nogueron and Isabel Munilla. June 25, 2009..... 22

WORLDWATCH INSTITUTE 22
 CRAFTING A CARBON MARKET FROM INDIA’S GRASSROOTS. Worldwatch Institute. Anna da Costa. July 8, 2009..... 22

“BLACK CARBON” CHOKES CHILEAN TOWNS. World Watch Institute. Jane Zhou. June 16, 2009..... 23

WORLD WILDLIFE FEDERATION23

 MEKONG DOLPHINS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION. World Wildlife Fund. June 18, 2009.
 23

 WHAT FUTURE FOR EU’S WATER? World Wildlife Fund. May 29, 2009. 23

 A RATING OF DESIGNATED OPERATIONAL ENTITIES (DOEs) ACCREDITED UNDER THE
 CLEAN DEVELOPMENT MECHANISM (CDM): SCOPE, METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS. World
 Wildlife Fund and Oeko-Institut e.V. May 27, 2009. 23

 SCIENTISTS FIND WHALES MORE ENDANGERED IN EXXON, BP AND ROSNEFT OIL AREAS.
 World Wildlife Fund. June 11, 2009. 23

 WHAT IF? FUTURE SEAS SCENARIO PLANNING AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MARINE
 RESERVE NETWORK. World Wildlife Fund. June 2009. 24

YALE UNIVERSITY24

 INDIA SHOULD COMBINE TOUGH CLIMATE STAND WITH GREEN POLICY. Yale Global.
 Nandan Nilekani. July 2, 2009. 24

ARTICLES FROM U.S. JOURNALS.....24

 BUILDING A GREENER CHINA. Wu, Ariane. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 2009 ... 24

 PHOSPHORUS FAMINE: THE THREAT TO OUR FOOD SUPPLY. Vaccari, David A. *Scientific
 American*, June 2009..... 25

 MAN-MADE NOISE MAY BE ALTERING EARTH’S ECOLOGY. Thompson, Clive. *Wired*, vol.
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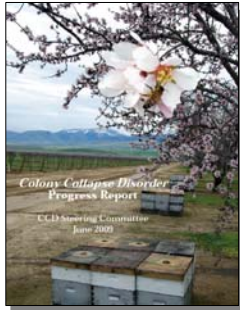
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GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS IN THE UNITED STATES. U.S. Global Change Research Program, June 2009

The report summarizes the science and the impacts of climate change on the United States, now and in the future. It focuses on climate change impacts in different regions of the U.S. and on various aspects of society and the economy such as energy, water, agriculture, and health. It's also a report written in plain language, with the goal of better informing public and private decision making at all levels. The report also highlights the choices we face in response to human-induced climate change. It is clear that impacts in the United States are already occurring and are projected to increase in the future, particularly if the concentration of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere continues to rise. So, choices about how we manage greenhouse gas emissions will have far-reaching consequences for climate change impacts. Similarly, there are choices to be made about adaptation strategies that can help to reduce or avoid some of the undesirable impacts of climate change. This report provides many of the scientific underpinnings for effective decisions to be made – at the national and at the regional level.

<http://www.globalchange.gov/publications/reports/scientific-assessments/us-impacts>

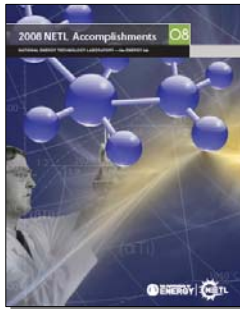


COLONY COLLAPSE DISORDER PROGRESS REPORT. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Web posted July 8, 2009.

The report represents the work of a large number of scientists from 8 Federal agencies, 2 state departments of agriculture, 22 universities, and several private research efforts. In response to the unexplained losses of U.S. honey bee colonies now known as colony collapse disorder (CCD), USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) led a collaborative effort to define an approach to CCD, resulting in the CCD Action Plan in July 2007.

[PDF format, 45 pages].

<http://pubwiki.extension.org/mediawiki/files/c/c7/CCDReport2009.pdf>

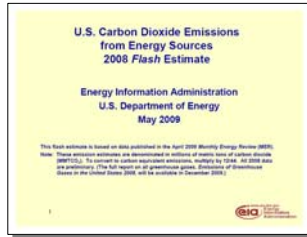


2008 NETL ACCOMPLISHMENTS. U.S. Department of Energy. June 2, 2009.

The National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) releases its annual accomplishments report, highlighting breakthroughs in research and technology development to address the nation's energy, economic, and environmental challenges. The accomplishments report illustrates the success of NETL and its research partners in advancing cost-effective and environmentally sound technologies to meet the nation's energy challenges today and into the future.

[PDF format, 72 pages].

http://www.netl.doe.gov/publications/others/accomp_rpt/accomp08.pdf



U.S. CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS FROM ENERGY SOURCES 2008 FLASH ESTIMATE. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy. May 2009.

U.S. carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels decreased by 2.8 percent in 2008, from 5,967 million metric tons of carbon dioxide (MMT_{CO2}) in 2007 to 5,802 MMT_{CO2} in 2008, according to preliminary estimates released today by the Energy Information Administration (EIA). This is the largest annual decline in energy-related carbon dioxide emissions since EIA began annual reporting on greenhouse gas emissions.

<http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/1605/flash/pdf/flash.pdf> [PDF format, 17 pages].

FACT SHEET: COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUES (CCR) – SURFACE IMPOUNDMENTS WITH HIGH HAZARD POTENTIAL RATINGS. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. June 29, 2009.

As part of its ongoing efforts to protect human health and the environment, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has posted a list of 44 “high hazard potential” impoundments containing coal combustion residuals, commonly referred to as coal ash, at 26 different coal burning electric utility facilities. A high hazard potential rating is not related to the stability of those impoundments but to the potential for harm should the impoundment fail. “The presence of liquid coal ash impoundments near our homes, schools and business could pose a serious risk to life and property in the event of an impoundment rupture” said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. [PDF format, 4 pages].

<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/nonhaz/industrial/special/fossil/ccr/fs/national.pdf>

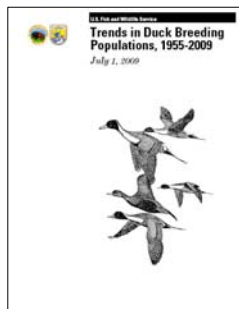


EPA'S BEACH REPORT: 2008 SWIMMING SEASON. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. May 2009.

The Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act of 2000 authorizes EPA to provide grants to coastal and Great Lakes states, territories, and eligible tribes to monitor their coastal beaches for bacteria that indicate the possible presence of disease-causing pathogens, and to notify the public when there is a potential risk to public health.

<http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches/seasons/2008/pdf/2008fs.pdf>

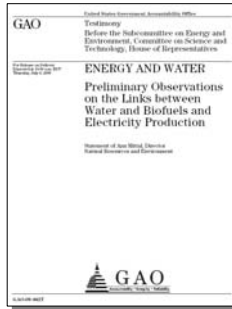
[PDF format, 4 pages].



TRENDS IN DUCK BREEDING POPULATIONS, 1955-2009. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. July 2, 2009.

The preliminary estimate of total ducks from the study was 42 million, which is 13 percent greater than last year's estimate and 25 percent greater than the 1955-2008 average, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service says. The survey samples more than two million square miles of waterfowl habitat across the north-central and northeastern United States, south-central, eastern, and northern Canada, and Alaska. The survey estimates the number of ducks on the continent's primary nesting grounds.

<http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/NewReportsPublications/PopulationStatus/Trends/Trend%20Report%202009.pdf>



ENERGY AND WATER: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE LINKS BETWEEN WATER AND BIOFUELS AND ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION. U.S. Government Accountability Office. Anu Mittal. July 9, 2009.

Water and energy are inexorably linked, energy is needed to pump, treat, and transport water and large quantities of water are needed to support the development of energy. However, both water and energy may face serious constraints as demand for these vital resources continues to rise. Two examples that demonstrate the link between water and energy are the cultivation and conversion of feedstocks, such as corn, switchgrass, and algae, into biofuels; and the production of electricity by thermoelectric power plants, which rely on large quantities of water for cooling during electricity generation.

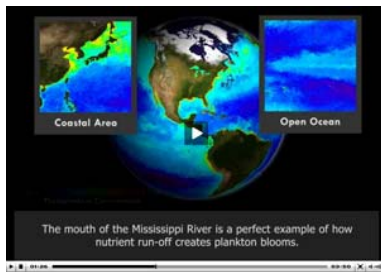
<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09862t.pdf> [PDF format, 14 pages].

IMAGES: NEW NASA SATELLITE SURVEY REVEALS DRAMATIC ARCTIC SEA ICE THINNING. National Aeronautics and Space Administration. July 7, 2009.

Arctic sea ice thinned dramatically between the winters of 2004 and 2008, with thin seasonal ice replacing thick older ice as the dominant type for the first time on record. The new results, based on data from a NASA Earth-orbiting spacecraft, provide further evidence for the rapid, ongoing transformation of the Arctic's ice cover.

http://www.nasa.gov/home/hqnews/2009/jul/HQ_09-155_Thin_Sea_Ice.html
News Release, [HTML format, various paging].

<http://www.nasa.gov/topics/earth/features/icesat-20090707.html>
[HTML format, various paging].



NOAA FORECAST PREDICTS LARGE "DEAD ZONE" FOR GULF OF MEXICO THIS SUMMER. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. June 18, 2009.

The authors are forecasting that the "dead zone" off the coast of Louisiana and Texas in the Gulf of Mexico this summer could be one of the largest on record. The dead zone is an area in the Gulf of Mexico where seasonal oxygen levels drop too low to support most life in bottom and near-bottom water. Scientists are predicting the area could measure between 7,450 and 8,456 square miles, or an area roughly the size of New Jersey. However, additional flooding of the Mississippi River since May may result in a larger dead zone. [HTML format, various paging]

http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2009/20090618_deadzone.html

CONGRESSIONAL DOCUMENTS (HEARINGS, REPORTS, ETC.)

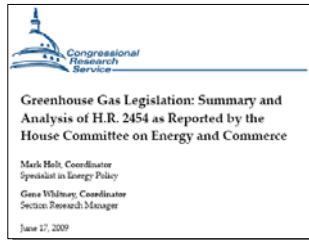
TWO RECENT STUDIES OF REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN THE EFFECTS OF POLICIES THAT WOULD PRICE CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS. Congressional Budget Office. July 9, 2009.

Two teams of experts, one affiliated with the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) and one affiliated with Resources for the Future (RFF), have estimated regional differences in the effects of policies that would increase the prices of fossil fuels in rough proportion to the carbon dioxide (CO₂) emitted when they are combusted, as would occur under a cap-and-trade program. [PDF format, 10 pages].

http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/104xx/doc10432/07-09-RegionalEffects_Cap-Trade.pdf

COST ESTIMATE FOR THE AMERICAN CLEAN ENERGY AND SECURITY ACT OF 2009. Congressional Budget Office. June 5, 2009.

Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) estimate that over the 2010-2019 period enacting this legislation would increase federal revenues by about \$846 billion and increase direct spending by about \$821 billion. In total, those changes would reduce budget deficits (or increase future surpluses) by about \$24 billion over the 2010-2019 period. <http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/102xx/doc10262/hr2454.pdf> [PDF format, 40 pages].



GREENHOUSE GAS LEGISLATION: SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF H.R. 2454 AS REPORTED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Mark Holt and Gene Whitney. June 17, 2009.

H.R. 2454 contains provisions that would amend the Clean Air Act to establish a cap-and-trade system designed to reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions 17% below 2005 levels by 2020 and 83% below 2005 levels by 2050. The market-based approach would establish an absolute cap on the emissions and would allow trading of emissions permits ("allowances"). The bill achieves its broad coverage through an upstream compliance mandate on petroleum and most fluorinated gas producers and importers, and a downstream mandate on electric generators, industrial sources, and natural gas local distribution companies (LDCs).

http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R40643_20090617.pdf [PDF format, 115 pages].

THE WHITE HOUSE

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION TAKES UNPRECEDENTED STEPS TO REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF MOUNTAINTOP COAL MINING, ANNOUNCES INTERAGENCY ACTION PLAN TO IMPLEMENT REFORMS. Executive Office of the President, Council on Environmental Quality. June 11, 2009.

Obama Administration announced that they are taking unprecedented steps to reduce the environmental impacts of mountaintop coal mining in the six Appalachian states of Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia through a coordinated approach between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of the Interior (DOI) and Army Corps of Engineers. [HTML format, various paging].

http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/Press_Releases/June_11_2009/

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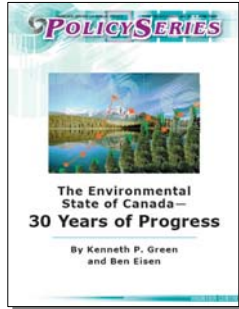
WAXMAN-MARKEY: AN EXERCISE IN UNREALITY. Steven F. Hayward, Kenneth P. Green. *Environmental Outlook*, AEI Online, Friday, July 10, 2009

After months of hearings and backroom give-and-take, the House of Representatives on June 26 passed HR 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, known as Waxman-Markey. The final draft of the bill was over 1,200 pages, and the House vote was extremely narrow: 219-212. Senate passage is uncertain. What is needed now as the Senate



begins its deliberations is a clear idea of exactly what Waxman-Markey contains, how it is likely to affect the economy, and whether it will address the problem of global warming in a serious way. Our view is that the legislation is an exercise in unreality.

<http://www.aei.org/outlook/100057>



THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATE OF CANADA; 30 Years of Progress. Kenneth P. Green, resident scholar at AEI, and Ben Eisen, Frontier Centre for Public Policy. Tuesday, June 16, 2009

Canadians have a great deal to celebrate when it concerns their environment. Over the past 30 years, Canada has cleaned up its air and water, preserved ecosystems and timberlands and protected the soils that feed not only its people but also many others worldwide. This has occurred while Canada's population and economy has grown strongly, and it has propelled Canada, a country of only 33 million, to the status of a global economic powerhouse with a standard of living that is the envy of much of the world. Of course, there is still more that can be done to protect and optimize the use of Canada's mighty environmental endowment, but Canada is well on the way toward environmental sustainability.

<http://www.aei.org/docLib/20090625-Green-Eisen-FCPP.pdf>

BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

CARBON OFFSETS AND THE EMERGING CLIMATE COALITION. Bryan K. Mignone, Director of Research, Energy Security Initiative. Brookings Institution, July 09, 2009

With the recent passage of the Waxman-Markey bill in the House, climate advocates are now shifting their attention to the Senate, where the challenges that await climate legislation are even greater. In moving forward, architects of climate policy would do well to heed key lessons from the House debate, recognizing, for example, the role of farm states in carrying any bill over the finish line.

In the context of a cap-and-trade program — the centerpiece of the Waxman-Markey bill and probably any Senate package — farm-state concerns largely boil down to concerns about the treatment of carbon offsets, credits that could be awarded for activities outside of capped sectors, like sequestration of carbon in managed forests or in agricultural soils. Such credits could potentially provide a steady stream of revenue back to regions of the country that have historically been slower to warm to the idea of cap-and-trade.

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/0709_climate_change_mignone.aspx

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT LAW

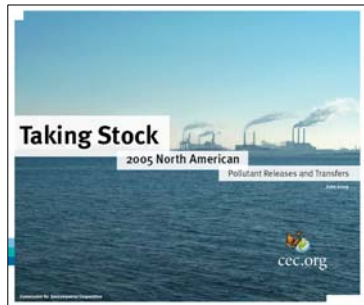
DISCUSSION DRAFT: ADDRESSING NANOMATERIALS AS AN ISSUE OF GLOBAL CONCERN. The Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), May 2009

Nanotechnology is unusual in several respects that simultaneously enhance its potential benefits and risks and complicate consideration of whether and, if so, how to regulate it. Nanotechnology applications use the very different properties that materials have at the nanoscale compared to the same materials made at larger sizes. Nanoscale materials may dissolve differently, have different magnetic properties, react differently to other substances, or reflect light differently than they would in the bulk form.

Nanotechnology promoters stress the potentially beneficial applications that these new technologies may enable, including in developing countries. In contrast, many scientific institutions across the world have underscored the need to assess carefully their possible health and environmental risks. A number of international organizations and civil society groups advocate a careful assessment of the various socio-economic impacts and health

and environmental risks that may be associated with nanotechnologies and materials. A very large knowledge gap exists with regard to basic understanding of the interaction
http://www.ciel.org/Publications/CIEL_NanoStudy_May09.pdf

COMMISSION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION



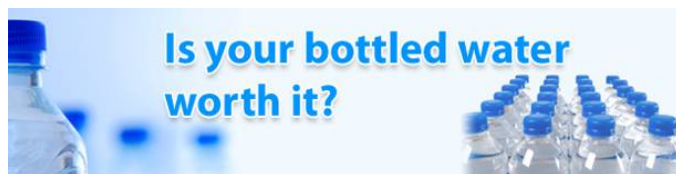
TAKING STOCK: 2005 NORTH AMERICAN POLLUTANT RELEASES AND TRANSFERS. Commission for Environmental Cooperation. June 2009.

Ninety percent of the 5.5 billion kilograms of toxic pollutant releases and transfers reported in North America in 2005 can be traced to about 30 substances from 15 industrial sectors across the United States, Canada and Mexico. The report represents the most complete picture of pollution reporting from North American industrial facilities ever assembled.

http://www.cec.org/files/PDF/POLLUTANTS/TS05_en.pdf [PDF format, 116 pages].

ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP

IS YOUR BOTTLED WATER WORTH IT? Environmental Working Group. July 8, 2009.



The study investigates almost 200 popular bottled water brands found less than 2 percent disclose the water's source, how the water has been purified and what chemical pollutants each bottle of water may contain. Just 2 of the 188 individual brands EWG analyzed disclosed those three basic facts about their water. [HTML format, various paging].

<http://www.ewg.org/health/report/bottledwater-scorecard>

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



ASSESSMENT OF GROUND-LEVEL OZONE IN EEA MEMBER COUNTRIES, WITH A FOCUS ON LONG-TERM TRENDS. EEA, 20 Jul 2009

Trends in measured and modelled ground-level ozone concentrations in Europe, influence of anthropogenic and natural emissions, meteorology, inter-continental transport of ozone precursor gases and link to climate change.

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/assessment-of-ground-level-ozone-in-eea-member-countries-with-a-focus-on-long-term-trends>

GREENPEACE

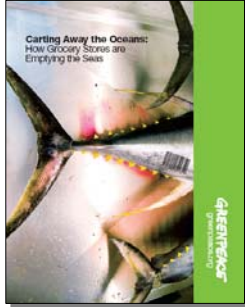
POLAR OCEANS IN PERIL...AND A PLANET AT RISK. Richard Page, Lindsay Keenan et al. Greenpeace, July 21, 2009

The Arctic and the Antarctic are under assault - from the impacts of rapidly accelerating climate change; from increased industrialization; and from the unchecked consumption of our planet's resources. Indicators of the planet's health, the poles provide us with an early warning that we are compromising the Earth's ability to sustain life as we know it. It is already too late to avoid profound negative changes at the poles. But, we can limit further impacts by



stabilizing boundaries that stop the commercial fishing fleets and the oil and gas industries from plundering and polluting these already damaged ecosystems.

<http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/usa/press-center/reports4/polar-oceans-in-peril.pdf>



CARTING AWAY THE OCEANS: HOW GROCERY STORES ARE EMPTYING THE SEAS. Greenpeace, June 2009

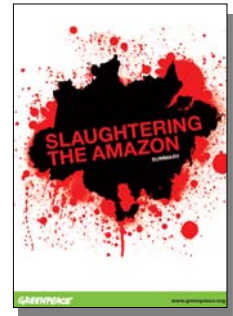
Every day, our oceans suffer under the relentlessly growing demand for seafood. Major retailers must begin to embrace environmental stewardship and sustainable business practices – not simply to safeguard the oceans, but also to ensure that they still have fish to sell in the coming decades. And, increasingly, retailers that refuse to improve the sustainability of their seafood will find themselves at a competitive disadvantage as consumers seek out retailers that share their concern about the fate of the oceans.

<http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/usa/press-center/reports4/carting-away-the-oceans.pdf>

SLAUGHTERING THE AMAZON. Greenpeace, June 01, 2009

The cattle sector in the Brazilian Amazon is the largest driver of deforestation in the world, responsible for an average of one acre lost every 8 seconds. Efforts to halt global deforestation emissions must tackle this sector.

<http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/usa/press-center/reports4/slaughtering-the-amazon.pdf>



HERITAGE FOUNDATION

WAXMAN-MARKEY: HOMEOWNERS, SMALL BUSINESSES, AND FARMERS HIT THE HARDEST. Ben Lieberman. Heritage Foundation WebMemo #2553, July 21, 2009

The Waxman-Markey global warming bill narrowly passed the U.S. House of Representatives and awaits consideration in the U.S. Senate. A Heritage Foundation analysis of the bill predicts the bill's energy price-boosting measures will result in sky-high costs. Should it become law, Waxman-Markey will reverberate throughout the economy, costing the nation an average of \$393 billion annually and over a million jobs from 2012 to 2035.

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/wm2553.cfm>



NUCLEAR WASTE: DO NOT RULE OUT YUCCA MOUNTAIN JUST YET, SAYS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. Jack Spencer and Nicolas Loris. Heritage Foundation WebMemo #2549, July 20, 2009

Energy Secretary Steven Chu recently announced that he is creating a blue-ribbon commission to study long-term solutions for managing nuclear waste in the U.S. Regrettably, prior to the commission even being formed, both Secretary Chu and President Obama stated that the nuclear materials repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, would not be one of the options considered. By taking what could be a perfectly viable waste disposal option

off the table, this decision effectively undermined the credibility of the commission before it was even formed.

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/wm2549.cfm>

THE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE WITH CAP AND TRADE. Testimony before Committee on Foreign Relations by Ben Lieberman. United States Senate, July 8, 2009

Most Western European nations are currently learning, the hard way, that ratcheting down carbon dioxide emissions in this manner is very difficult and expensive. In fact, most of these nations (not to mention other Kyoto Protocol signatories like Canada and Japan) have not been reducing their emissions over the past several years, though it should be noted that they are doing so now but only as a result of the recent recession. Indeed, several were seeing faster increases since 2000 than those in the U.S., which has not been subject to such a scheme.

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/tst071009a.cfm>

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT



COMPANY-LED APPROACHES TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE FOREST SECTOR. Emma Wilson. IIED, July 2009

Conflict between companies that profit from forests and local people who depend on them could be tackled by industry-led approaches but too few companies use them, says a report released today by The Forests Dialogue. The report, written for TFD, an international group of forest experts from business, environmental, academic and human rights groups, by the International Institute for Environment and Development, urges companies to take the lead in resolving existing conflicts and preventing new ones from arising.

http://www.wbcsd.org/DocRoot/ZmqLiTPAjEtFaGW7dDBJ/Conflict%20Resolution_TFD_Research_Paper_IIED_July09.pdf

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

RISING TEMPERATURES, RISING TENSIONS: CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE RISK OF VIOLENT CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. International Institute for Sustainable Development. Oli Brown and Alec Crawford. May 2009.

Climate models are predicting a hotter, drier and less predictable climate in the Middle East—a region already considered the world's most water-scarce and where, in many places, demand for water already outstrips supply. For Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, climate change threatens to reduce the availability of scarce water resources, increase food insecurity, hinder economic growth and lead to large-scale population movements. This could hold serious implications for peace in the region, according to the report.

http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2009/rising_temps_middle_east.pdf [PDF format, 42 pages].

NATIONAL CENTER FOR ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH

NEW NCAR SYSTEM MAY GUIDE TRANSOCEANIC FLIGHTS AROUND STORMS AND TURBULENCE. NCAR, July 07, 2009

BOULDER—The National Center for Atmospheric Research is developing a prototype system to provide aircraft with updates about severe storms and turbulence as they fly across remote ocean regions. The system is designed to help guide pilots away from intense weather, such as the thunderstorms that Air France Flight 447 apparently encountered before crashing into the Atlantic Ocean on June 1. The NCAR system, being developed with funding from NASA, combines satellite data and computer weather models with cutting-edge artificial intelligence techniques to identify and predict rapidly evolving storms and other potential areas of

turbulence. The system is based on products that NCAR has developed to alert pilots and air traffic controllers about storms and turbulence over the continental United States.

<http://www.ucar.edu/news/releases/2009/ocean-air-turbulence.jsp>

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES (NIEHS)

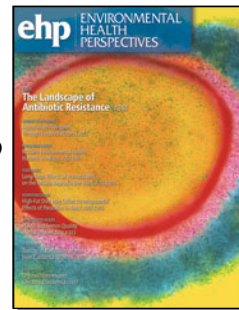


ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PERSPECTIVES

Volume 117 Number 7, July 2009

Volume 117 Number 6, June 2009

<http://www.ehponline.org/>



NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

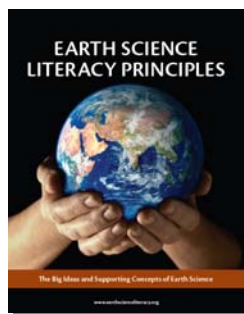


SHELLFISH MARICULTURE IN DRAKES ESTERO, POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE, CALIFORNIA. National Research Council. July 2009.

When Drakes Estero, which lies within the Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS) about 25 miles northwest of San Francisco, California, was designated by Congress in 1976 as Potential Wilderness, it contained a commercial shellfish mariculture operation. Nevertheless, with the approach of the 2012 expiration date of the current National Park Service (NPS) Reservation of Use and Occupancy (RUO) and Special Use Permit (SUP), there's concern over the scope and intensity of impacts of the shellfish culture operations on the estero's ecosystem. [HTML format, various paging].

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12667

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

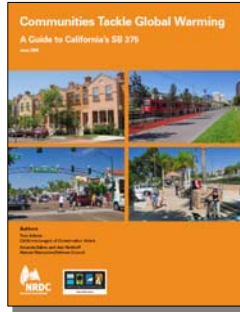


EARTH SCIENCE LITERACY PRINCIPLES. Earth Science Literacy Initiative and National Science Foundation. June 2009.

Earth's rocks and other materials provide a record of its history. Our solar system formed from a vast cloud of gas and dust 4.6 billion years ago. Earth's crust has two distinct types: continental and oceanic. These and other concepts are the major ideas of Earth science that all citizens should know, according to the report. Even modest changes to Earth's systems have had profound influences on human societies and the course of civilization. Understanding these systems and how they interact is vital for our survival, the report states.

http://www.earthscienceliteracy.org/es_literacy_22may09.pdf [PDF format, 13 pages].

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL



COMMUNITIES TACKLE GLOBAL WARMING: A GUIDE TO CALIFORNIA'S SB 375. National Resources Defense Council. Tom Adams et al. June 2009.

The report provides a blueprint for how communities can tackle global warming. It is a guide to California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, or SB 375, the nation's first legislation to link transportation and land use planning with global warming. The report highlights that locating homes closer to jobs and transportation choices creates walkable communities and can improve quality of life, reduce commute times and cut millions of tons of global warming pollution. [PDF format, 34 pages].

<http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/sb375/files/sb375.pdf>

MAKING EVERY DROP WORK: INCREASING WATER EFFICIENCY IN CALIFORNIA'S COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL (CII) SECTOR. National Resources Defense Council. Ronnie Cohen et al. May 26, 2009.

In the midst of a third consecutive dry year, California's water supply continues to shrink as the state's population grows, but according to the report, the state's commercial, industrial and institutional (CII) sector has the tools to save more than enough water to meet the annual needs of Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Diego combined. Some leading California businesses and institutions are already catching on, saving water and money at the same time.

<http://www.nrdc.org/water/cacii/files/cii.pdf> [PDF format, 40 pages].

ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT'S (OECD)

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION, DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Mark Davies et al. July 8, 2009.

Poorer developing countries are especially vulnerable to climate change because of their geographic exposure, low incomes and greater reliance on climate sensitive sectors, particularly agriculture. People exposed to the most severe climate-related hazards are often those least able to cope with the associated impacts, due to their limited adaptive capacity. This in turn poses multiple threats to economic growth, wider poverty reduction, and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Within this context, there is growing recognition of the potential role of social protection as a response to the multiple risks and short and long-term shocks and stresses associated with climate change.

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/25/55/43280946.pdf> [PDF format, 17 pages].

THE ECONOMICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION: HOW TO BUILD THE NECESSARY GLOBAL ACTION IN A COST-EFFECTIVE MANNER. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Jean-marc Burniaux et al. June 3, 2009.

The paper examines the cost of a range of national, regional and global mitigation policies and the corresponding incentives for countries to participate in ambitious international mitigation actions. The paper illustrates the scope for available instruments to strengthen these incentives and discusses ways to overcome barriers to the development of an international carbon price, based on the quantitative assessment from two global and sectorially-disaggregated CGE models. [PDF format, 127 pages].

[http://www.oecd.org/olis/2009doc.nsf/LinkTo/NT00002E82/\\$FILE/JT03267346.PDF](http://www.oecd.org/olis/2009doc.nsf/LinkTo/NT00002E82/$FILE/JT03267346.PDF)

PEW CENTER ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE



WIND AND SOLAR ELECTRICITY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES. Dr. Paul Komor. Pew Center on Global Climate Change, June 2009

Wind and solar power could become a major source of electricity for the United States, but only if the nation adopts new policies that promote renewable energy and that place a price on carbon. The report cites figures showing that renewable energy sources currently provide only a small fraction of U.S. electricity (8 percent of the total including conventional hydro power, and only 2 percent excluding hydro). A business-as-usual forecast suggests that renewables will supply 14 percent of U.S. electricity by 2030, with non-hydro renewables providing only 6 percent. *Wind and Solar Electricity: Challenges and Opportunities* examines three primary obstacles to deployment of wind and solar power: cost, variability of generation, and lack of transmission. The paper, authored by Dr. Paul Komor of the University of Colorado at Boulder, explains these challenges, explores policy options for addressing them, and describes the implications of future scenarios that entail significantly higher levels of electricity generation from wind and solar power.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/report/Wind-Solar-Electricity/June2009>



THE CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY: REPOWERING JOBS, BUSINESSES AND INVESTMENTS ACROSS AMERICA. Pew Charitable Trusts. June 2009.

The number of jobs in America's emerging clean energy economy grew nearly two and a half times faster than overall jobs between 1998 and 2007, according to the report. Pew found that jobs in the clean energy economy grew at a national rate of 9.1 percent, while traditional jobs grew by only 3.7 percent between 1998 and 2007. Pew developed a data-driven definition of the clean energy economy and conducted hard count across all 50 states of the actual jobs, companies and venture capital investments that supply the growing market demand for environmentally friendly products and services.

http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/Clean_Economy_Report_Web.pdf
[PDF format, 61 pages].

PLOS ONE

THE STATUS OF WILDLIFE IN PROTECTED AREAS COMPARED TO NON-PROTECTED AREAS OF KENYA. PLoS One. David Western et al. July 2009.

The study compiles over 270 wildlife counts of Kenya's wildlife populations conducted over the last 30 years to compare trends in national parks and reserves with adjacent ecosystems and country-wide trends. It shows the importance of discriminating human-induced changes from natural population oscillations related to rainfall and ecological factors. National park and reserve populations have declined sharply over the last 30 years, at a rate similar to non-protected areas and country-wide trends. The protected area losses reflect in part their poor coverage of seasonal ungulate migrations. [HTML format, various paging].

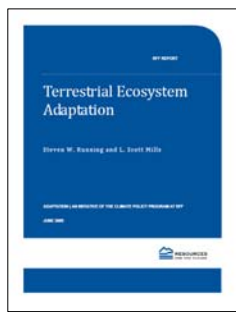
<http://www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pone.0006140>

RESOURCES FOR THE FUTURE


THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY POLICIES IN CLIMATE MITIGATION. Carolyn Fischer. RFF Feature, July 17, 2009

The main tools for developing climate-friendly technologies should be those that encourage the market to make good choices more generally: pricing carbon emissions and other environmental damages, removing distorting subsidies and barriers to competition, and supporting research and development broadly. That is the assertion of RFF Senior Fellow Carolyn Fischer in "The Role of Technology Policies in Climate Mitigation," an RFF Issue Brief that suggests ways to bring about clean-energy advances.

<http://www.rff.org/rff/documents/RFF-IB-09-08.pdf>


TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEM ADAPTATION. Steven Running and L. Scott Mills. RFF Feature, July 8, 2009

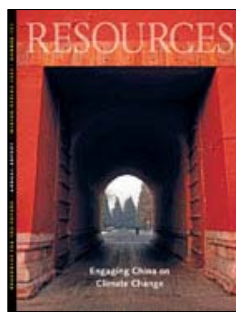
A new report, exploring how ecosystems might adapt to climate changes over the next half-century, predicts that large parts of the United States will confront a range of weather-related problems—from plagues of insect infestations to wildfires, from melting permafrost to dried wetlands, and from incursions of invasive species to large-scale species extinction.

<http://www.rff.org/rff/documents/RFF-Rpt-Adaptation-RunningMills.pdf>


ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE: PUBLIC HEALTH. Jonathan M. Samet. RFF Report, June 2009

The potential consequences of climate change extend to the health of the public, with warming of the planet projected to have both positive and negative consequences that will vary temporally and spatially. Climate change will not act to introduce new causes of morbidity and mortality, but to change the distributions of factors that affect the occurrence of morbidity and mortality. The time frames over which health consequences of climate change are anticipated manifest are both immediate and longer term and, consequently, adaptation measures could potentially reduce their impact. This paper addresses the projected health consequences of climate change, reviewing the projected adverse effects, the diverse strategies that might mitigate these effects, and the potential effectiveness of these strategies. It addresses temperature, aeroallergens and allergic diseases, air pollution, and infectious diseases.

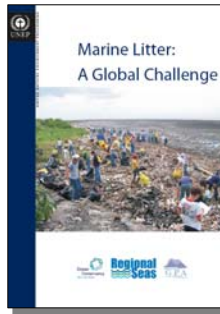
<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-Rpt-Adaptation-Samet.pdf>


RESOURCES MAGAZINE Winter/Spring 2009 | Resources 171

Resources is our quarterly magazine, with feature stories by Resources for the Future authors on a variety of environmental, energy, and natural resource issues, and news about ongoing research and public outreach efforts. Resources is sent to individuals and institutions for free.

<http://www.rff.org/Publications/Resources/Pages/default.aspx>

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

**MARINE LITTER: A GLOBAL CHALLENGE. UNEP, June 2009**

Marine litter is an ecological, economic, health and aesthetic problem. It is a complex and multi-dimensional challenge with significant implications for the marine and coastal environment, and human activities all over the world. The persistence of marine litter is the result of a lack of coordinated global and regional strategies, and deficiencies in the implementation and enforcement of existing programmes, regulations and standards at all levels – international, regional and national. The UNEP Global Initiative on Marine Litter provides a platform for the management of marine litter through the establishment of partnerships, cooperative arrangements and coordination of

joint activities.

http://www.unep.org/pdf/UNEP_Marine_Litter-A_Global_Challenge.pdf

**THE NATURAL FIX? THE ROLE OF ECOSYSTEMS IN CLIMATE MITIGATION. UNEP, June 2009**

Large cuts in emissions of greenhouse gases are needed if we are to avoid the worst effects of global climate change. This Rapid Assessment Report describes the vital contributions which ecosystems can and must make to improve these efforts. It presents carbon capture and storage through a Green Economy lens, outlining the potential in terms of natural systems, from forests to grasslands which have been doing the job in a tried and tested way for millennia.

Currently the world's ecosystems, instead of maintaining and enhancing nature's carbon capture and storage capacity, are being depleted at an alarming rate. This authoritative report, compiled for World Environment Day on 5th June, underlines a far greater potential across a wider suite of natural systems: a potential to not only combat climate change and climate-proof vulnerable economies but to also accelerate sustainable development and the achievement of the poverty related Millennium Development Goals.

http://www.unep.org/pdf/BioseqRRA_scr.pdf

THE WORLD CONSERVATION UNION (IUCN)

**PROTECTION OF ENDANGERED GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN IN BRAHMAPUTRA RIVER, ASSAM, INDIA. Final Technical Report. Abdul Wakid, Gill Braulik. IUCN, June 2009**

Estimates have put the total population of the Ganges River Dolphins at around 2,000. Out of these, between 240 to 300 inhabit the Brahmaputra River system in India, according to a recent survey by an IUCN Sir Peter Scott Fund project. "Our research shows accidental killing through fisheries by-catch, followed by poaching for oil, are the major threats to the dolphins of the Brahmaputra river system," says Project Leader Abdul Wakid. "Their habitat is also being degraded by human activities. Dam building and a proposed seismic survey in the Brahmaputra river are potential threats."

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/brahmaputra_river_dolphins__psf_final_report.pdf

THE TIME FOR BIODIVERSITY BUSINESS. IUCN, July 2009



The publication illustrates a selection of the many great businesses developed by the conservation organizations that participated to this study. The twenty-two biodiversity businesses illustrated in this publication range from the more traditional ecotourism operations, to natural ingredients that support the growing wellness industry, to nature focused books. The products are located in all regions of the world. The point of view of 10 experts on issues such as the role of governments; the need to share benefits with communities; the experience of multinationals, complement the stories.

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/newspaper_web_en_final.pdf



WILDLIFE IN A CHANGING WORLD: An analysis of the 2008 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Edited by Jean-Christophe Vié, Craig Hilton-Taylor and Simon N. Stuart. IUCN, July 2009

Life on Earth is under serious threat, despite the commitment by world leaders to reverse the trend, according to a detailed analysis of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. The IUCN analysis, which is published every four years, comes just before the deadline governments set themselves to evaluate how successful they were in achieving the 2010 target to reduce biodiversity loss. The IUCN report, Wildlife in a Changing World, shows the 2010 target will not be met.

<http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/RL-2009-001.pdf>

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE



CLIMATE SCIENCE: 2008. WRI, July 2009

This annual WRI review highlights the latest major research and innovations in climate change science and technology. It presents a timely synthesis of current understanding of global warming at a critically important time for the United States and the world. The international community is negotiating a new global agreement to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases for the period post-2012, while the U.S. Congress is drafting landmark climate and energy legislation to reduce domestic emissions. Our review of select peer reviewed 2008 science and technology publications, including those from key general scientific journals and technical journals, aims to inform policymakers and legislators, the NGO community, and the media, by:

- describing the wide-ranging potential ramifications of human-induced climate change;
- documenting the impacts that are already occurring as a result of increased global temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, sea level rise, and other changes in physical and hydrological systems; and
- identifying important advances relating to technologies that could help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the future.

http://pdf.wri.org/climate_science_2008.pdf



UNDISCLOSED RISK: CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL REPORTING IN EMERGING ASIA. World Resources Institute. Dana Krechowicz and Hiranya Fernando. July 2009.

The report focuses on corporate transparency on environmental risks, and lays the groundwork for understanding environmental disclosure and reporting issues in emerging markets through an investor lens. It is the second report in a series establishing the link between issues like climate change, air pollution, water supply, and natural resource depletion and traditional financial analysis on corporate value and financial strength for

companies in six key Asian economies, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

http://pdf.wri.org/undisclosed_risk_emerging_asia.pdf [PDF format, 32 pages].



ENABLING ADAPTATION: PRIORITIES FOR SUPPORTING THE RURAL POOR IN A CHANGING CLIMATE. World Resources Institute. Manish Bapan et al. June 2009.

Effective climate adaptation requires an enabling environment, one that grants the poor the rights, resources and access they need to sustain and benefit from ecosystems, governments and markets, according to the authors. Development experience provides important lessons for fostering such enabling environments, including principles of good governance that provide the rural poor with control of the ecosystems on which they depend.

http://pdf.wri.org/issue_brief_enabling_adaptation.pdf [PDF format, 12 pages]

WHOSE AMAZON IS IT? World Resources Institute. Ruth Noguera and Isabel Munilla. June 25, 2009.

Following the recent violence over natural resource use, Peru has an opportunity to balance economic development with human rights protections. [HTML format, various paging].

<http://www.wri.org/stories/2009/06/whose-amazon-is-it>



WORLDWATCH INSTITUTE

CRAFTING A CARBON MARKET FROM INDIA'S GRASSROOTS. Worldwatch Institute. Anna da Costa. July 8, 2009.

In India, the carbon market is starting to take root. The country is now home to a large share of carbon-offset projects, many of which are certified under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the Kyoto Protocol. Yet forests remain poorly represented in these efforts. This may not be the case for long, however, if one of India's climate-focused entrepreneurs has his way. M. Satyanarayanan is hoping to utilize a new and innovative business model to create a veritable forest of wealth.

<http://www.worldwatch.org/node/6178> [HTML format, various paging].

“BLACK CARBON” CHOKES CHILEAN TOWNS. World Watch Institute. Jane Zhou. June 16, 2009.

Firewood use in the world's poorest regions contributes to local pollution, public health concerns, and climate change. Even Chile, South America's most prosperous country, is struggling to overcome the effects of black carbon.

<http://www.worldwatch.org/node/6157> [HTML format, various paging].

WORLD WILDLIFE FEDERATION

MEKONG DOLPHINS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION. World Wildlife Fund. June 18, 2009.

Pollution in the Mekong River has pushed the local population of Irrawaddy dolphins to the brink of extinction, the report shows.

<http://www.panda.org/?167001/Mekong-dolphins-on-the-brink-of-extinction>

[HTML format, various paging].



WHAT FUTURE FOR EU'S WATER? World Wildlife Fund. May 29, 2009.

Governments and authorities are now acknowledging that Europe's water environment is in a worse state than expected. The majority of rivers, lakes and coastal waters have been degraded to the point where they cannot sustain functioning ecosystems, or their services to humans. The main reason for this decline is insufficient natural space and water volume left for nature to maintain functioning ecosystems and landscapes. Groundwater levels are falling and pollution levels remain high. [PDF format, 48 pages].

http://assets.panda.org/downloads/what_future_for_eus_water___full_report.pdf

A RATING OF DESIGNATED OPERATIONAL ENTITIES (DOEs) ACCREDITED UNDER THE CLEAN DEVELOPMENT MECHANISM (CDM): SCOPE, METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS. World Wildlife Fund and Oko-Institut e.V. May 27, 2009.

The evaluation of climate offset projects under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is inefficient and often of poor quality, according to the report. It rates project evaluators which certify offset projects under the Kyoto Protocol's mechanism reveals. [PDF format, 15 pages].

http://assets.panda.org/downloads/wwf_doe_rating___scope_methodology_and_results_final.pdf

SCIENTISTS FIND WHALES MORE ENDANGERED IN EXXON, BP AND ROSNEFT OIL AREAS. World Wildlife Fund. June 11, 2009.

Oil and gas exploration by energy giants Exxon, BP and Rosneft is seriously threatening one of the world's most critically endangered whales, according to a panel of top scientists in the report. The scientists found that in 2008 there was a large decrease in the number of whales in their annual feeding area near the shore during a period of loud industrial activity, including a seismic survey. This is significant because if the whales are displaced from this primary annual feeding area, they will have less success reproducing, according to the report.

<http://www.panda.org/?166681/Scientists-find-whales-more-endangered-in-Exxon-BP-and-Rosneft-oil-areas>

http://assets.panda.org/downloads/wgwap_6_report_final.pdf



WHAT IF? FUTURE SEAS SCENARIO PLANNING AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MARINE RESERVE NETWORK. World Wildlife Fund. June 2009.

The report is based on two scenarios developed by a representative group of fishers, scientists, energy experts, community leaders, eco-tour operators, environmentalists, and Māori and government representatives. It examines the long-term future of New Zealand's marine environment, which faces tremendous outside pressure on its resources, including from fishing and mineral extraction, competing interests within the marine environment, and pollution of marine habitats. Researchers conclude that New Zealand must

take major steps to protect the country's marine resources from the effects of climate change, steps that also could be replicated in other countries. [PDF format, 69 pages].

http://assets.panda.org/downloads/21056_future_scenario_final.pdf

YALE UNIVERSITY

INDIA SHOULD COMBINE TOUGH CLIMATE STAND WITH GREEN POLICY. Yale Global. Nandan Nilekani. July 2, 2009.

Facing a serious global warming threat, India has to focus on mitigation and green economy says the author. Eighty percent of India's rural population depends on the health of its rivers and land. In the end, "low-carbon" policies and development don't have to be mutually exclusive. The US' reduction of acid rain over the past 20 years is a good example. India's future depends on the country addressing climate change today, lest it suffer unwanted results tomorrow.



<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=12536> [HTML format, various paging].

ARTICLES FROM U.S. JOURNALS

BUILDING A GREENER CHINA. Wu, Ariane. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 2009

Summary: Wu, New Media Fellow at the Asia Society's Center on U.S.-China Relations, writes that, now that Barack Obama has accepted Chinese President Hu Jintao's invitation to visit China later this year, this is a huge opportunity for both countries to collaborate on reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions. While China has not committed to emission caps, "green" building and retrofitting inefficient construction would be a much more promising avenue to pursue. Wu notes that the Chinese regime is well aware of the cost-saving benefits of green buildings and is increasingly worried about looming energy shortages. However, there are a number of obstacles to adoption of green construction in China on a massive scale, notably government subsidies for electricity and gas, lack of national energy performance standards, breakneck-speed building schedules that do not allow for environmentally-sound analysis, and a lack of experienced environmental engineers. Wu says that China's high-profile eco-campaigns are good in that they promote awareness of the energy and environmental challenges the country faces, however the government must enact tough policies, such as establishing nationwide standards, before the green building industry can flourish.

<http://www.feer.com/international-relations/20098/may56/Building-a-Greener-China>

PHOSPHORUS FAMINE: THE THREAT TO OUR FOOD SUPPLY. Vaccari, David A. *Scientific American*, June 2009

Summary: Phosphorus, an underappreciated resource and a key component of fertilizers, is still decades from running out. But the author warns that we must act now to conserve it, or future agriculture could collapse. Mining phosphorus for fertilizer is consuming the mineral faster than geologic cycles can replenish it. The U.S. may run out of its accessible domestic sources in a few decades, and few other countries have substantial reserves, which could also be depleted in about a century. Excess phosphorus in waterways helps feed algal blooms, which starve fish of oxygen, creating "dead zones." Reducing soil erosion and recycling phosphorus from farm and human waste could help make food production sustainable and prevent algal blooms. Currently available online at

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=phosphorus-a-looming-crisis>

MAN-MADE NOISE MAY BE ALTERING EARTH'S ECOLOGY. Thompson, Clive. *Wired*, vol. 16, no. 6, June 2008

Summary: The author notes that noise from human activities, such as aircraft, highway traffic and construction is not just an aesthetic nuisance – it is becoming a serious environmental issue. In a wilderness environment, the distinctive sounds of the various species of animals use different frequencies in the acoustic spectrum, and their mating calls or warning cries can be heard without interfering with those of other species. The author notes that some researchers believe that this is how they can coexist so well. Noise from human activities can interfere with various acoustic frequencies, compromising species' ability to communicate and making them vulnerable to predation. This is possibly a factor in many species' decline worldwide. Available online at

http://www.wired.com/science/planetearth/magazine/16-06/st_thompson

More about environmental issues:
<http://www.america.gov/global/environ.html>
