



Newsletter

INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER
Embassy of the United States of America

Environmental Issues

March 2010

WORLD WATER DAY—MARCH 22

Clean Water for a Healthy World

<http://www.unwater.org/worldwaterday/about.html>



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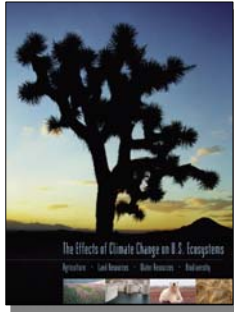
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THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON U.S. ECOSYSTEMS. U.S. Department of Agriculture. December 2009.

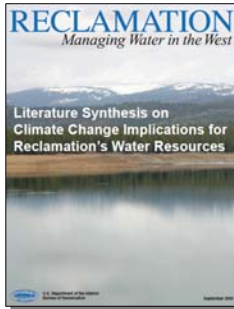
The report provides an accessible summary of findings contained in a U.S. scientific assessment project. Based on a wealth of source and review literature, the report concludes that climate change is already affecting U.S. agriculture, land resources, water resources, and biodiversity, and will continue to do so. The report identifies the effects climate is having and is expected to have on natural resources and ecosystems services in the U.S. over the next several decades. [PDF format, 28 pages].

<http://www.usda.gov/img/content/EffectsofClimateChangeonUSEcosystem.pdf>

THE IMPACT OF THE AMERICAN CLEAN ENERGY AND SECURITY ACT OF 2009 ON U.S. AGRICULTURE. U.S. Department of Agriculture. December 18, 2009.

The immediate implications are that higher energy prices will increase the prices paid for energy-related agriculture inputs and therefore increase agricultural production costs. Energy-related inputs include direct energy use, such as for diesel, natural gas, and electricity, and indirect use, such as for fertilizer. The findings suggest that under the energy price scenario estimated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), price and income effects due to higher production costs will be relatively small, particularly over the short run (2012-18). Impacts on production costs are also mitigated by provisions in H.R. 2454 that would provide allowance rebates to "trade-vulnerable" industries, including fertilizers. [PDF, 80 pages].

<http://www.usda.gov/oce/newsroom/archives/releases/2009files/ImpactsofHR%202454.pdf>



LITERATURE SYNTHESIS ON CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS FOR RECLAMATION'S WATER RESOURCES. U.S. Department of Interior. Web posted February 22, 2010.

The scientific report summarizes recent literature on the past and projected effects of climate change on hydrology and water resources in the western United States. It leverages the latest understanding of the science of climate change and ongoing research. [PDF format, 290 pages].

<http://www.usbr.gov/research/docs/climatechangelitsynthesis.pdf>



"GREEN SERVICIZING" FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE US ECONOMY: KEY CONCEPTS, TOOLS AND ANALYSES TO INFORM POLICY ENGAGEMENT. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. September 2009

This report briefs the Green Servicizing concept; provides a working definition of high-potential Green Servicizing models; identifies 10 such models and briefs their market status and environmental performance; provides analysis and methodologies to assist in weighing policy engagement; and identifies possible next steps to begin more substantive engagement.

engagement.

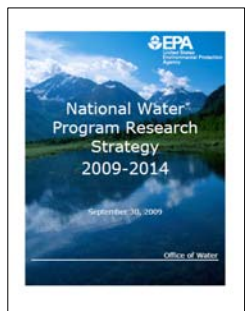
<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/partnerships/stewardship/docs/green-service.pdf>



GROUND-LEVEL OZONE. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. January 7, 2010.

The agency proposes the strictest health standards to date for smog. Smog, also known as ground-level ozone, is linked to a number of serious health problems, ranging from aggravation of asthma to increased risk of premature death in people with heart or lung disease. Ozone can even harm healthy people who work and play outdoors. The agency is proposing to replace the standards set by the previous administration, which many believe were not protective enough of human health. [HTML format, various paging].

<http://www.epa.gov/groundlevelozone/>



NATIONAL WATER PROGRAM RESEARCH STRATEGY. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. December 18, 2009.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) releases its National Water Research Strategy to engage a broader range of researchers in meeting the challenges of protecting and improving the nation's water resources. The strategy identifies and promotes the research needs of EPA's national water program to potential partners. The strategy outlines the water program's four research priorities: healthy watersheds and coastal waters, safe drinking water, sustainable water infrastructure and water security. Each priority also focuses on five technical areas: aquatic life health effects, human health effects, method development, occurrence and exposure, and treatment technologies and effectiveness.

<http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/strategy/> [HTML format with links].



EARTHQUAKE INFORMATION FOR 2009. U.S. Geological Survey. January 2010.

At least 1783 deaths worldwide resulted from earthquake activity in 2009. The deadliest earthquake of the year was a magnitude 7.5 event that killed approximately 1117 people in southern Sumatra, Indonesia on Sept. 30, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and confirmed by the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). However, the number of earthquake-related fatalities in 2009 was far less than the 2008 count of over 88,000. The high number of fatalities in 2008 was primarily due to the devastating magnitude 7.9 earthquake that occurred in Sichuan, China on May 12. / [HTML with links].

http://neic.cr.usgs.gov/neis/eq_depot/2009



BIOMONITORING: EPA COULD MAKE BETTER USE OF BIOMONITORING DATA. U.S. Government Accountability Office. John Stephenson. February 4, 2010.

Biomonitoring, which measures chemicals in people's tissues or body fluids, has shown that the U.S. population is widely exposed to chemicals used in everyday products. EPA has made limited use of biomonitoring data in its assessments of risks posed by commercial chemicals.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10419t.pdf> [PDF format, 13 pages].

CONGRESSIONAL DOCUMENTS (HEARINGS, REPORTS, ETC.)



OZONE AIR QUALITY STANDARDS: EPA's PROPOSED JANUARY 2010 REVISIONS. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. James E. McCarthy. February 2010.

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson signed proposed changes to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone on January 6, 2010. The proposed standards, when finalized in August 2010, will set in motion a long and complicated implementation process that has far-reaching impacts for public health, for sources of pollution in numerous economic sectors, and for state and local governments. The first step, designation of nonattainment areas, is expected to take place in the summer of 2011, with the areas so designated then having 3 to 20 years to reach attainment. The report discusses the standard-setting process, the specifics of the new standard, and issues raised by the Administrator's choice; and it describes the steps that will follow EPA's promulgation. <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41062.pdf> [PDF format, 15 pages].

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT: FY 2010 Appropriations. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Carl E. Behrens. January 2010.

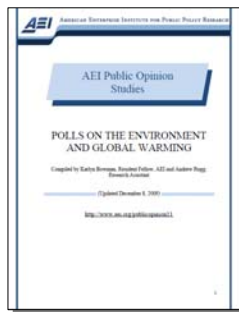
The Energy and Water Development appropriations bill provides funding for civil works projects of the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation, the Department of Energy (DOE), and a number of independent agencies. The report includes key budgetary issues for FY2010. http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R40669_20100105.pdf [PDF format, 55 pages].

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE EU EMISSIONS TRADING SCHEME (ETS): LOOKING TO 2020. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Larry Parker. January 26, 2010.

The European Union's (EU) Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) is a cornerstone of the EU's efforts to meet its obligation under the Kyoto Protocol. It covers more than 10,000 energy intensive facilities across the 27 EU Member countries; covered entities emit about 45% of the EU's carbon dioxide emissions. http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R41049_20100126.pdf [PDF format, 22 pages].

THINK TANKS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE



POLLS ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND GLOBAL WARMING. American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. Karlyn Bowman and Andrew Rugg. December 8, 2009.

The study is a compilation of public opinion data on the quality of the environment, which political party is better on the issue, the handling of the environment by the Bush and Obama administrations, priorities for President Obama and Congress, the political importance of the environment, environmental activism, and global warming. The study includes the latest polling data as well as important historical trends for comparative purposes. [PDF format, 61 pages].

<http://www.aei.org/docLib/PublicOpinionStudyEnvironment.pdf>

BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

FIVE YEARS OF KYOTO. Brookings Institution. Nathan Hultman. February 9, 2010.

On February 16th, the Kyoto Protocol will reach the fifth anniversary of its entry into force, the date at which it received enough ratifications to become legally active. While technically not a "birthday," the Protocol was negotiated in December 1997, this milestone provides an opportunity to reflect on the wider meaning and significance of this instrument into which perhaps too many expectations were invested. [HTML format, various paging].

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2010/0209_kyoto_hultman.aspx

THE CLIMATE OF BELIEF: AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION ON CLIMATE CHANGE.

Brookings Institution. Barry G. Rabe and Christopher P. Borick. January 6, 2010.

Climate change has gained enormous visibility during the past year, reflected in a range of American policy initiatives leading up to the international deliberations in Copenhagen. The Environmental Protection Agency has designated carbon dioxide as an air pollutant and issued an endangerment finding that could generate federal regulation of emissions. But what does the American public think about the issue of climate change and possible policy responses? Have these views changed over time? The report tracks American public opinion on the issue.

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2010/01_climate_rabe_borick/01_climate_rabe_borick.pdf [PDF format, 15 pages].

THE STATUS REPORT: OBAMA AND ENERGY SECURITY. William J. Antholis, Charles K. Ebinger. The Brookings Institution, January 05, 2010 .

One year ago, Brookings experts wrote a series of 12 memos to the incoming president on the most pressing policy issues facing the country. Now they assess the administration's progress on those issues in The Status Report , a daily series of commentary with video to be featured in POLITICO's Arena . William Antholis and Charles Ebinger give President Obama a composite score of B+ on taking mostly positive steps internationally, but some missteps domestically, toward building a secure energy future for the United States.

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2010/0105_energy_security.aspx

CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

A ROOKIE'S IMPRESSIONS OF COP-15. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Therese Miranda. January 11, 2010.

The Copenhagen Accord represents a small but imperfect step forwards. If efforts are not made to pass Senate legislation, fill in details within the existing U.N. tracks, and bridge the growing divide between developed and developing countries, success will be elusive in Mexico as well, endangering the future of the planet. [HTML format, various paging].

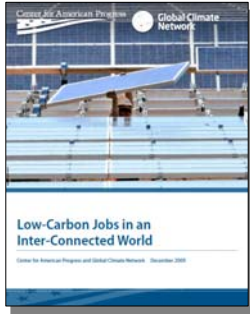
<http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=24679>

MEMO TO COPENHAGEN: COMMENTARY IS MISINFORMED – CHINA'S COMMITMENT IS SIGNIFICANT. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. William Chandler. December 8, 2009.

According to the author, criticism of China's pledge to reduce its carbon intensity by 45 percent by 2020 is ill-founded; it only serves to provide cover for U.S. opponents to climate change action, and risks blocking effective progress. [PDF format, 7 pages].

http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/Memo_to_Copenhagen_final_2.pdf

CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS AND GLOBAL CLIMATE NETWORK



LOW-CARBON JOBS IN AN INTER-CONNECTED WORLD. Center for American Progress and Global Climate Network. December 2009.

According to the report, low-carbon industries have the potential to create tens of millions of high-quality jobs, but strong government support for these industries will be necessary to realize potential gains. [PDF format, 52 pages].

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/12/pdf/gcn_jobs.pdf

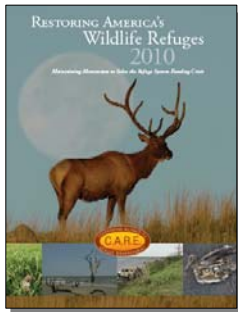
CENTER FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

THE ECONOMICS OF ADAPTATION TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. Center for Global Development. Brian Blankespoor et al. January 11, 2010.

According to the authors, without international assistance, developing countries will adapt to climate change as best they can. Part of the cost will be absorbed by households and part by the public sector. Adaptation costs will themselves be affected by socioeconomic development, which will also be affected by climate change. Without a better understanding of these interactions, it will be difficult for climate negotiators and donor institutions to determine the appropriate levels and modes of adaptation assistance. The paper contributes by assessing the economics of adaptation to extreme weather events. [HTML format with links].

<http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/1423545>

COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE FOR REFUGE ENHANCEMENT (CARE)



RESTORING AMERICA'S WILDLIFE REFUGES 2010. Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement, March 2010.

The U.S. National Wildlife Refuge System, which fuels the economic engine of local communities in all 50 states, is under threat from an Obama Administration proposal to significantly cut the system's budget. The report warns that unless Congress acts to restore funding for the Refuge System, the economic benefits that refuges provide could be in jeopardy at the very time they're needed most. Also at risk are the lands, waters, wildlife, birds and recreation opportunities that the more than 550 refuges in the 150-million-acre Refuge System were established to protect.

<http://www.refugeassociation.org/new-pdf-files/2010CAREreport.pdf>

COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

FIXING THE GLOBAL CLIMATE SCIENCE PROCESS. Council on Foreign Relations. February 24, 2010.

With some findings of the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in question, four experts debate how much the premier climate science review panel may need to make changes. [HTML format, various paging].

http://www.cfr.org/publication/21515/fixing_the_global_climate_science_process.html

ALTERNATIVE VIEWS OF CLIMATE CHANGE. Council on Foreign Relations. Toni Johnson. February 23, 2010.

Debating global warming policy has moved to the top of agendas worldwide, but some skeptics still question whether action is necessary or possible. [HTML format, various paging].

http://www.cfr.org/publication/14318/alternative_views_on_climate_change.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fby_type%2Fbackgrounder

PERU'S MINERAL WEALTH AND WOES. Council on Foreign Relations. Toni Johnson. February 10, 2010.

Peru has avoided the development problems seen in other extraction-dependent economies, but experts say the country faces governance hurdles, especially on the environment.

http://www.cfr.org/publication/21408/perus_mineral_wealth_and_woes.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fby_type%2Fbackgrounder

[HTML format, various paging].

CLIMATE RIGHT FOR U.S. JOINING LAW OF SEA CONVENTION. Council on Foreign Relations. Scott G. Borgerson and Thomas R. Pickering. December 23, 2009.

According to the authors, the time is ripe for President Obama to press for Senate passage of the Law of the Sea Convention and expand U.S. influence on oceans governance. [HTML format, various paging].

http://www.cfr.org/publication/21041/climate_right_for_us_joining_law_of_sea_convention.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fby_type%2Fregion_issue_brief

DEFORESTATION AND GREENHOUSE-GAS EMISSIONS. Council on Foreign Relations. Toni Johnson. December 16, 2009.

Loss of forests is a major contributor to greenhouse-gas emissions. Plans to devise a policy tool for using trees for carbon dioxide sequestration are now under way, according to the author. [HTML format, various paging].

http://www.cfr.org/publication/14919/deforestation_and_greenhousegas_emissions.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fby_type%2Fbackgrounder

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

BIODIVERSITY – 10 MESSAGES FOR 2010. European Environment Agency, 09 Mar 2010

Each message provides a short assessment focusing on a specific ecosystem or issue related to biodiversity in Europe. The remaining messages will be published at various intervals throughout 2010.

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/10-messages-for-2010>



GODDARD INSTITUTE FOR SPACE STUDIES

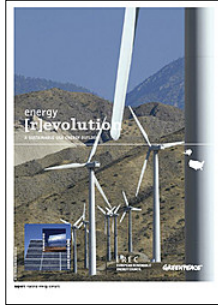
2009: SECOND WARMEST YEAR ON RECORD: END OF WARMEST DECADE. Goddard Institute for Space Studies. January 21, 2010.

2009 was tied for the second warmest year in the modern record, according to the analysis of global surface temperature shows. The analysis, conducted by the Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS), also shows that in the Southern Hemisphere, 2009 was the warmest year since modern records began in 1880. Although 2008 was the coolest year of the decade, due

to strong cooling of the tropical Pacific Ocean, 2009 saw a return to near-record global temperatures. The past year was only a fraction of a degree cooler than 2005, the warmest year on record, and tied with a cluster of other years, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2006 and 2007 1998 and 2007, as the second warmest year since recordkeeping began.

<http://www.giss.nasa.gov/research/news/20100121/> [HTML format with links].

GREENPEACE



ENERGY [R]EVOLUTION: A SUSTAINABLE U.S.A. ENERGY OUTLOOK. Greenpeace, March 11, 2009

The newly released Greenpeace report details how the United States can cut greenhouse gas emissions to the levels we must reach in order to prevent the worst effects of global warming and simultaneously build a sustainable economy. It proposes a win-win scenario: We can solve global warming and in the process bolster our ailing economy by creating millions of new jobs and securing our energy without being subject to volatile energy prices due to the fluctuating costs of imported fuels.

<http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/campaigns/global-warming-and-energy/energyrevolution>

HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL

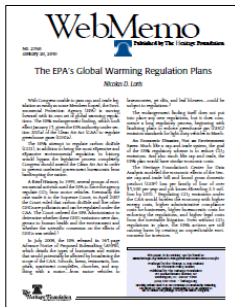
ACCELERATING INNOVATION IN ENERGY: INSIGHTS FROM MULTIPLE SECTORS.

Harvard Business School. Rebecca Henderson and Richard G. Newell. February 2010.

A combination of concerns about climate change and energy security has recently led to significant increases in public funding for energy R&D. Some commentators are suggesting that these increases need to be sustained, and are advocating for increases of as much as three or four hundred percent, suggesting that the U.S. needs a "Manhattan project" for energy. Other observers have discussed supporting innovation through a range of additional policy interventions, including tax credits, loan guarantees, IP policy, regulatory mandates, codes and standards. It is critically important that these kinds of interventions be thoughtfully designed since it seems probable that without major advances in energy technology it is unlikely that the world will be able to reduce green house gas emissions rapidly enough to avoid a substantial increase in the risk of significant climate change.

<http://www.hbs.edu/research/pdf/10-067.pdf> [PDF format, 24 pages].

HERITAGE FOUNDATION

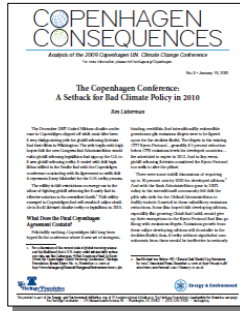


THE EPA'S GLOBAL WARMING REGULATION PLANS. Nicolas Loris. Heritage Foundation WebMemo #2768, January 20, 2010

With Congress unable to pass cap-and-trade legislation as easily as some Members hoped, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is moving forward with its own set of global warming regulations. The EPA's endangerment finding, which took effect January 14, gives the EPA authority under section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act (CAA) to regulate greenhouse gases (GHGs). The EPA's attempt to regulate carbon dioxide (CO₂), in addition to being the most expensive and expansive

environmental regulation in history, would bypass the legislative process completely. Congress should amend the Clean Air Act in order to prevent unelected government bureaucrats from bankrupting the nation.

http://s3.amazonaws.com/thf_media/2010/pdf/wm_2768.pdf



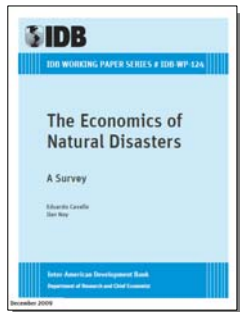
THE COPENHAGEN CONFERENCE: A SETBACK FOR BAD CLIMATE POLICY IN 2010. Ben Lieberman. Heritage Foundation Special Report #75. January 19, 2010

The December 2009 United Nations climate conference in Copenhagen capped off what must have been a very disappointing year for global warming activists and their allies in Washington. The year began with high hopes that the new Congress and Administration would enact global warming legislation and sign up the U.S. to a new global warming treaty. It ended with that legislation stalled in the Senate and with the Copenhagen conference concluding with an agreement so weak that it represents a step backward for the U.N. treaty process.

The reality is that restrictions on energy use in the name of fighting global warming are a costly and ineffective solution to an overstated threat. That reality emerged in Copenhagen and will remain a major obstacle to an ill-advised climate treaty or legislation in 2010.

http://s3.amazonaws.com/thf_media/2010/pdf/Copenhagen_Consequences_8.pdf

INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK



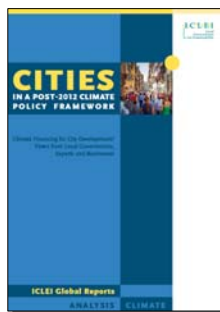
THE ECONOMICS OF NATURAL DISASTERS: A SURVEY. Inter-American Development Bank. Eduardo Cavallo and Ilan Noy. December 2009.

Catastrophes caused by natural disasters are by no means new, yet the evolving understanding of their relevance to economic development and growth is still in its infancy. In order to facilitate further necessary research on this topic, this paper summarizes the state of the economic literature examining the aggregate impact of disasters. The paper reviews the main disaster data sources available, discusses the determinants of the direct effects of disasters, and distinguishes between short- and long-run indirect effects. The paper then examines some of the relevant policy questions and follows up with projections about the likelihood of future disasters, while paying particular attention to climate change.

<http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=35022204>

[PDF format, 46 pages].

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

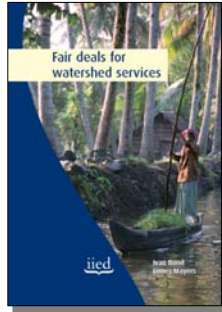


CLIMATE FINANCING FOR CITY DEVELOPMENT? ICLEI, March 05, 2010

Cities in a Post-2012 Climate Policy Framework is the theme of an ICLEI Global Report now published. This Climate Analysis report builds upon 38 Interviews from local governments, international climate and urban experts, and international business representatives. The report investigates how suitable the international climate financing architecture is for cities and local governments in the developing world, provides a current account of local governments in the international climate negotiations, and a discussion of city-level greenhouse gas inventories.

http://www.iclei.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Global/Services/Cities_in_a_Post-2012_Policy_Framework-Climate_Financing_for_City_Development_ICLEI_2010.pdf

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT



FAIR DEALS FOR WATERSHED SERVICES. International Institute for Environment and Development. Ivan Bond and James Mayers. January 2010.

Supplies of good clean water where, and when people need it is taken for granted by some, and is a pipedream for others. To get the water people want, people have traditionally relied on regulation, exhortation, cooperation or just keeping the fingers crossed, according to the report. What about some cold hard cash? What if the downstream beneficiaries of wise upstream land use and ecological management paid for these benefits? This is the idea of payments for watershed services. [PDF format, 122 pages].

<http://www.iied.org/pubs/pdfs/13535IIED.pdf>

NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH

CLIMATE SHOCKS AND EXPORTS. National Bureau of Economic Research. Benjamin F. Jones and Benjamin A. Olken. Web posted February 1, 2010.

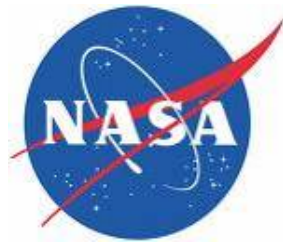
The paper uses international trade data to examine the effects of climate shocks on economic activity. It examines panel models relating the annual growth rate of a country's exports in a particular product category to the country's weather in that year. The paper finds that a poor country being 1 degree Celsius warmer in a given year reduces the growth rate of that country's exports by between 2.0 and 5.7 percentage points, with no detectable effects in rich countries. It also finds negative effects of temperature on exports of both agricultural products and light manufacturing products, with little apparent effects on heavy industry or raw materials. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w15711.pdf>

DISCONTINUOUS BEHAVIORAL RESPONSES TO RECYCLING LAWS AND PLASTIC WATER BOTTLE DEPOSITS. National Bureau of Economic Research. W. Kip Viscusi et al. December 2009.

The report examines the effects of recycling and deposit laws on consumer recycling of plastic water bottles. Economic theory predicts individual behavior that gravitates toward extremes, either diligent recycling or no recycling at all. Both water bottle deposits and recycling laws foster recycling behavior through a discontinuous effect that converts reluctant recyclers into diligent recyclers. More stringent recycling laws have a greater effect on recycling rates.

http://www.nber.org/papers/w15585.pdf?new_window=1 [PDF format, 47 pages].

NASA



NEW NASA WEB PAGE SHEDS LIGHT ON SCIENCE OF A WARMING WORLD

WASHINGTON -- Will 2010 be the warmest year on record? How do the recent U.S. "Snowmageddon" winter storms and record low temperatures in Europe fit into the bigger picture of long-term global warming? NASA has launched a new web page to help people better understand the causes and effects of Earth's changing climate. The new "A Warming World" page hosts a series of new articles, videos, data visualizations, space-based imagery and interactive visuals that provide unique NASA perspectives on this topic of global importance.

<http://climate.nasa.gov/warmingworld>

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

DEFENDING PLANET EARTH: NEAR-EARTH OBJECT SURVEYS AND HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGIES: FINAL REPORT. National Research Council. January 22, 2010.

The report lays out options NASA could follow to detect more near-Earth objects (NEOs), asteroids and comets that could pose a hazard if they cross Earth's orbit. The report says the \$4 million the U.S. spends annually to search for NEOs is insufficient to meet a congressionally mandated requirement to detect NEOs that could threaten Earth.

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12842 [HTML format with links].

NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

**REPORTS HIGHLIGHT THREATS TO LOCAL WATERS AND WETLANDS; STUDIES DEMONSTRATE NEED TO RESTORE CLEAN WATER ACT PROTECTIONS.** NWF, 02-10-2010 // Aileo Weinmann

A series of new reports highlight the threats to local waters and wetlands in four states under regulatory guidance resulting from two Supreme Court Cases. Compiled by the National Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, and Trout Unlimited, the reports identify case studies where the loss of Clean Water Act protections has put local waters in Colorado, Montana, South Carolina and Tennessee at risk for pollution, unrestricted drainage and destruction. It is almost certain that these waters would have been protected prior to the 2001 and 2006 Supreme Court decisions that weakened

the Clean Water Act.

<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/Media-Center/News-by-Topic/Wildlife/2010/02-09-10-Reports-Highlight-Threats-to-Local-Waters-and-Wetlands.aspx>

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

**ONE EARTH MAGAZINE.** Spring 2010. NRDC

FEATURE STORIES:

Renewable Energy Catches on in Red America, by Michael Behar
Driven, by Craig Canine
True Confessions of a Citizen Scientist, by Sharman Apt Russell
Water's Edge, by Robert Sullivan, Diane Cook, Len Jenshel

<http://www.onearth.org/10spr>

NATURE CONSERVANCY AND CARY INSTITUTE OF ECOSYSTEM STUDIES

ALIEN SPECIES IN FRESH WATERS: ECOLOGICAL EFFECTS, INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER STRESSORS, AND PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE. David L. Strayer. Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, February 2010.

Biological invasions are numerous in fresh waters around the world. At least hundreds of freshwater species have been moved outside of their native ranges by vectors such as ballast

water, canals, deliberate introductions, and releases from aquaria, gardens, and bait buckets. As a result, many bodies of fresh water now contain dozens of alien species. Some invaders have had deep and pervasive effects on the ecosystems that they invade. The number of alien species in freshwater ecosystems will increase in the future as new aliens are moved outside of their native ranges by humans, and as established aliens fill their potential ranges. Alien species create “no-analogue” ecosystems that will be difficult to manage in the future. We may be able to reduce future impacts of invaders by making more serious efforts to prevent new invasions and manage existing invaders.

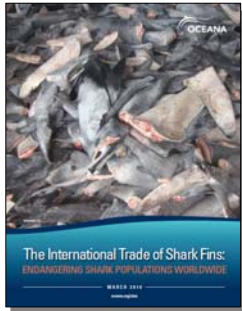
http://www.ecostudies.org/reprints/Strayer_freshbiol_2010.pdf

ECOLOGY OF FRESHWATER SHORE ZONES. David L. Strayer, Stuart E. G. Findlay. Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, 9 February 2010

Freshwater shore zones are among the most ecologically valuable parts of the planet, but have been heavily damaged by human activities. Because the management and rehabilitation of freshwater shore zones could be improved by better use of ecological knowledge, we summarize here what is known about their ecological functioning. Shore zones are complexes of habitats that support high biodiversity, which is enhanced by high physical complexity and connectivity. Shore zones dissipate large amounts of physical energy, can receive and process extraordinarily high inputs of autochthonous and allochthonous organic matter, and are sites of intensive nutrient cycling. Interactions between organic matter inputs (including wood), physical energy, and the biota are especially important. In general, the ecological character of shore zone ecosystems is set by inputs of physical energy, geologic (or anthropogenic) structure, the hydrologic regime, nutrient inputs, the biota, and climate.

http://www.ecostudies.org/reprints/Strayer_Findlay_2010_AquatSci.pdf

OCEANA



THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE OF SHARK FINS: ENDANGERING SHARK POPULATIONS WORLDWIDE. Oceana, March 16, 2010

Up to 10 million kg of shark fins (equivalent to the weight of more than 2,000 adult African Elephants) are exported annually to Hong Kong by nearly 87 countries, cites a new report The International Trade of Shark Fins: Endangering Shark Populations Worldwide released today by Oceana, the world’s largest conservation organization focused solely on marine issues. “The global shark fin trade is driving the oceans to collapse,” said Courtney Sakai, senior campaign director at Oceana. “Trade measures are the most direct way to ensure that the powerful economic incentives to

catch sharks do not lead to their extinction.”

http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/o/fileadmin/oceana/uploads/europe/downloads/OCEANA_international_trade_shark_fins_english.pdf



U.S. SEA TURTLES: A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF SIX TROUBLED SPECIES. Oceana, December 11, 2009

This report provides an overview of the six species of sea turtle that inhabit U.S. waters: green, hawksbill, Kemp’s ridley, leatherback, loggerhead and olive ridley, as well as the threats facing each of them. Sea turtles have been swimming the oceans for more than 100 million years. They have persisted through natural predators, climatic changes and even the mass dinosaur extinction, and have proven to be important ecologically, economically and culturally both in the United States and abroad.

Nonetheless, modern day activities of humans are killing sea turtles at a rate faster than many populations can sustain. In fact, each of the sea turtle species found in U.S. waters is listed as either “threatened” or “endangered” under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) – which means they may be driven to extinction in the foreseeable future.

http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/reports/U.S._Sea_Turtles_Report_FINAL1.pdf

ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT'S (OECD)

LINKAGE BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND COMPETITIVENESS. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Leena Lankoski. January 13, 2010.

Debates exist between those who claim that environmental policy will impose additional burdens and costs on industries, thus impairing their competitiveness, and those who claim that improved environmental performance can spur competitiveness.

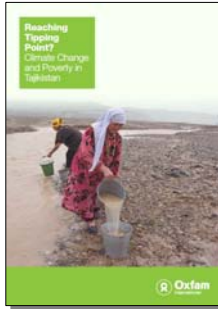
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/0/8/44392874.pdf> [PDF format, 54 pages].

IMPROVING THE POLICY FRAMEWORK IN JAPAN TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Randall S. Jones and Byungseo Yoo. Web posted December 10, 2009.

Japan, a relatively energy-efficient country, has been active in combating climate change. Under the Kyoto Protocol, Japan is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 6% relative to 1990 over the period 2008-12. [PDF format, 31 pages].

[http://www.oecd.org/olis/2009doc.nsf/LinkTo/NT000088B6/\\$FILE/JT03275815.PDF](http://www.oecd.org/olis/2009doc.nsf/LinkTo/NT000088B6/$FILE/JT03275815.PDF)

OXFAM INTERNATIONAL



REACHING TIPPING POINT?: CLIMATE CHANGE AND POVERTY IN TAJIKISTAN. Oxfam International. February 17, 2010.

Tajikistan's glaciers are retreating and could lead to greater water shortages and disputes in the wider region in the future, says the report. The painful blow of climate change has been sharply felt in rural areas of Tajikistan in recent years where 1.4 million people are already food insecure. Last summer's good rains brought some relief to rural communities across Tajikistan that had previously suffered from three consecutive years of drought, failed harvests and one of the harshest winters on record. But the long-term trends are clear and ominous. [PDF format, 13 pages].

<http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/tipping-point-climate-poverty-tajikistan.pdf>

CLIMATE SHAME: GET BACK TO THE TABLE. Oxfam International. December 21, 2009.

Copenhagen was a unique opportunity to turn the world's course away from climate disaster, towards a safe future for all of us on this small planet. Massive global public mobilization demanded it. But leaders of the major powers negotiated for their national interests, instead of safeguarding our shared destiny, according to the report. [PDF format, 13 pages].

<http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/briefing-note-climate-shame-get-back-to-the-table.pdf>

PEW



COMPARISON OF THE CEJAP ACT AND THE CLEAR ACT: Climate Policy Memo #7: A Comparison of the Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act (CEJAP Act) and the Carbon Limits and Energy for America's Renewal Act (CLEAR Act). Pew Center on Global Climate Change, March 2010

This brief compares key elements of two bills currently under consideration in Congress. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee passed the Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act (CEJAP Act) on November 5, 2009. It provides a comprehensive, economy-wide approach to achieving reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by capping emissions, using a combination of auctions and free allocations for distributing allowances, and allowing firms to trade and purchase offsets to reduce compliance costs. The second bill, introduced by Sen. Cantwell and Sen. Collins, is the Carbon Limits and Energy for America's Renewal Act (CLEAR Act). Like the CEJAP Act, the CLEAR Act caps greenhouse gas emissions, but the approaches used in these bills differ significantly. The CLEAR Act puts limits on carbon emissions. This brief describes the key features of each bill and Table 1 at the end of the brief contains a side-by-side comparison of the bills.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/policy-memo/comparison-cejap-act-clear-act>

CARBON MARKET DESIGNS & OVERSIGHT: A SHORT OVERVIEW. Pew Center on Global Climate Change. February 17, 2010.

At the heart of any successful cap-and-trade program is a well-functioning market for the trading of emissions allowances. The sulfur dioxide allowance market created under 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments to control acid rain is an example of such a success. At the same time, several recent high profile market crises, such as the 2008 petroleum price spike, the crash of subprime mortgage and credit default swap (CDS) markets, the Lehman bankruptcy, and the Madoff Ponzi scheme have led many to question market mechanisms.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/carbon-market-design-oversight-brief.pdf>

CLEAN ENERGY MARKETS: JOBS AND OPPORTUNITIES. Pew Center on Global Climate Change. February 2010.

The brief explains how investment in clean energy technologies will generate economic growth and create new jobs in the United States and around the world. Comprehensive, market-based national policy that attracts investment in clean energy markets can help create these economic benefits. [PDF format, 18 pages].

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/clean-energy-markets-jobs-opportunities-brief.pdf>



ARCTIC TREASURE: GLOBAL ASSETS MELTING AWAY. Pew Charitable Trusts. February 2010.

Ice and snow are defining features of the Arctic. At no point in at least 800,000 years has the Arctic been without sea ice. By some projections the region may lose summer sea ice as soon as 2030. In a sense, the value of this ice is incalculable. Arctic ice defines the homelands and cultures of indigenous peoples and ecosystems that harbor species which are uniquely adapted to this environment. [PDF format, 12 pages].

http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Protecting_ocean_life/Arctic_Summary_FINAL.pdf?n=1822

PROJECT FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

“CLIMATE-GATE” RE-IGNITES THE BLOGOSPHERE DEBATE. Project for Excellence in Journalism. February 25, 2010.

Blogs once again fixated on one of its most popular topics, global warming, following a BBC interview with Phil Jones, the scientist at the center of the so-called "Climate-gate" controversy. [HTML format, various paging].

<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1507/bloggers-focus-again-climate-gate-controversy>

RAND

THE IMPACT OF AIR QUALITY ON HOSPITAL SPENDING. John A. Romley, Andrew Hackbarth, Dana P. Goldman

Air pollution is harmful to human health, but little is known about the costs of pollution-related health care. If such care imposes a significant burden on insurance companies and employers, they would have substantial stakes in improving air quality. Reduced medical spending could also benefit public programs such as Medicare and Medicaid. This study estimated the amount of medical spending by private health insurers and public purchasers, such as Medicare, that is related to air pollution. Specifically, the authors determined how much failing to meet air quality standards cost various purchasers of hospital care in California over 2005-2007. The results indicate that substantial reductions in hospital spending can be achieved through reductions in air pollution.

http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/2010/RAND_TR777.pdf

RESOURCES FOR THE FUTURE

**COMBINING POLICIES FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY: IS THE WHOLE LESS THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS? Carolyn Fischer, Louis Preonas. RFF Discussion Paper 10-19 | March 2010.**

Since the energy crisis in the 1970s and later the growing concern for climate change in the 1990s, policymakers at all levels of government and around the world have been enthusiastically supporting a wide range of incentive mechanisms for electricity from renewable energy sources (RES-E). Motivations range from energy security to environmental preservation to green jobs and innovation, and measures comprise an array of subsidies to mandates to emissions trading. But do these policies work together or at cross-purposes? To evaluate RES-E policies, one must understand how specific policy mechanisms interact with each other and under what conditions multiple policy levers are necessary.

<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-DP-10-19.pdf>

**SHARING THE LOAD: A MULTI-COUNTRY SURVEY OF THE WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR SLOWING CLIMATE CHANGE. Resources for the Future. December 2009.**

The results show that significant majorities of the public in the United States and, particularly, Sweden are willing to shoulder the cost burdens of climate mitigation, about 2 to 3 percent of their per-capita income (or analogously, GDP), to prevent a warming of more than 2°F. Furthermore, while the burden-sharing principles favorable to one's own country are preferred, the WTP for such a principle over others is small.

<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-Krupnick.pdf> [PDF format, 2 pages].

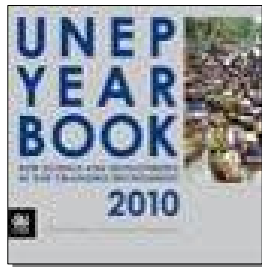
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)



BETTER BUILDINGS: ENHANCED WATER-, ENERGY-, AND WASTE-MANAGEMENT IN ARAB URBAN ECOSYSTEMS – GLOBALLY APPLICABLE. U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. 2010.

High consumption rates of water and energy are based on the climatic situation in the Arabian Peninsula and the lack of interest and awareness of environmental issues. The UNESCO Doha workshop discussed possibilities on how to reduce the above mentioned inadequacies. Methods on environmentally improved design of buildings, and better human behavior and education were discussed. The workshop offered four main themes: water, energy, waste, and architecture. [PDF format, 47 pages].

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001866/186626e.pdf>



UNEP YEARBOOK 2010.

The UNEP Yearbook 2010 is essential, informative and authoritative reading and within six chapters the Year Book addresses the following: In 2009, efforts to advance international environmental governance focused on defining key objectives and functions for an improved UN architecture to address global environmental change. Ecosystems are being pushed beyond thresholds. Drivers of change that lead to biodiversity loss and changes in ecosystem services are growing in intensity. Dead zones in coastal areas have doubled in extent every decade since the 1960's. Much work remains to be done to reduce and mitigate the effects of harmful substances and hazardous waste on human health and the environment. Many unanswered questions remain about nano-materials. The effects of increasing atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations are better understood, as more indicators of climate change are being assessed. Direct observations and modeling indicate that the planet's tropical belt is expanding. Sustainable natural resource management can reduce vulnerability to disasters and conflicts and support peace-building. Promising tools to reduce disaster conflict risks are being integrated into policy and institutional structures. Better managing material and energy flows will help meet challenges associated with environmental impacts and advance decoupling of economic growth and resource use.

http://www.unep.org/publications/contents/pub_details_search.asp?ID=4104

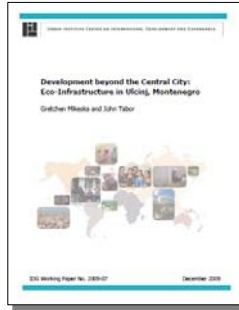
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO LAW SCHOOL

PARENTING THE PLANET. University of Colorado Law School. Sarah Karkoff. February 10, 2010.

Climate change and other environmental problems of global scale indicate that we have entered, as Nobel prize winner Paul Crutzen has described it, the "Anthropocene," the era of pervasive human influence on the earth's natural systems. Further, the collective action features of climate change render it a commons problem of global and intergenerational proportions. The author suggests that the metaphor of parenting, while not perfect, captures the aspects of control, care, and inherent tragedy that characterize the stage that humans now occupy with respect to their relationship with the planet. [HTML with a link].

http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1548658

URBAN INSTITUTE



DEVELOPMENT BEYOND THE CENTRAL CITY: ECO-INFRASTRUCTURE IN ULCINJ, MONTENEGRO. Urban Institute. Gretchen Mikeska and John Tabor. Web posted February 8, 2010.

The principal objectives and scope of the current study are to examine how eco-infrastructure can be sustained within a multiuse area of a municipality in a transition economy in a way that protects habitat, ensures public access, and is adequately funded and managed. The case of Ulcinj, Montenegro, is presented for this purpose. The methodology employed reviews the available literature and best practices to identify possible models, and then considers them in the context of Ulcinj for their relevance and feasibility.

http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412023_eco-infrastructure_ulcinj.pdf

WORLD BANK

CLIMATE COST UNCERTAINTY, RETROFIT COST UNCERTAINTY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE CLOSURE: A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS. Policy Research Working Paper, The World Bank. Jon Strand and Sebastian Miller. February 2010.

Large and energy-intensive infrastructure investments with long life times have substantial implications for climate policy. This study focuses on options to scale down energy consumption and carbon emissions now and in the future, and on the costs of doing so.

<http://www->

[wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2010/02/16/00158349_20100216102532/Rendered/PDF/WPS5208.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2010/02/16/00158349_20100216102532/Rendered/PDF/WPS5208.pdf) [PDF format, 32 pages].

EARTHQUAKE PROPENSITY AND THE POLITICS OF MORTALITY PREVENTION. The World Bank. Philip Keefer et al. January 19, 2010.

Governments can significantly reduce earthquake mortality by implementing and enforcing quake-proof construction regulation. The authors examine why many governments do not. Contrary to intuition, controlling for the strength and location of actual earthquakes, mortality is lower in countries with higher earthquake propensity, where the payoffs to mortality prevention are higher. Importantly, however, the government response to earthquake propensity depends on country income and the political incentives of governments to provide public goods to citizens. [PDF format, 40 pages].

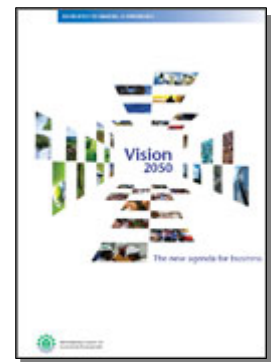
<http://www->

[wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2010/01/19/00158349_20100119134830/Rendered/PDF/WPS5182.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2010/01/19/00158349_20100119134830/Rendered/PDF/WPS5182.pdf)

WORLD BUSINESS COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

VISION 2050 LAYS A PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABLE LIVING WITHIN PLANET. World Business Council for Sustainable, 4 February 2010

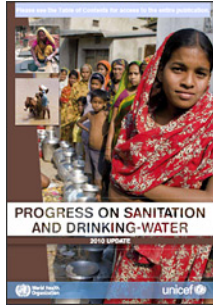
The study lays out a pathway leading to a global population of some 9 billion people living well, within the resource limits of the planet by 2050. The report, released at the World CEO Forum in New Delhi, India, was compiled by 29 leading global companies representing 14 industries. It outlines a future in which 9 billion people live well, enjoying health, food, shelter, energy, mobility, education and other basics of life. Syngenta CEO,



Michael Mack added that "humanity has largely had an exploitative relationship with our planet; we can, and should, aim to make this a symbiotic one." In the Vision 2050 scenario, global society attains this standard of living at a sustainable rate, without further harm to biodiversity, climate and ecosystem services.

<http://www.wbcsd.org/Plugins/DocSearch/details.asp?DocTypeId=33&ObjectId=Mzc0MDE>

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)



PROGRESS ON SANITATION AND DRINKING-WATER 2010 UPDATE. WHO/UNICEF, March 15, 2010.

The latest report of the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme on Water Supply and Sanitation provides the most recent data for drinking-water and sanitation, along with the implications and trends these new data reveal for reaching the basic sanitation and safe drinking-water MDG target. With the MDG target date of 2015 only five years away, it is time to intensify efforts towards achieving the MDG target and addressing the glaring disparities worldwide.

http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2010/9789241563956_eng.pdf

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE



SOUTHERN FORESTS FOR THE FUTURE. Craig Hanson et al. WRI, March 2010.

This report introduces readers to the forests of the southern United States. It provides data, maps, and other forms of information about southern forests, their condition, and trends. It is designed to serve as a resource for conservation organizations, concerned citizens, landowners, academic institutions, the private sector, government agencies, and others involved with forest stewardship.

<http://www.wri.org/publication/southern-forests-for-the-future>



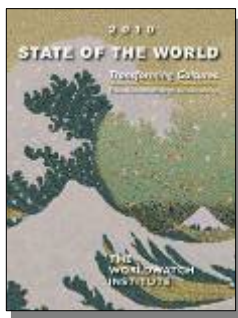
COMPARABILITY OF ANNEX I EMISSION REDUCTION PLEDGES. World Resources Institute. Kelly Levin and Rob Bradley. February 2010.

Significant commitments to reduce developed country greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) will be central to the realization of the Copenhagen Accord. As negotiated in December 2009, the Copenhagen Accord provides a mandate for Annex I Parties that choose to associate themselves with the Accord to register their emission reduction pledges by 31 January 2010.

Many pledges have already been put forward by major industrialized countries and economic blocs. These include the European Union (EU), Japan, Canada, and Australia, and the US. The analysis assesses Annex I pledges under the Copenhagen Accord, as well as pledges by Parties that have yet to associate themselves with the Accord (namely Belarus and Ukraine). [PDF format, 22 pages].

http://pdf.wri.org/working_papers/comparability_of_annex1_emission_reduction_pledges_2010-02-01.pdf

WORLD WATCH INSTITUTE

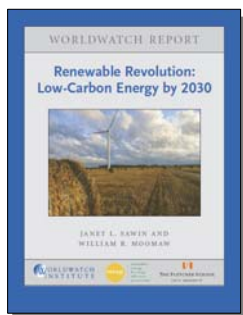

STATE OF THE WORLD 2010: TRANSFORMING CULTURES. WRI, January 2010

Like a tsunami, consumerism has engulfed human cultures and Earth's ecosystems. Left unaddressed, we risk global disaster. But if we channel this wave, intentionally transforming our cultures to center on sustainability, we will not only prevent catastrophe, but may usher in an era of sustainability—one that allows all people to thrive while protecting, even restoring, Earth. In *State of the World 2010*, sixty renowned researchers and practitioners describe how we can harness the world's leading institutions—education, the media, business, governments, traditions, and

social movements—to reorient cultures toward sustainability.

Download individual *State of the World 2010* chapters:

<http://www.worldwatch.org/node/6369>


RENEWABLE REVOLUTION: LOW-CARBON ENERGY BY 2030. World Watch Institute. Janet L. Sawin and William R. Moomaw. December 16, 2009.

Tackling climate change and a host of other global challenges will require systematic transformation of the global energy system over the next several decades, according to the report. It highlights four key synergies between energy efficiency and renewable energy and argues that these two strategies, used in concert, can play a key role in meeting rising global demand for energy services while averting catastrophic climate change.

<http://www.worldwatch.org/files/pdf/Renewable%20Revolution.pdf>

WORLD WILDLIFE FEDERATION


OVERCOMING THE PAST, LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: A CASE STUDY ON RESPONSIBLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN MALAYSIA. World Wildlife Fund. Web posted February 18, 2010.

Lush tropical forests cover much of Sabah, a Malaysian state located in northern Borneo. For many years the economic benefits associated with forest clearing outweighed the long-term benefits of the responsible use of these natural resources. The Global Forest & Trade Network (GFTN) is working with the Sabah Forestry Department (SFD) to reverse this destructive trajectory. [PDF format, 4 pages].

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


A DECADE ON, LOWER DANUBE EXCEEDS GREEN CORRIDOR TARGETS. World Wildlife Fund. February 17, 2010.

A decade after four governments agreed to work together to establish a "green corridor" along the entire length of the Lower Danube River, Europe's most ambitious wetland protection and restoration program is well ahead of targets for creating protected areas. [HTML format, various paging].

<http://www.panda.org/?189121/A-decade-on-lower-Danube-exceeds-green-corridor-targets>



EMERGING LEADERS: HOW THE DEVELOPING WORLD IS STARTING A NEW ERA OF CLIMATE CHANGE LEADERSHIP. World Wildlife Fund. Mark Lutes. Web posted December 10, 2009.

There is a widespread belief that developing countries do not take climate change seriously, are not taking steps to reduce emissions and will be an obstacle to reaching a new global agreement to stop climate change. In reality, these countries are not only taking action to reduce their own emissions, but many of them are also playing a constructive role in the international climate negotiations, according to the report. [PDF, 15 pages].

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

COP 15: TWELVE DAYS TO SAVE THE PLANET. World Wildlife Fund. December 3, 2009.

According to the brief, the climate conference in Copenhagen is the best opportunity to agree on a climate deal that can save the planet from devastating climate change.

<http://www.panda.org/?182482/COP-15-twelve-days-to-save-the-planet>

YALE UNIVERSITY

WILL JAPAN EMERGE FROM ITS SHELL? PART I: CLIMATE CHANGE IS A GOOD PLATFORM FOR JAPAN'S GREATER GLOBAL INTERCOURSE. YaleGlobal. Edward J. Lincoln. February 3, 2010.

For the world's second largest economy, Japan takes a decidedly backseat approach to involvement in global affairs. While there are no rules to force global intercourse, Japan-specialist Edward J. Lincoln believes that as a key beneficiary and user of global public goods, Japan should become more involved. [HTML format, various paging].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/will-japan-emerge-its-shell-%E2%80%93-part-i>

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE INDEX 2010. Yale University and Columbia University. Christine Kim et al. January 28, 2010.

The Index ranks 163 countries on 25 performance indicators tracked across ten policy categories covering both environmental public health and ecosystem vitality. These indicators provide a gauge at a national government scale of how close countries are to established environmental policy goals. The Index's proximity-to-target methodology facilitates cross-country comparisons as well as analysis of how the global community is doing collectively on each particular policy issue. / [HTML format with links].

<http://epi.yale.edu>

FALLOUT FROM COPENHAGEN: HAS THE EU LOST ITS GLOBAL RELEVANCE? YaleGlobal. Jean-Pierre Lehmann. January 5, 2010.

The first decade of the 21st century is still garnering many monikers. But the author believes that it may soon be considered Europe's swan song as a global power. From a storied constitution to lack of a consistent trade policy to a failure to effect global policy on climate change, the EU demonstrated throughout the decade that it cannot act in a coherent fashion and that its relevance on the global stage has eroded. But the most telling of examples are divisions over support for the war in Iraq and lack of representation at the Copenhagen Climate Summit. [HTML format, various paging].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/fallout-copenhagen-has-eu-lost-its-global-relevance>

COPENHAGEN: YET ANOTHER GIANT BEGINNING WITH AN UNCERTAIN END.
YaleGlobal. Scott Barrett. December 21, 2009.

As feared by many, the U.N. conference on climate change has produced a lame document which can, most charitably be described as a beginning. As environmental economist Scott Barrett notes, previous meetings on the environment were also called a beginning but have not ended in anything tangible. Despite a long period spent on negotiations, the final outcome is a short text that reflects a lowest-common-denominator compromise between proposals produced by two groups of countries. Barrett argues that given the enormity and complexity of the issues, there is a better chance of reaching agreements if they were broken up into smaller and more manageable issues, like the successful Montreal protocol (1987) on repairing the ozone layer depletion. [HTML format, various paging].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/copenhagen-yet-another-giant-beginning-uncertain-end>

ARTICLES FROM U.S. JOURNALS

UNDER THE WORLD'S GREATEST CITIES, DEADLY PLATES. Achenbach, Joel.
Washington Post, February 23, 2010

In 1800, only one city in the world had more than a million people, Beijing. Last year, humanity reached a turning point, when more people lived in cities than rural areas; today, there are 381 cities with over a million residents each. Over 400 million people worldwide live in large cities that face significant seismic hazards, and the author writes that strong earthquakes, such as those that recently struck central Chile and Port-au-Prince, Haiti, will extract an increasing human toll due to the growing global trend toward urbanization. Achenbach notes that it is not the earthquake itself, but buildings, often poorly constructed, that kill people. Currently available online at

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/22/AR2010022204828.html>

NEW SPECIES FROM ANCIENT CAVES. Anderson, Troy. *National Wildlife*, Vol. 48, No. 2, February/March 2010

Caves shelter thousands of animal species, many of them unknown, according to biologists exploring caves beneath California's southern Sierra Nevada Mountains, in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, where new and unusual species are being discovered. Cave life forms are vulnerable to chemicals, poisons and other contaminants, and are adversely affected by amateur cave explorers who disrupt delicate underground habitats. Caves help purify groundwater in karst (hollowed-out bedrock) aquifers that supply freshwater to an estimated quarter of the world. Currently available online at

<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/National-Wildlife/Animals/Archives/2010/New-Species-from-Ancient-Caves.aspx>

LESSONS IN A LAND OF WIND AND ICE. Strycker, Noah A. *National Wildlife*, Vol. 48, No. 2, February/March 2010

Strycker, a researcher and journalist, writes about his three-month stay at Cape Crozier, Antarctica, to study and photograph Adélie penguins. He relates that their behavior is influenced by changes in weather and ice patterns: "The penguins are bellwethers of this climate change." Adélie and Emperor penguins who breed on the region's ice shelves may face extinction unless they can adapt to the shrinking ice. Currently available online at

<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/National-Wildlife/Birds/Archives/2010/Lessons-in-a-Land-of-Wind-and-Ice.aspx>

FACING EXTINCTION: 9 STEPS TO SAVE BIODIVERSITY. Roman, Joe, Ehrlich, Paul et al. *Solutions*, No. 1, January-February 2010.

Four distinguished authors outline conservationists' responsibility to defend and restore ecosystems in a world where biodiversity is increasingly compromised by climate change and human activity. They propose nine ways to do this that involve local communities, individual and national economics, biodiversity endowments, and education to increase "bioliteracy." With so many species extinct or on the brink of extinction, the goal is to reach "zero extinction" by returning to good stewardship. Currently available online at http://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/feature_article/2009-02-24-facing-extinction-nine-steps-save-biodiversity

THE OTHER INCONVENIENT TRUTH: THE CRISIS IN GLOBAL LAND USE. Foley, Jonathan. *Yale Environment* 360, October 5, 2009

Foley, director of the Institute on the Environment at the University of the Minnesota, writes that the environmental impact of our current agricultural practices rival that of climate change. Already, humanity has converted over a third of the world's ice-free land surface to agriculture, which has been more disruptive to the earth's ecosystems than anything else since the last ice age. Given the world's growing population, we may have to double or even triple agricultural output over the next 30-40 years. Says Foley, "the future of our civilization and our planet requires that we simultaneously address the grand challenges of climate change and land use ... anything less will be a complete catastrophe." He believes that we need to have a larger international conversation to acknowledge the scope of the problem; among the goals he suggests is to invest in new agricultural solutions and bridge the divide that has grown between production agriculture and environmental conservation. Currently available online at <http://www.e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2196>

THE DAMMING OF THE MEKONG: MAJOR BLOW TO AN EPIC RIVER. Pearce, Fred. *Yale Environment* 360, June 16, 2009)

The Mekong River in Southeast Asia sustains one of the world's largest fisheries, and has been a mainstay of the region for millennia; some 60 million people depend on the river for their sustenance. The annual flood of the Mekong pours into the Tonle Sap in Cambodia, a river that flows backward once a year and creates a huge inland lake, where billions of fish are raised. The author notes that this remarkable ecosystem is threatened by a series of hydroelectric dams that China is building along the upper reaches of the Mekong, that could cut its flood-season flow by a quarter. Pearce notes that China never joined the Mekong River Commission, formed by the four downstream nations on the river, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand, nor has it even discussed its dam plans with the commission. China, notes Pearce, is not the only "upstream bully" on the world's major rivers; international law is urgently needed to protect downstream nations, and to protect the ecological integrity of the world's great rivers. Available online at <http://www.e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2162>

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