



NGO SUSTAINABILITY

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PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LIVING AND RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR PLANET
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Consultative Status, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
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- NGO Sustainability team

“Climate change is moving faster than we are, but we don't give up because we know that climate action is the only path..” -Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General

Jeffery Sachs

Economist Jeffrey Sachs is the director for Columbia University's Center for Sustainable Development. Additionally, he serves as president for the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network. In this role, Sachs aids in advising on various issues of international interest, ranging from collaborative solutions among countries to addressing climate change, and recently the U.S. role in conflicts in Ukraine. Additionally he serves as an advisor to UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, on the Sustainable Development Goals. Previously Sachs served as the president of Columbia's Earth Institute where he was a firm advocate for sustainable development. In 2015, Sachs was recognized for his commitment to environmental advocacy, being rewarded the Blue Planet Prize for his work in applying scientific



Jeffery Sachs speaking at UN Economic and Social Council meeting regarding addressing inequality as a means of achieving Sustainable Development Goals. March 2016. Photo: Getty Images

research related to climate change, suggesting ambitious but viable economic solutions for a more sustainable future. Sachs has authored multiple New York Times bestsellers and continues to publish new books based on his recent research, including his most recent, *Ethics in Action for Sustainable Development* (2022).

“Warned”
by Sylvia Stults ¹

The sands of time have rendered fear
Blue skies on high no longer clear
Stars were bright whence they came
Now dimmed, obscured, pollution's haze

Crystal clear our waters gleamed
Fish abundant, rivers streamed
Ocean floors sandy white
Now littered, brown, pollution's plight

Trees towered high above
Trunks baring professed love
Birds chirping from sites unseen
Gone, paper joined pollution's team

One can't blame pollution alone
As they say, you reap what you've sown
So let us plant a better seed
Tear out old roots, cultivate, weed

Protect what has been given for free
Our waters, skies, wildlife and trees
For once they're gone, don't you say
Consider yourself warned of that fatal day

¹ Sylvia Stults. "Warned." Family Friend Poems, Oct 2015.

“Brazil to Require Mandatory Sustainability Reporting from 2026”

By: Mark Segal, *ESG Today*



Photo: Getty Images

Brazil's Securities and Exchange Commission (CVM) and Ministry of Finance have announced that public companies in Brazil will be required to provide annual sustainability and climate-related disclosures starting in 2026. These requirements will be based on standards issued by the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) of the IFRS Foundation. Brazil joins other jurisdictions like the UK and Australia in adopting these global standards, following a call by IOSCO, the international securities regulators forum. The move is part of Brazil's Ecological Transformation Plan, designed to transition the country to a green economy, involving significant public and private investment. The reporting will help global investors assess risks and opportunities, enhance transparency, and facilitate sustainable investment decisions. Companies can voluntarily adopt these standards from 2024, with mandatory reporting for public firms starting in 2026. The initiative aims to create transparency, allowing global metrics for market assessment and decision making in alignment with sustainable values.

[Full Article](#)

“Electric vehicles are hitting a roadblock: Car dealers”

By: Shannon Osaka, *Washington Post*



Photo: Getty Images

The Biden administration has a goal for at least two-thirds of car sales to be electric within the next decade. However, prohibitions on manufacturers selling their produced vehicles, rather than dealers selling their cars, are stalling sales of electric vehicles. Many customers themselves have reported misinformation from car dealerships, or promotion of traditional gas vehicles rather than promoting EV sales, which is deterring many from promoting electric vehicle sales. Many dealers report not wanting to sell these electric vehicles, due to longer times on average required to sell these EVs, which decreases economic incentive as opposed to selling gas cars, as well as the fact that far less maintenance is required on electric vehicles, so they are less of an income source. EV producers themselves are reported to hold most of the knowledge about the benefits of electric vehicles, and most sales remain either at dealerships reserved only for EVs, or sales from EV companies like Tesla themselves.

[Full Article](#)

“Indonesia to Return 200,000 Hectares of Palm Oil Plantations to Forests”

By: *ESG News*



Photo: Getty Images

The Indonesian government has announced plans to restore around 200,000 hectares of palm oil plantations back to natural forestland. The move aims to protect wildlife habitats and ecosystems that have been severely degraded by the rapid expansion of palm oil cultivation across the country. The restored forests will reconnect fragmented habitats for endangered species like orangutans, tigers, rhinos, and elephants. Reforestation is seen as vital for meeting Indonesia's climate goals as well, since intact tropical forests store massive amounts of carbon. The government will provide incentives for firms to participate and claims the initiative will balance economic development with conservation needs. Environmental groups have welcomed the bold plan after years of destructive palm oil growth enabled by the government. They caution that diligent monitoring will be required to ensure companies comply and that restored areas are protected. The reforestation plan demonstrates Indonesia's increasing commitment to sustainable development amid ongoing global scrutiny.

[Full Article](#)

“EU Council Adopts New European Green Bond Standard to Promote Sustainable Finance?”



By: *ESG News*

Photo: Getty Images

The European Council recently adopted the new European Green Bond Standard, a set of criteria designed to provide uniform standards for bonds financing sustainable projects across the EU. The standard aims to boost the sustainable finance market by providing confidence to investors that their funds will support eco-friendly initiatives. Under the new rules, any bond issue seeking the EU Green Bond label must allocate at least 95% of proceeds to projects aligned with the EU taxonomy, which defines environmentally sustainable economic activities. The standard is part of the EU's Sustainable Finance Action Plan seeking to direct massive capital flows towards zero-carbon transition initiatives through bonds, loans, investment funds and other instruments, estimated to require €350 billion in additional financing per year. The EU hopes standardized green bond guidelines will prevent greenwashing, accelerating growth in this market, and ultimately funding renewable energy, clean transportation infrastructure, pollution prevention, and climate change adaptation across Europe.

[Full Article](#)

“How Climate Change is Testing the Endangered Species Act”

By: Nathan Rott, Ryan Kellman, Rachel Carlson, Regina G. Barber, *NPR Shortwave*



Photo: Getty Images

One scientist is advocating for the most endangered deer population in the U.S. called the Key deer, only found in one region of Florida’s southernmost region of the Florida Keys, because changing climates are endangering this extremely small population of deer. For example, pine rockland trees, which deer use as the only source of habitat on the islands they are on, are not extremely tolerant of salt water, and are facing threats from soils in the Florida Keys that are becoming more salty due to sea level rising. Approaching saltwater is not only wiping out vegetation on the island that the Key Deer inhabit, threatening Key Deer populations and causing scientists to question whether conservation measures must be taken to protect Key Deer populations.

[Full Article](#)

“A Tire Chemical is Threatening Salmon”

By: Rachel McCrea, *Washington Post*



Photo: Getty Images

6-PPD is a chemical commonly used in tire production, which is raising increasing concern from scientists over its role in the death of salmon. This chemical is commonly washed into streams or rivers from precipitation, which is spreading particles of the chemical being removed from tires and onto the road. Specifically, many indigenous tribes are filing lawsuits in regions known to contain 6-PPD, in attempts to force companies to stop the production of tires with 6 PPD. However, resistance is coming from manufacturers who remind people that there are currently no alternative chemicals to serve as a viable substitute without reducing the quality of tires being produced, leaving an uncertain future for this chemical’s production.

[Full Article](#)

“Better Cotton Revolutionizes Sustainable Cotton Sector with Traceability Solution”

By: *ESG News*



Photo: Getty Images

Better Cotton, the world's largest sustainable cotton program, has launched a new traceability solution to provide transparency into its supply chain. The initiative will allow retailers, brands and manufacturers to track Better Cotton's journey through the supply chain from farm to final product. Partners can access data on the origin and sustainability metrics of Better Cotton used in their products. This unprecedented visibility aims to substantiate sustainability claims and satisfy consumer demand for supply chain transparency. As fashion brands face scrutiny over sustainability practices, Better Cotton's traceability platform provides assurance their raw materials are responsibly and ethically sourced. The nonprofit Better Cotton Growth & Innovation Fund will use insights from tracing data to direct its farmer training and capacity building programs. By revolutionizing traceability, Better Cotton hopes to scale responsible cotton production worldwide, promising both sustainability and supply chain accountability.

[Full Article](#)

“New York Announces Largest State Investment in Renewable Energy in US History”

By: *ESG News*



Photo: Getty Images

The state of New York recently announced its largest ever commitment to renewable energy projects, a massive \$13.9 billion investment that will fund the development of over 11,000 megawatts of new renewable energy capacity across the state. This is the single largest investment in renewable energy by any state in U.S. history. Once operational, these new renewable energy sources, including large-scale offshore wind farms off the coast of Long Island, upstate solar arrays, and community solar projects, among others, will be able to power over 6 million New York homes. This enormous investment is a key component of New York's ambitious goal to achieve 70% renewable electricity statewide by 2030 and a zero emissions electricity sector by 2040 and create 13,000 jobs across New York.

Environmental advocacy groups have applauded the announcement, pointing out that it will substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution from fossil fuel-fired power plants in the state. The funded projects are expected to come online within the next 5 years.

[Full Article](#)

Danish Energy Resilience: Local Decisions With Global Implications



An offshore wind farm near Copenhagen, at sunset.
Photo: Andrew Miller

Skyrocketing energy prices, rolling blackouts, and widespread unrest: this was not some apocalyptic future but a genuine prediction for the winter of 2022 across the European Union (EU) as Russia cut natural gas supplies to the continent after the imposition of international sanctions. Instead, however, a much more insidious danger is spreading throughout Europe: the reopening of and reinvestment into fossil fuel infrastructure and the threat of an even more destructive climate future. While much of the world uses the energy crisis as an excuse to invest more in fossil fuels, the small country of Denmark has taken an alternative route. Through direct government action and promoting the adoption of renewable energy, Denmark is accelerating the achievement of its climate goals while breaking its dependence on Russian fossil fuel supplies.

Changing energy politics

Before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Denmark [imported 75 percent of its natural gas from Russia](#) but joined the rest of the EU in [placing sanctions](#) on Russian exports. Now Denmark is implementing a plan to wean itself off Russian

natural gas and achieve its climate goals. The plan would convert 50 percent of households heated by natural gas to [biogas](#) from district heat plants or electric heat pumps by 2028.

While the sudden lack of Russian natural gas supplies wasn't unexpected after the first round of sanctions, it still caught some EU nations unprepared. Many EU states, particularly Germany, received the majority of their natural gas from Russia before the war, making them dependent on Moscow for energy. But almost all EU members, [including Denmark](#), pledged to phase out the use of Russian natural gas to limit funding for Russia's war, a move which forced the reopening of large coal plants across the continent and a surge of imports of liquified natural gas (LNG) from the United States.

But Denmark remained more resilient to the sudden energy crisis than its larger neighbors. Part of the reason for Denmark's relatively smooth experience since the start of the war was the result of its history. [Oil imports](#) once made up 93 percent of Denmark's energy mix, leaving the country vulnerable to the catastrophic shortages of the 1973 oil crisis. To compensate, Denmark began exploiting offshore oil and gas fields in its national waters, making the small nation energy independent.

As its fossil fuel reserves have been depleted, Denmark began importing energy from other countries again. Before the war, much of its gas came through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline from Russia, but now most gas and other energy comes from Norway and Sweden. However, almost 48 percent of Denmark's electricity comes from domestic wind production. Denmark is also supplementing natural gas with



Amagerbakke, a biomass burning plant and tourist attraction on the edge of Copenhagen

Photo: Andrew Miller

biogas, making it less reliant than other countries on Russian fossil fuels. However, the war still had notable effects on Denmark's energy plans. The sudden energy shortage prompted Denmark to prolong the lifespan of its last remaining coal fired power plants and forced it to consider expanding natural gas operations in the North Sea. While there has been no fossil fuel renaissance, as is starting to take place in other countries, energy security is now more of a priority than climate change in Danish politics.

Economic impacts

Energy was not the only reason Denmark fared so well compared to its neighbors. Inflation levels unseen for decades rocked the EU, sparing not even Denmark. But the broader economic policies the Danish government enacted prevented much of the social unrest seen across the EU. The government allowed people to [defer payments](#) of their energy bills indefinitely and, against the warnings of Denmark's central bank, instituted a 660 dkk (roughly US\$95) increase in the child tax credit.

To reduce energy costs, the government also [issued several recommendations](#) to conserve energy including reducing temperatures in public buildings and offices to no lower than 19°C and turning off outdoor lighting on municipal buildings. In fact, Denmark's energy conservation practices were so successful because they were readily adopted by the population.

Danes began taking simple measures such as running large appliances less frequently, being more frugal with heat, and minimizing light use. High energy prices spurred many of these changes, forcing the adoption of new habits. Several apps, including Min Strøm (My Power), aided this process by allowing Danes to see when energy costs are cheapest during the day. Not only did these actions lower energy costs, but they also helped [reduce the greenhouse gas emissions](#) from energy consumption that rose in so many other countries. But as with the Danish government, many of these decisions were driven primarily by economic and energy security considerations; sustainability was an afterthought. Most importantly, the population largely went ahead with energy conservation policies. There were no protests on the scale of those seen in the [Czech Republic](#) or [many other](#) nations.

A Model for the Future?

There are signs that Denmark's resiliency plans might be more successful than first expected. Instead of reopening old fossil fuel plants, Denmark has approved [9 gigawatts](#) more of offshore wind development, is [partnering](#) with the European Commission on a 170 million euro (roughly US\$183 million) green hydrogen project, and set a national record for renewable

energy production in 2022. As Denmark's greenhouse gas emissions continue to decline, we can only hope that other governments around the world, particularly in industrialized countries, adopt similar policies in times of peace and crisis.

At the same time, the Danish model itself needs to be improved. While Denmark is a world leader in renewable energy, especially wind, and has made bold proposals about reducing its GHG emissions, the details on how to meet those goals are vague. Instead of making plans to substantially cut emissions now, the Danish government is betting on the future development of carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) technology.

As first reported by the Copenhagen Post, Denmark is [on track to meet its earliest climate goal](#) of reducing its GHG emissions levels 49.8 percent by 2025 compared to 1990 levels, and 70 percent by 2030, and will make more progress by using biofuels in vehicles. Even more promising, [electricity emissions](#) will be reduced 99 percent compared to 1990 levels by 2030, not counting waste incineration. But most of the industrialized world is making much less progress on climate. If we do not expand our renewable energy capacity and instead invest more in fossil fuels, like much of the world, every time there is a major disruption

to the status quo, we will all feel the consequences for generations to come.



Avedøreværket, a mixed-use biomass and petroleum power plant to the south of Copenhagen with nearby wind turbines.

Photo: Andrew Miller

Book Report: "Sustainability Is the New Advantage: Leadership, Change, and the Future of Business"

By Peter McAteer

Book Report by Intern: Egest Balla

There is no doubt that politicians and the general public must take decisive action to address climate change's dire impacts. Climate change has a profound impact on the environment, and it's becoming more urgent to create a sustainable world to address those consequences. The book "*Sustainability is the New Advantage*" by Peter McAteer argues why sustainability should be integrated into business strategy. *Sustainability Is the New Advantage*, examines the significance of sustainable practices for businesses today. According to McAteer, sustainable development should take a Triple Bottom Line approach that considers financial, environmental, and social factors. Thus, businesses can contribute positively to society and the environment while achieving long-term success. The book emphasizes leadership's pivotal role in driving sustainability initiatives within organizations. Strong, visionary leaders inspire teams and stakeholders to embrace sustainability as a core value. McAteer provides real-world examples of companies that have successfully integrated sustainability into their operations, highlighting the benefits of enhanced brand reputation, cost savings, and increased customer loyalty.

Peter McAteer highlights some key concepts regarding business sustainability:

1. **The Triple Bottom Line:** McAteer introduces the concept of the Triple Bottom Line, advocating for a balanced focus on financial, environmental, and social factors. This approach enables businesses to align their strategies with sustainability principles.

2. **Leadership and Change:** The book highlights the importance of leadership in effecting change and driving sustainability efforts within organizations. Leaders play a critical role in promoting sustainable practices and inspiring collective action.

3. **Innovation and Circular Economy:** McAteer explores the link between sustainability and innovation, encouraging businesses to adopt circular economy principles for resource efficiency and waste reduction.

4. **Stakeholder Engagement:** The book emphasizes the significance of engaging with stakeholders, including suppliers, customers, and communities, to foster a sustainable value chain and address broader social and environmental concerns.

5. **Transparency and Reporting:** McAteer stresses the value of transparency in communicating sustainable practices and reporting on progress to stakeholders and the public.

McAteer's exploration of real-life case studies enhances the practical relevance of the book's principles, making it a valuable resource for business professionals seeking sustainability. The emphasis on leadership is particularly noteworthy, as effective leaders can drive meaningful change and create a sustainability oriented corporate culture. Additionally, the book's focus on tangible benefits, such as cost savings and enhanced brand reputation, dispels the misconception that sustainability efforts are solely altruistic and costly. *Sustainability Is the New Advantage* presents a compelling case for the integration of sustainability principles into the core strategies of businesses. Peter McAteer's insightful analysis emphasizes the importance of leadership, change, and stakeholder engagement in driving sustainability initiatives.

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