

# Newsletter

## NGO Sustainability, Inc.



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## Prof. Travis Bradford

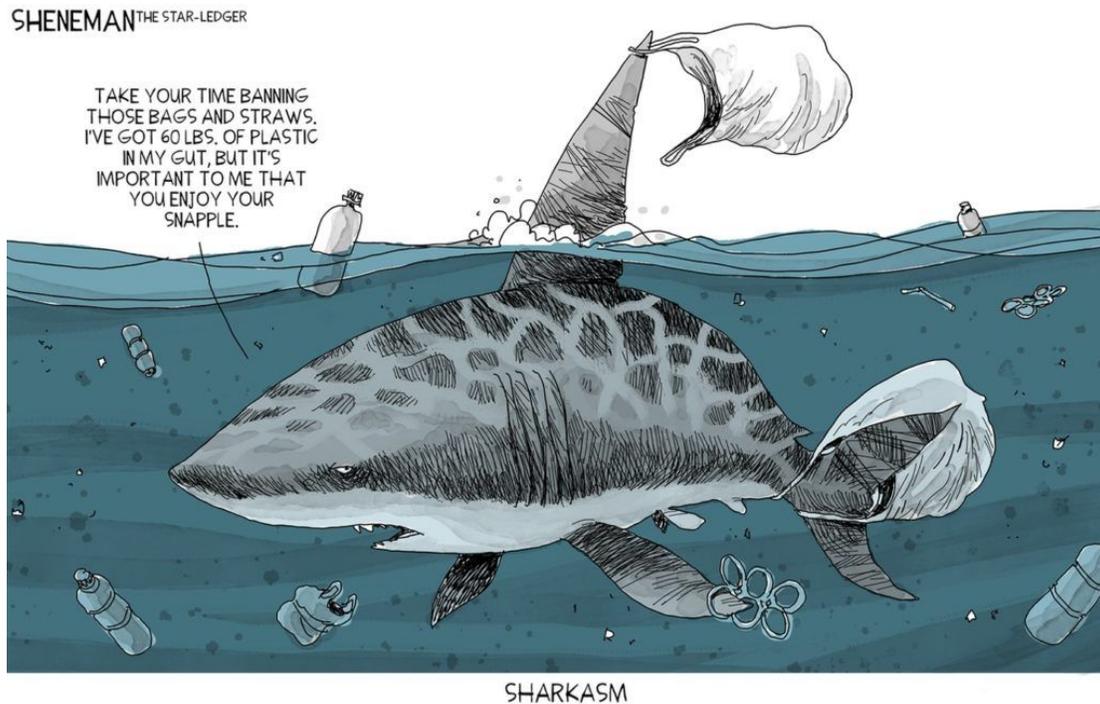


M.S. in Sustainability Management Professor Travis Bradford

Travis Bradford is a full-time Professor of Professional Practice at Columbia University, teaching energy and natural resource markets and innovation at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia Business School, and the Earth Institute. Travis is also the founder and president of the Prometheus Institute for Sustainable Development, a nonprofit organization focused on harnessing the power of the business sector to develop cost-effective and sustainable solutions in technologies, including energy, water, food, and recycling. Through the Institute, he helped launch many organizations, including Greentech Media and the Carbon War Room. He is the Chairman of Watt Fuel Cell Corporation. His latest book is ‘‘The Energy System: Technology, Economics, Markets, and Policy.’’

**‘Microplastics Find Their Way Into Your Gut, a Pilot Study Finds’**

Douglas Quenqua



In a pilot study with a small sample size, researchers looked for microplastics in stool samples of eight people from Finland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, the United Kingdom and Austria. To their surprise, every single sample tested positive for the presence of a variety of microplastics.

Researchers have long suspected microplastics would eventually be found in the human gut. One study estimated that people who regularly eat shellfish may be consuming as much as 11,000 plastic pieces per year. Up to nine different kinds of plastics were detected, ranging in size from .002 to .02 inches. The most common plastics detected were polypropylene and polyethylene terephthalate — both major components of plastic bottles and caps.

Link to Article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/22/health/microplastics-human-stool.html>

## ‘European Parliament Approves Ban on Single-Use Plastics’

Ceylan Yeginsu



Photo Credit: Matt Dunham

The European Parliament has overwhelmingly approved a ban on single-use plastics such as straws, plates, and cutlery in Europe by 2021, joining a global shift as environmentalists emphasize the urgency of halting the use of materials that are detrimental to the planet. The use of other plastics such as single-use burger and sandwich boxes that don't have practical alternatives at this point will be reduced by at least 25 percent by 2025, and 90 percent of beverage bottles will be recycled, under the proposal.

[Link to Article:](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/25/world/europe/european-parliament-plastic-ban.html?smid=fb-nytimes&smtyp=cur&fbclid=IwAR1pEuorIKvJF4qP9o1uGSy0t-ahR5CrSgYj2ZpjmEh08oOFfxrE0zzewd4)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/25/world/europe/european-parliament-plastic-ban.html?smid=fb-nytimes&smtyp=cur&fbclid=IwAR1pEuorIKvJF4qP9o1uGSy0t-ahR5CrSgYj2ZpjmEh08oOFfxrE0zzewd4>

## ‘Call From Scientists to Scrub the Air of Carbon’

Brad Plumer



Photo Credit: Janie Osborne

The nation's leading scientific body on Wednesday urged the federal government to begin a research program focused on developing technologies that can remove around 10 billion tons of carbon dioxide from the air each year by midcentury. That's nearly as much carbon as all the world's forests and soils currently absorb each year. A warning that merely reducing emissions is no longer enough; we need an effort to bring researchers and companies together to help bring carbon removal technologies to the marketplace.

[Link to Article:](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/24/climate/global-warming-carbon-removal.html)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/24/climate/global-warming-carbon-removal.html>

## ‘Something New May Be Rising Off California Coast: Wind Farms’

Ivan Penn and Stanley Reed



Photo credit: Chang W. Lee

California's determination to fully rely on carbon-free technology by 2045 is forcing the state to look beyond solar power and land-based wind farms to meet the goal. Floating windmills could begin producing power within six years.

California is a particularly opportune spot for such a project, given the length of its coast and the size of its population.

[Link to Article:](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/19/business/energy-environment/california-coast-wind-farms.html)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/19/business/energy-environment/california-coast-wind-farms.html>

## ‘One Way To Stay Cool’

Sharon Lerner



Photo Credit: Hiroko Masuike

The report released recently by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change laid out the drastic reductions in coal, oil and gas consumption necessary to avoid catastrophic warming of the planet. But to stave off the most disastrous damage, we need to swear off another product, too: hydrofluorocarbons. We already have alternatives to HFCs that don't contribute to warming for instance ammonia, propane and isobutane.

In a bitter irony, these chemicals, used to cool, have also been driving global temperatures up.

An international agreement known as the Kigali Amendment will begin phasing out HFCs in 2019.

[Link to Article:](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/15/opinion/climate-change-refrigerators-air-conditioners.html)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/15/opinion/climate-change-refrigerators-air-conditioners.html>

## ‘California’s Underwater Forests Are Being Eaten by the ‘Cockroaches of the Ocean’

Kendra Pierre-Louis



Photo credit: Gabriella Angotti - Jones

“Our target today is the purple urchin,” said Josh Russo, a recreational fishing advocate who organized the event. Climate change helped trigger a 60-fold explosion of purple urchins off Northern California’s coast, the urchins going on a feeding frenzy and devouring kelp. In the absence of predators and with dwindling food supplies, the purple urchins have gone on a rampage.

Link to Article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/22/climate/kelp-climate-change-california.html>

## ‘New York Sues Exxon Mobil, Saying It Deceived Shareholders on Climate Change’

John Schwartz



Photo credit: Chona Kasinger

New York’s attorney general sued Exxon Mobil on Wednesday, claiming the company defrauded shareholders by downplaying the expected risks of climate change to its business. The Securities and Exchange Commission opened an investigation in 2016 over the company’s practice of not writing down the value of oil reserves in light of the risk of climate change regulations. Exxon recently announced it would spend \$1 million over the next two years to finance a group promoting “carbon dividend” legislation that would tax carbon dioxide emissions and then return the money that is collected back to taxpayers.

Link to Article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/24/climate/exxon-lawsuit-climate-change.html>

## ‘A New Culprit Is Identified in China’s Choking Smog’

Steven Lee Myers



Photo credit: Reuters

BEIJING - Scientists from Harvard and two Chinese universities reported that emissions of formaldehyde played a larger role than previously understood in producing the thick, toxic pollution that chokes much of the country each winter. China’s efforts to reduce the haze have focused lately on reducing sulfur dioxide emissions. The research suggests that China could improve air quality still more by directing efforts toward reducing emissions of formaldehyde in vehicles and industrial refining.

Link to Article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/18/world/asia/china-pollution-formaldehyde-sulfur.html>

## ‘Rescuing Sea Turtles From Fishermen’s Nets’

Amy Lee



Photo credit: Jeff Rotman

Local Ocean Conservation, a nonprofit based in the town of Watamu in Kenya is the only turtle rescue and rehabilitation center on the East African seaboard.

Today, sea turtles worldwide are threatened with extinction. And it’s estimated that only one of 1,000 turtle eggs laid survive to adulthood.

Ten to 15 percent of the center’s turtle patients are sick from eating plastic.

There is no doubt plastic pollution is growing; three-quarters of marine litter is now composed of plastic and tons of plastic waste get dumped into the ocean every year.

Link to Article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/15/science/sea-turtles-endangered-fishing.html>

**‘Beyond boom and bust?’**

The Economist



Photo credit: Getty Images

America is now the world’s top oil producer, surpassing Saudi Arabia and Russia.

Extracting oil from shale has become more efficient since 2014: the median break-even price for producing a barrel is \$46. But costs are rising.

As the industry matures and costs rise, recent leaps in output will probably become more modest.

But America is hardly energy-independent. Last year the country imported more than 10m barrels of petroleum each day, equal to about half of its consumption.

Link to Article:

<https://www.economist.com/leaders/2018/10/18/americas-shale-industry-faces-constraints>

**‘Connecticut’s voice can have effect’**

Stamford Advocate



Photo Credit: NextGen America

In the State of Connecticut the U.S. Climate Alliance is attempting to negotiate with Canada and Mexico in the aftermath of President Trump’s announcement that the United States would withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord, a landmark deal that was ratified by 170 nations. Mexico and Canada have agreed to work with the Alliance in areas like clean transportation, zero carbon power generation, increasing coastal resiliency and sharing information about the social cost of carbon.

<https://www.pressreader.com/usa/the-norwalk-hour/20180920/281724090464616>

**‘Young People Are Suing the Trump Administration Over Climate Change. She’s Their Lawyer.’**

John Schwartz



Julia Olson on a hike near Eugene, Ore.

Photo credit: Amanda Lucier

A landmark federal lawsuit against the Trump administration on behalf of 21 plaintiffs, ages 11 to 22, who are demanding that the government fight climate change. The young plaintiffs claim that the government’s actions, and inaction, in the face of global warming violate their “fundamental constitutional rights to freedom from deprivation of life, liberty, and property.” Their age is central to their argument.

Link to Article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/23/climate/kids-climate-lawsuit-lawyer.html>

**‘Heat and Drought Could Threaten World Beer Supply’**

James Gorman



Photo credit: Pat LaCroix

Nature Plants researchers say China, Britain and the United States by the end of the century that drought and heat could hurt barley crops enough to cause a 20 percent drop in supply.

China and the United States drink the most beer, because of their populations. “Under the worst scenario,” he said, China would lose 10 percent of its beer supply and the United States 15 to 20 percent.

Link to Article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/15/science/drought-beer-climate.html>

**Marine technology of the future: ‘In need of a clean up’**

The Economist



Photo Credit: Getty Images

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the United Nations body responsible for the world's shipping, decided to reduce the amount of sulphur allowed in bunker fuel from 3.5% to 0.5% by 2020.

The obvious way to offset the loss of sulphur-related cooling is by steep cuts to shipping's planet-cooking carbon-dioxide emissions. The IMO wants these to fall by half, compared with 2008 levels, by 2050, regardless of how many vessels then ply the seas. But unlike desulphurisation, which is both imminent and legally binding, the CO2 target looks fuzzy and lacks any enforcement mechanism. There are some various approaches to cut marine emissions such as electric motors and low-carbon fuel systems.

Link to Article:

<https://www.economist.com/science-and-technology/2018/11/03/shipping-regulators-plan-to-cut-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

### **‘Best Way to Fight Climate Change? Put an Honest Price on Carbon’**

The New York Times



Photo Credit: Lily Padula

Washington State voters will decide next week whether to impose a fee on carbon emissions. Climate scientists and economists have long argued that the single best way to slow global warming is to put a price on greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels and raise that price over time, thus creating a sensible market incentive to reduce emissions and invest in cleaner energy sources.

Link to Article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/29/opinion/climate-change-carbon-price.html>

### **‘New rules on sulphur make neither economic nor environmental sense’**

The Economist



Photo Credit: Netwave System

In London, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the United Nations agency for shipping, began a meeting on October 22nd aimed at taking action against air pollution.

The IMO will cut emissions of sulphur either by reducing its content in marine fuel from 3.5% to 0.5% from 2020 or by requiring ships to remove it from exhaust fumes.

Link to Article:

<https://www.economist.com/business/2018/10/27/sulphur-emissions-rules-for-shipping-will-worsen-global-warming>

### **‘Taking the Oceans’ Temperature, Scientists Find Unexpected Heat’**

Kendra Pierre-Louis



Photo Credit: The Ocean Agency

Climate change is rapidly warming the world's oceans, killing off aquatic organisms — like coral reefs and kelp forests — that anchor entire ecosystems. The warmer waters also cause sea levels to rise and make extreme weather events like hurricanes more destructive. If scientists can more accurately measure the speed at which oceans are warming, they can better predict the future effects of climate change. And a study published Wednesday in the journal Nature suggests that oceans are warming far faster than the estimates laid out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the global organization for climate data.

Link to Article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/31/climate/ocean-temperatures-hotter.html>

### **‘Economising on energy is great for consumers. Is it good for the planet?’**

The Economist



Photo Credit: Grist

On October 19th the International Energy Agency reported that doubling world GDP by 2040 would require only a small rise in energy demand if everyone adopted strict efficiency standards like Japan’s for vehicle-fuel efficiency. That, the forecaster says, would be great news for consumers and the climate alike. Higher efficiency means less fossil fuel must be burned— and less planet-cooking gas belched—to power the global economy.

Link to Article:  
<https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2018/10/27/energy-efficiency-is-good-for-consumers-and-for-the-planet>

**“Partnership to help bolster ocean research”**

Alexander Soule



Michael Bloomberg  
 Photo Credit: Stamford Advocate

United Nations envoy Michael Bloomberg and Greenwich billionaire Ray Dalio announced a \$185 million partnership over four years between Dalio’s OceanX initiative and Bloomberg Philanthropies to raise awareness of the challenges facing ocean ecosystems. OceanX is the newest of a large number of U.S. and international academic labs and nonprofits that fund both scientists on oceangoing research vessels as well as advocacy and education efforts to encourage sustainable practices with respect to the environment.

Link to Article:  
<https://www.stamfordadvocate.com/business/article/Greenwich-billionaire-commits-185M-to-sea-13344600.php>

**“Stamford parents start grassroots effort to cut school waste”**

Erin Kayata



Photo Credit: Michael Cummo

Whether vegetable remain on the styrofoam tray of students instead of landing in the trash, it is placed in a yellow bin marked “compost.”

Waste reduction has been a focus across the city since the cost of trash and recycling disposal went up to \$70 a pound.

Link to Article:  
<https://www.stamfordadvocate.com/local/article/Stamford-parents-start-grassroots-effort-to-cut-13230003.php>

**“We Have to Save the Planet. So I’m Donating \$1 Billion.”**

Hansjörg Wyss



Photo Credit: Walter Diaz

Wild lands and waters are best conserved not in private hands, locked behind gates, but as public national parks, wildlife refuges and marine reserves, forever open for everyone to experience and explore.

Wyss, a philanthropy, has decided to donate \$1 billion over the next decade to help accelerate land and ocean conservation efforts around the world, with the goal of protecting 30 percent of the planet’s surface by 2030. This money will support locally led conservation efforts around the world, push for increased global targets for land and ocean protection, seek to raise public awareness about the importance of this effort, and fund scientific studies to identify the best strategies to reach our target.

Link to Article:  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/31/opinion/earth-biodiversity-conservation-billion-dollars.html>

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