



NGO SUSTAINABILITY

GLOBAL WARNING

*LATEST NEWS IN SUSTAINABILITY +
NO. 135 | October 2022*

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)
Observer Status, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

“There’s little time left for a laissez-faire approach to conservation, especially when the loss of any one species in an ecosystem can yield unpredictable, potentially catastrophic ripple effects” - Tim McDonnell

Yvon Chouinard

Yvon Chouinard is an environmentalist and businessman who is most notable for founding the leading outdoor company Patagonia. His love of rock climbing led to the creation of the Chouinard Equipment company in the 1960s selling various types of climbing equipment. In 1973, he transformed the company into Patagonia and began selling outdoor clothing. He used the newfound success of his company to further his environmental goals. Under his leadership, Patagonia implemented environmental policies including committing to using all organic cotton in 1996 and becoming carbon neutral by 2025. In 2002, he founded 1% for the Planet, an international organization that donates 1% of all profits from its members to environmental causes. In 2022, he retired, relinquishing ownership over the company to a private trust that would use all future profits to fight climate change.



Warned

By Sylvia Stults

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

To view her poem and others like it, visit: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/warned>

“Switching to renewable energy could save trillions - study”

By: Jonah Fisher, *BBC News*



Photo: Jonah Fisher

A new study from Oxford University found that a global transition to renewable energy would save close to \$12 trillion by 2050. The authors utilized historic price data for both renewables and fossil fuels and ran models to predict future changes. They found that while fossil fuel prices have remained relatively stable (accounting for factors like market fluctuations and inflation), the price of renewables has fallen rapidly, close to a rate of 10% per year. Further development into renewable technologies would help to continue this trend and would lead to massive savings in the future. The authors criticized existing predictions as being too conservative and underestimating economic benefits, while advocating for greater investments in green energy to bring costs down further.

[Full Article](#)

“Half of world’s bird species in decline as destruction of avian life intensifies”

By: Phoebe Weston, *The Guardian*



Photo: Getty Images

According to the new State of the World's Birds report, close to half of all bird species are dwindling and one in eight are threatened with extinction as a consequence of anthropogenic climate change. Many bird species are essential to a healthy ecosystem, responsible for dispersing seeds, disposing of organic waste, and contributing to nutrient flows across biomes. Loss of any of these essential species would result in catastrophic dismantling of ecosystems that may be unrecoverable. In addition, solid data is showing that there is a connection between human health and the health of bird populations. Given that 70% of zoonotic illnesses originate in wildlife, the COVID-19 pandemic serves as a cautionary tale for what can happen if humans continue to harm the natural environment. With the UN Biodiversity Conference scheduled for December, there are hopes that this report will sound the alarm for governments to take further action.

[Full Article](#)

“Methane Might Be a Bigger Climate Problem Than Thought, Study Finds”

By: Henry Fountain, *The New York Times*



Photo: Getty Images

Methane is a prominent component of natural gas that can leak into the atmosphere through wells and other infrastructures. The oil industry typically burns off excess methane in a process called flaring to convert it into less potent greenhouse gases. However, scientists have discovered that flaring has proven more ineffective than previously assumed, leading to methane escaping into the atmosphere. As a result, greenhouse emissions in the United States have increased an estimated five times higher than in previous studies. Improving technology to mitigate methane emissions would, in the United States alone, be equivalent to taking 3 million cars off the road annually.

[Full Article](#)

“Trees Get Overheated in a Warmer Rainforest”

By: University of Gothenburg, *Environmental News Network*



Photo: Getty Images

The capacity of rainforests to act as carbon sinks may start to deteriorate as a result of higher temperatures from climate change. A new thesis by Maria Wittemann from the University of Gothenburg argues that photosynthesis rates for tree species that store the most amount of carbon diminish at higher temperatures and the plants' natural cooling mechanisms fail during droughts. Wittemann made this hypothesis after some species of trees were showing increased mortality rates without explanation. Although fast-growing species are able to withstand the increasing heat in tropical climates by sucking up vast amounts of water to their leaves, the same is not true for old growth forests, which develop more slowly and whose leaves lack the same capacity for transpirational cooling. As temperatures continue to rise, it could lead to the loss of one of the most important carbon sinks on the planet.

[Full Article](#)

“Environmental Sustainability in the Beauty Industry”

By: Penelope Martinez, *Unsustainable Magazine*



Photo: William Shu

Sustainability in the beauty and cosmetic industry is becoming more apparent as consumers become more environmentally conscious. However, the industry still contributes to several environmental issues. Many products are wastefully packaged as companies prioritize marketability over packing efficiency. Moreover, many cosmetics require large amounts of water which inevitably contributes to the alarmingly increasing water crisis. Additionally, some ingredients are derived from fossil fuels and many types of cosmetics including fragrances, deodorants, and hair sprays contain Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). Microbeads used in exfoliating body scrubs end up in oceans and contribute to microplastic pollution. Animal testing for cosmetics subject animals to the harsh exposure of chemicals and skin and eye irritation experiments. Overall, the cosmetic industry faces challenges with the increase of environmental awareness of the industry's environmental impact.

[Full Article](#)

“Boston bans artificial turf in parks due to toxic ‘forever chemicals’”

By: Tom Perkins, *The Guardian*



Photo: Getty Images

The city of Boston recently banned new artificial turf installations in public parks, joining a growing number of municipalities nationwide limiting its use due to environmental and health concerns. Over 1,200 artificial turf fields are installed every year in the U.S., and they are often heralded as a superior alternative to conventional grass fields due to lower maintenance costs. However, the materials used are laced with toxic compounds including PFAS, VOCs, and benzene, which are slowly released into the environment over time. Children are particularly vulnerable to these chemicals as their bodies are still developing and they are frequently exposed when playing sports or other activities. Although manufacturers claim that levels in artificial turf are too low to be dangerous, it is yet another vector of exposure to these forever chemicals in our everyday lives.

[Full Article](#)

“Fossil-Fuel Money Will Undermine Stanford’s New Sustainability School”

By: Naomi Oreskes, *Scientific American*



Photo: Harry Gregory/Stanford University

Stanford University has recently opened the Doerr School of Sustainability to help further their initiatives on climate change. However, the newly elected dean has stated they are willing to take donations from corporate giants in the fossil fuel industry. Although many academic leaders insist that “tainted money” doesn’t exist, there is ample evidence that academic findings are partially influenced by the interests of the donors who fund them, and the way institutions conduct research relies immensely on what their benefactors wish to accomplish. It is not enough to blindly accept money from fossil-fuel corporations, as their lobbying efforts to preserve the industry will likely tarnish scientific progress to mitigate climate change. It is hoped that the school will reconsider their decision and eliminate any influence from companies that wish to exacerbate our climate crisis.

[Full Article](#)

“Space Station Instrument may help cities combat extreme heat”

By: Melissa Gaskell, *Texas Climate News*



Photo: NASA

In light of increasing temperatures from recent heat waves, one of Texas’s significant environmental concerns includes the Urban Heat Island Effect. Urban Heat Islands occur when natural terrain is replaced with pavement, buildings and other surfaces that absorb and retain heat, often with deadly consequences. An experiment conducted by NASA for the ISS has revealed a way for society to combat this. Known as The Ecosystem Spaceborne Thermal Radiometer Experiment on Space Station (ECOSTRESS), this instrument can be used to identify hot spots within cities by recording ground surface temperatures. ECOSTRESS can identify thresholds for water use in plants and document patterns of heat absorption and retention. Most notably, it can create highly-detailed images that can be used to reveal the hottest part of cities, allowing cities to direct their efforts to reduce the Urban Heat Island effect in those areas.

[Full Article](#)

Earthshot Prize Council

by Jaclynn Nicole Sandoval

Mission and Background

The Earthshot Prize Council facilitates and promotes the Earthshot Prize, an award for solutions to climate change and other environmental issues. The Council selects 5 winners to receive a grant of €1 million to support their goals. The prize is presented by The Royal Foundation, a charity that supports the work of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and is intended to be awarded every year until 2030. Their mission is to discover and support solutions that could be crucial for repairing the planet. The 5 categories of focus include: ‘the restoration and protection of nature’, ‘air cleanliness’, ‘ocean revival’, ‘waste-free living’ and ‘climate action.’ The categories were inspired by the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The next awards ceremony is scheduled for December 2022 in Boston, Massachusetts.

Leadership

The Earthshot Prize Council is composed of 13 members including Prince William and David Attenborough. Other members include global ambassadors and influencers that come from a wide range of sectors dedicated to supporting positive environmental action. Those members include Queen Rania of Jordan, Christina Figueres, former Executive Secretary of the IPCC, Shakira, Cate Blanchett, and Indra Nooyi, former CEO of PepsiCo. According to Prince William, “The Earth is at a tipping point and we face a stark choice: either we continue as we are and irreparably damage our planet, or we remember our unique power as human beings and our continual ability to lead, innovate, and problem solve.”

Actions

The Earthshot Prize Council undergoes a thorough selection process, first conducting a global search for breakthrough solutions that can potentially address significant environmental challenges, and solutions with the most significant impact and best relate to the awards’ five categories are selected. There is one winner chosen for each category, hence 5 total winners. The council offers winners of the prize support with social networking, affords them access to a global platform, and showcases their profiles and solutions to the rest of the world. Winners of the 2021 Earthshot Prize include the Republic of Costa Rica, Takachar India, Coral Vita Bahamas, and The City of Milan in Italy.

Finance

The Earthshot Prize was originally part of the Royal Foundation for two years but became an independent charity in 2021. The Earthshot Prize is fully funded by the Duke of Cambridge’s Royal Foundation, which includes Prince William. It is additionally supported by the Global Alliance, a network of non-profit and international organizations committed to environment and sustainable development. The Earthshot Prize is estimated to cost a total of €50 million euros, which will be distributed across 50 total winners.

Assessment

Overall, I believe the Earthshot Prize Council will have a tremendous impact in finding and financially supporting environmental solutions and the sustainable development goals during this decade.

Sources

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DEATH TO THE LIVING , Long Live Trash

by Janelle Sochet



As trash fills the great oceans and piles up onto shore, we are left with more to neglect or as others propose, more to collect. Duke Riley is a Brooklyn-based artist that forms his creations through found objects or what many of us refer to as trash: mixed-plastics are transformed into colorful fishing lures, artful scrimshaws, and captivating sailor’s valentines.

Walking into his exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum, the viewer is drawn into the space with scrimshaws scattered around. However, there is something unfamiliar about these ‘ivory bones’, they aren’t bones at all. They’re bottles, broken tubes, medication capsules, even the rubber soles of a shoe. Paired with cartoon-like map art and a YouTube tutorial overhead on how to make a bait from a tampon applicator, one will realize this is not an ode to the typical fisherman. Riley, or the “modern-day pirate,” as Anne Pasternak, the director of the Brooklyn Museum stated, scavenges the coasts of New York waterways for all of the rubbish he can get his hands on. The artist organizes the refuse by color and type, in order to prepare the plastic for its artful rebirth. Specifically for the sailor valentines, Riley explained how he creates the pattern and then selects the products that will compliment the design.

Now one may question whether there is enough trash to create such patterned and harmonic work. The answer would be there is enough to make a job out of it. On one of Riley’s excavations, he met a woman on Fishers Island, a Long Island enclave. For the woman, it was nearly a ritual waking up each morning and without fail collecting several bags worth of plastic from the beach each day. Amongst meeting Duke, the woman offered to contribute her ‘trash’ure to the artist’s cause.

The playful nature of Riley’s creations juxtaposed the poisoned nature of how and where these materials are sourced. Personally, perceiving this artwork evoked a sort of sadness, behind the wave of color and India ink-drawings, there was a piece of plastic that was floating in the ocean, a danger to marine life and humankind, placed there through thoughtless actions of people and a broken system. In discussing with the artist himself I asked how he doesn’t get emotional dealing with all of this waste. And with nonchalance, he expressed why waste his time “wasting about waste” when he could make it into something.

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