



## NGO SUSTAINABILITY

# GLOBAL WARNING

LATEST NEWS IN SUSTAINABILITY +  
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PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LIVING AND RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR PLANET  
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*“What’s the use of a fine house if you haven’t got a tolerable planet to put it on.”  
—Henry David Thoreau*

### Elon Musk



Photo: *USA TODAY*

From his advocacy to his companies, he is without doubt, one of today’s most prominent influencers when it comes to climate issues. Elon Musk co-founded and leads Tesla, SpaceX, Neuralink and The Boring Company. As the co-founder and CEO of Tesla, Elon leads all product design, engineering and global manufacturing of the company's electric vehicles, battery products and solar energy products. Since the company’s inception in 2003, Tesla’s mission has been to accelerate the world’s transition to sustainable energy. Tesla launched Model S sedan in 2012 which received Consumer Reports’ Best Overall Car and has been named ultimate car of the year by Motor Trend. Because of his deep passion to

electrify the transport sector, Elon also launched The Boring Company, which combines fast, affordable tunneling technology with an all-electric public transportation system to alleviate urban congestion and enable high-speed, long-distance travel. The company is currently constructing the Vegas Loop, a public transportation system at the Las Vegas Convention Center. Elon believes the only way humanity can move away from fossil fuels to renewable energy for good is by massively increasing battery production. His company launched a Battery Day on September 22, 2020, to outline their plan to have more places to store energy.



Photo: *Crystal Bennes*

**“How’s my coal”** BY Simon Barraclough

Simon Barraclough was born and raised in Huddersfield and studied at the universities of Nottingham and Sussex. He is a freelance writer in creative and technical fields, and lives in London. He is published widely in poetry magazines, including Poetry Review and The Manhattan Review, and his work has been broadcast on BBC Radio.

*How’s my coal getting on?  
I set as much aside for you as I could.  
Don’t use it all up at once.  
It might come in handy one day.  
How’s my oil faring?  
It keeps best underground, in the dark.  
Doesn’t do so well in the light.  
Don’t let it spoil.  
How’s the wind blowing?  
I try to keep it moving,  
keep it on the muscle,  
keep the pressure on, make it hustle.  
How’s the hydro hanging?  
All that potential.  
You don’t oughta de-water: watch out for insects, birdlife.  
You’re dammed if you do and you’re dammed if you don’t.  
Any breaking news on wave power?  
I’ve hired an intern to handle the oceans.  
If we could make some ripples, get more converts,  
that would be swell.*

### “2nd largest US oil state eyes net-zero emission”

*Energy Wire* by Mike Lee



*Photo by Susan Montoya Bryan*

New Mexico is expecting a bill that would set one of the most aggressive state climate plans in the US. Passing the bill would require all industries in the second-biggest US oil producing state to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions to 50% of the 2005 levels by 2030 and equivalent to zero emissions by 2050. This is significant because New Mexico oil production has grown by about a 3rd in the last year, pumping about 1.3 million barrels per day.

[Full Article](#)

### “Indonesia is clearing less forest for palm oil, but it’s still not sustainable”

*Mongabay* by Hans Nicholas Jong



*Photo by Ruby Russell*

A new analysis has found that the clearing of forests for palm oil plantations in Indonesia has decreased since 2015. The amount of deforestation for plantations peaked at 314,937 hectares in 2012, and has decreased since to less than 100,000 hectares. Experts associate the slower rates of plantation expansion with a decline in palm oil prices. While palm oil is a vital element in a range of products, its production has been “associated with the wholesale clearing of tropical rainforests, burning of peatlands, destruction of endangered wildlife habitat, land conflicts with Indigenous and traditional communities, and labor rights abuses.” As a result, the product has been boycotted by consumer groups and for organizations such as the European Union to no longer recognize palm oil as a renewable fuel.

[Full Article](#)

## “Alaskan Indigenous leaders fear impacts on salmon streams from mining project”

*Mongabay* by Laurel Sutherland



*Photo by Laurel Sutherland*

Indigenous tribes have expressed concern for the approval of the construction of one of the world’s largest open-pit gold mines near Alaska’s Kuskokwim River. The river is a significant spawning ground for salmon, which make up an important part of native communities’ diet and lifestyle. Mining company Donlin Gold, the developers of the mine, state that they will implement technology that adequately eliminates the risk of polluting the river. Additionally, they have received approval from native corporations, which are “created to provide stewardship of ancestral lands and financial resources for Alaska’s native people.” However, local tribes have stated that these corporations acted without consulting them, and are appealing the decision in court.

[Full Article](#)

## “Ocean Microplastic Pollution May Be Greater Than Estimated”

*Science Daily* by Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona



*Photo by Shuttershock*

Microplastics are being underestimated in the Mediterranean due to the variety and evolving nature of scientific methods and techniques, finds the Institute of Environmental Science and Technology of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. The different characteristics, sampling methods, retardants or pigments create resistance to having a baseline framework to look at the plastics. Smaller particles and the open sea were areas left out in previous studies. Further work would be supplemented by knowledge of how microplastics move throughout the water column.

[Full Article](#)

**“Researchers say Earth's core may be cooling 'more rapidly than expected”**

*The Hill* by Mychael Schnell



*Photo by The Hill*

Researchers are warning that the Earth’s core may be cooling “more rapidly than expected,” which could speed up the timeline for when the planet becomes uninhabitable for humans. According to the researchers, when the planet gets cold enough, it will begin losing its magnetic field, which protects the Earth from damaging cosmic radiation. This would ultimately lead the planet to become sterile and unlivable. They added that the rate at which the Earth has been losing heat “directly links to the fundamental question on how long the Earth will remain dynamically active”

[Full Article](#)

**“A third of all flights could run on liquid green hydrogen by 2050, says international body”**

*Recharge News* by Leigh Collins



*Photo by Recharge News*

Liquid hydrogen (LH<sub>2</sub>) could be the preferred fuel for flights of up to 3,400km from 2035, accounting for 31-38% of all passenger aviation journeys, according to a performance analysis report by the International Council on Clean Transportation. LH<sub>2</sub> would be a cheaper aviation fuel than blue hydrogen or e-kerosene for trips of up to 3,400km, according to a new study by US non-profit ICCT. Blue hydrogen is produced from natural gas while green hydrogen is produced from electrolysis of water. However, fuel costs will increase considerably, because liquid hydrogen has a much lower energy density by volume than conventional jet fuel thus needs to be stored at temperatures below minus 253°C.

[Full Article](#)

## “Going Nuclear, should nations unilaterally decide?”

*DW* by Tamisin Walker



*Photo by Ludovic Marin*

As the world’s largest nuclear energy dependent country, France generates 70% of its electricity from atomic power. The country confirmed its plans to extend the life of its 32 oldest nuclear reactors for another 10 years amidst safety concerns in neighboring countries, mainly because of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster that spread radioactive waste across Europe, (leaving some remains 30 years later). France is relying on the European Commission’s ‘definitive response’ that allows member states to make the decision to operate nuclear energy and take responsibility to ensure its safety.

[Full Article](#)

## “China Group Develops plan to turn Biomass into Low-Carbon Natural Gas”

*Power News* by Darrel Proctor



*Photo by RCG*

Researchers in China have published the results of a study that the group said provides an efficient catalytic approach to directly transfer solid biomass into natural gas, while enabling the gas to have a low-carbon footprint. The researchers said biogenic and thermogenic processes are the two widely accepted methods for producing natural gas, which is a raw material for making ammonia and hydrogen. China’s Biomass Energy Industry Promotion Association (BEIPA) last year reported that the country annually produces more than 900 million tons of agricultural and forestry biomass which could generate power equal to that from about 400 million tons of coal.

[Full Article](#)

*Each week, our interns at NGO Sustainability choose special topics of interest to report on. We believe our interns should explore issues they are passionate about within the sustainability field and we look forward to sharing some of the most interesting aspects of this work with you. Here is Intern Naim's Report on Mini Grids*

## **Mini-Grids**

***Inspiring hope and powering up global clean energy access!***



*Photo source: Maxeon solar Technologies*

The influx of mini-grids largely solar in the energy sector provides not just an alternative to our main grids but hope and empowerment for communities globally. Mini-grids are the off-grid electricity generation and distribution grids that operate in isolation from the national network involving small-scale electricity generation.

Mini-grids promote universal clean energy access, reliable access to electricity for education, stabilizing small businesses, as well as increased access to social interactions through the internet, television and other media outlets thanks to electricity in remote locations.

They provide ancillary services that contribute to the power sector transformation in various countries. For example, Smart, Integrated and Decentralized Energy (SIDE) systems are a series of pilot projects for neighborhoods in the Netherlands to help balance the main grid. Similarly, the United States has been building and testing interconnected mini-grids such as the Stone Edge Farm mini-grids in California with about 630 photovoltaic (PV) panels along with several energy storage systems and a hydrogen production station for vehicle fuel.

According to the world bank, mini-grids have the potential to provide electricity to as many as 500 million people by 2030, which will require about \$220 million to build more than 210 mini-grids globally. This is possible to achieve because the costs of mini-grids projects have been reduced, while their quality has improved significantly.

Through mini-grids, there is the opportunity to achieve several goals of the UN SDGs. Among the 17 goals, mini-grids promote inclusive and equitable quality education-Goal 4, it promotes awareness and reduce inequalities-Goal 10, it promotes safe resilient and sustainable human settlements-Goal 11, it

helps to combat climate change-Goal 13 and goal 7 which ensures access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

*“Renewable energy mini-grids are emerging as the superstars of energy access, particularly in rural areas, where they have become a viable option for providing reliable and high-quality electricity to rural populations and businesses” UNIDO*

### ***Mini-grids positive impacts in pictures***



*Photo by Eco-Business*



*Photo by PowerGen*

*Environmental Organization report from Intern Arjun Anand.*



**The Tropical Forest Alliance (TFA)** is an international, multistakeholder public-private partnership dedicated to reducing deforestation and encouraging sustainable land use management in tropical forest countries. The TFA is governed by a Steering Committee that is composed of representatives from partner organizations. The Committee helps direct and manage the TFA's projects, actions, and goals.

As a host partner in the World Economic Forum's Center for Nature and Climate and Climate Action Platform, TFA works in collaboration with more than 170 partners, including companies, government agencies, civil groups, indigenous peoples, local communities, and other international organizations.

The TFA focuses on core action areas :

- Encourage sustainable land-use management in forest countries
- Lead projects to reduce tropical deforestation from global agricultural supply chains
  - Support and communicate on the progress of commitments to combat deforestation
- Engage key emerging markets in efforts to reduce commodity-driven deforestation

On the global level TFA supports commodity coalitions to implement their commitments, catalyzes the implementation of jurisdictional approaches, works with finance to reduce deforestation and facilitates the creation of demand-side policies.

The works of TFA in its four regional hubs :

### **Latin America**

- Brazil - Produce, Conserve and Include (PCI): works with the PCI to increase productivity, support native vegetation, and prevent deforestation

- Columbia - Zero Deforestation Agreements:  
works to support Columbia in its Zero Deforestation pledge for palm, cocoa, beef, and dairy
- Peru - Peruvian Public-Private Coalition:  
supports the implementation of deforestation agreements

### **Southeast Asia**

- Indonesia - Smallholder Task Force:  
facilitate discussions around financing and national policy in the context of smallholders (small-scale farm owners)
- Indonesia - Jurisdictional Approach in Jambi:  
Helps to create preferential sourcing areas and reduce national emissions.
- Indonesia - Jurisdictional Approach in Riau:  
supports Indonesia's Low Carbon Development Initiative (LCDI) and promotes a low-carbon development path through efforts to reduce deforestation.

### **West & Central Africa**

- African Palm Oil Initiative (APOI):  
Multinational effort to engage with government, civil organizations, and the private sector to reduce deforestation for palm oil plantations
- Côte D'Ivoire and Ghana - Cocoa and Forest Initiative:  
promotes sustainable sourcing of cocoa beans
- Ghana, Cameroon, and Côte D'Ivoire - Jurisdictional Approach:  
Fosters sustainable development programs through implementation dialogues on high level.

### **China**

- Business Coalition on Ecological Civilization:  
Building a coalition among companies in the food and beverage, retail, agriculture, and extractive industries to work towards global biodiversity conservation.
- Sustainable Soy Trade Platform:  
Works alongside major agricultural traders, Chinese companies, and international companies to form a more sustainable soy industry
- Green Value Chains Special Policy Study:  
Provides policy recommendations with high-level advisory input to the Chinese government that seek to cut deforestation from global supply chains

The TFA is funded by the governments of the Netherlands, Norway, Germany, the U.K., and the U.S.  
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