

A GLOBAL GREENING

By: Carl Zimmer
April 11, 2017

Since the Industrial Revolution, humans have increased the concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂) by 40 percent. This extra concentration has long fascinated scientists about the effects it has on plant growth, considering that CO₂ fertilizes them and that plant growth around the world has accelerated at a staggering rate. However, plants rely on more than just CO₂ to grow and survive. As a result, scientists have created isolated-vacuumed experiments to test their theories, which comprised of built enclosures, satellites, studying trapped air bubbles, and investigating the unimaginably rare molecule carbonyl sulfide in Antarctica's ice sheets.

Scientists have discovered that the levels of carbonyl sulfide — a molecule made up of individual carbon, sulfur and oxygen atoms — not only reflects the worldwide growth of plants, but also creates a historical record of the atmosphere reaching back thousands of years. It is still an open question as to what plants will do with the extra CO₂ in the years to come. More CO₂ might spur even more growth. But many climate models project that plants will suffer as temperature rises and rainfall patterns shift. According to Dr. J. Elliot Campbell of the University of California, “You see ecosystems storing more carbon for the next 50 years, but at some point you hit a breaking point.”

Link:
https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/05/science/carbon-dioxide-plant-growth-antarctic-ice.html?_r=0

BLOOMBERG URGES WORLD LEADERS: IGNORE TRUMP ON CLIMATE

By: Steve Peoples
April 23, 2017

New York billionaire Michael Bloomberg urged world leaders not to follow President Donald Trump's lead on climate change and declared his intention to help save an international agreement to reduce carbon emissions.

Instead of helping to re-ignite his political career, he said that his new book, “Climate of Hope: How Cities, Businesses, and Citizens Can Save the Planet”, which is co-authored by former Sierra Club executive director Carl Pope, offers a specific policy objective: To help save an international agreement, negotiated in Paris, to reduce global carbon emissions.

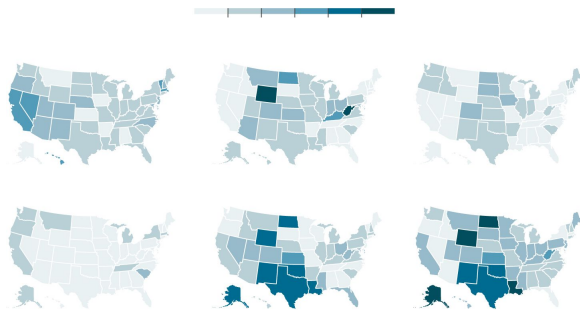
“We hope this book will help to correct that wrong impression and help save the Paris deal.”

Link:
<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nation/world/politics/ct-bloomberg-trump-climate-change-20170423-story.html>

SOLAR AND WIND, BUT NOT COAL: WHERE ENERGY JOBS ARE GROWING

By: Nadja Popovich
April 25, 2017

Although President Trump proposed to revive the coal industry, the Department of Energy's January report indicated that the solar, bioenergy, and other 'power creation' industries employed more Americans in recent years. In certain states, like Wyoming and West Virginia, the coal industry accounted for 3 percent and 2 percent of employment respectively. There is no doubt, however, that renewable power plays a significant role and will continue to impact America's energy economy.



Link:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/04/25/climate/todays-energy-jobs-are-in-solar-not-coal.html>



A TURNING POINT FOR PLUG-IN HYBRIDS

By: John R. Quian
May 11, 2017

2017 is a turning point for plug-in hybrids. Not only do these cars represent a third of the car market in the US, companies like Mercedes-Benz and General Motors are offering environmentally-friendly and affordable cars with diversified models and high-performance. Federal tax subsidies, rebates, and a decrease in battery prices are further incentives that motivate vehicle owners to purchase these cars. Despite the growth of the hybrid trend, the Trump administration is planning to roll back on current fuel economy standards, thereby discouraging drivers from staying motivated and/or considering them in the first place. Nonetheless, companies are making progress and setting expectations to move towards popularizing the all-electric and hybrid trends. Making this a promising year for the car industry.

Link:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/04/automobiles/wheels/plug-in-electric-hybrid-automobiles.html>