



NGO SUSTAINABILITY

GLOBAL WARNING

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PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LIVING AND RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR PLANET

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"The first rule of sustainability is to align with natural forces, or at least not try to defy them" - Paul Hawken

David Wallace-Wells



David Wallace-Wells is an American-born journalist who focuses on climate change. He is the editor-at-large at New York Magazine and a contributing editor for The Guardian newspaper. Wells rose to national prominence in 2017 with his New York Magazine article, "The Uninhabitable Earth". The article forecasted a dire scenario in the relatively near future if surface temperature warming is not curbed. He focuses on the effects of climate change on human civilization including severe weather, sea level rise, droughts, famine, and in particular the role they may play in generating human conflict. The article was later adapted into a book of the same name in 2019. In 2022, he began writing for the New York Times in an effort to raise awareness about climate change and the scale of collective action required to combat the unfolding crisis we face. Amongst the solutions he proposes include investment in renewable energy, research and development regarding carbon sequestration, and the potential implementation of a carbon tax.

Albeit

By: Carolina Ebeid

Carolina Ebeid is a poet whose debut collection, from which this poem is taken, is “*You Ask Me To Talk About the Interior*”. Her work has been featured in *AGNI*, *Gulf Coast*, and *Poetry Magazine*, and she serves as the poetry editor for *The Rumpus*.

Because I have wanted
 to make you something
 beautiful, I borrowed
 a book on how to keep
 a bee-hive made of glass.
 An observatory
 of translucent arteries
 lit with wing-gossip.
 An allegory for the soul.
 Though what do I understand
 of beauty that thrives
 in a place of exile.
 (Bees can anger so.
 A grist of killers has swarmed
 a boy beneath the windowsill).
 You said the soul-to-be.
 Vegetables flower
 outside. Squash-blossoms.
 & for what is that
 an allegory?
 We live in a copy
 of Eden, a copy
 that depends on violence.



“Monarch Butterflies Are Endangered, Leading Wildlife Monitor Says” *The New York Times* by Catrin Einhorn



Photo: Getty Images

The Monarch Butterfly has been classified as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. The population of Western monarchs has decreased by 99.9% since the 1980s, with Eastern monarchs dropping 84%. Monarchs are susceptible because they feed only on milkweed and have to migrate vast distances across North America. Excess spraying of agricultural by-products such as glyphosates combined with climate change-induced weather events have decimated milkweed populations, leaving the monarchs without a plentiful source of food. Additionally, climate change is creating a desynchronization between when the plants bloom and insects arrive during spring. The Monarch may start its migration at a time when the milkweed hasn't reached maturation to feed the population. Monarch experts have turned to the public for help, encouraging the planting of native milkweed species, while spreading awareness and encouraging interventions to ensure the monarchs' survival.

[Full Article](#)

“White House launches Heat.gov website as warmer temperatures hit U.S.” *NBCNews*, by Denise Chow



Photo: Heat.gov

In response to record-breaking temperatures across the country this summer, the Biden Administration released a new website (HEAT.gov) designed to inform and protect the public from extreme heat. The site contains detailed maps and data to provide accurate heat forecasts from multiple government agencies to warn the public about upcoming heat waves. Additionally, the site is designed around being most effective for people especially vulnerable to heat-related illnesses, with important health risk information readily accessible to impacted communities. With close to 38 million Americans under active heat advisories and many municipalities reaching triple-digit temperatures, the website aims to provide resources to help those in need prepare for future weather events.

[Full Article](#)

“As drought shrivels Lake Powell, millions face power crisis” *The Guardian*, by Peter Yeung



Photo: Getty Images

Water levels at Lake Powell have reached record lows due to one of the longest dry-spells in the Colorado River basin in more than 12 centuries. As one of the largest artificial reservoirs in the country, it provides water and electricity to almost 40 million people across the Southwest. However, levels have dropped significantly enough to where critical hydropower infrastructure is at risk of no longer producing any energy. This has significant impacts across the board, with special emphasis on Native American communities who often lack access to affordable energy alternatives. The Bureau of Reclamation has predicted that in spite of proposed water cuts there is a 23% chance that power production at the lake could cease by 2024, with some predicting as early as July of next year. Many solutions are being proposed to address the situation, including water allowances and imports from other reservoirs. Drastic measures need to be taken in order to mitigate damages and adapt to a rapidly changing climate.

[Full Article](#)

“A coming copper shortage could derail the energy transition, report finds” *CNBC*, by Pippa Stevens

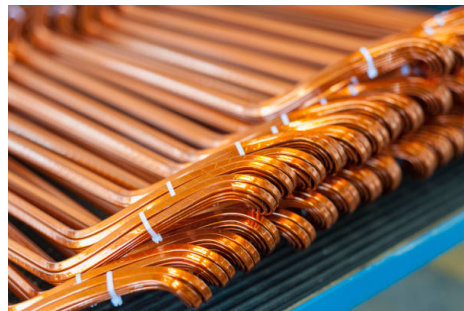


Photo: Getty Images

According to a new report from S&P Global, the global copper industry is set to experience severe supply setbacks, potentially hampering the transition towards reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. Copper is a key component in a variety of sustainable applications including electric vehicles, renewable energy, and battery storage. The report predicts a two-fold increase in copper demand by 2035, and is expected to reach 53 million metric tons by 2050. As new mines take 16 years on average to begin viable operations, current initiatives such as increased output at existing mines and copper recycling can help alleviate the market disequilibrium. However, under several predicted scenarios the market experiences a supply deficit, prompting reevaluation of our extraction and consumption of copper. Rising demand for key minerals will likely create a new geopolitical order around securing additional stockpiles to establish a dominating presence in the growing market.

[Full Article](#)

“Tidal Energy is the next wave in renewables”

Boss Magazine, by BOSS Editorial



Photo: Getty Images

With increasing demand for renewables, tidal energy presents another option for coastal communities. Simply put, tidal energy harnesses the flow of water between high and low tide and uses the resultant kinetic energy to generate electricity. There are three main forms of tidal energy. The first being barrages, which are dam-like structures stretched across tidal basins that use sluice gates to control the flow of water through small turbines. The second uses large and isolated underwater turbines powered by tidal currents. The third is fences, which are small turbines stacked vertically which exploit fast flowing underwater ocean currents to produce energy. Tidal energy provides several benefits, including greater energy efficiency than conventional turbines and a smaller footprint. Several prototype designs are being tested, with further developments in California, South Korea, Maine, and France. Although the full impact on local ecosystems remains under study, the potential of tidal energy is huge and can provide large amounts of clean energy to coastal communities with large tidal ranges.

[Full Article](#)

“Farmer Protests in the Netherlands Show Just How Messy the Climate Transition Will Be”

Time Magazine, by Clara Nugent



Photo: Mohamed Farouk Batiche

Protests have erupted across the Netherlands – particularly from Dutch farmers – as a result of recent government climate proposals. The agricultural sector has become a target for government policies due to large amounts of manure that release ammonia as well as potent greenhouse gasses like nitrous oxide. The Netherlands proposed an aggressive policy measure to halve these emissions by 2030, which would involve a 30% reduction in livestock. However, experts say that many farms would have to shut down, leaving the livelihoods of many farmers in jeopardy. Although the proposal includes \$25 billion to help farmers transition, there is uncertainty around how that money will be distributed as well as which farms will need to give up their assets. This dispute has rippled into other Western countries like Spain, France, and Canada as more aggressive climate policies are being introduced. In order to ensure the effectiveness of these environmental reforms, governments should work to be more transparent and offer more support to farmers.

[Full Article](#)

“Biodiversity Survey Reveals that More Species are Threatened with Extinction than Previously Thought”

ScienceDaily by University of Minnesota



Photo: Getty Images

A meta-study incorporating 187 countries and 3,331 survey responses from bioscientists found that since 1500, about 30% of species have been classified as threatened or extinct. The study was designed to incorporate a variety of scientific perspectives and show the effects of demographics on published estimates. For example, experts in the Global South who identified as women cited greater losses to biodiversity than their contemporaries. The authors encouraged professionals to compare their findings with other diverse groups. The results could be used to create effective biodiversity targets and inform international policy. The study emphasizes the need for greater conservation efforts today that could reduce the possibility of extinction for one out of three species by 2100.

[Full Article](#)

“What Would a Climate Emergency Mean? Here Are 4 Key Points.” *The New York Times*, by Elena Shao



Photo: Getty Images

The Biden Administration is hearing calls from the Democratic Party to declare climate change a national emergency. Doing so would allow President Biden to bypass Congress utilizing the National Emergencies Act. The Biden administration could further regulate the oil and gas industry by reinstating a ban on oil exports, which a study from the Greenpeace and Oil Change International group equated to shutting down 42 coal plants. There could also be a halt on oil and gas drilling near 11 million acres of federal waters. This is ideal as chemicals and processes associated with fracking can contaminate water tables. Additionally, an emergency declaration could allow the President to suppress fossil fuel trade while halting U.S. investment in foreign wells. While some scholars believe an emergency declaration exceeds the President’s authority, others highlight the necessary urgency that effective climate policies require. However, long-term legislation from Congress is needed alongside judicial cooperation in order for an executive climate agenda to be successful.

[Full Article](#)

Each week, interns at NGO Sustainability choose special topics of interest to report on, exploring issues they are passionate about within the sustainability field. We look forward to sharing some of the most interesting aspects of this work with you. Here is Intern Kamille Sharma's report on the 2022 United Nations Ocean Conference

The 2022 UN Ocean Conference:

The United Nations Ocean Conference was held in Lisbon, Portugal from June 27th - July 1st, 2022, under the joint sponsorship of Portugal and Kenya. World leaders and representatives from over 150 countries met to discuss the rate of climate change's impacts on the ocean as well as opportunities for a sustainable future.

The conference centered on raising awareness on alarming ocean issues, including ocean acidification and rising pollution levels. Recent measurements have found the ocean to be at its most acidic level in over 26,000 years. This increased acidity has severely impacted marine species that require a narrow and specific habitable pH range to survive and reproduce. Mr. Hans Otto-Pörtner, Co-Chair of the IPCC Working Group II (WG II), discussed the limited temperature ranges in which marine species can adequately survive and many organisms are being affected by higher temperatures and lower oxygen levels in the ocean.¹ This has led to high marine organism mortalities in coral reefs that require decades to fully recover.² The conference reinforced the need to protect coastal habitats, coral reefs and other marine ecosystems to conserve biodiversity as well as open new opportunities to naturally sequester carbon, such as mangroves.³ Alongside protecting organisms like blue crab, anchovies and Spanish mackerel, mangroves prevent erosion and mitigate damages from storm surges.⁴

One of the hallmarks of the conference was the launch of the Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing Action Alliance. Illegal and unregulated fishing is one of the major causes of



declining fish stocks and marine habitat degradation across the globe. The alliance is a result of collaboration between the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. This collaboration hopes to recruit additional member states to bolster global efforts to mitigate these damages alongside increased monitoring and surveillance efforts through shared fishing data. The partnership is supported by the Joint Analytical Cell (JAC), an international initiative that provides shared surveillance technologies and data analysis with the help of real-time monitoring software to provide up-to-date information to support global policies.⁵

As for the private sector, the UN Global Compact released its Sustainable Ocean Principles, a framework for sustainable business practices that align with Goals 13 and 14 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Included are principles concerning aquaculture, fisheries, and energy in order to protect and restore the world's ocean resources and ecosystems. It is built upon the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact which address human rights, the environment, and anti-corruption, among other issues.⁶ A recent development to promote sustainable ocean projects is the utilization of blue bonds. Blue bonds are an investment tool

specifically designed to fund projects aimed at improving ocean health, protecting endangered wildlife, and improving the resiliency of waterfront communities. These bonds can be issued by federal governments, private companies, and financial institutions as a way to grow the blue economy. Blue bonds have been used successfully in the Bahamas, where the government issued a \$200 million bond backed by the International Development Bank (IDB) to support business recovery, natural resource management, and reduce ocean pollution. The conference served as an opportunity for several international organizations, including the International Capital Market Association (ICMA), the UN Global Compact, and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to draft a comprehensive guide on how to effectively and sustainably use blue bonds to their greatest potential. The guide will aim to address the lack of standardization with bond issuance and concerns with what kinds of projects qualify for funding.⁷

Growing concerns was expressed over rising levels of plastic pollution and the lack so far of urgent international action. However, the the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) is drafting a binding treaty addressing plastic pollution. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) aims to finalize the treaty by the end of 2024.⁸ Actions to phase out and manage plastics were highlighted, alongside recommendations to base current policy and economic initiatives “as though the plastic pollution treaty already exists”, in order to better facilitate the transition to a sustainable circular economy.⁹

The conference culminated with pledges by individual member states as well as collective actions. The conference unanimously adopted the Lisbon Declaration, a document highlighting key ocean issues and proposing science-based and innovative actions to address them. The document accounted for many small developing nations at the frontline of the climate crisis that lack the capacity to adequately adapt or take action.¹⁰ Alongside the Lisbon Declaration and the plastics treaty, individual member states pledged voluntary commitments to help tackle the current crisis. Australia promised to supply \$1.2 billion USD to revitalize and protect the Great Barrier Reef.¹¹ Additionally, Colombia reached its 30 by 30 target for ocean species conservation through the creation of a “marine highway” for endangered sharks.¹² The conference was considered to be a successful example of international diplomacy, with significant attendance from across the world as well as key commitments to protect the oceans. While the total impacts remain to be seen, it was a positive step forward in the fight to restore our oceans and strengthen our bond with nature.



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