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Climate & Health News

Newsletter of the JHU-UPF Public Policy Center Climate Change Working Group



FEBRUARY 2019

To better reflect the urgency of climate action and the key role health can play, this year we have organized the Newsletter around the five Lancet Countdown themes: climate impacts, adaptation, mitigation, economics and finance, and communication. We hope this change helps you stay better informed and engaged – let us know what you think!

Health Impacts

News

[250,000 deaths a year from climate change is a 'conservative estimate' new research says](#)

Climate change could reverse progress made in human health, leading to many more deaths than the 250,000 per year that the World Health Organization predicted five years ago, [according to a new report in the New England Journal of Medicine](#). –CNN



Wading through flood waters from Tropical Storm Harvey in Houston in August 2017. “We know we can adapt to slow changes,” a Yale economist said. “Rapid changes are the ones that would be most damaging and painful.”

Credit: Jonathan Bachman/Reuters

Read more:

- [The oceans are warming faster than IPCC projected](#)
- [Mold and depression: lingering health impacts from extreme weather](#)
- [Water wars: are India and Pakistan headed for climate change-induced conflict?](#)
- [Food shocks from extreme weather and violence are becoming more frequent](#)
- [If the Earth is warming why is it so cold outside?](#)



Corn shows the affect of drought in Texas in August 2013. USDA/BOB NICHOLS.

Science

Extreme heat responsible for 6% of hot-season hospitalizations in Brazil

Study authors found for every 5°C increase in daily mean temperature during the 2000-2015 hot seasons in Brazil, risk of hospitalization rose by 4.0% (95% CI 3.7%, 4.3%). Impacts were greatest in children, for infectious and parasitic diseases, and urban Centerwest and Northeast.

Zhao et al. (2019). Geographic, demographic, and temporal variations in the association between heat exposure and hospitalization in Brazil: A nationwide study between 2000 and 2015. Environ Health Perspect. 127(1):17001.



A view of an 800-hectare solar farm in Pirapora, Minas Gerais state, Brazil, on Nov. 9, 2017.
(Carl de Souza/AFP/Getty Images)

Read more:

- [Wet-bulb globe temperature as a measure of heat waves \(South Korea\)](#)
- [Are elderly women at higher risk from extreme heat than elderly men?](#)
- [Short-term temperature variability and cardiovascular disease \(Chinese cities\)](#)
- [Urban heat island effect in semi-arid regions \(Iran\)](#)

Adaptation

News

[How soon will climate change force you to move?](#)

After Hurricane Maria, thousands of Puerto Ricans moved to US mainland. In Louisiana, the US government is paying to move a community from their sinking island, while in Alaska whole villages are relocating. By 2100, 13 million Americans may be forced to move; Florida will have the most climate refugees. Globally, 2 billion may be displaced. – *Fast Company*



A CSO/Wet Weather Discharge Point on the West coast of the Bronx River near Tremont Avenue, New York.
Photo: Adi Talwar

Read more:

- [Jakarta: saving a megacity from sinking – see the new film](#)
 - [Battered coast or urban slum? Bangladesh faces new migration crisis](#)
 - [Climate change and New York City's sewer overflows](#)
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Science

Replicable “health-and-climate-in-all-policies” in South Africa

This review found that discussion of health in climate change adaptation strategies of sub-national governments is limited worldwide (including a case study presented for South Africa). A replicable framework for a “health and climate change in all policies” is presented.

Godsmark et al. (2019). Priority focus areas for a sub-national response to climate change and health: A South African provincial case study. Environ Int. 122:31-51.



Delegates attending the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) held at the Durban ICC, January 2019. Picture: Motshwari Mofokeng/African News Agency (ANA)

Read more:

- [How can national governments support local public health adaptation to climate change?](#)
 - [Environmental health practitioners in local climate adaptation \(South Africa\)](#)
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Mitigation

News

DiCaprio's foundation points the way to reaching Paris climate goal

Leonardo DiCaprio's 'One Earth' initiative has issued a [new report](#) based on modeling by Australian climate scientists that indicates limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees C can be reached without resorting to nuclear power or unproven carbon capture technologies. It requires rapid conversion to renewable energy (100% by 2050) and shifting heating, cooling and transport to renewable-powered electricity. – *Fast Company*



Actor Leonardo DiCaprio, a UN Messenger of Peace, speaks at the opening session of the United Nations climate summit in New York on Sept. 23. Photo: Reuters

Relying on coal energy, China's massive Belt and Road Initiative puts climate targets at risk

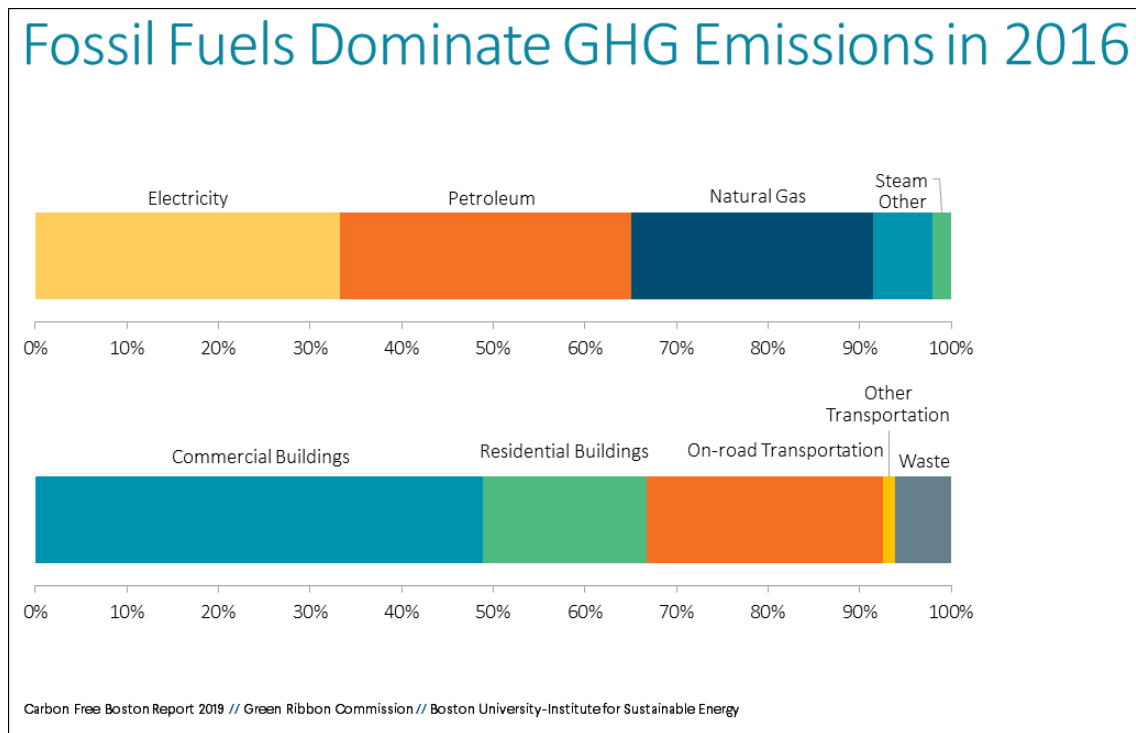
The ambitious Belt and Road Initiative, launched by China's President Xi in 2013, aims to transform economies from Eastern Mediterranean to China and beyond through infrastructure and other investments. But by relying on coal-fired power plants, the Initiative may make reaching Paris-agreed greenhouse gas mitigation goals impossible. – *The Atlantic*



Trucks hauling coal at a Chinese-financed open-pit mine in Pakistan's Sindh province in May 2018. RIZWAN TABASSUM / AFP / GETTY IMAGES

Read more:

- [Boston to be carbon free by 2050](#)
- [Your treadmill might generate electricity and save the planet](#)
- [Dr. Katherine Hayhoe shares advice on best climate mitigation solutions](#)
- [Bill McKibbin's new year message: 'We need to act fast'](#)



Buildings account for more than two-thirds of Boston emissions. (Courtesy of the Carbon Free Boston report)

Science

[Lancet Commission on Healthy Diets and Sustainability](#)

The new Commission brings together experts from health, agriculture, political sciences, and environmental sustainability to develop global 'safe operating space' targets based on the best evidence available for healthy diets and sustainable food production that will help ensure the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Paris Agreement are achieved.

Willett et al. (2019). Food in the Anthropocene: the EAT-Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems. Lancet. pii: S0140-6736(18)31788-4.



Drought in Pakistan. Credit: DW/R. Saeed

Economics & Finance

News

Could a 'Green New Deal' provide funding to turn US cities into clean energy leaders?

Named to recall US President Roosevelt's Depression-era package of infrastructure investments, the proposed 'Green New Deal' would promote and fund renewable energy, smart energy grids, and shift employment and investment away from fossil fuels. The idea has garnered substantial public support in America. – *Curbed*



New York youth, leaders representing hundreds of community, social justice, environmental and climate organizations protest in front of Senator Chuck Schumer's office in December 2018.

LightRocket via Getty Images

[The next financial crisis could be caused by climate change](#)

California utility Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), one of the largest in the US, filed for bankruptcy after facing \$30 billion in damages and 650 lawsuits following disastrous wildfires. PG&E's situation could mark a milestone: the first major corporate casualty of climate change and an indication of future market risks. – *Vice*



Wildfire, Malibu, California, on November 9. Photo by David McNew/Getty

- [Climate Investment Funds \(CIF\) to issue \\$500 million in green bonds](#)
- [Corporations anxious about climate change risks](#)
- [Climate change's giant impact on the economy: 4 key issues](#)



A general view shows solar panels to produce renewable energy at the Urbasolar photovoltaic park in Gardanne, France, June 25, 2018. REUTERS/Jean-Paul Pelissier

Science

[The key to a global carbon tax](#)

Lack of public support is the main obstacle to a world-wide carbon pricing system – considered by many economists to be the most efficient way to reduce GHG emissions. Study authors carried out a survey which found a global tax on emissions could be popular so long as revenues are given back to citizens.

Carattini et al. (2019). How to win public support for a global carbon tax. Nature 565(7739):289-291.

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A bike docking station during 2017's Hurricane Irma in Miami, one of many severe weather events that were likely made worse by climate change. Photo by Joe Raedle/Getty

Read more:

- [How to make the Green New Deal work](#)
 - [Increased electricity consumption with climate change \(Yangtze River Delta, China\)](#)
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Communication

News

[**Sweden, Morocco, the UK, Switzerland top Climate Change Performance Index for 2019**](#)

Prepared annually by GermanWatch, the CCPI compares country performance across four areas: GHG emissions, renewable energy, energy use, and progress made implementing Paris Agreement commitments. Russia, Canada, Australia and South Korea score badly, with the US just one place from last. – *Climate News Network*

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Ouarzazate, the world's largest solar power plant, in Morocco. *Image: By Marc Lacoste, via Wikimedia Commons*

Read more:

- [Kids go on strike for climate – and they may save us](#)
- [How to convince a skeptic on climate change](#)
- [The new language of climate change](#)
- [Gaming to communicate on climate](#)



Greta Thunberg, 16, speaks at World Economic Forum in Davos. (AP Photo / Markus Schreiber)

Science

professionals

Authors reviewed the literature on climate change, health and health education, and identified twelve recommendations for integrating environmental sustainability into health professional education in a way that builds on intersectoral and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Schwerdtle et al. (2019). Twelve tips for teaching environmental sustainability to health professionals. Med Teach. 24:1-6.



Jonathan Saruk/The Weather Channel via Getty Images

Read more:

- [Climate information and health risk perception \(China\)](#)
- [Chinese medical students feel responsible but unprepared to tackle climate change](#)



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