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Climate & Health News

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



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Happy New Year 2019 to our readers – and a warm welcome to our new Climate & Health News
Managing Editor, Aeve Ribbons!

Health Impacts

News

Climate rules agreed at UN COP24 talks in Poland

Diplomats from nearly 200 countries agreed to a climate deal at United Nations talks in Katowice, Poland this month. The deal establishes a set of rules to govern the Paris Accord, however, was criticized for lack of ambition or a clear promise of enhanced climate action. – *The Independent*

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The drought-stricken La Sorrueda reservoir in Gran Canaria, Spain. Rising emissions could trigger extreme weather events around the world, the UN says. Photograph: Reuters

'Lancet Countdown' report: slow progress on climate change is putting lives at risk

Climate change poses an emerging global health crisis with impacts that will only worsen as the planet continues to warm, according to a new report from the Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change (see Science). The authors warn that the world's slow progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions is putting lives and the health care systems people depend on at risk. – *Inside Climate News*

Experts tell Poland UN meeting climate change is already a health emergency.

“The global public health community is getting very impatient,” according to the WHO’s director of public and environmental health Maria Neira. “If you don’t think you need to take action for the sake of climate change, make sure when you think about the planet you incorporate a couple of lungs, a brain and a heart. It is not just about saving the planet in the future, it is about protecting the health of the people right now.” – *The Guardian*

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Hanhan, three, receives nebuliser therapy after a Beijing red alert for air pollution in 2015. Photograph: Jason Lee/Reuters

2018 climate impacts in review

2018 was the 'year the world woke up to climate change.' Several climate reports tell us that the year is likely to be remembered as a turning point, for better or worse, in the fight to reduce global warming. – *Inside Climate News*

Read more:

- [Naturalist Sir David Attenborough, representing 'the people' at UN climate talks, calls climate 'our greatest threat' – BBC](#)
- [How climate change is driving Central American immigration to the US – Texas Observer](#)
- [Somaliland crisis driven by changing climate – Ozy](#)
- [How climate change is challenging America's health care – The Atlantic](#)
- [Climate Risk Index: 2017 broke records for extreme weather -- DW](#)

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A collage of children's drawing about climate change laid out on a glacier in Switzerland. Photo: Fabrice Coffrini

Science

[The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change 2018](#)

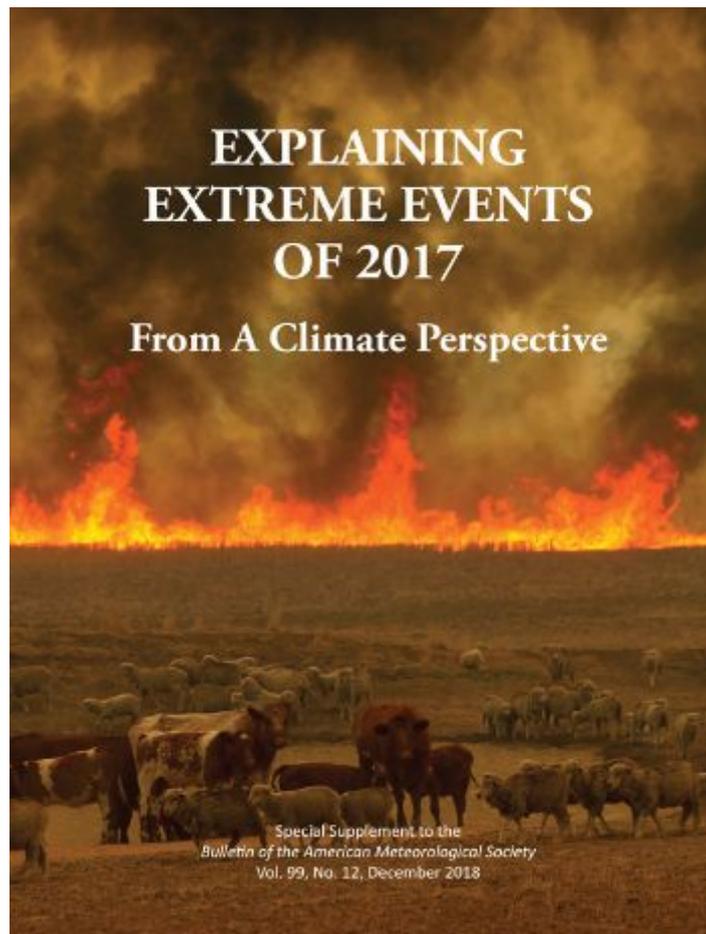
The Lancet Countdown's 2018 report tracks 41 indicators across five key domains in health and climate change, continuously strengthening its methods, data and analysis. It arrives at three key conclusions: Impacts on heat exposure and decreases in labor capacity are an early warning; there has been lack of progress in emissions reductions and adaptation that threaten human lives; however, an opportunity exists to make a low-carbon transition that will determine the health of nations for centuries to come.



Gina McCarthy, a former administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, says climate change can reverse

['Explaining Extreme Events' report from Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society issued for 2017](#)

The seventh edition of a series of reports on *Explaining Extreme Events from a Climate Perspective* finds the U.S. Northern Plains and East Africa droughts, floods in South America, China and Bangladesh, and heatwaves in China and the Mediterranean were all made more likely by human-caused climate change. The intense marine heatwaves off of Australia were found to be “virtually impossible” without human-caused climate change.



Read more:

- [Mosquito-borne threats in Europe](#)
- [Review: worker productivity under heat strain](#)
- [Review: Lyme disease bearing ticks in Europe](#)
- [Review: Climate change and sleep disturbance](#)
- [Rising carbon dioxide levels could affect concentration and decision-making of global workforce](#)

News

[Life after carbon: the next global transformation of cities](#)

In response to climate change, cities are cultivating the capacity of their inhabitants and core systems to adapt successfully to the future's new requirements. This idea – called 'Adaptive Futures,' by Peter Plastrik and John Cleveland, authors of a new book by that title, is one of several transformational now ideas reshaping cities. It recognizes that cities cannot simply create the future they want. They must plan a future that fully takes into account the uncertainties and risks of a changing climate. – Daily Climate



North Carolina National Guard assists residents of Old Dock, North Carolina, after flooding forced them from their homes in September 2018 (Credit: The National Guard)

Read more:

- [In a democracy, should nature have a vote?](#) - *The Anthropocene*

Science

[Public health agency responses and opportunities to adapt to climate change](#)

capacity. Authors discuss government public health agency responses to improve resilience including vulnerability assessment, adaptation planning, and integration with community health programs.

Hutchins et al. 2018. Public health agency responses and opportunities to protect against health impacts of climate change among US populations with multiple vulnerabilities. J Racial Ethn Health Disparities. (6):1159-1170.



Riding bikes in Oakland, California. (Credit: Thomas Hawk/flickr)

Read more:

- [**Review:** Adaptation to weather-related disasters](#)
- [Climate health vulnerability and adaptation in Sydney, Australia](#)
- [Climate and health adaptation in South Africa](#)
- [Flood vulnerability of older residents on US East Coast](#)
- [France's Public Health Department quantifies heat and cold mortality risks](#)
- [The Saami, Europe's only indigenous people, face limited prospects for climate adaptation](#)



Climate justice rally at the Chevron Oil Refinery in Richmond, California. (Credit: planet a./flickr)

Mitigation

News

Britain and Denmark seen as climate mitigation leaders

The UK, the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, ranks second in mitigating climate change behind Denmark among 25 countries analyzed in a report commissioned by utility Drax Group PLC, and compiled by academics at Imperial College London. Britain's uptake of electric vehicles is among the highest of the nations in the study. – Bloomberg

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Atmospheric CO2 reached record high earlier this year (Getty)

Read more:

- [Latin America's cities expand electric buses -- DW](#)
- ['Paris to Pittsburgh' documentary shows how average Americans are mitigating climate change – Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- ['Paris to Pittsburgh' interview with Michael Bloomberg – National Geographic](#)
- [Shipping giant Maersk aims for net zero emissions by 2050 -- Bloomberg](#)
- [Indonesia: the most important emitter of greenhouse gases that no one is talking about -- Vox](#)
- [California's new energy efficiency standards to require solar in new buildings as of 2020 – GreenTechMedia](#)



Latin America, one of the regions with the greatest decarbonization potential.

Science

'Lancet Countdown' for Australia

Authors examine 41 indicators for Australia consistent with those of the Lancet Countdown global assessment. They find Australia has gone backwards and lags behind other high income countries particularly regarding slow transition to renewable energy. However, they also find progress, e.g., in heatwave response planning.

Zhang et al. 2018. The MJA-Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: Australian policy inaction threatens lives. Med J Aust. 209(11):474.



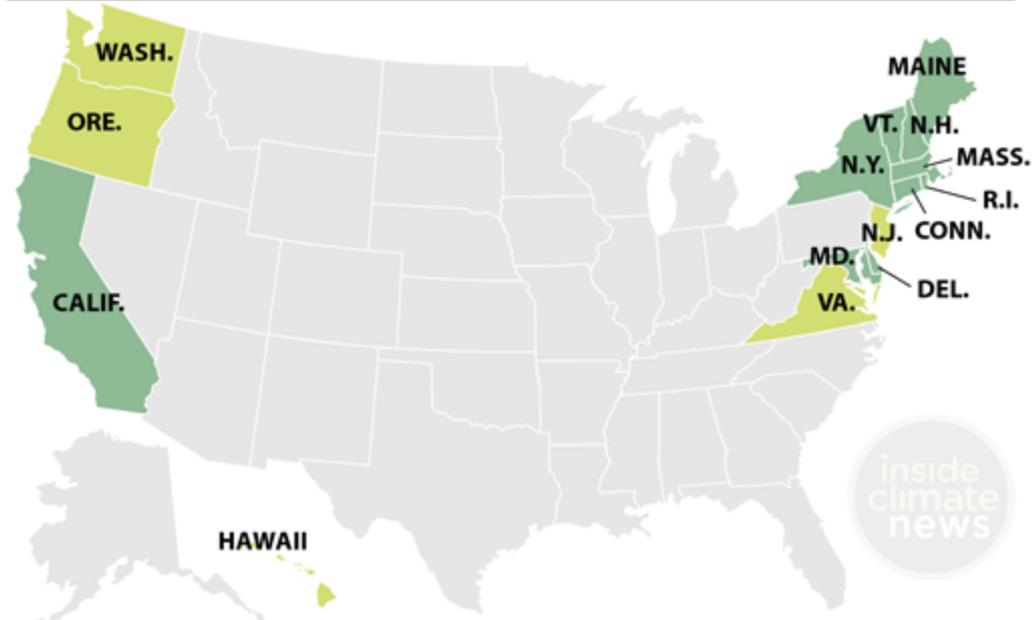
Economics & Finance

News

[US states to price carbon?](#)

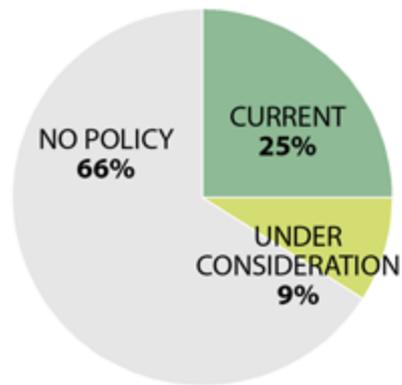
At least seven state governments are poised at the brink of putting a price on climate-warming carbon emissions within the next year. Some are considering new carbon taxes or fees. Others are making plans to join regional carbon markets. – *Inside Climate News*

At least seven states are considering carbon pricing initiatives that have a chance of passage within the next year—five of them for the first time. If the measures advance, 15 states that are home to more than a third of the U.S. population would have some sort of surcharge on fossil fuels.



STATE/ INITIATIVE STATUS	POPULATION (2017 estimates)
California	39,536,653
New York	19,849,399
New Jersey	9,005,644
Virginia	8,470,020
Washington	7,405,743
Massachusetts	6,859,819
Maryland	6,052,177
Oregon	4,142,776
Connecticut	3,588,184
Hawaii	1,427,538
New Hampshire	1,342,795
Maine	1,335,907
Rhode Island	1,059,639
Delaware	961,939
Vermont	623,657

PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION



SOURCES: U.S. Energy Information Administration; U.S. Census Bureau; ICN research

PAUL HORN / InsideClimate News

Read more:

- [World's biggest investors advise tackling climate change or face financial crash – The Guardian](#)
- [World Bank to double investment in climate change to \\$200 billion over 2021-25 – The Guardian](#)
- [Young adults' lawsuit in Canada alleges Canadian government is protecting the oil industry and jeopardizing their future – The Tyee](#)
- [Here's how much climate change could cost the US – Scientific American](#)



The lawsuit against the Canadian government was filed by youth group Environnement Jeunesse on behalf of all Quebec residents under the age of 35. Photo by Jean-François Veilleux.

Science

Canada's carbon pricing is a win-win policy but requires monitoring

Carbon pricing is a win-win environmental and public health policy. As Canada moves ahead with a mandatory carbon pricing policy, monitoring and evaluating the policy's impact will be important, including modifying and complementing it as necessary with policies and regulations.

Ambasta & Buonocore, 2018. Carbon pricing: a win-win environmental and public health policy. Can J Public Health. 109(5-6):779-781.

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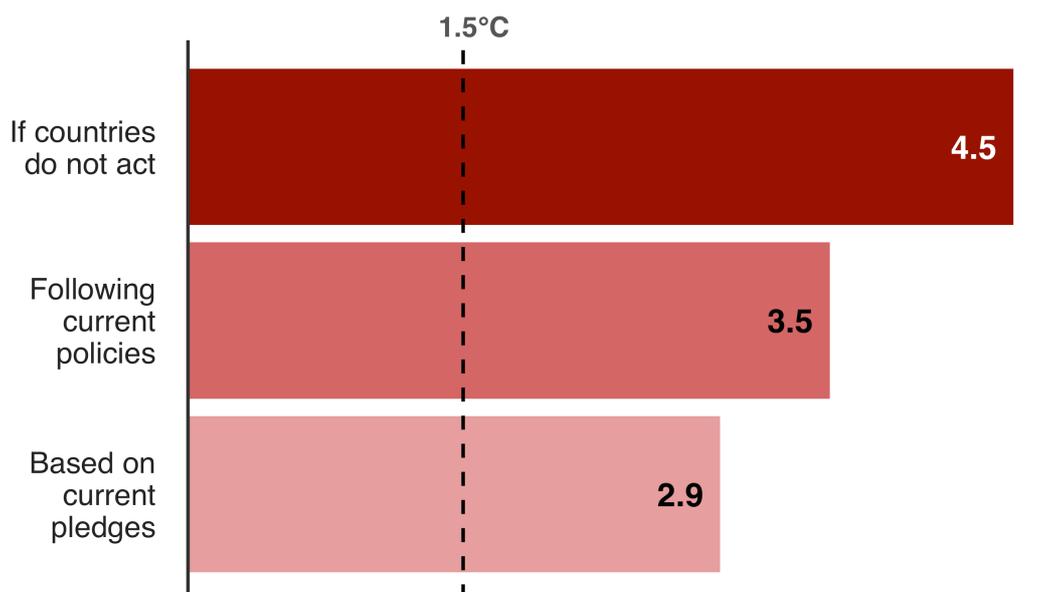
Photograph: Alexander Koerner/Getty Images

Communication

News

[Where we are on climate change as 2018 closes: 7 graphs that tell the story](#)

This article provides seven graphs from 2018, including on how much the global climate has warmed, projected future warming, world cities at greatest risk, and 2018 records broken. - *BBC*

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Source: Climate Action Tracker, updated November 2017

BBC

Read more:

- [The psychology of climate change – why people deny the science evidence- CBC](#)
- [New US poll shows two-thirds of voters are concerned about new climate report- Politico](#)

Science

[Interdisciplinary climate research depends on good communication: lessons from Florida](#)

Authors offer lessons from using an adaptive framework to manage South Florida's water and threats from climate change. Effective integration requires building a well-defined cross-sectoral team and leadership, relying on tools that foster communication and shared research outputs.

Lanier et al. 2018. Facilitating integration in interdisciplinary research: Lessons from a South Florida sustainability and climate project. Environ Manage. 62(6): 1025-1037.

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Read more:

- [Opinion: It's time for medical schools to introduce climate change into curricula](#)



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