



PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY

BRINGING YOU CURRENT NEWS ON GLOBAL HEALTH & ECOLOGICAL WELLNESS

June 15, 2017

<https://planetaryhealthweekly.com>

Volume 3, Number 24

11 YEARS OLD, A MOM AND PUSHED TO MARRY HER RAPIST IN FLORIDA

More than 167,000 young people age 17 and under married in 38 states between 2000 and 2010, according to a search of available marriage license data by a group called Unchained at Last, which aims to ban child marriage. The number of child marriages has been falling, but every state in America still allows underage girls to marry, typically with the consent of parents, a judge or both. Twenty-seven states do not even set a minimum age by statute, according to the Tahirih Justice Center's Forced Marriage Initiative.

[Read More on NY Times](#)



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GLOBAL WARMING MAKING OCEANS MORE TOXIC

Climate change is predicted to cause a series of maladies for world oceans including heating up, acidification, and the loss of oxygen. A newly published study published online in the April 24 edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences entitled, "Ocean warming since 1982 has expanded the niche of toxic algal blooms in the North Atlantic and North Pacific Oceans," demonstrates that one ocean consequence of climate change that has already occurred is the spread and intensification of toxic algae. Marine algae are so tiny -- 50 of them side by side span only the width of a single hair -- that they may seem harmless. But when billions of toxic cells come together, they can poison humans, kill marine life, and economically harm coastal communities. [Read More on Science Daily](#)





INDIA'S 'SUCCESSFUL' TOILET CAMPAIGN MAY BE MISSING ITS MARK

India's campaign to end open defecation has been widely celebrated by officials as an innovative and aggressive success. But independent surveys and investigations have come to a vastly different conclusion – that victory, unfortunately, is not in sight. Three years ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the country's most aggressive sanitation drive ever, called "Swachh Bharat" or the Clean India Mission. Among its targets is to make the entire country open-defecation free by Oct. 2, 2019. But in December 2016, Indian Express journalists found grave discrepancies when they visited two districts, Dhantari and Mungeli, that had just been declared open-defecation free for less than two months. [Read More on Humansphere](#)

Only Radical Ideas Will Cut Maternal Tragedies in The U.K.

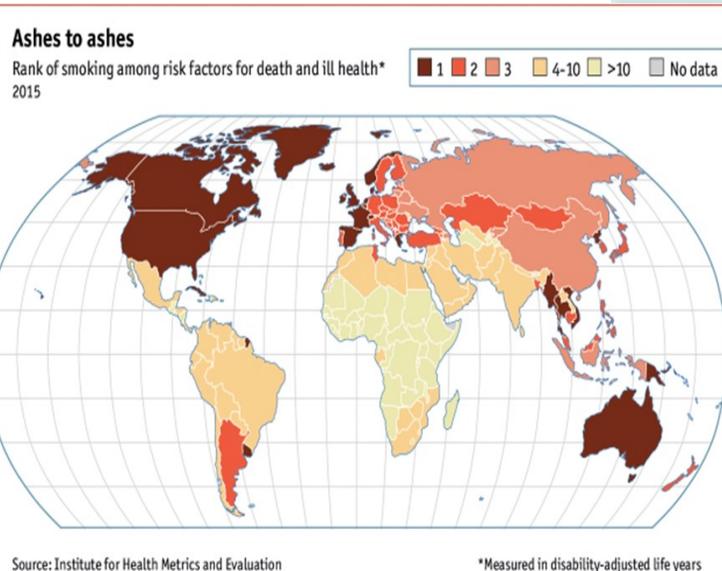
Inadequate, inefficient care on maternity wards is leaving babies disabled or dead, some mothers in pain or with long-lasting injuries, and one in six of them not feeling cared for or respected at an intensely vulnerable time. Other European countries have much better results. The U.K.'s infant mortality rate is 50 per cent higher than Finland's. The huge variations in deaths or serious incidents across England show that there's nothing inevitable about these grim figures. Some tragedies and agonies are unavoidable but too many are the result of errors. A recent BBC investigation found that maternity units in England were making at least 1,400 mistakes a week. Bad as that sounds, it is an underestimate. England's medical inspectorate, the Care Quality Commission, lists more than 128,000 reported safety incidents.

[Read More on The Times UK](#)



WHERE SMOKING IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AND ILL HEALTH

In 24 countries smoking causes the largest share of the overall burden of disease, measured in years lost to ill health and premature death. In another 37 countries it ranks second. Most of these 61 countries are rich. Although their smoking rates are falling, much of the decline is because fewer young people are picking up the habit, rather than because older smokers are quitting. The harms from smoking affect people most seriously after middle age, so countries where smoking became popular a generation or more ago are worst affected—for now. In poor countries, smoking is still a less important cause of death and disability than several other things, such as dirty water and malnutrition. [Read More on The Economist](#)





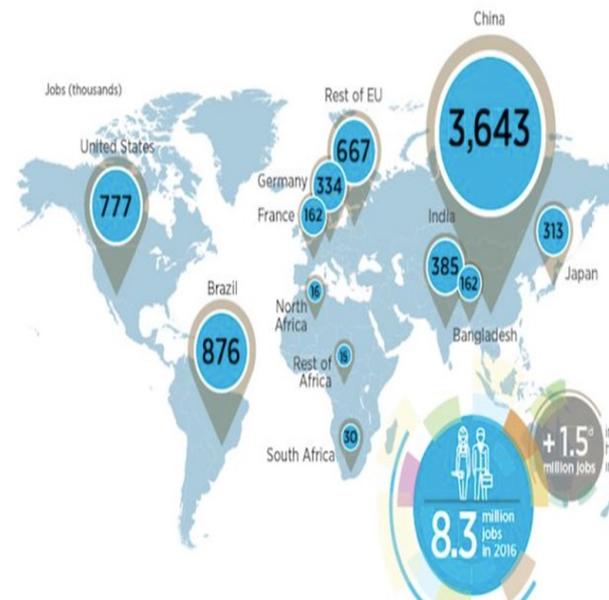
Costa Rica's Bid For World's Cleanest Transport System

Internationally hailed for meeting over 98% of electricity demand from renewable sources two years in a row, the Central American republic is miles ahead of most nations – developing or industrialised – on the allegorical road to a carbon-free future. But on the actual road, fossil-fuelled vehicles prevail. With clean electricity sourced from its natural abundance of hydroelectricity and geothermal resources, Costa Rica's dirty transport is taking centre stage in its climate policies. With over 1.5 million vehicles for 4.7 million inhabitants, transport is responsible for more than half (54%) of Costa Rica's CO2 emissions and the driving force behind its oil demand. Public institutions, civil society and young professionals like Quirós in the so-called greenest country in the world are hoping to upend a deeply-rooted system with an old trick: be visible.

[Read More on Climate Change News](#)

9.8 Million Reasons Why Renewable Energy Is The Future

There were 9.8 million jobs in the renewable energy sector globally in 2016, according to the latest report from the International Renewable Energy Agency. Job growth has steadily increased since IRENA first started measuring employment in 2012, and the agency expects the it to start accelerating. "Falling costs and enabling policies have steadily driven up investment and employment in renewable energy worldwide since IRENA's first annual assessment in 2012, when just over seven million people were working in the sector," IRENA director-general Adnan Amin said. "In the last four years, for instance, the number of jobs in the solar and wind sectors combined has more than doubled." The numbers were a 1.1 per cent increase on 2015, though jobs in renewables excluding hydro rose 2.8 per cent to 8.3 million. [Read More on The Fifth Estate](#)

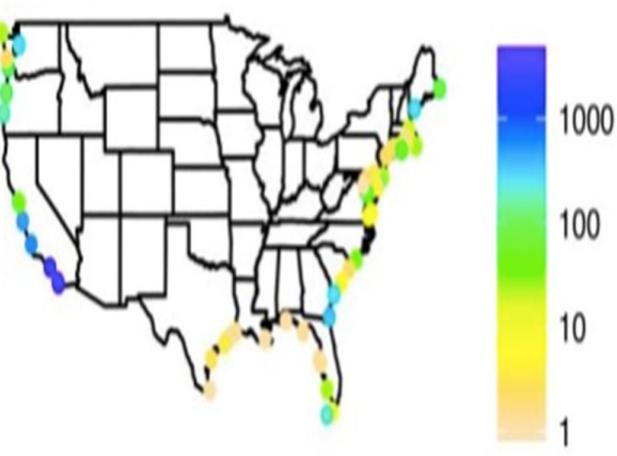


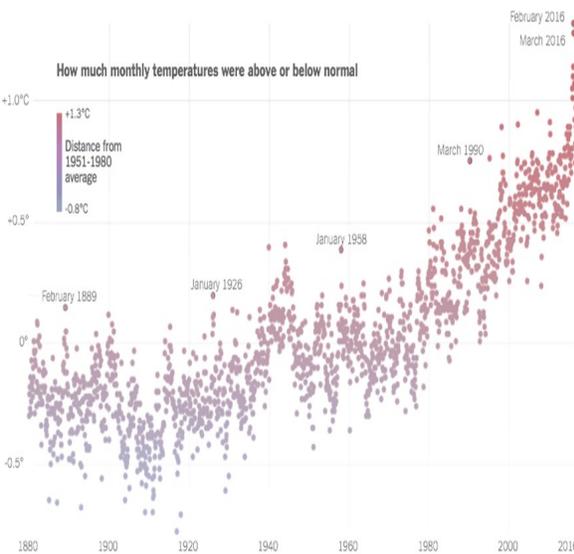
Rising Sea Levels Will Boost Moderte Floods in Some Area, Severe Flood in Others

The study by researchers at Princeton and Rutgers universities found that along the southeastern coast, where severe flooding due to hurricanes is relatively frequent, cities such as Charleston, South Carolina, will see a disproportionate increase in moderate flooding. However, areas that have little history of severe flooding, such as Seattle, are likely to experience a greater uptick in the number of severe, or even historically unprecedented, floods. The researchers sought to improve the accuracy of a set of flood predictions included in a 2013 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report. That analysis did not consider the possibility that sea-level rise might amplify some levels of flooding more than others.

[Read More on Science Daily](#)

Amplification of severe floods





How 2016 Became Earth's Hottest Year on Record

Global temperatures have continued to rise, making 2016 the hottest year on the historical record and the third consecutive record-breaking year, scientists say. Of the 17 hottest years ever recorded, 16 have now occurred since 2000. In the historical record, months early in the year, like February and March, have moved further away from the norm than the rest of the year. Scientists expect that the early months of 2017 will continue to show levels of warming beyond the norm, but likely not at the level of 2016 because a strong El Niño weather pattern is now subsiding. Human-induced climate change has made it at least 160 times more likely that three consecutive years after 2000 would be record-setting, according to Michael E. Mann, a climate scientist at Pennsylvania State University.

[Read More on NY Times](#)

SPOTLIGHT ON POLICY:

Bucking Trump, Cities, States and Companies Commit To Paris Accord

Representatives of American cities, states and companies are preparing to submit a plan to the United Nations pledging to meet the United States' greenhouse gas emissions targets under the Paris climate accord, despite President Trump's decision to withdraw from the agreement. The unnamed group — which, so far, includes 30 mayors, three governors, more than 80 university presidents and more than 100 businesses — is negotiating with the United Nations to have its submission accepted alongside contributions to the Paris climate deal by other nations. By redoubling their climate efforts, he said, cities, states and corporations could achieve, or even surpass, the pledge of the administration of former President Barack Obama to reduce America's planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions 26 percent by 2025, from their levels in 2005. [Read More on NY Times](#)



SPOTLIGHT ON INDIGENOUS HEALTH: Rural Indigenous Women Lack Land Rights and Protection Worldwide

Countries that have agreed to a U.N. convention against discrimination are failing to provide indigenous and rural women legal protections to own and manage property, according to a new report. The Rights and Resources Initiative analyzed 80 legal frameworks in 30 low- and middle-income countries, which had ratified the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. According to the findings, not one met the minimum standards outlined in the convention. "Up to 2.5 billion people hold and use the world's community lands, yet it is widely recognized that the tenure rights of women — who comprise more than half the population of the world's Indigenous Peoples and local communities — are insufficiently respected and protected by governments," according to the report. [Read More on Humanosphere](#)



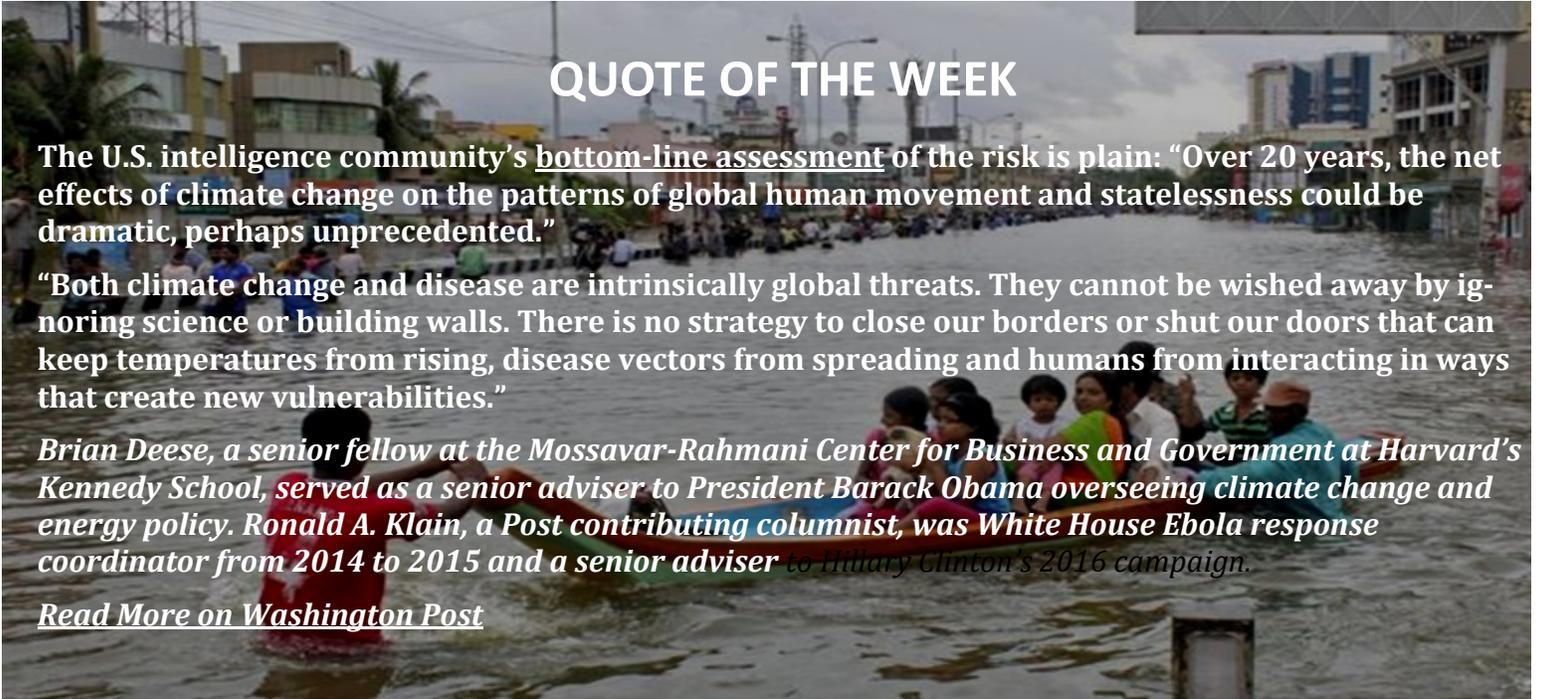
QUOTE OF THE WEEK

The U.S. intelligence community's bottom-line assessment of the risk is plain: "Over 20 years, the net effects of climate change on the patterns of global human movement and statelessness could be dramatic, perhaps unprecedented."

"Both climate change and disease are intrinsically global threats. They cannot be wished away by ignoring science or building walls. There is no strategy to close our borders or shut our doors that can keep temperatures from rising, disease vectors from spreading and humans from interacting in ways that create new vulnerabilities."

Brian Deese, a senior fellow at the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government at Harvard's Kennedy School, served as a senior adviser to President Barack Obama overseeing climate change and energy policy. Ronald A. Klain, a Post contributing columnist, was White House Ebola response coordinator from 2014 to 2015 and a senior adviser to Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign.

[Read More on Washington Post](#)



EVENTSTABLE

DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	REGISTER
June- Sept	Aboriginal Conferences	Canada	http://aboriginalconferences.ca/
June 12-23	McGill Summer Institute in Infectious Disease and Global Health	Montreal Canada	http://mcgill-idgh.ca/
June 12-16	Global Health Diagnostics	Montreal Canada	http://mcgill-idgh.ca/courses/global-health-diagnostics/
June 19	Building A Meaningful Organisation: Improving Accessibility for Children in Nicaragua	Montreal Canada	https://www.mcgill.ca/spot/global-health/ghri-forum
June 28-30	6th Conference of the International Society for Child Indicators	Montreal Canada	https://www.mcgill.ca/spot/global-health/ghri-forum
July 25-27	Pedagogy For The Anthropocene: Re-rooting Academic Knowledge in Nature	Toronto Canada	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfofqDbn3qR-F5XpUO9k_mhfkPp6SOj3w4-vQsouYH1oVuYnQ/viewform?c=0&w=1
Oct 29-31	Canadian Conference for Global Health	Montreal Canada	https://www.ccgh-csih.ca/ccgh2015/index



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NEW BOOK: *FOOD SECURITY* BY BRYAN MCDONALD



Having worked as an analyst, practitioner, educator and consultant in the field of city-based food security for close to 20 years, Wayne Roberts still found lots to learn from Pennsylvania State University historian Bryan McDonald's brief and clearly-written book, called simply *Food Security*.

In this review he summarizes and comments on three propositions in the book that really deepen our understanding of food security, and three omissions that are disappointing. Positive: a) food security links to human security b) hidden hunger c) 4 ways to think about solutions and people-centered food policy. Disappointing: a) not bringing in cities, corporations and ecological health.

Most useful to good food campaigners, McDonald's book positions food security within the context of "human security"—a new way of framing the issues that boosts the chances of food getting the green light as a priority.

[Read More on The Medium](#)

TRUMP'S NEW ABORTION RESTRICTION WILL AFFECT \$9 BILLION IN U.S. GLOBAL HEALTH MONEY



The Trump administration has released new anti-abortion rules — including a policy name change — that will apply to almost \$9 billion in global health funding, including a massive HIV/AIDS prevention program. The rules — dubbed the "Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance" plan, and approved by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson — restrict any foreign nongovernmental organization receiving US global health aid from using any of their other funding to "perform or actively promote abortions as a method of family planning," according to a senior administration official who briefed the press on the plan.

"Referrals for the termination of a pregnancy in cases of rape, incest, or endangerment of the life of the woman are not prohibited under this policy," the official added. The Tillerson plan is a dramatic expansion of the Mexico City Policy, a Reagan-era restriction that's since been suspended by every Democrat in the White House and revived by every Republican. President Donald Trump signed a memo bringing back the restrictions on Jan. 23.

This expanded policy newly affects several agencies, including the Department of Defense, and programs like the President's Malaria Initiative and PEPFAR, short for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Both programs were started by George W. Bush. PEPFAR accounts for \$6 billion of the \$8.8 billion in funds affected by the new policy, according to the administration official.

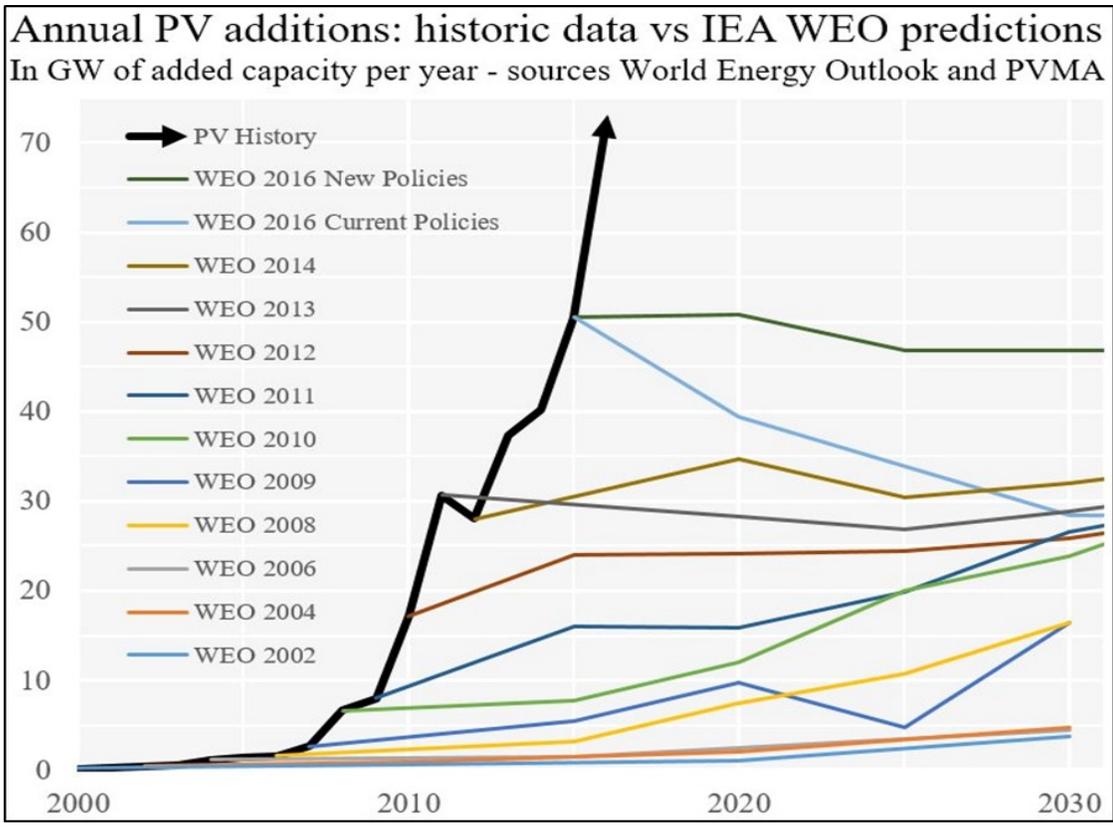
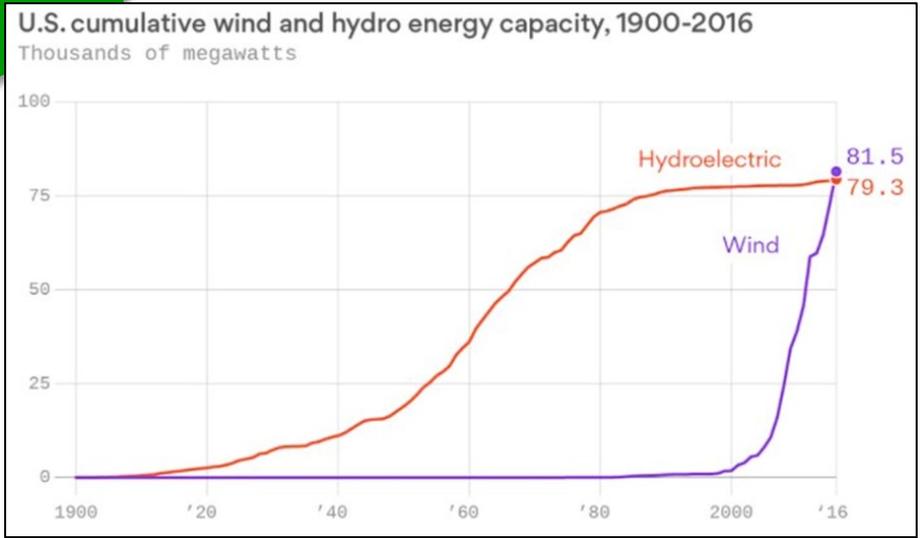
Humanitarian and disaster relief funding at USAID, the State Department, and the Department of Defense are exempted, officials said, as are State Department funds for migration and refugee assistance.

National and local governments and multilateral institutions, like the Global Fund, are also exempted. The announcement left unclear when exactly foreign organizations will feel the effects of the policy but promised "a thorough and comprehensive review," focusing especially on newly affected programs, within six months.

[Read More on BuzzFeed](#)



SOARING GROWTH OF SOLAR POWER DEMONSTRATED IN TWO CHARTS



The general tenor of the discussion agreed that wind and solar together will soon be the two main sources of renewable energy—and that they continue to grow at a pace not yet absorbed by the general public.

[Read More on Green Car Reports](#)



Under a dual onslaught of global warming and localised urban heating, some of the world's cities may be as much as 8C (14.4F) warmer by 2100, researchers have warned. Such a temperature spike would have dire consequences for the health of city-dwellers, rob companies and industries of able workers, and put pressure on already strained natural resources such as water. The projection is based on the worst-case scenario assumption that emissions of greenhouse gases continue to rise throughout the 21st century. The top quarter of most populated cities, in this scenario, could see temperatures rise 7C or more by century's end, said a study in the journal *Nature Climate Change*. For some, nearly 5C of the total would be attributed to average global warming. The rest would be due to the so-called "urban heat island" effect, which occurs when parks, dams and lakes, which have a cooling effect, are replaced by concrete and asphalt – making cities warmer than their surrounds, the researchers said. "The top 5% [of cities by population] could see increases in temperatures of about 8C and larger," study co-author Francisco Estrada of the Institute for Environmental Studies in the Netherlands said.

[Read More on The Guardian](#)



AS A DOCTOR IN SOUTH SUDAN LET ME TELL YOU, FOREIGN AID SAVES LIVES



President Trump announced proposed cuts in the diplomatic and foreign aid budget. The budget suggests cuts in aid to international organisations by 44%, humanitarian assistance funding would drop by 31% and global health programmes would be cut by 25%. While many people think the budget has little chance of passing in Congress, it does, however, provide an alarming sense of the Trump administration's priorities.

But it's not just a US concern. Earlier this month, the Australian government announced it will cut \$303m from the foreign aid budget over two years. In the UK, Theresa May's pledge to continue meeting the UN's 0.7% aid target was a great relief, although this good news has since been tarnished by the claim that poverty reduction in the world's poorest countries risks being diluted by the UK government devoting a bigger share of its aid budget to pursuing the national interest. This comes at a time when the world faces its worst humanitarian crisis since 1945, according to the UN. Twenty million people face starvation without an immediate injection of funds in Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria. Only seven countries meet the 0.7% of global national income target for aid. Countries that should be at the forefront of efforts to prevent catastrophes such as famine and to relieve the effects of drought on some of the world's poorest people are turning a blind eye. This sends a worrying message that leading economies are no longer interested in being part of efforts to mitigate suffering. Part of the problem is that the narrative needs to change. Foreign aid has become a politically divisive issue. People assume the money is misspent, wasted on bureaucracy or that foreign aid just doesn't work.

Of course, the system is far from perfect. In an ideal world, it would not just be about how much is spent to fix the immediate problems, but, rather, about the impact aid has on sustaining stable governments, tackling corruption, protecting human rights and the rule of law. Nonetheless, in the short term, I see what a positive impact humanitarian aid can have. It can literally make the difference between life and death. There are people doing incredible work around the world every day to help preserve human life. These are not people tied to the international aid system, but people who independently tackle the needs of the most helpless and destitute and do so at great risk. [Read More on The Guardian](#)



TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF GLOBAL HEALTH LEADERS IN AFRICA



At this time of year, students around the world are putting on their caps and gowns for graduation ceremonies. Among them are 23 students from Rwanda and one from the U.S. just to who recently graduated as the first class of the University of Global Health Equity in Kigali, Rwanda.

UGHE was an aspiration of the founders of Partners in Health — including Paul Farmer, Ophelia Dahl and Jim Yong Kim, president of the World Bank — who wanted to build a university that would advance the science of health care delivery. It is one of a number of programs designed to train the next generation of global health leaders in Africa.

The university's flagship program is the Master of Science in Global Health Delivery, which launched in 2015, and has an emphasis on implementation science, or how to drive change in health systems. The two-year, part-time degree gathers students one evening a week and one weekend a month during the semester, as well as for a week-long residency at the beginning of every term. The cost is \$16,500 for Rwandan and East African Community nationals and \$24,500 for others, typically paid for through a mix of scholarships from the university, employer support and private funds. Rwandan students in the first graduating class include Caroline Numuhire, who was initially trained as an agronomist and now works with Global Health Corps for an organization providing agricultural solutions to childhood malnutrition; and Dr. Eugene Tuyishime, who was completing his medical residency while pursuing his degree, and will be one of only 14 anesthesiologists in Rwanda. He is committed to expanding, strengthening and improving the field across the country, he said.

[Read More on Devex](#)



Hikers on Dune 45 in the Namib-Naukluft National Park, Namibia
(80 metres high - 5,000,000 year old sand)
June 2, 2017

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Planetary Health Weekly is an e-newsletter published in collaboration with the Planetary Health Commission at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada.

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