



PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY

BRINGING YOU CURRENT NEWS ON GLOBAL HEALTH & ECOLOGICAL WELLNESS

July 30, 2015

Volume 1, Issue 21

Financing Universal Health Coverage: Effects of Tax on Public Health

Increasing domestic tax revenues is integral to achieving universal health coverage, particularly in countries with low tax bases. Pro-poor taxes on profits and capital gains seem to support expanding health coverage without the adverse associations with health outcomes observed for higher consumption taxes.

[Read More on The Lancet.](#)



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Cuba Confronts Climate Change

Climate change presents the greatest challenges especially to island nations. Changes in climate and the resulting effects on human health call for examination of the interactions between environmental and social factors. Important in Cuba's case are soil conditions, food availability, disease burden, ecological changes, extreme weather events, water quality and rising sea levels, all in conjunction with a range of social, cultural economic and demographic conditions.

[Read More on MEDICC.](#)



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Heatwaves: Be Prepared for Many Serious Health Effects

Heatwaves, periods of abnormally and uncomfortably hot and usually humid weather, are among the most dangerous natural hazards. Because of climate change, heatwaves are becoming increasingly frequent and intense, with 14 of the 15 warmest years on record all occurring in the 21st century. In 2003, a European heatwave resulted in deaths of more than 70,000 people.

[Read More on The Lancet.](#)

Biofortified Crops for Better Nutrition

The threat posed by “hidden hunger” from inadequate intake of vitamin A, iodine, iron, zinc, and other minerals and vitamins continues to undermine the health of millions of people worldwide. Low-income families whose diet consists primarily of rice lack the micronutrients that protect them from blindness, anemia, compromised immunity and the lifelong effects of stunted growth. This problem persists today for families around the world who depend on foods like rice, maize, wheat or cassava for most of their meals.

[Read More on Devex.](#)



Barriers to Early Abortion for Women

Women in developed countries still find it very difficult to get an abortion in early pregnancy, despite the fact that they face fewer legal constraints than women in other parts of the world. Barriers to early abortion include moral opposition of some health care providers, lack of suitable training, too few health care professionals and the high cost of the procedure. Access to services could be improved by increasing training, particularly for mid-level practitioners, making services more affordable and developing clear guidelines and referral protocols related to abortion services. [Read More on Science Daily.](#)

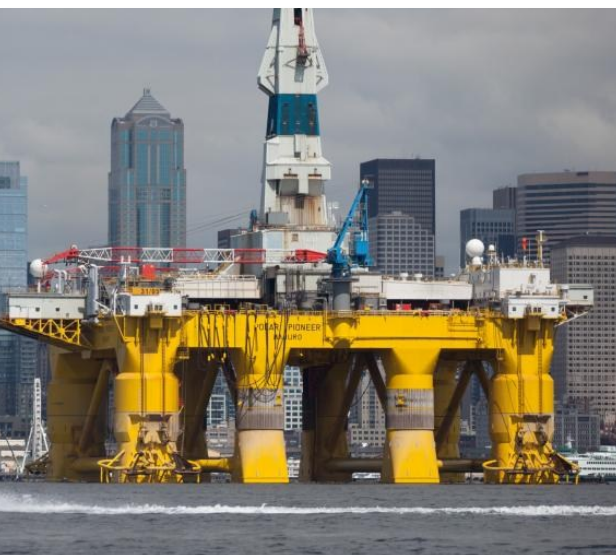


Bumblebees Disappearing As Climate Change Warms in North America and Europe

Bumblebees are rapidly declining in both North America and Europe, and climate change is the major factor. Unlike other species which are compensating by moving further north as the climate warms, bumblebees are not heading north. Their range areas are compressing with rapid warming and this is causing a significant reduction in their populations. [Read More on York University File.](#)

Solar Power is Mostly For the Affluent: New US Plan to Spread the Wealth Around

Rooftop solar power systems cost a lot less these days than they did five or ten years ago, and with many solar companies now offering leases and loans, it's safe to say that going solar is more affordable than even before. That trend goes a long way to explaining why solar, while still making up less than 1% of the total US energy mix, is the fastest-growing power source in the country, but not necessarily for the poor. [Read More on Mother Jones.](#)



Shell Gets Permits For Oil Drilling Off Alaska

Shell and other companies hope to tap into one of the country's last great petroleum reserves. The permits were approved despite officials earlier concluding that long-term drilling in the Arctic's Chukchi Sea would come with a 75% chance of a major spill. Some environmental groups worry the Arctic's remoteness and rugged conditions will hamper cleanup efforts in the event of a spill, risking devastation of a fragile ecosystem.

[Read More on Royal Dutch Shell.](#)

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Integration of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Western Medicine

Although the literature is abundant on traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in the West, there is limited information on how TCM is integrated with Western medicine (WM). The authors describe how one Chinese Community Health Service (CHS) system located in Beijing integrates WM and TCM.

[Read More on the Family Medicine and Community Health Journal.](#)

This Lake is About to Fall Off a Cliff: Gradually Melting Arctic Permafrost

In the coming months a lake in the Northwest Territories is expected to breach the earthen embankment containing it and flow over a cliff, sending tens of thousands of cubic meters of water crashing into a neighboring valley. It's just another piece in the puzzle showing how the climate is changing in regions that are especially sensitive to even small changes.

[Read More on Vice News.](#)



MEDICC's Partnership Linking Navajo CHWs with Cuba

Medical Education Cooperation with Cuba's (MEDICC's) Community Partnerships for Health (CPHE) continues to grow, with the recent addition of a Native American community within the Navajo Nation. MEDICC's partner organization, COPE (Community Outreach and Empowerment), in New Mexico, works to eliminate health disparities and improve the wellbeing of American Indians. COPE conducts community-based outreach through training and providing resources to Navajo community health workers (CHWs). [Read More on MEDICC.](#)



QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"The near-total impunity that exists worldwide for crimes against women in conflict zones in particular, means that we are seeing more and more armed groups turn it into their weapon of choice...This is inextricably linked to our overall failure to prevent and end conflicts worldwide, which is causing human suffering on an unprecedented level."

-Angelina Jolie, UNHCR Special Envoy and Actor
(June 12, 2015. Cape Town, South Africa)

EVENTSTABLE

DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	REGISTER
Aug. 25-27	The Global Forum for Research and Innovation for Health 2015	Manila PH	www.forum2015.org
Aug. 25 to Sept. 2	The Society for the Advancement of Science in Africa (SASA) 3rd International Annual Conference	Toronto CA	http://sasascience.org
Sept. 16-18	Community Health Centers: Agents for Care, Agents of Change	Ottawa CA	http://www.cachc.ca/acac2015
Nov. 5-7	Canadian Conference on Global Health 2015	Montreal CA	http://www.csih.org/en/events/ccgh2015
Nov. 16-18	2015 Canadian Undergraduate Conference on Healthcare (CUCOH)	Kingston CA	http://www.cucoh.com/about
Nov. 18-20	9th World Alliance For Risk Factor Surveillance (WARFS) & The Americas' Network for Chronic Disease Surveillance (AMNET) Global Conference 2015	St. John's AG (Antigua)	http://warfs15.squarespace.com



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Africa: Angelina Jolie Speaks at AU Summit on Sexual Crimes Against Women

Angelina, who is the UNHCR special envoy and who kept the 200 or so diplomats and leaders waiting for half an hour, spoke as part of a high-level panel on women, peace and security, which included AU Commission Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and former British foreign secretary William Hague, who is working with Angelina on an initiative to deal with sexual crimes against women in conflict zones.

Angelina says that 50 million people have been displaced by war today, more than half of which are women and children.

"This means more women and children are exposed to violence, countless more girls out of school who are vulnerable to rape and sexual slavery, generations whose talents are lost to their home communities and to humanity as a whole." [Read More on All Africa.](#)



{ **DOUBLETAKE** }

“Environment, Climate Change and Health”

MEDICC Review, April, 2015

Entire Open Source Issue on Climate Change from a Cuban Perspective

2015 is a critical year, one in which greenhouse emissions must stay "within budget" to avoid mean temperatures rising 2 °C above preindustrial levels. The concept of climate justice was emphasized, meaning an equitable sharing of the benefits and burdens of preventing climate change and mitigating its impacts. Particularly, wealthier countries whose growth has depended mainly on fossil fuels must move quickly to a sustainable development model, while committing resources to help middle- and low-income countries transition to zero-carbon development.

[Read More on MEDICC.](#)



Nigerien Rural Village, Dosso Region
Photo by **Z Productions**, July 2015

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Planetary Health Weekly is an e-newsletter published by the
Planetary Health Commission at Ryerson University in Toronto, ON, CANADA.
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