



PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY

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OUR PHONES AND GADGETS ARE NOW ENDANGERING THE PLANET

Most of us communicate with Loudoun County, Virginia, one of the world's largest concentrations of computing power – the county is the home of data centres used by about 3,000 tech companies. But there is a big problem, centred on a power company called Dominion, which supplies the vast majority of Loudoun County's electricity. According to a 2017 Greenpeace report, only 1% of Dominion's total electricity comes from credibly renewable sources. Dominion is also in the middle of a huge regional controversy about a proposed pipeline that will carry fracked gas to its power plants to drive these data centres' insatiable appetite for electricity. The British writer James Bridle recently published *New Dark Age* where he cites a study in Japan that suggests that by 2030, the power requirements of digital services will outstrip the nation's entire current generation capacity. Data centres are set to soon have a bigger carbon footprint than the entire aviation industry.

[Read more at The Guardian.](#)



Credit: Andrzej Krauze

WELCOME TO THE NEXT DEADLY AIDS PANDEMIC

The world's experts on HIV/AIDS have just gathered in Amsterdam for the 22nd International AIDS Conference. The disease is now poised, for the first time in recent memory, to add massively to its global death toll of 35 million. Three factors are contributing to its runaway resurgence: flawed public health strategy, rapidly shifting demography, and diminished resources. Many in the leadership of global HIV efforts blame overly optimistic messaging for high-level complacency and declines in funding. But the two greatest resource needs receive little rhetorical or financial attention: a vaccine and a cure. No matter how optimistic the assumptions made in models forecasting the mid-21st-century status of the world's pandemic, it is impossible to imagine global control of the virus continuing to rest primarily on lifelong, daily drug treatment for tens of millions of people. Humanity's war with AIDS has reached a dangerous, critical juncture.

[Read more at Foreign Policy.](#)



Credit: Sergei Supinsky

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Backpage: The Great Canadian Summer



Credit: Greg Torda

DR CONGO WILL OPEN VIRUNGA, SALONGA PARKS TO OIL COMPANIES

The government of the Democratic Republic of Congo announced that it was opening parts of its famous Virunga and Salonga national parks, which is home to several endangered and rare species, such as gorillas, bonobos and forest elephants to oil drilling. Oil operations will put wildlife at risk as well as release massive amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Virunga is home to half of the world's mountain gorillas. Salonga, which is over 33,000 square kilometers (12,740 square miles), is the world's second-largest rainforest and home to many extraordinary. It has been on UNESCO's list of World Heritage in Danger since 1999.

[Read more at Deutsche Welle.](#)



Credit: DW/A. Walsh



Credit: Resource Magazine

CORAL REEFS 'WILL BE OVERWHELMED BY RISING OCEANS'

Scientists have found that most endangered coral reefs are incapable of growing quickly enough to compensate for rising sea levels triggered by global warming. Coral reefs – which are already suffering serious degradation because the world's seas are warming and becoming more acidic – could also become overwhelmed by rising oceans. The research – led by scientists at Exeter University and published in *Nature* – involved studying growth rates for more than 200 tropical western Atlantic and Indian Ocean reefs. It was found only 9% of these reefs had the ability to keep up with even the most optimistic rates of sea-level rises being forecasted.

[Read more at The Guardian.](#)

WHY YOU SHOULDN'T BE A 'STRAW-MAN' ENVIRONMENTALIST

Dramatic and evocative statements and statistics, including the infamous “plastic will outweigh fish in the ocean by 2050” prophecy, are inciting some incredible interventions from governments, large multinationals and individual citizens. Although these kinds of statements may not be entirely accurate, the overwhelming response has been the removal of straws from day-to-day society. Along with these recent “anti-straw” endeavours, there comes an accompanying “anti-anti-straw” rhetoric that opposes such interventions on various grounds. For instance, some people with disabilities need straws to drink, and quantitatively, straws make up a small portion of the plastics that enter and contaminate the ocean. It doesn't mean that straws aren't worth addressing.

[Read more at The Conversation.](#)



CONTAINING A DEADLY VIRUS: LESSONS FROM THE NIPAH OUTBREAK IN INDIA

When the rare and deadly Nipah virus broke out in the southern Indian state of Kerala in May, 19 people were infected and 17 died. Key to the response was Kerala's past investments in education and health—the state ranks 10th in GDP among Indian states and territories, but first in human development. A Nipah infection leads to acute respiratory problems and brain inflammation. The key to containment in Kerala was the speed of detection. The timely response is credited to preparedness, capacity building, and coordination with state, national, and global organizations. Disease prevention and rapid response, coupled with environmental protection, should be bigger priorities everywhere.

[Read more at Brookings.](#)

Credit: PTI Photo

DR TEDROS' LETTER TO HEADS OF STATES ON UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE (UHC); AFRICA HEALTH BUDGET NETWORK CALLS ON AFRICAN LEADERS TO SEIZE THE MOMENT AND INVEST

Dr Tedros, head of WHO, while commending the commitment of heads of states to the well-being of their people, encouraged them to move further down the pathway towards UHC which can only be achieved with the convergence of unwavering political commitment, prioritized investment of domestic resources, and a strategic plan for health tailored to national context. He was asking them to make three concrete commitments towards achieving UHC and to report these at the World Health Assembly.

[Read more at Africa Health Budget Network.](#)



Credit: Daniel Johnson

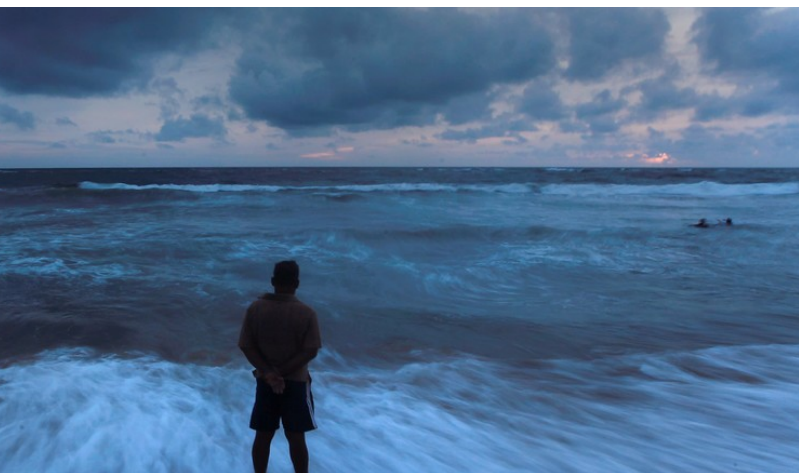


THE BIRTHING MAT THAT HELPS SAVE WOMEN'S LIVES

On a humid afternoon in Kunipara slum, one of Bangladesh's largest informal settlements, a group of young women sit in a circle on the floor of a health care center run by BRAC, the world's largest development organization. The women, who live in tin sheds above a canal, are all between seven and nine months pregnant. They are at the center to learn about safe birth preparedness, including a simple very effective tool.

[Read more at Devex.](#)

Credit: Conor Ashleigh / AusAID / CC BY



Credit: REUTERS/Dinuka Liyanawatte

SPOTLIGHT ON POLICY: BREASTFEEDING HAS BEEN THE BEST PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY THROUGHOUT HISTORY

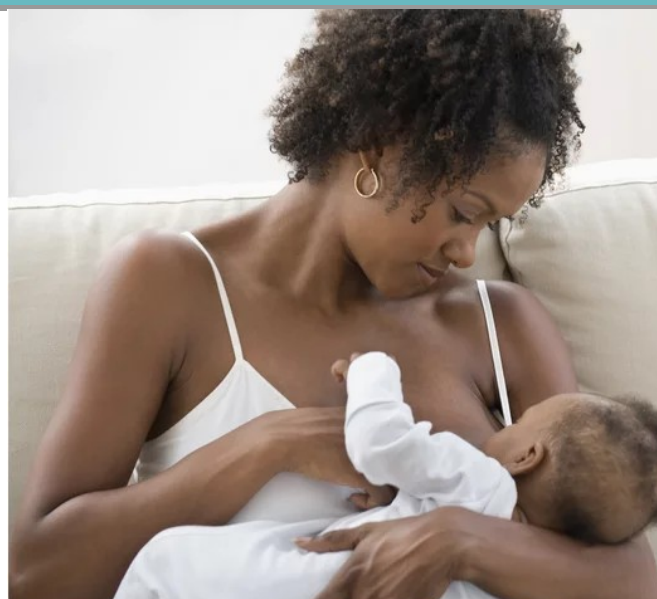
The benefits of breastfeeding for children and mothers are irrefutable. Initiation of skin-to-skin contact immediately after delivery, with early onset of breastfeeding within the first hour of life, supports newborn stability and provides protective immunoglobulins. Human milk provides human milk oligosaccharides, facilitating the colonization of the intestinal tract with probiotics and establishing a microbiome that protects against pathogenic bacteria. In contrast, formula-fed infants face higher rates of gastrointestinal diseases, respiratory infections and a higher likelihood of sudden infant death syndrome. Longer term, they have a higher risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, asthma and certain childhood cancers when compared to breastfed cohorts. Also, mothers who fail to breastfeed according to current recommendations face higher risks of postpartum hemorrhage, breast cancer, ovarian cancer, obesity, type 2 diabetes and heart disease, including hypertension and heart attack.

[Read more at The Conversation.](#)

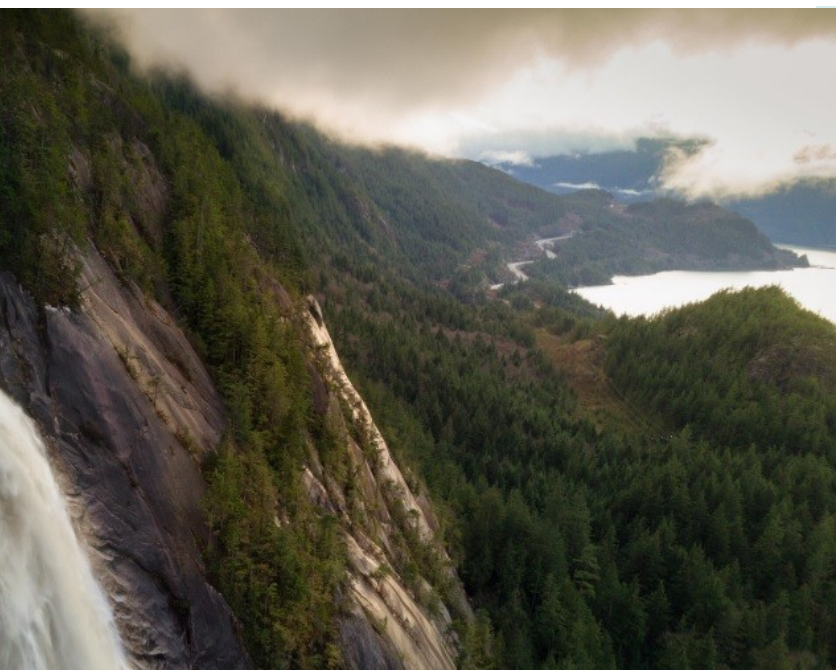
IF WE DON'T PROTECT THE OCEANS, HUMANITARIAN DISASTER AWAITS

On World Oceans Day, we need to strengthen our commitment to reversing ocean decline. The ocean holds the key to overcoming some of our most pressing challenges, such as combating climate change and producing enough food sustainably for 10 billion people by the middle of the 21st century. In 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including 17 global goals. Sustainable Development Goal 14 'Life below water' and its ten targets specify what must be done to improve ocean health. The ocean may seem big — almost infinite — but our individual share is only one fifth of a cubic kilometre of ocean. If we don't act now, collapses in fisheries and marine ecosystems will trigger humanitarian disasters around the world.

[Read more at Medium.](#)



Credit: SelectStock—Getty Images/Vetta

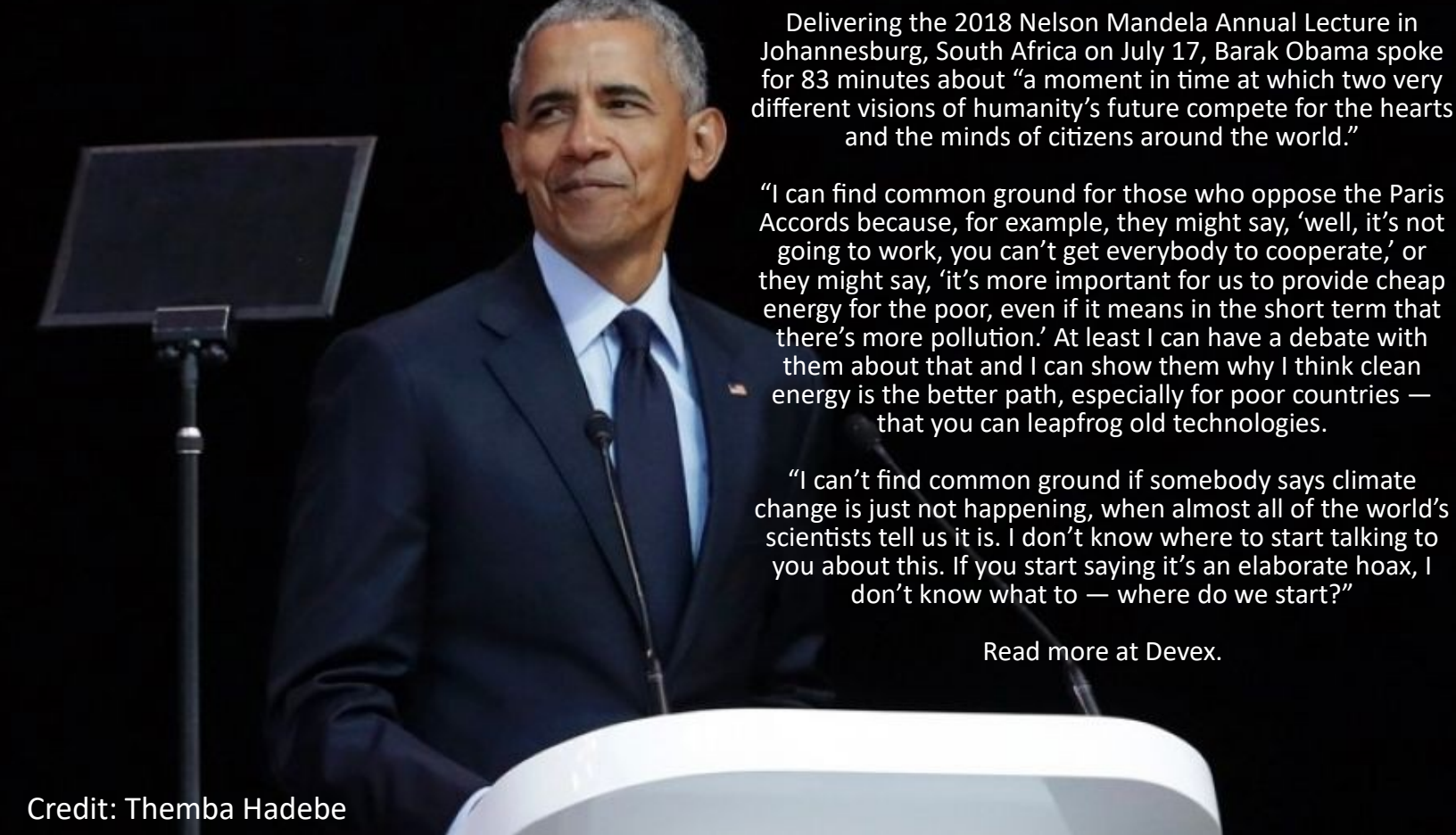


Credit: Jesse Delgrosse

SPOTLIGHT ON INDIGENOUS HEALTH: SQUAMISH NATION PLANS CLEANSING CEREMONY AFTER SHANNON FALLS DEATHS

Squamish First Nation and the City of Squamish are working together to plan a traditional cleansing ceremony at Shannon Falls for three YouTube video bloggers Ryker Gamble, Alexey Lyakh and Megan Scraper who died at Shannon Falls in the provincial park on July 3. The nation wants to work with the District of Squamish and BC Parks to educate visitors about the risks in Squamish-based provincial parks and their traditional significance. The nation hopes to increase safety-focused signage in provincial parks in its traditional territory to make people more cautious around the use of undesignated trails. Following the cleansing ceremony, the Squamish Nation and the municipality will work together to urge BC Parks to increase the nation's presence in provincial parks.

[Read more at The Tyee.](#)



Delivering the 2018 Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture in Johannesburg, South Africa on July 17, Barack Obama spoke for 83 minutes about “a moment in time at which two very different visions of humanity’s future compete for the hearts and the minds of citizens around the world.”

“I can find common ground for those who oppose the Paris Accords because, for example, they might say, ‘well, it’s not going to work, you can’t get everybody to cooperate,’ or they might say, ‘it’s more important for us to provide cheap energy for the poor, even if it means in the short term that there’s more pollution.’ At least I can have a debate with them about that and I can show them why I think clean energy is the better path, especially for poor countries — that you can leapfrog old technologies.

“I can’t find common ground if somebody says climate change is just not happening, when almost all of the world’s scientists tell us it is. I don’t know where to start talking to you about this. If you start saying it’s an elaborate hoax, I don’t know what to — where do we start?”

Read more at Devex.

Credit: Themba Hadebe

EVENTSTABLE

DATES	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	REGISTER
Sept. 29th	7th Annual Action Global Health Network Conference	Ottawa Canada	Early Bird deadline for abstract is July 20th, 2017, please e-mail aghn2017.research@gmail.com for more information
Oct. 8th-12th	5th Global Symposium on Health Systems Research	Liverpool England	http://healthsystemsresearch.org/hsr2018/
Oct. 18th	Integrative Health Institute Conference	Edmonton Canada	https://www.ualberta.ca/integrative-health-institute
Nov. 8th-9th	Workshop: Rules of the Road 2.0	Washington USA	https://www.cugh.org/events/workshop-rules-road-20
Nov. 15th-19th	4th People’s Health Assembly	Dhaka Bangladesh	http://www.phmovement.org/en/node/10805
Nov. 19th-21st	Canadian Conference on Global Health	Toronto Canada	http://www.csih.org/en/events/canadian-conference-global-health
Mar. 8th-10th	10th annual CUGH Conference - Translation and Implementation for impact in Global Health	Chicago USA	Panel and Abstract proposal deadline - August 25, 2018



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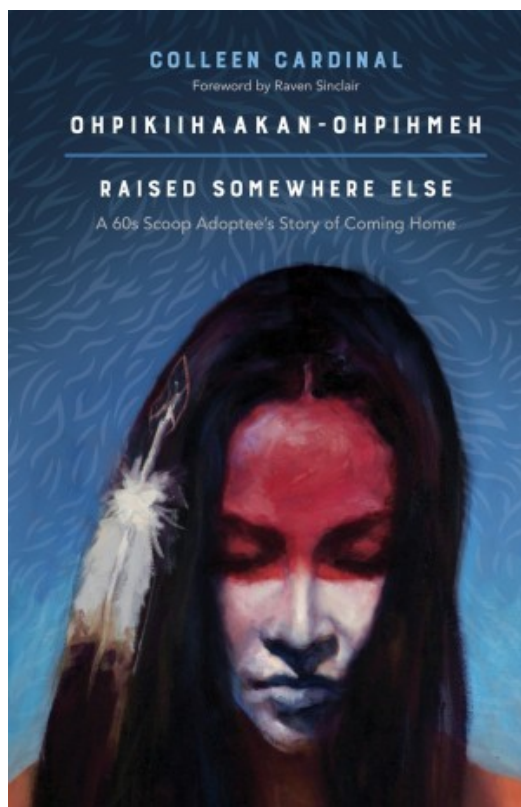


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SPOTLIGHT ON MEDIA: NEW BOOK OHPIKIIHAAKAN-OHPIHMEH (RAISED SOMEWHERE ELSE) - A 60S SCOOP ADOPTEES STORY OF COMING HOME BY COLLEEN CARDINAL



During the 60s Scoop, over 20,000 Indigenous children in Canada were removed from their biological families, lands and culture and trafficked across provinces, borders and overseas to be raised in nonIndigenous households

Ohpikiihaakan-ohpihmeh delves into the personal and provocative narrative of Colleen Cardinal's journey growing up in a non- Indigenous household as a 60s Scoop adoptee. Cardinal speaks frankly and intimately about instances of violence and abuse throughout her life, but this book is not a story of tragedy. It is a story of empowerment, reclamation and, ultimately, personal reconciliation. It is a form of Indigenous resistance through truth-telling, a story that informs the narrative on missing and murdered Indigenous women, colonial violence, racism and the Indigenous child welfare system.

Colleen Cardinal is Nehiyaw Iskwew from Onihcikiskowapowin Saddle Lake First Nation Alberta, daughter of a residential school survivor, 60s scoop adoptee and MMIWG family member and social justice activist organizer. She is co-founder of the National Indigenous Survivors of Child Welfare Network.

[Read more at Fernwood Publishing.](#)



5 WAYS TO MAKE SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL A REALITY



Credit: Getty Images

Over the decades, travel has become a multibillion dollar industry. It keeps growing and that all you really need to go somewhere these days is some money and a bit of free time. When traveling, there are 5 ways to make your impact on the planet more sustainable:

1) **Start with the Culture:** Sustainable travel simply means mindful travel. It's about paying respect to the place you're going to, it's about exploring and learning.

2) **Get a Green Car:** Solar-powered cars are a great way to lower your carbon footprint, and the prices are definitely getting lower as the world tries its best to find more energy-saving solutions. There is also the option of taking the train instead of flying.

3) **Walk:** Don't use cars or even public transport, simply get a good pair of shoes and see where your heart takes you. You might see fewer things, but the places that you do see, you'll actually remember.

4) **Use Less Plastic:** Do your best to clean up after yourself, and try not to buy or bring plastic with you. Carry reusable bottles, don't buy endless lattes in plastic cups, and carry foldable tote bags with you for those times when you want to go shopping.

5) **Support the Local Economy:** Buying from local merchants who handcraft will usually be more expensive, but you'll have something that's actually traditional and unique to the culture, not to mention the fact that you'll be supporting the local economy in a more direct way. The same goes for eating out – a family-run restaurant over a chain you are familiar with.

Be a mindful sustainable traveler.

[Read more at Cause Artist.](#)



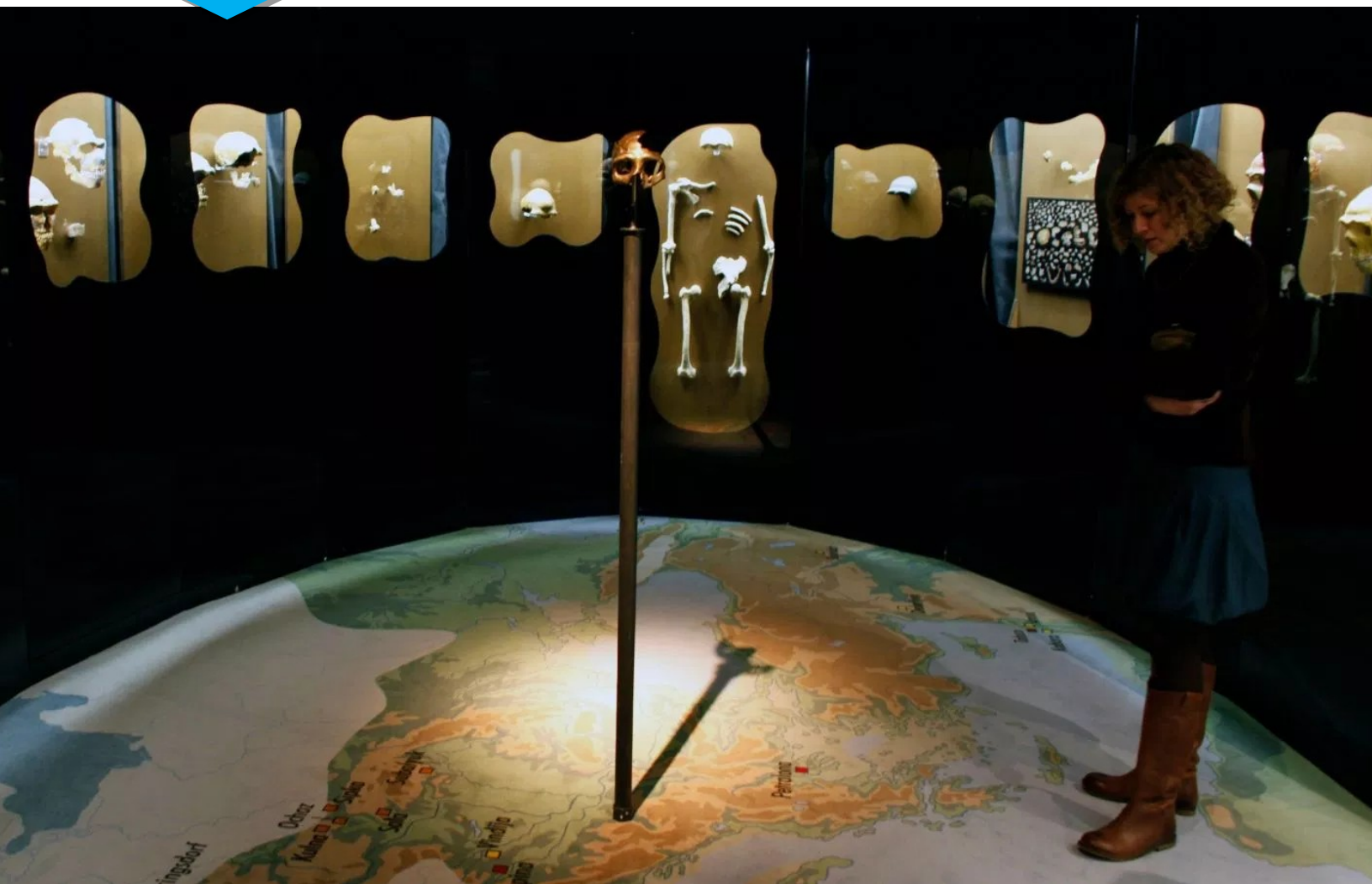
Credit: Government of B.C.

On June 20, British Columbia Agriculture Minister Lana Popham was expected to make an announcement about the fate of fish farm licences in the Broughton Archipelago that have been strenuously opposed by several First Nations. Those provincial licences expired at midnight and have apparently been converted to a month to month renewal. Instead the minister rolled out a new policy for fish farms altogether. Effective in 2022, the provincial government will only grant tenures to fish farm operators provided they meet two conditions. The owners of industrial open net pens or fish feedlots must now prove to Fisheries and Oceans Canada, which has regulated the industry since 2009, that their operations will not adversely impact wild salmon stocks. In addition they “must negotiate agreements with the First Nation(s) in whose territory they propose to operate.” But the government media advisory added that no decision about contested tenures in the Broughton had been made. Dzawada’enuxw leaders have characterized the industry as a colonial force that threatens wild salmon and that never had their permission to operate in their territory. The industry has no agreements with the Dzawada’enuxw.

[Read more at The Tyee.](#)



EARLY HUMANS MADE THE FIRST JOURNEY FROM AFRICA TO CHINA OVER TWO MILLION YEARS AGO



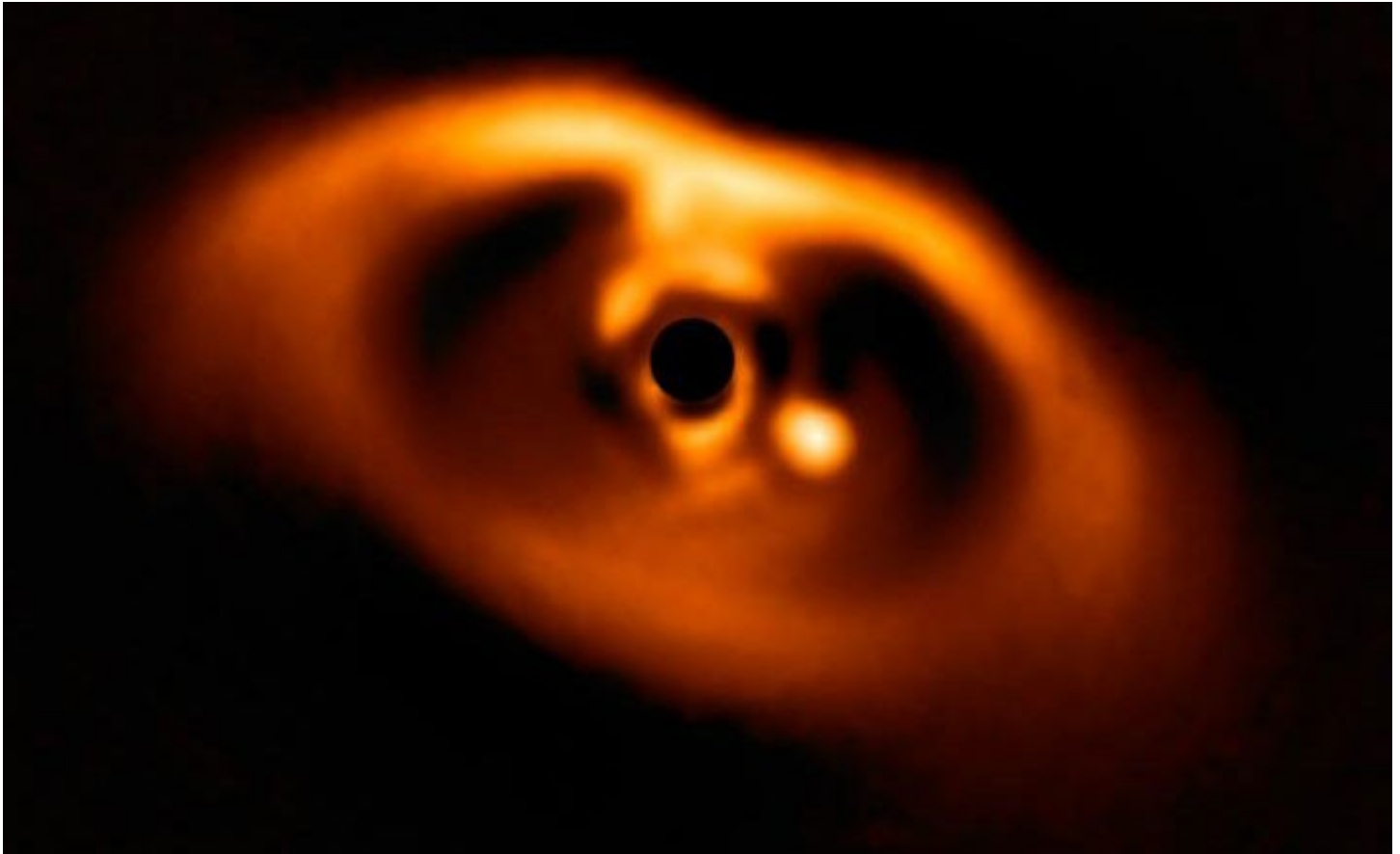
Credit: Nikola Solic

Findings published in *Nature* have extended the start of our worldwide trekking back to beyond 2.1 million years ago. Presented in the new paper, evidence for this earlier—and further—human movement comes in the form of flaked stone tools found in sediments at Shangchen, in the southern Chinese Loess Plateau. Some 96 tools were found in situ—that is, still in the ground and undisturbed—and have shapes and traces of working recognizable to the archaeologist as distinctly human-made. An onslaught of recent findings from Asia has prompted some researchers to suggest that humans came “Out of Asia.” However, while it appears that people were in this region very early, humanity remains an African invention. Our earliest ancestors arose in Africa some 6 million years ago, although the earliest remains of those belonging to our branch of the family tree—that of *Homo*—only date back to 2.8 million years ago. Currently, it seems that the earliest communities of *Homo* lived in eastern Africa for several hundred thousand years before heading out and away from the motherland. Humans are extremely flexible and adaptable to new environments. Ultimately, it allowed us to discover and colonize the entire globe as part of a multi-millennial human odyssey.

[Read more at Quartz Africa.](#)



ASTRONOMERS CAPTURED THE FIRST IMAGE OF A BABY PLANET: A PLANET IS BORN



Credit: A. Müller et al.

A group of astronomers have taken the first photograph of a planet being formed around a young dwarf star called PDS 70 using European Southern Observatory's (ESO) telescope. The planet has been named PDS 70b. The bright spot to the right of the black dot in the middle of the picture is the newly forming planet. The black area is the star, which has been blotted out with a coronagraph to enable astronomers to see details that would otherwise be overwhelmed by the light of PDS 70b. The distance between the newly forming planet and its host star is about 3 billion km. PDS 70b appears to be a gas giant, with a larger mass than Jupiter. The surface temperature is currently a steamy 1000 degrees Celsius (1832 degrees F). This is the first time they've actually been able to detect a separate baby planet. [Read more at engadget.](#)

FOUR STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING WISDOM TODAY



Credit: Hollandse Hoogte/AA

In October of 1979, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Barbara Tuchman delivered a lecture at West Point in which she decried the “persistence of unwisdom” among politicians across the ages. Tuchman spoke of geopolitical reason as overwhelmed by “ambition, greed, fear, face-saving, the instinct to dominate, the needs of the ego, the whole bundle of personal vanities and anxieties.” We live in a time when technological innovation and a rampant ideology of self seem clearly to conspire against wisdom’s acquisition. Our increasingly curated online lives not only make us anxious about not measuring up; they tend to erase the life struggles so essential to the acquisition of wisdom. Our task as educators is twofold: to lay the groundwork for wisdom by consciously aligning our pedagogy with its most essential attributes and to use examples of great wisdom -- past and, most especially, present -- to waken in our students a hunger for it. It has, of course, long been argued that wisdom cannot be taught. That is not to say, however, that we cannot teach for wisdom. First, at a time when our media environment and our practices of secondary education tend to reward those who stake out a position and defend it at all costs, it is vital that we as educators teach our students to acknowledge and appreciate complexity, in both its cognitive and ethical forms. Second, we must consistently help our students to see how the actions and values of individuals -- whether historic, contemporary or fictional -- have been shaped by their particular social, cultural, economic and/or religious contexts. Finally, and in many ways most critically, wisdom implies cognitive humility. As hardheaded academics, we tend to be suspicious of the seemingly mushy, New Agey concept of wisdom. But in a political and social age that devalues cognitive and moral nuance, ignores the determinative force of cultural difference, and leaves both empathy and cognitive humility in short supply, we have no choice but to consistently, and self-consciously, teach for wisdom.

[Read more at Inside Higher Ed.](#)

**The Great Canadian Summer
Lac Stukely Beach
Mount Orford Provincial Park, Quebec
July 30, 2018**



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