



PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY



BRINGING YOU CURRENT NEWS ON ECOLOGICAL WELLNESS & GLOBAL HEALTH

Volume 4, Number 51

<https://planetaryhealthweekly.com>

December 20, 2018

BEEF-EATING 'MUST FALL DRASTICALLY' AS WORLD POPULATION GROWS

According to the World Resources Institute report, which was launched at the UN climate summit in Katowice, Poland recognize that we will need 50% more food by 2050 while requiring greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture to reduce by two-thirds. If new farmland are created to accommodate the extra food, remaining forests around the world will face destruction. The new report follows other major scientific analyses showing that it is necessary to reduce the consumption of meat in order to avoid climate change. Moreover, eliminating meat and dairy products was the biggest way to decrease a person's environmental impact on earth.

Read more at [The Guardian](#).



Credit: Frederic J Brown/AFP/Getty Images

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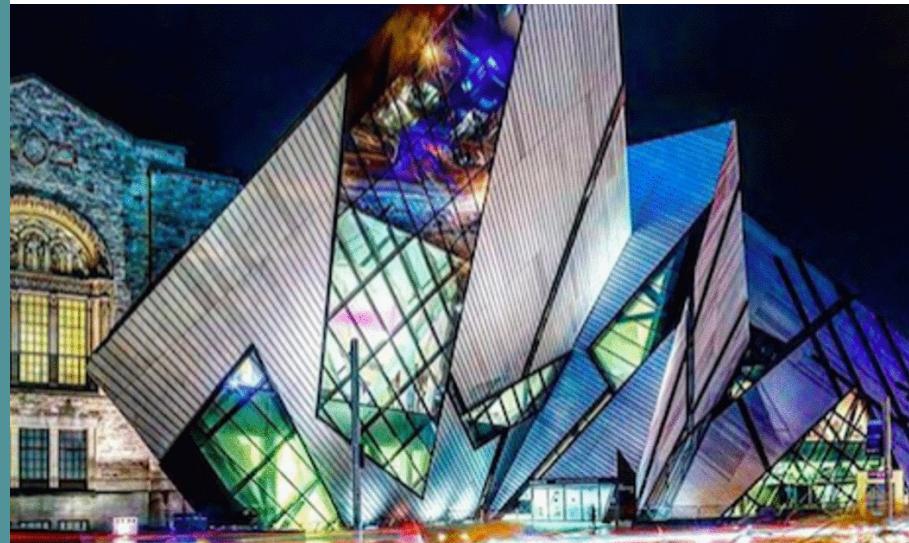
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DOCTORS CAN NOW PRESCRIBE A VISIT TO THE MUSEUM THROUGH A NEW INITIATIVE TO COMBAT ANXIETY AND LONELINESS

Rexdale Community Health Centre is one of 74 Ontario community health centres participating in a pilot program that provides social and artistic remedies as an alternative treatment for health issues like anxiety and loneliness. Patients who meet the criteria are referred to a link worker, who free treatment alternatives. This summer, the provincial health ministry granted \$600,000 to launch the program in Ontario to address the health needs of patients who aren't well-served by the mainstream health system. The goal is to draft a final report that recommends how to make social prescribing permanent for the 11 community health centres that is participating in this groundbreaking program.

Read more at [The Star](#).



Credit: @marco_l



Credit: Sarah Das/Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution/PA

CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES ACCELERATED CLIMATE CHANGE AS MUCH AS A WHOLE YEAR OF POWER USE

In 2018, California's fire season released 68 million tons of carbon dioxide, which is almost as much as a year's worth of electricity usage in California. In a statement on November 30th, the Interior Department blamed the wildfires mainly on forest management practices albeit fire officials, scientists, and California government officials who did not share this sentiment. Fire officials felt that it was the rise of climate change and residential sprawl that contributes to increasingly dry locales that incite fires.

[Read more at Quartz.](#)



Credit: Noah Berger



Credit: Archive Photos/Getty Images

SEA LEVELS MAY RISE MORE RAPIDLY DUE TO GREENLAND ICE MELT

When assessing the rate at which the ice melts in Greenland, the rising sea level could be rising quicker than what was once believed. The run-off from Greenland's vast northern ice sheet is currently the biggest single source of meltwater adding to the volume of the world's oceans. According to a published paper in *Nature*, it is 50% higher than pre-industrial levels and rising exponentially due to global warming. Most of the increase has taken place in the past two decades, which suggests that the ice sheet becomes more sensitive as temperatures rise. The first sign of meltwater increase was identified 339 years ago at the time of the industrial revolution in the mid-1800s. The trend remained within the natural variation until the 1990s when it has spiked outside of the normal 9-13 year cycles.

[Read more at The Guardian.](#)

THE ARCTIC HAS LOST 2.6 MILLION REINDEER OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS

Reindeer are the largest deer species in proportion to their bodies. In addition, they travel thousand-mile journeys in herds of 100,000 or more to search for food every year. In the Arctic ecosystem, they are considered an important source of food and livelihood for people with their ability to reshape vegetation by grazing. Unfortunately, in recent years, the population of reindeers, also known as caribou, are declining in the North Pole. It is not only the population of reindeers that is declining but there is decline among the animal population too from 4.7 million animals to 2.1 million animals. The decline of the herds can be attributed to factors like hunting, disease, diminished food availability and climate change.

[Read more at Vox.](#)



Credit: Geoff Oliver Bugbee / Orbis International

A MULTIPRONGED APPROACH TO TACKLE AVOIDABLE BLINDNESS

Bacteria can cause an infectious and debilitating eye disease called trachoma. Trachoma can even lead to blindness. In addition to trachoma being prevalent in some of the least-developed regions around the globe, it is also considered to be the number one cause of infectious blindness.

[Read more at Devex.](#)

THE COMPLICATED TRUTH

ABOUT C-SECTIONS

Before the Cesarean became a medical mainstay, better wound management and antibiotics were required first. In 2013, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists suggest that in some cases, elective Cesareans could be a viable option. It takes more time to recover from a C-section given that a C-section is major abdominal surgery. The risks of complications with the placenta in later pregnancies are dramatically increased for those who have a C-section for at least one birth. At the moment, there is no universally agreed upon level of C-sections that is considered optimal.

[Read more at Medium.](#)



Credit: Tetra Images/Brand X Pictures/Getty



Credit: Tetra Images/Brand X Pictures/Getty

ROMANIA HOSPITAL SAYS 39 BABIES NOW DIAGNOSED WITH SUPERBUG

On November 30th, Giulesti Maternity hospital in Romania closed due to an outbreak of a drug-resistant superbug that affected 39 babies, which is 3 times the number of newborns diagnosed with antibiotic-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* last month. Although there were no deaths, there were infants hospitalized in three children's facilities in Bucharest. While the bacteria generally live on the skin or in the nostrils without causing symptoms, they can damage to heart valves or cause other harm if they enter the bloodstream.

[Read more at AP News.](#)

PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY



THIS IS HOW BIG OIL WILL DIE

In 2025, it is predicted that 800,000 tons of used high strength steel will be up for auction. In 2019, the Keystone XL pipeline was done at a cost of approximately \$7 billion. The pipeline can carry up to 500,000 barrels of oil a day from the Canadian tar sands to refineries in Texas and Louisiana, United States for processing. The Keystone XL pipeline will be known as the world's last great fossil fuels infrastructure project. Over the past several years, the transportation sector has been undergoing the biggest, fastest change in the history of human civilization, causing the bankruptcy of companies such as Exxon Mobil and General Motors. In addition, the transportation sector has led to over \$10 trillion in economic output. Although Big Oil is considered to be the most feared industry, it is also the most respected industry in history as demonstrated by its ability to dominate our economics and our politics in the past century.

[Read more at Medium.](#)

Credit:WHMP / clipart.com

SPOTLIGHT ON POLICY: MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH FOR CARBON PRICING IN THE U.S. CANADIANS CELEBRATE THIS CARBON PRICING BREAKTHROUGH.

Five members of the U.S. House of Representatives introduced the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, which is the most significant climate change legislation in Congress in over a decade. This climate solution will create more than 2 million new jobs, lower health care costs, encourage energy innovation, and promote consumer spending. The revenue from nationwide carbon emissions can help achieve these outcomes. Economists and climate scientists are advocated as the simplest, most effective approach to solving climate change. Over the next decade, this bill aims to lower carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions by at least 33%.

[Read more at Below2°C.](#)

Energy Innovation AND Carbon Dividend Act

AMERICA'S CLIMATE SOLUTION

H.R. 7173

This bill will drive down America's carbon pollution and bring climate change under control. It is:

EFFECTIVE



GOOD FOR
PEOPLE



GOOD FOR THE
ECONOMY



REVENUE
NEUTRAL



Republicans and Democrats agree

Credit:Energy Innovation Act



SPOTLIGHT ON INDIGENOUS WELLNESS: INDIGENOUS WOMEN WERE FORCED TO GET THEIR TUBES TIED. HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS ARE CALLING ON CANADA TO ACT

In October 2017, two Indigenous women launched a lawsuit against doctors and health workers in Saskatchewan for forcing Indigenous women to sterilize. Human rights groups call on Canada to put a stop this practice. There are at least 60 women who have added their names to the allegations that they were pressured into undergoing tubal ligation in Canada. Amnesty International Canada wants the federal government to assign a representative to listen to the voice of Indigenous women who experienced coerced sterilization so that justice can be served to those affected.

[Read more at Global Citizen.](#)



Dene elder François Paulette says, ***“First Nations are in a unique position to be leaders in climate change initiatives because of our knowledge of the sacred teachings of the land. We must not be situated as passive recipients of climate change impacts. We must be agents of change in climate action.”***

Read more at [David Suzuki Foundation](#).

Credit: Joshua Rawson-Harris via Unsplash

EVENTS TABLE

DATES	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	REGISTER
January 8th	The Global Leadership Series: Decolonization as a Pathway to Wellness for Indigenous Peoples	Toronto Canada	https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/global-leadership-series-decolonization-as-a-pathway-to-wellness-for-indigenous-peoples-tickets-48111126288
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
Mar. 20th-22nd	2019 Climate Leadership Conference and Awards	Baltimore USA	https://www.climateleadershipconference.org/
Apr. 30th – May 2nd	Public Health 2019 (CPHA)	Ottawa Canada	https://www.cpha.ca/public-health-2019-program
May 13th - 15th	Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics (CSEB): 2019 Biennial Conference	Ottawa Canada	https://cseb.ca/conferences/2019-conference/
June 10th-21st	5th McGill Summer Institute in Infectious Diseases and Global Health	Montreal Canada	http://mcgill-idgh.ca/





SPOTLIGHT ON MEDIA

COP24 SPECIAL REPORT: HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE



Credit: World Health Organization

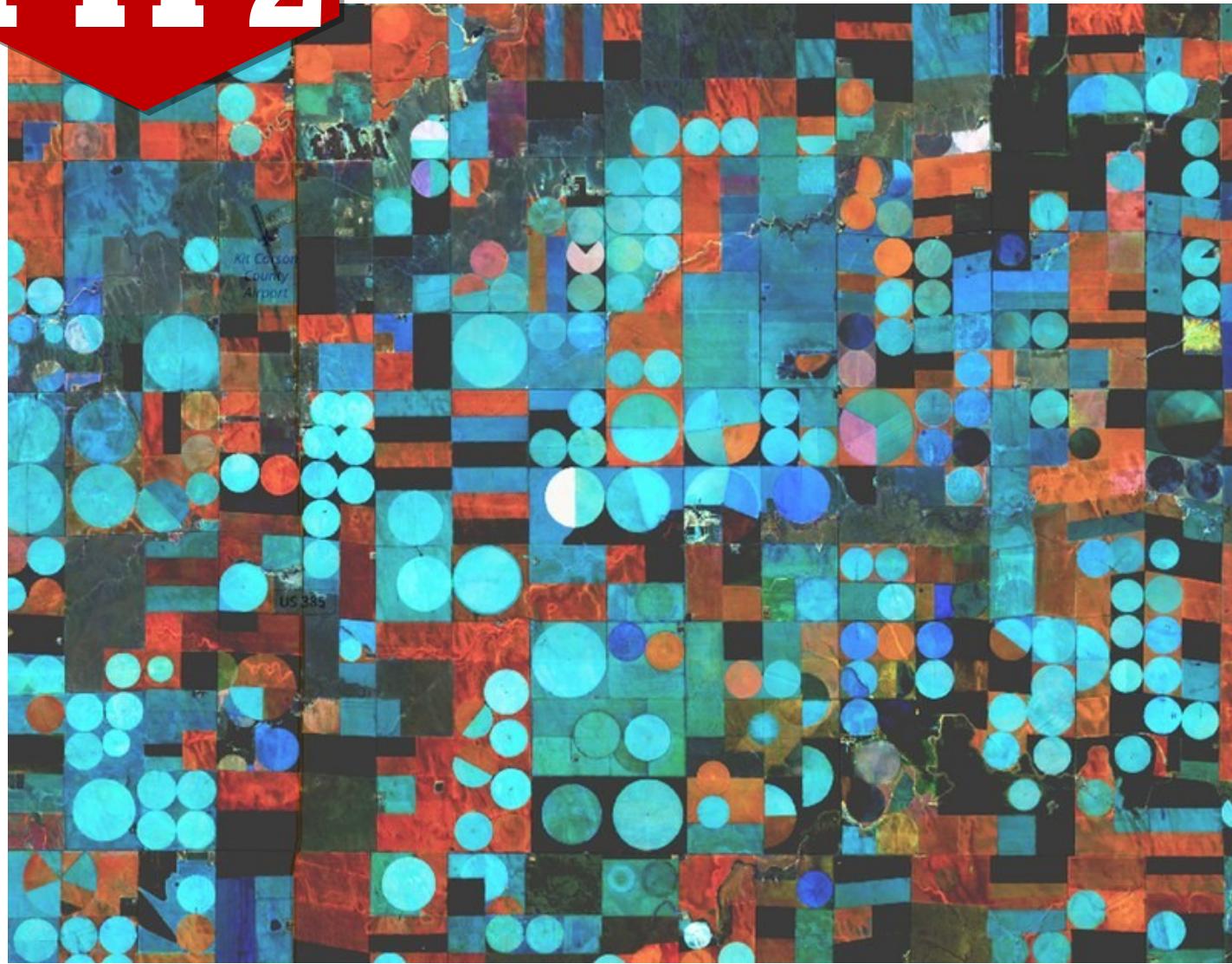
Over 80 health professionals, academic experts, representatives of civil society and international agencies from the public health community contributed to this report to support the negotiations of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The report, which was delivered at COP24, was written upon the request of the President of the 23rd Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP23), Prime Minister Bainimarama of Fiji, to the World Health Organisation (WHO). The objectives of the report are as follow:

- To provide global knowledge on the interconnection between climate change and health
- To offer an overview of the initiatives and tools that the public health community is supporting and scaling up actions to implement the Paris Agreement for a healthier, more sustainable society.
- Recommendations for United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiators and policy-makers to optimize the health benefits of addressing climate change and avoiding the worst health impacts of this global challenge.

[Read more at World Health Organization.](#)

WELCOME TO THE CLIMATE- CHANGE-REVERSING INVENTION CONVENTION

FYI 2



Credit: Indigo Ag

As the co-founder of a company called Indigo Ag, von Maltzahn was working on a probiotic to increase crop yields. Since Indigo began selling naturally occurring organisms, spray-coated onto seeds, Indigo Ag has grown to become perhaps the most valuable agtech company in the world in the past three years. These microbes are aiding crops grow in low-water conditions, which can potentially replace the chemical fertilizers that modern agriculture currently relies on. This fall, Indigo Ag launched an online marketplace, kind of like a “farmers’ eBay” to connect agricultural buyers with sellers. In 2017, Indigo Ag forecasted that the US corn crop yield with an accuracy of more than 99% months earlier than the US Department of Agriculture. Indigo Ag believes the startup’s AI will allow more farmers to grow more food while placing less strain on the environment.

[Read more at Wired.](#)



FYI 3

IN 1973, AN MIT COMPUTER PREDICTED WHEN CIVILIZATION WILL END



Credit: ABC News

In 1973, the computer pioneer, Jay Forrester, created the computer program to originally model global sustainability but instead it forecasted that our civilization would end by 2040. Jay Forrester was commissioned by the Club of Rome, an organization made up of thinkers, former world heads of states, scientists, and UN bureaucrats with the mission to "promote understanding of the global challenges facing humanity and to propose solutions through scientific analysis, communication, and advocacy". The end of civilization was forecasted based on the model's calculations, which consider trends in pollution levels, population growth, the amount of natural resources and the overall quality of life on Earth. In 2020, the quality of life will decrease significantly as envisioned by World One.

[Read more at Think Big.](#)

FYI 4

47,000 TICKS ON A MOOSE, AND THAT'S JUST AVERAGE. BLAME CLIMATE CHANGE



Credit: Dan Bergeron/New Hampshire Fish and Game Department

From 2014 to 2016, Dr. Pekins, a professor of natural resources and the environment at the University of New Hampshire, counted ticks on moose calves at two locations in New Hampshire and Maine. The highest number of winter ticks he found on a moose was approximately 100,000 ticks on a dead moose calf. With climate change delaying the arrival of snow in New England's winters, he wanted to see how the moose were doing. In the Canadian Journal of Zoology published in November of 2018, Dr. Pekins and his colleagues argued that climate change plays an influential role for the three consecutive years of tick outbreaks in the host-parasite relationship. In the future, although Dr. Pekins doesn't anticipate moose being extinct, he believes that there would be less of them.

[Read more at The New York Times.](#)



AS SNOW DISAPPEARS, THE SIERRAS AND ROCKIES ARE SHRINKING



Credit: George Rose/Getty Images

Based on a new analysis of the nation's snowpack over the past 36 years, the mountains of the High Sierra and the Rockies in western USA are shrinking while experiencing less snow with some places having a decline of 41% in the annual mass of snow since 1982. According to a research team led by Xubin Zeng, professor of hydrology and atmospheric sciences at the University of Arizona, noted that for the snowiest regions, the length of the snow season reduced by 34 days. The western snowpack plays an important role in maintaining drinking water for tens of millions of people from Denver to San Diego, and supporting a healthy forest ecosystem. The reason for warmer temperatures and greater rainfall in certain areas is attributed to climate change.

[Read more at Wired.](#)

FYI 6

SIX TIPS FOR FIRST-GEN GRADUATES SEEKING A CAREER



Credit: Shutterstock

Helen Pho provides six tips to first-generation post-secondary graduates who are searching for a career:

1. Network to find out how others prepare for careers
2. Cultivate strong professional relationships
3. Bet on yourself and say yes
4. Do something outside your research to gain professional experience
5. Take advantage of career services
6. Develop your network of peer mentors

Read more at [Academica Group](#).

9th People's Hospital
Shanghai, China
December 13, 2018



Credit: David Zakus

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Production: Elisabeth Huang & Eunice Anteh

Social Media: Evans Oppong



Subscription Services: Maame Efua De-Heer

