



# HAPPY NEW YEAR 2019

# PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY

BRINGING YOU CURRENT NEWS ON ECOLOGICAL WELLNESS & GLOBAL HEALTH

Volume 4, Number 53

<https://planetaryhealthweekly.com>

January 3, 2019

## 3 BIG SOCIETAL PROBLEMS TO FIX IN 2019

There are three big societal issues to take into consideration for 2019. The first challenge to tackle is to re-couple overall economic progress with gains in living standards. There is declining faith, especially in higher income countries, that higher gross domestic product (GDP) means better lives for average families. Many citizens feel economic gains are for those who are the elites. The growing shifts in automation technology increases workers' insecurities. The second issue to resolve is to de-couple economic progress from environmental degradation. Every new unit of economic gain correlates to an unit of environmental suffering. In less than 30 years, the world needs to reduce approximately 90% of greenhouse gas emissions per unit of GDP.

[Read more at Brookings.](#)



Credit: Carey Marks/Plymouth University

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## GLOBAL HEALTH DISRUPTORS: CLIMATE CHANGE

According to the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, our planet will be 1.5°C hotter than pre-industrial levels in 12-34 years if we continue to burn fossil fuels at the present rate. This increase of 1.5°C can lead to the death of 70-90% of our coral reefs and damage to our terrestrial crops and ecosystems. Climate change can also contribute to intensified heat waves and storms, air pollution, malnutrition, climate sensitive infectious diseases, and social dislocation, which can all threaten public health. In order to limit global warming to under 1.5°C, there needs to be a 45% decline in global net emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> by 2030, and "net zero" emissions by 2050.

[Read more at BMJ Opinion.](#)



Credit: Sascha Steinbach/EPA





## AS SEAS WARM, GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS FACE A GIANT EVOLUTIONARY TEST

The Galápagos Islands are considered to be one of the most vulnerable places to the effects of climate change. In the era of climate change, there are species that struggle against extinction on these islands. As climate change warms the oceans, the Galápagos islands are set for potentially the greatest evolutionary test. Scientists are worried given that the Galápagos islands are at the intersection of three ocean currents as well as in the cross hairs of El Niño, which contributes to rapid, severe ocean heating across the Eastern Pacific tropics.

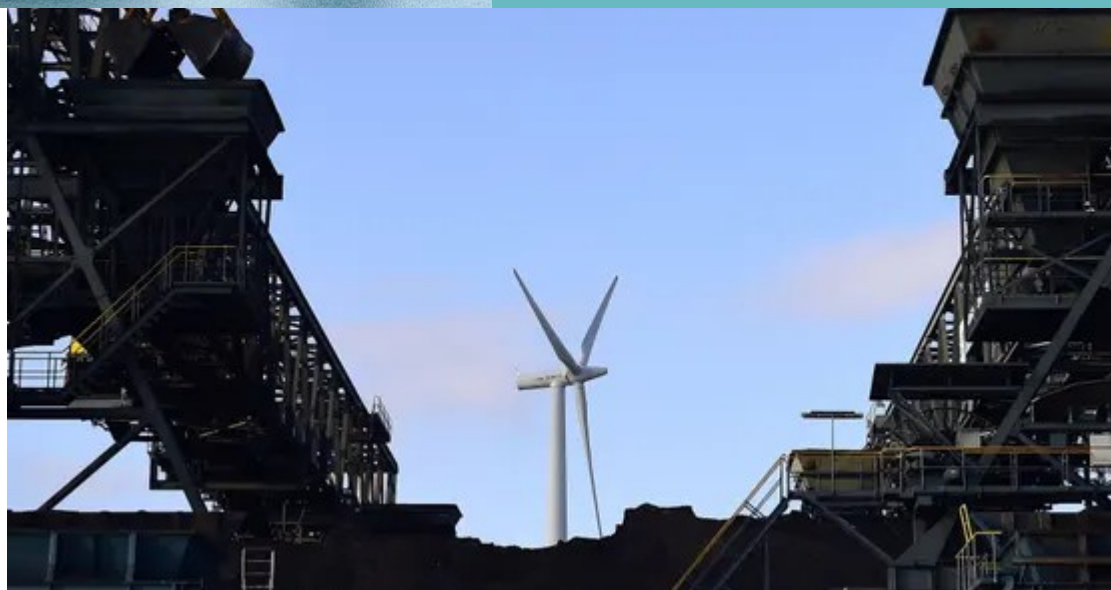
[Read more at The New York Times.](#)

Credit:pen\_ashs/pixabay

## TACKLE CLIMATE OR FACE FINANCIAL CRASH, SAY WORLD'S BIGGEST INVESTORS

At the recent UN climate summit, global investors managing \$32trillion demand governments to cut carbon emissions and phase out of all coal burning otherwise there may be a financial crash more severe than the 2008 crisis. The investors would like to end fossil fuel subsidies and introduce substantial carbon taxes. If action is not taken quickly, investment firm Schroders believes that there is a possibility of \$23 trillion economic losses per year globally in the long term.

[Read more at The Guardian.](#)



Credit: Alexander Koerner/Getty Images



## THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK'S CLIMATE MISSION

The president of the African Development Bank, Akinwumi Adesina, feels that Africa needs to demand more from climate finance. He says that "Africa cannot adapt to climate change through words. It can only adapt to climate change through resources." While Africa is doing more to create its own systems and financing models to address the effects of climate change on the African continent, there is a need to refrain from depending on external partners. Read more about the conversation.

[Read more at Devex.](#)

Credit: FAO/Giulio Napolitano





Credit: Geoff Oliver Bugbee / Orbis International

## A PANOPLY OF VOICES, A PLETHORA OF IDEAS - FOUR KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR TRANSLATING EVIDENCE TO ACTION

The Evidence into Action Thematic Working Group of Health Systems Global has released “Bringing the Pieces Together: Multiple Perspectives on Translating Evidence into Action”, which includes the perspectives of those who are neglected but powerful such as civil society and media. The four key takeaway from the session includes:

- (1) Locally available, reliable, and good quality data (and evidence) are essential
- (2) The standing relationships among various actors can strengthen policy discussions and reduce barriers
- (3) The media can help amplify the voices of citizens while encouraging better governance
- (4) In addition to taking on multiple roles, civil society organizations use different forms of data.

[Read more at Health Systems Global.](#)

## ECUADOR MIDWIVES

The Association of Kichwa Midwives of the Upper Napo (AMUPAKIN) consists of 10 indigenous Kichwa midwives in Archidona, a small town in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Despite the various challenges that they face, the group of midwives continue to fight to practice and maintain their ancestral medicinal traditions. They organize workshops and a 24/7 clinic to pass on their ancestral knowledge to future generations. The Ecuadorian Amazon is considered to be home to the most biodiverse territory in the world. Each of the nine different indigenous nationalities has their own distinct language and diverse cultural practices.

[Read more at OZY.](#)



Credit: Julia Muldavin/OZY



## TURNING AIR INTO DRINKING WATER: AFRICA'S INSPIRED INVENTORS

The fifth Royal Academy of Engineering Africa prize has shortlisted 16 inventors from six African countries who aim to revolutionize various sectors from agriculture to health. These shortlisted contenders will have the opportunity to receive funding, training and mentorship for their innovations. The winning innovation will be awarded £25,000. There will be also three runners up selected. Each runner up will be awarded £10,000. Some of these innovations include: Sign-IO (Kenya), Pelebox smart lockers (South Africa), The Vertical Farm (Uganda), Chanjo Plus (Kenya), and Majik Water (Kenya).

[Read more at The Guardian.](#)





## WHY PLAYERS SUCH AS THE ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL MATTER TO THE GLOBAL CLIMATE

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil are members of the world's largest certification scheme for palm oil. They have voted to improve its sustainability standard. The world's leading climate scientists wrote the the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report. The report notes that we have approximately 12 years to prevent the worst effects of climate change. There is a significant amount of action that needs to be taken in order to achieve the 1.5 degree Celsius limit set by the Paris Agreement. For instance, to reduce the amount of emissions, less fossil fuels usage is necessary while maintaining world's forests standing. The palm oil industry contributes to tropical rainforest deforestation, peatland conversion, and global climate emissions.

[Read more at Devex.](#)

Credit: Rainforest Action Network / CC BY-NC

## SPOTLIGHT ON POLICY:

### AI WEIWEI: 'THE MOOD IS LIKE GERMANY IN THE 1930S'

Ai's father, Ai Qing, was a poet and political radical. Although Ai Qing was not an activist, he was perceived to be a threat to society. Ai's personal experience motivated his involvement in human rights issues. Many of Ai's works of over 40 years have been investigations into human rights transgressions. The UK arts organisations and human rights charities have invited him to design a flag to mark the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which he has accepted. He has a series of photographs, which illustrates the muddy footprints of Rohingya refugees who have been forced to flee attacks by Myanmar soldiers and take refuge in neighbouring Bangladesh. These mud-prints have been transformed into various versions of a white footprint on a blue background, which design the foundation of Ai's flag.

[Read more at The Guardian.](#)



Credit: Camilla Greenwell



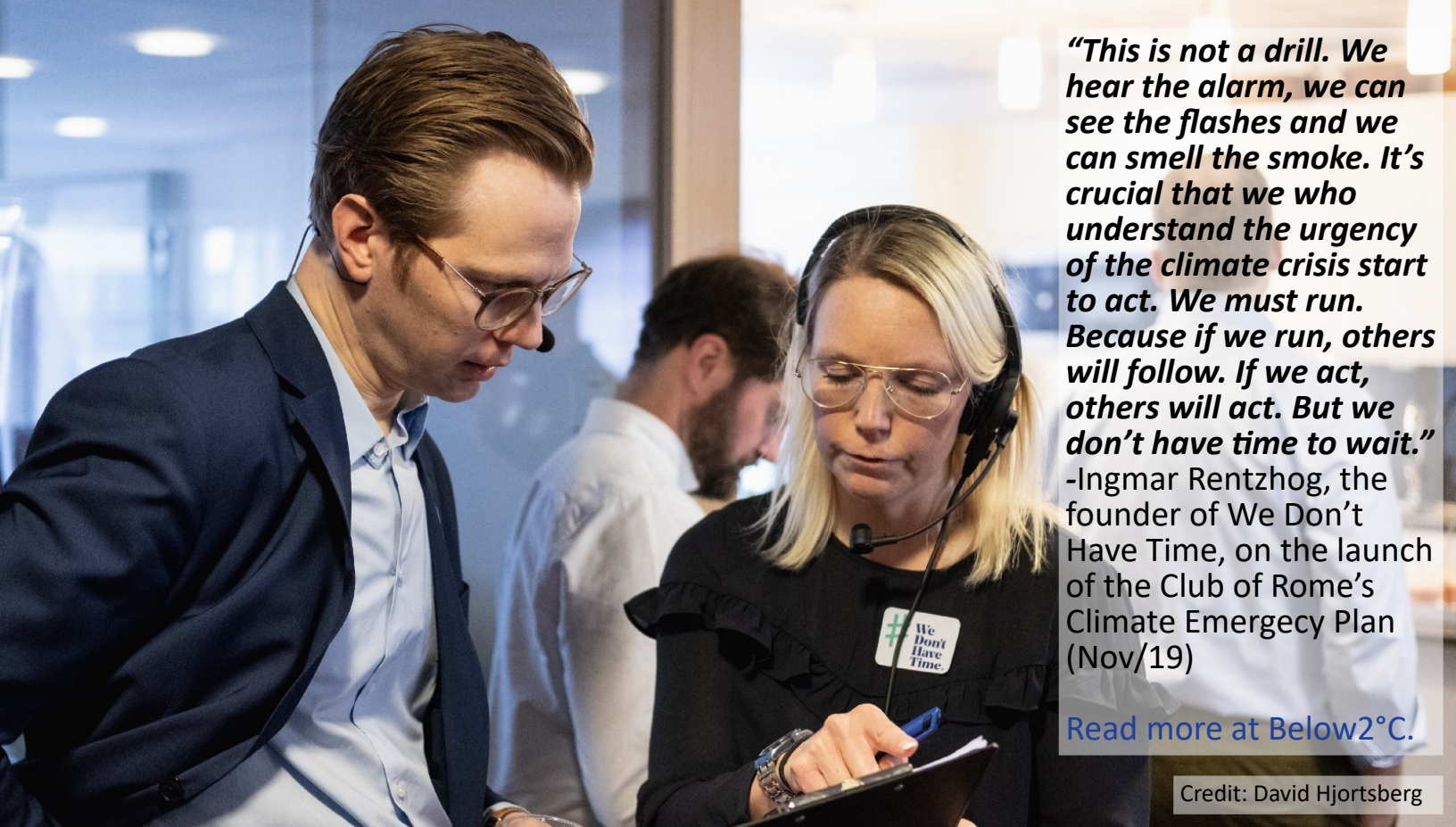
Credit: Saul Loeb / AFP / Getty Images

## SPOTLIGHT ON INDIGENOUS WELLNESS: CAN ADOPTING A COMPLEMENTARY INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE SAVE US?

An Indigenous perspective needs to be acknowledged every month of the year, not just November in honor of Native American Heritage. For thousands of years, indigenous cultures recognize that a human-centered perspective leads to a troubling imbalance. The idea of being closely related to nonhuman life forms comes from traditional, nonhierarchical Indigenous ways. In addition, an Indigenous perspective perceives humans as younger siblings of the nonhuman elders of creation, and the nonhuman elders as our teachers. When we perceive a tree as a relative rather than a resource, diversity and inclusion, as it connects to human beings, takes place. Indigenous cultures protect 80% of the biodiversity that is left on earth.

[Read more at Truthout.](#)





***"This is not a drill. We hear the alarm, we can see the flashes and we can smell the smoke. It's crucial that we who understand the urgency of the climate crisis start to act. We must run. Because if we run, others will follow. If we act, others will act. But we don't have time to wait."***  
 -Ingmar Rentzhog, the founder of We Don't Have Time, on the launch of the Club of Rome's Climate Emergency Plan (Nov/19)

[Read more at Below2°C.](#)

Credit: David Hjortsberg

## EVENTS TABLE

DATES	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	REGISTER
January 8th	The Global Leadership Series: Decolonization as a Pathway to Wellness for Indigenous Peoples	Toronto Canada	
Mar. 8th-10th	10th annual CUGH Conference - Translation and Implementation for impact in Global Health	Chicago USA	
Mar. 20th-22nd	2019 Climate Leadership Conference and Awards	Baltimore USA	
April 15th-17th	Integrative Mental Health Conference	San Francisco California	
Apr. 30th – May 2nd	Public Health 2019 (CPHA)	Ottawa Canada	
May 7th-10th	International Congress on Complementary Medicine Research	Brisbane Australia	
May 13th - 15th	Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics (CSEB): 2019 Biennial Conference	Ottawa Canada	
May 22nd-24th	3rd International Integrative Nursing Symposium	Galway Ireland	
June 10th-21st	5th McGill Summer Institute in Infectious Diseases and Global Health	Montreal Canada	



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## SPOTLIGHT ON MEDIA

### EARTHRISE 1968 & TOP VIDEOS OF 2018



Credit: Astronaut Bill Anders, NASA

On December 24, 1968, there were three astronauts who left our home planet to capture their view in space. They all agreed that the most significant discovery was Earth. It is now the 50th anniversary of the famous Apollo 8 Earthrise photograph, which was captured by the astronauts. Five years ago, NASA's Scientific Visualization Studio released a video that visualizes the events that led up to the photo's capture.

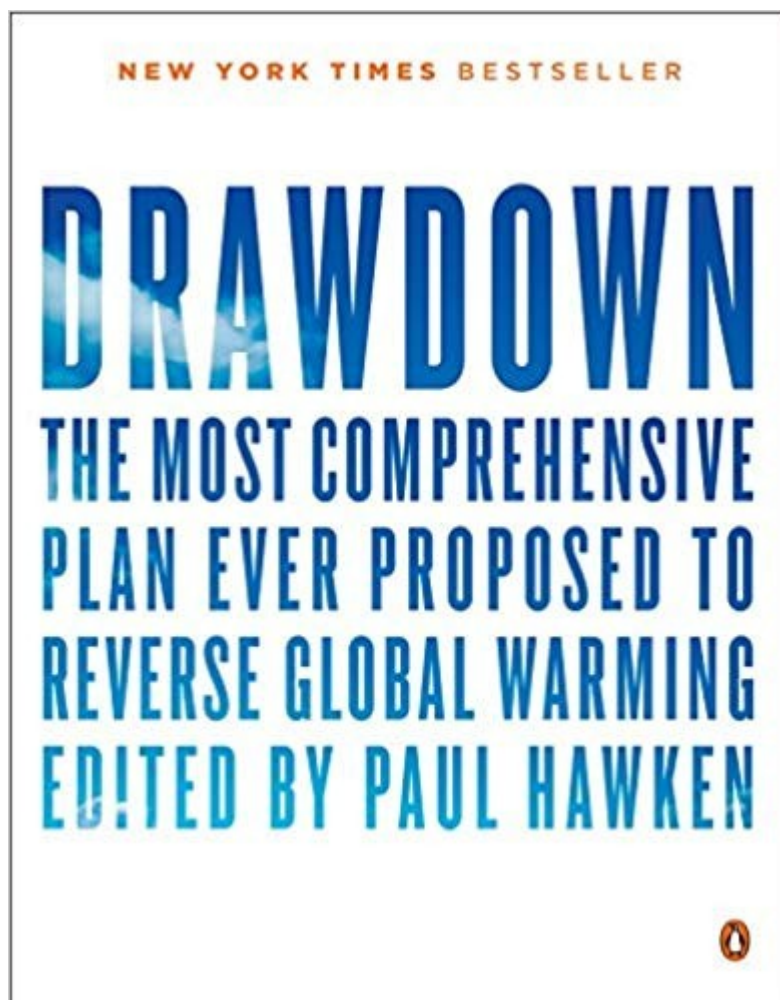
[Earthrise: 50 Years Since Apollo 8 - Short Video](#)

[AND CHECK THIS: Top 10 video clips of 2018 from African Geographic.](#)

One of the top 10 videos will be selected as the 2018's Best Video Clip. The 2018's Best Video Clip will be awarded \$500. There will also be another \$500 awarded to the 'Audience Favourite' video clip, which will be selected based on the number of votes received from the public.



## **DRAWDOWN: THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE PLAN EVER PROPOSED TO REVERSE GLOBAL WARMING BY PAUL HAWKEN**



Credit: Paul Hawken

A New York Times bestseller shares the 100 most substantive solutions to reverse global warming. These solutions are based on the research done by leading scientists and policymakers around the globe. While this New York Times bestseller shares a message that is grounded in science, it is also a testament to those who recognize the significant challenge ahead of us.

[Read more at Amazon.ca.](#)

## HOW EDIBLE SEAWEED COULD COMBAT PLASTIC POLLUTION OF THE SEAS



Credit: PR Company Handout

As an engineer in L'Oréal's Paris factories, Pierre-Yves Paslier was shocked when he learned about the volume of plastic companies produce. In 2012, he left L'Oréal and began to study at Imperial College London and the Royal College of Art to brainstorm ideas to design non-plastic containers. Four years later, he co-founded an alternative packaging business called Skipping Rocks Lab. Its the first edible packaging project was a seaweed pod filled with filtered water.

[Read more at Financial Times.](#)





## LEAD UP TO COP25 IN NOVEMBER 2019 IN CHILE



Carbon Brief compiled the key meetings and milestones leading up to COP25 in Chile, which will take place in November 2019.

Date	Event
7-8 February 2019	World summit on “leaving no one behind” in Geneva, Switzerland
13-15 February 2019	World symposium on climate change and tourism in Bariloche, Argentina
18-22 March 2019	Africa climate week in Accra, Ghana
20-22 March 2019	Second UN high-level conference on south-south cooperation in Buenos Aires, Argentina
14-18 May 2019	49th session of the IPCC in Kyoto, Japan
May 1, 2019	2019 Refinement to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories
17-27 June 2019	UNFCCC intersessional in Bonn, Germany (the “49th session of the subsidiary bodies”)
16 August 2019	IPCC special report on climate change and land
20 September 2019	IPCC special report on Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate
23 September 2019	UN 2019 climate summit in New York, US
24-25 September 2019	UN high-level political forum on sustainable development in New York, US
26 September 2019	UN high-level dialogue on financing for development in New York, US
23-26 October 2019	International Renewable Energy Conference in Seoul, Korea
4-8 November 2019	31st meeting of parties to Montreal Protocol
October 2019, tbc	Pre-COP in Costa Rica
11-22 November 2019, tbc	COP25 in Chile



Credit: Health Systems Research

At the Health Systems Research 2018 Symposium, delegates examined ways to challenge embedded power dynamics in health systems research through participatory methodologies. The forty-year anniversary of the Alma Alta declaration recognize the need for a wider range of voices by including marginalized people to participate in health systems research whereby they can co-produced research activities. One of the Local Organising Committee's innovations is a multi-project Photovoice exhibition.

Photovoice is a participatory action research methodology that consists of images taken by individuals that are discussed and analysed. The images are used to communicate the lived experiences, strengths and challenges of the photographers. The HSR2018 website shows an online gallery of all HSR2018 Photovoice accepted submissions.

[Read more at Health Systems Research.](#)





# UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES TO GET £200 MILLION IN REPARATION



Credit: Jamaica Observer

Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice Chancellor of The University of the West Indies, announced that the University of Glasgow in the United Kingdom plans to pay £200 million of reparations taken from the Caribbean. The £200 million would consists of cash and kind. The Vice Chancellor of the UK-based university Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli show that their records demonstrates a significant influx of grants and endowments from Jamaica. The University of Glasgow and The University of the West Indies are currently drafting a memorandum of understanding, which will include the term 'reparatory justice'.

[Read more at The Gleaner Company \(Media\) Limited.](#)

First Sunrise of the Year  
\*\*HAPPY NEW YEAR\*\*  
Whitefish Lake, Ontario  
January 1, 2019



Credit: David Zakus

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