



PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY

BRINGING YOU CURRENT NEWS ON ECOLOGICAL WELLNESS & GLOBAL HEALTH

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THE RISE OF THE RIGHTS OF NATURE

Recent assessments show one third of freshwater fish species are under threat of extinction alongside at least one quarter of local livestock breeds, and large numbers of the bees, bats and birds which pollinate crops. Linked to the decline of species, in the last two decades alone around 20% of the land we use to grow food has become less productive. Responding to these and other threats to nature, as well as high-profile campaigns like Extinction Rebellion, many initiatives globally that give rights to nature. In February 2019 voters in Toledo, Ohio, approved a ballot to give Lake Erie, suffering heavy pollution, rights normally associated with a person. But the story which brought this shift to international attention was the tale of a river in New Zealand. In 2010, the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature was formed to provide a global hub for empowering the global movement.

[Read More at Rapid Transition Alliance](#)



Credit: Vertikal Life Magazine

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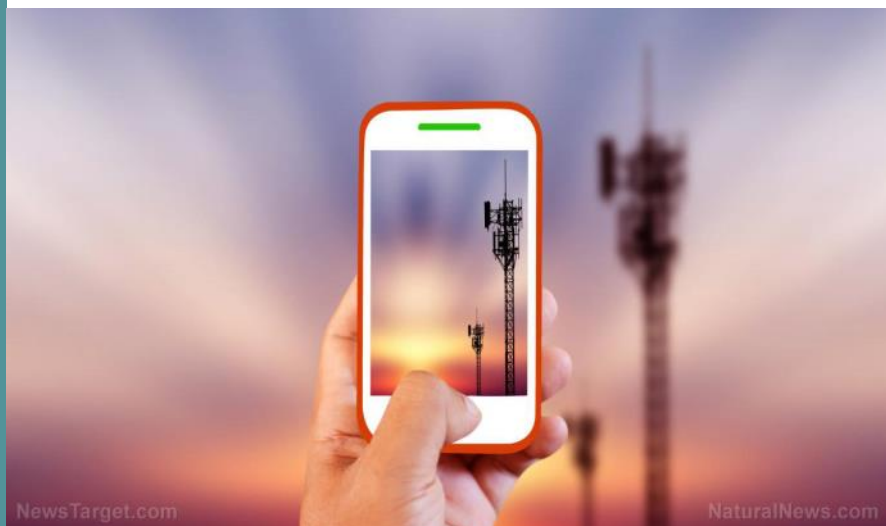
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5G AND THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF CELL PHONES

In There's a new angle to 5G: Do transmissions to and from 5G cells, which will need to be everywhere, and much closer to us than traditional cell towers, pulsing out very-high-frequency radio waves at high power levels, pose real risks to human health? I've been impatient for years with people complaining about the health effects of wireless communications. But I am learning that some scientists believe that the intensity of 5G represents a change and that 5G's effects on humankind should be studied closely before this technology is widely adopted. As with climate change, where denial rhetoric has been driven by companies interested in maintaining the status quo, the wireless industry is vitally interested in assuring us that 5G poses no issues—or that there's an unresolved debate, so we should trust the existing radio-frequency exposure standards. That's where we are now. [Read More at Wired](#)

See Also: [The Improbable Rise of Huawei](#)



NewsTarget.com

NaturalNews.com

Credit: Shutterstock



Credit: : World Bank

A photograph of a tropical beach scene. In the foreground, large, dark, gnarled tree trunks and branches frame the view. The ocean is turbulent, with white-capped waves crashing against the shore and the base of the trees. The water is a deep blue-grey color. In the background, the sea extends to a distant, hazy shoreline with more trees under a cloudy sky. The overall mood is dramatic and powerful, capturing the raw energy of the ocean.

Credit: AFP/Getty Images

Technology companies are now some of the biggest and most influential on the planet so it's good news that more of them are going big on sustainability, with Microsoft the latest to ramp up its green commitments. But the suite of announcements has been met with scepticism from some critics who say the company's efforts are undermined by its dealings with the oil and gas industries. New research also launched today in partnership with PwC shows the benefits of greater AI adoption for environmental outcomes, including a reduction of global greenhouse emissions by as much as 4% by 2030. But it's not all good news from the technology sector, with Microsoft still engaged with the fossil fuel industry such as its partnership with Exxon Mobil Corp. It's not the only one, with Amazon's staff citing the company's connections to the oil and gas industry as proof it isn't doing enough to address climate change.

[Read More at The Fifth Estate](#)

[Read More at The Fifth Estate](#)



Credit: AI for Earth



Credit: UNHCR/P. Rulashe

FAMINE DECLARED IN SOUTH SUDAN, WITH 100,000 PEOPLE FACING STARVATION

Famine has been formally declared in parts of South Sudan, the United Nations said, warning that war and a collapsing economy have left some 100,000 people facing starvation there and a further one million people are classified as being on the brink of famine. "Famine has become a tragic reality in parts of South Sudan and our worst fears have been realised." The situation is the worst hunger catastrophe since fighting erupted more than three years ago between rival forces. According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) update, 4.9 million people - more than 40% of South Sudan's population - are in need of urgent food, agriculture and nutrition assistance. The total number of food insecure people is expected to rise to 5.5 million at the height of the lean season in July if nothing is done to curb the severity and spread of the food crisis. [Read More at The Washington Post](#)

AFTER CYCLONE IDAI, THOUSANDS STILL CUT OFF, MANY MORE IN NEED

One month after Cyclone Idai tore through southern Africa bringing devastating floods, aid agencies say the situation remains critical with some communities in worst-hit Mozambique only just being reached with aid. Dorothy Sang, Oxfam's humanitarian advocacy manager, said an aid drop was being planned for an isolated area where just last week 2,000 people were found for the first time since the storm. They had been surviving on coconuts, dates and small fish they could catch. Oxfam estimates there are 4,000 people still cut off. Sang added that while often these weren't the worst-hit by the disaster, they were already living in chronic poverty and now face huge challenges to survive. [Read More at Reuters](#)



Credit: Reuters/MIKE HUTCHINGS



Credit: Reuters/Tomas Bravo

POST-CASTRO CUBA: NEW CONSTITUTION EXPANDS HEALTH RIGHTS

The right to health has been extended in Cuba's new constitution, in which the state now recognises its responsibility for the protection of older people, the rights to dignified housing, and the rights to public health, water, and food. This new constitution has received widespread popular support demonstrating that Cuba's new generation holds on to its socialist core and strives to be a bastion for free and equal access for health. Cuba is holding fast to its Communist ideology, even after revolutionary icon Fidel Castro's death in 2016 and his brother Raúl stepping down in 2018. Although the grip on power of the so-called historic generation is loosening, the new generation has "demonstrated capacity to uphold the banners of...Revolution and Socialism", as Raúl Castro noted in 2013. Interestingly, too, Cuba has taken a health-based approach to achieving normalisation of sexual diversity, as Mariela Castro noted in 2006: "our view is that any kind of prejudice or discrimination is damaging to health". [Read More at The Lancet](#)



SPOTLIGHT ON OPINION

TRANSLATING EVIDENCE INTO POLICY

Former assistant secretary for health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Howard K. Koh, MD, MPH, issued a challenge to participants at a recent Harvard Catalyst Community Engagement forum on how to best translate research evidence into effective policy changes. “There is no issue more pressing than this one,” emphasized Koh, now a Harvard professor of public health. Sue Curry, PhD, interim vice president and provost of the University of Iowa and chair of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) advised, “If you want to get research evidence into practice, you must get practice into evidence.” Her other suggestions: Partner with settings where you want to put an intervention into practice. Design a strategy for disseminating evidence-based information so it reaches the intended audiences. Get more creative and think of new strategies to do this. Have the people affected be part of research design, data analysis, and advocacy to together achieve our goals. [Read More at Harvard Catalyst](#)

Credit: David Zagunis

SPOTLIGHT ON POLICY

IT'S NO LONGER FREE TO POLLUTE ANYWHERE IN CANADA

Canada's long-awaited carbon pricing policy is now in effect across the country. The federal government imposed its Backstop Carbon Pricing Policy on the last four hold-out provinces: Ontario, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The following is sourced from Citizens' Climate Canada laser talks. In June 2018, the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act achieved Royal Assent and became law of the land in Canada. All provinces and territories must have a carbon pricing policy of at least \$20 tonne by January 1, 2019, rising \$10 per tonne each year until 2022. The backstop policy allows flexibility for provinces to have carbon taxes or an equally stringent cap and trade system. In those four jurisdictions that do not have carbon pricing policies, the Federal Backstop Carbon Pricing Policy kicked in on April 1, 2019. [Read More at Below2C](#)



Credit: Twitter/ Catherine McKenna



SPOTLIGHT ON INDIGENOUS WELLNESS

INEQUITIES IN CERVICAL CANCER CARE IN INDIGENOUS PERUVIAN WOMEN

Indigenous Peru's coastal capital, Lima, is home to the country's National Institute of Cancer (INEN) and has substantially lower rates of cervical cancer than elsewhere in the country, partially due to higher socioeconomic status and better access to screening and specialised care, such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy. In 2012, to address geographic and economic cancer inequities, the Peruvian government approved the first national cancer plan, Plan Esperanza, which aims to reduce cancer morbidity and mortality in a pluralistic and decentralised way. The inconsistency between these women's experiences and existing policy highlights the need to assess the gap between the promise of Plan Esperanza policy development and its implementation. This problem is an important opportunity for community-engaged research to empower marginalised populations and identify gaps in policy implementation. [Read More at The Lancet](#)

Credit: PLOS Blogs

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“We are a state that is greatly threatened by the impacts of climate change. It has been estimated by the UN IPCC’s reports and analysis that a one-metre sea level rise in the south of the country will entail a 17-20% loss of territory to the sea, meaning that Bangladesh will lose up to 20% of its current land-mass. It is going to create a very large climate refugee population.”

He warns, too: “The internal capacity of the state, given its size and resources, to absorb such a large displacement of the human population and large number of climate refugees, certainly does not exist in the country. Therefore, we are not only going to see internal destabilisation due to large-scale displacement of people, but there will be transboundary migration of climate refugees into the neighbouring countries.”

Munir Muniruzzaman, chair of the Global Military Advisory Council on Climate Change and a former military adviser to the president of Bangladesh.

[Read More at The Guardian](#)



Credit: Environmental Justice Foundation

EVENTSTABLE

DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	REGISTER
Apr. 30th- May 2nd	Public Health 2019 (CPHA)	Ottawa Canada	https://www.cpha.ca/public-health-2019-program
May 7th-10th	Integrative Congress on Complementary Medicine Research	Brisbane Australia	https://www.iscmr.org/content/iccmr-2019
May 13th - 15th	Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics (CSEB): 2019 Biennial Conference	Ottawa Canada	https://cseb.ca/conferences/2019-conference/
May 22nd-24th	3rd International Integrative Nursing Symposium	Galway Ireland	https://www.integrativenursingsymposium.com/
June 6th-9th	CNIS Bethune Round Table in Global Surgery: Ethics in Global Surgery	Edmonton Canada	https://bethuneroundtable.com/
June 6th-9th	Society for the Advancement of Science in Africa	Toronto Canada	https://sasascience.org/conference/
June 10th-21st	5th McGill Summer Institute in Infectious Diseases and Global Health	Montreal Canada	http://mcgill-idgh.ca
June 12th-13th	Community Health Connections	Ottawa Canada	https://www.cachc.ca/2019conference/
June 14th-16th	North American Refugee Health Conference	Toronto Canada	https://facmed.registration.med.utoronto.ca/portal/events/reg/participantTypeSelection.do?method=load&entityId=1469515
June 24th-28th	Global Ecological Integrity Group	Trieste Italy	www.globalecointegrity.org
Oct 7th-11th	Climate Change and the Role of Nuclear Power	Vienna Austria	https://www.iaea.org/atoms4climate
Oct 15th-18th	Global Symposium of Citizenship, Governance and Accountability in Health	New Delhi India	http://copasahglobalsymposium2019.net/overview.html



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VIDEO AND INFOGRAPHICS ON THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



Credit: NHS Scotland

Creating a healthy population requires greater action on the social determinants of health. Our series of infographics explore the political, social, economic, environmental and cultural factors that shape our opportunities to be healthy. By providing good work for all, we can reduce socio-economic inequalities and create a healthier society. Infographic illustrating how our family, friends and community build the foundations for good health. There's an infographic looking at the links between our health and transport. Another infographic looks at how our money and resources can influence our health. Another looks at how our health is influenced by the food we eat. Another infographic illustrates the main ways in which the links between housing and health play out. And our latest infographic looks at how health is influenced by education and skills, and the foundations they build for us. To understand what shapes our health and wellbeing, we need to look at the bigger picture. These infographics explore some of the social determinants that influence our health, and are a great way to communicate these messages. [Read More at The Health Foundation](#)





THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE: HOW TECHNOLOGY WILL SHAPE PATIENT CARE AND IMPROVE OUTCOMES



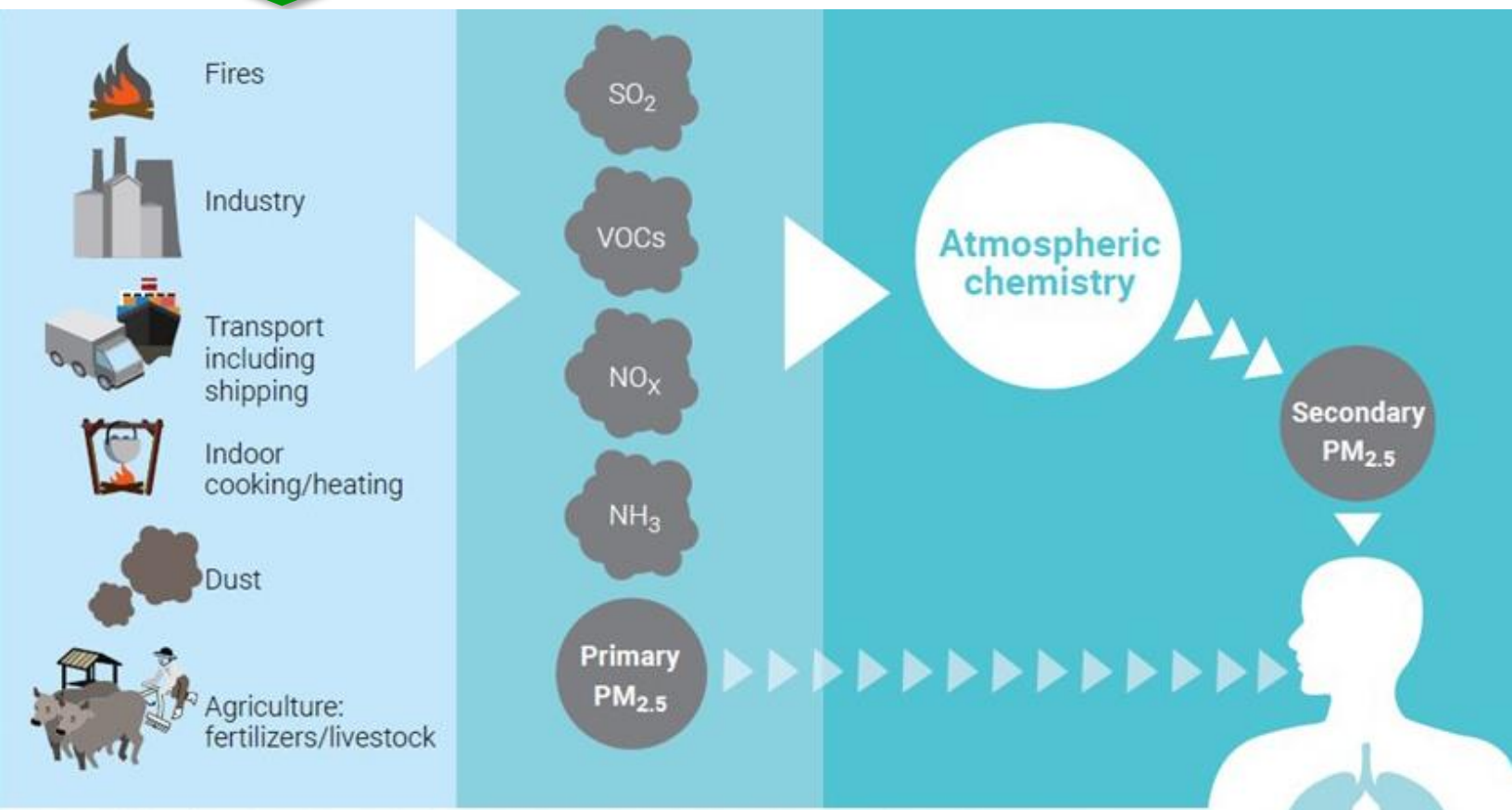
Credit: HPE

Widespread technology adoption is changing how medicine works, from healthcare techniques to the patient user experience. Sometimes it seems as though healthcare has improved little from our parents' day: We still encounter long waits to see a doctor, short appointments, incessant testing, and ennui that leads to patients who feel uninvolved with their own care. But the latest generation of medical technology promises a healthier experience. Medical care is seeing rapid changes as technology becomes integrated into processes, patient records, diagnostics, and even what people eat. Making use of the technological edge and the rapidly increasing amount of data that can be discovered, analyzed and applied is changing the day-to-day way medicine works. This report covers the following areas: a) Technology that's improving all aspects of patient care; b) Reduced patient costs; c) Improved security for information and devices; d) Smart medical spaces; e) Prescriptions that include food; f) and Integration of personal devices into healthcare.

[Read More at HP Enterprise](#)



NOT JUST LUNG [AND MENTAL] DISEASES, AIR POLLUTION LEADS TO DIABETES DEATHS TOO



Credit: UN report /CareOurEarth

Air pollution causes not only breathing and psychological ailments but also diabetes deaths, according to the recently released State of Global Air 2019 report, put together by US-based researchers. As per the report, exposure to fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) was the third leading risk factor for Type 2 diabetes deaths in 2017, after high blood sugar and excessive body weight. However, doctors in Bengaluru say it's tough to convince patients about the correlation between air pollution and diabetes. "Evidence will come only after air quality is improved. This can be better proven when we live amid clean air, with fresh diabetes cases gradually reducing," said Dr Mohan Badgandi, consultant endocrinologist, Manipal Hospitals. As per the report, long-term exposure to outdoor and indoor air pollution contributed to nearly 5 million deaths from stroke, diabetes, heart attack, lung cancer and chronic lung disease in 2017. South Asian countries — Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan — formed the most polluted region in the world, with over 1.5 million air-pollution related deaths.

[Read More at ET HealthWorld](#)





Credit: Sunitha Rao R

More than 3 million people were physically or economically displaced by nearly 1,000 World Bank-financed projects between 2004 and 2013. An ICIJ analysis found that between 20% and 30% of all projects the bank funded from 2004 to 2013 were deemed likely to cause resettlement. Projects range from major oil pipelines and dams to small schools and clinics. Since a policy change in 2001, the number of bank-funded projects approved with just a placeholder resettlement report, known as a “Policy Framework,” has increased compared to those with more detailed “Action Plans.” On paper, most resettlement cases appear to take place in Asia and Africa. But inconsistent documentation makes it impossible to tell exactly which countries are most affected. Top Countries with confirmed and possible cases of displacement:

China - 112

Brazil - 42

Vietnam - 38

India - 33

Ghana - 24

Mozambique - 23

Senegal - 22

Indonesia - 21

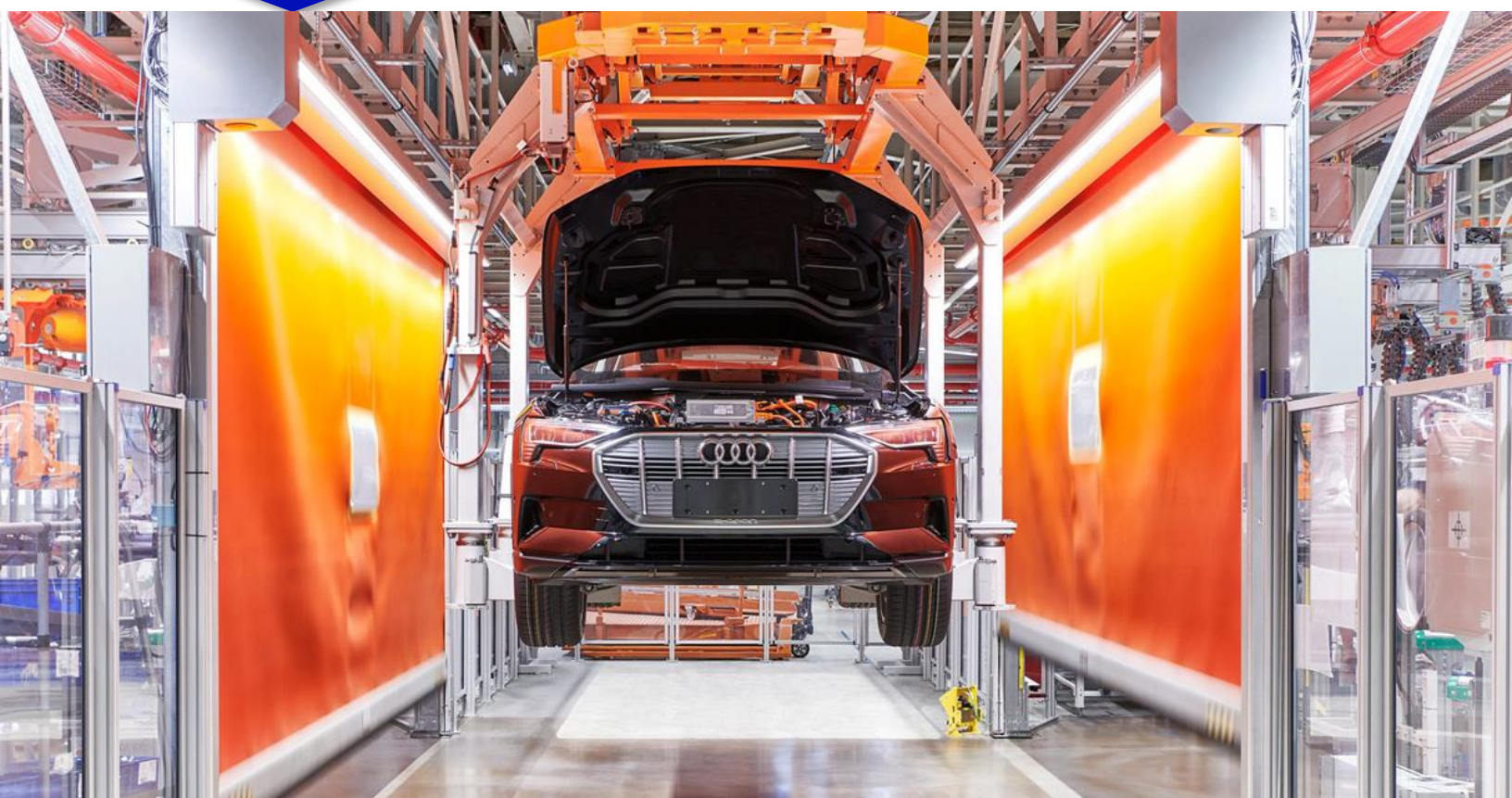
Ethiopia - 21

Kenya - 20.

[Read More at The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists.](#)



AUDI'S NEW ELECTRIC-CAR FACTORY GOES GREEN



Credit: Audi Motors

Exchange your old-fashioned internal combustion engine for an electric one, and change the world. Turns out it's more complicated than that. One analysis from the science advocacy organization Union of Concerned Scientists found that manufacturing an electric vehicle results in about 15 percent to 68 percent more emissions, depending on the size of the vehicle and its battery capacity. That same study found that EVs make up for the emissions disparity once they hit the road, but corporate minds—and eco-watchdogs—are eager to close the gap. “The answer was obvious: Minimize the energy consumed and use different types of energy production to begin with,” Patrick Danau, the Audi plant's director of production, technology, and logistics, said during a tour of the new 540,000-square-meter factory in early March. Of course, none of this comes cheap. “It's an investment, but if you look at it from a five- or 10-year perspective, it becomes a viable solution,” says Audi CEO Bram Schot. “It's also a matter of conviction—do you want to do that, yes or no?” [Read More at Wired](#)



SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION OVERCOMING TIPS FOR SECURING A STAFF JOB IN THE ACADEMY



Credit: Getty Images

William Weaver writes that applicants for staff jobs, be they faculty looking for a career change or recent PhDs, need to address themselves to two audiences—administrators concerned with the day-to-day business of running a unit and faculty who want to know that applicants understand their department’s intellectual climate. To navigate these complementary challenges, Weaver offers several tips for the interview process, noting that applicants need to: show the committee that they can handle the personalities that make up a particular department; demonstrate flexibility, an aptitude for learning, and a wide array of skills; project a calm and grounded demeanour; and try to get a sense of the interpersonal dynamics of the committee, as it can reflect the department’s culture.

[Read More at Inside Higher Ed](#)





Celebrating 50 Years
Faculty of Environmental Studies
York University, Toronto
April 24, 2019



Credit: David Zakus

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