



# PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY

BRINGING YOU CURRENT NEWS ON ECOLOGICAL WELLNESS & GLOBAL HEALTH

June 20, 2019

[planetaryhealthweekly.com](http://planetaryhealthweekly.com)

Volume 5, Number 25

## DEFORESTATION OF BRAZILIAN AMAZON SURGES TO RECORD HIGH

Deforestation of the Brazilian Amazon surged last month to the highest May level since the current monitoring method began, prompting concerns that president Jair Bolsonaro is giving a free pass to illegal logging, farming and mining. "The government can't deny these numbers from their own agency. The question now is what they'll do about it," said Carlos Souza, of the independent monitoring group Imazon. "By the end of July we'll have a clear idea of the impact of recent moves to dismantle environmental policies." "The spike in deforestation is depressing, but hardly surprising: you have a government in Brazil who is dismantling nearly every environmental policy put in place since 1992 and who is harassing federal environmental agents, thus empowering environmental criminals," said Carlos Rittl, executive secretary of the Climate Observatory. [Read More at The Guardian](#)



Credit: Vinicius Mendonca/AP

## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

**Finland Pledges To Become Carbon Neutral By 2035  
Climate Change An 'Unconscionable' Threat To Peace  
Greenpeace North Sea Oil Rig Protest** 2

**Successful Treatment Of HIV Eliminates Sexual  
Transmission**

**Preventing Antibiotic Resistance In Livestock Industry  
W.H.O. Calls For Point-Of-Care Diagnostics For STIs** 3

**Zombie GMO Myths**

**The Devastating Impact Of Trump's Global Gag Rule  
I Was Triggered By The MMIWG Report** 4

**Quote Of The Week On Climate Change & Events** 5

**FYI#1: New Book: 'One Planet' Cities** 6

**FYI#2: 10 Facts You Should Know About Air Pollution** 7

**FYI#3: Midwife Challenges Threaten Maternal Care** 8

**FYI#4: Public Markets Selling Ugandan Girls For \$14** 9

**FYI#5: Weedkiller Contaminates Children's Foods** 10

**FYI#6: How Medical Education Became A Business** 11

**Backpage: Signs of Spring: New Growth**

## TWO-THIRDS OF AIDS TREATMENT DRUGS SUPPLIED GLOBALLY BY INDIA

Taking a lead in the global fight against AIDS, India is supplying the world with two-thirds of the drugs to treat those infected with HIV, according to Indian diplomat Paulomi Tripathi. "India is contributing in the international fight against AIDS: almost two-thirds of the antiretroviral drugs used globally are supplied by the Indian pharmaceutical industry," she said. Domestically, "the focus is on reduction in new infection, elimination of mother to child transmission and elimination of stigma and discrimination by 2020," she added. According to a 2017 study by Harvard Business School, low-cost generic antiretroviral drugs from India "have been integral to the rapid scale-up of HIV treatment in Sub-Saharan Africa and other developing countries". [Read More at ET Health World](#)



Credit: Economics Times Healthworld





## FINLAND PLEDGES TO BECOME CARBON NEUTRAL

Finland's new coalition government has pledged to make the country carbon neutral by 2035 as part of a program that includes a major increase in public spending on welfare and infrastructure. The Social Democratic party leader, Antti Rinne, who formed the five-party alliance of centrist, leftist and Green parties after narrowly beating the nationalist Finns party in an election in April, said it was time to "invest in the future" after years of austerity. "People demanded faster climate action and that's what we're going to get," said Sini Harkki, of Greenpeace Nordic. "Building the world's first fossil-free, sustainable society is going to require much more than nice words on paper, but we're determined to make it happen. It's an exciting journey we want to embark on." A survey for the previous government found 80% of Finns felt urgent climate action was necessary, with 70% of respondents saying the new government must do more. [Read More at The Guardian](#)

See Also: [Japan sets carbon-neutral goal as UK plans climate laws.](#)

Credit: : Pekka Sipola/EPA

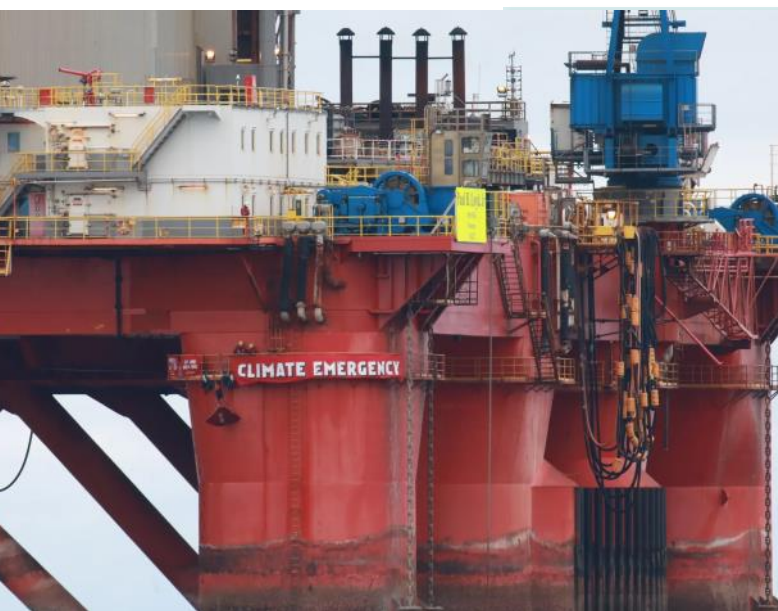
## CLIMATE CHANGE AN 'UNCONSCIONABLE' THREAT TO PEACE: GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE

The "Berlin Call to Action" was circulated among ministers from a dozen countries, former US secretary of state John Kerry and experts at a climate security conference last week. It called for stronger international cooperation to help fragile regions cope with weather disasters, food shortages and migration driven by climate change. "Where people's livelihoods are under threat, conflicts are predestined. Displacement and forced migration could increase to barely manageable levels. Foreign and security policy needs to provide a response to these issues." Chitra Ranagarajan, an expert on the Lake Chad basin where climate variability has fed terror groups, said the summit helped to build political consensus, which should ultimately lead to better support for vulnerable people.

[Read More at Climate Home News](#)



Credit: EC/ECHO/Anouk Delafortrie



## GREENPEACE NORTH SEA OIL RIG PROTEST PROMPTS INJUNCTION

Two Greenpeace activists boarded the platform in the Cromarty Firth north of Inverness, UK on Sunday night in protest at BP's continued drilling in the North Sea despite the climate crisis. The rig's owners, Transocean, went to court in Scotland on Tuesday to secure an interdict (or injunction), ordering the activists to leave the 27,000-tonne rig. The campaign group said oil workers on the platform had attempted to lower a copy of the injunction to them in a bucket. John Sauven, the executive director of Greenpeace UK, said the organization would continue with its protest. "BP have spent billions lobbying governments to prevent action on climate change and now they want to try to silence peaceful protest. But we're in a climate emergency and they're fueling that. We have to act," he said. Roseanna Cunningham, the environment minister said, "Difficult decisions will have to be made, but Scotland is not in the business of taking the easy way out. We are up for the challenge." [Read More at The Guardian](#)

Credit: Greenpeace UK/EPA



## SUCCESSFUL TREATMENT OF HIV ELIMINATES SEXUAL TRANSMISSION

In December, 2011, *Science* recognized the findings of the HPTN 052 study as the scientific breakthrough of the year. This study showed a 96% reduction in sexual transmission of HIV in sero different couples (one partner HIV positive, the other negative) when the HIV-positive partner was successfully treated with antiretroviral therapy (ART). In 2016, the results of the PARTNER study were reported, a study that had enrolled 1166 sero different couples at 75 sites in 14 European countries between 2010 and 2014; 340 gay couples were included. The study reported no HIV transmission from ART-treated gay men with viral suppression to their sexual partners. Results of the PARTNER studies, along with those from other studies of MSM7 and heterosexual couples, also emphasize the impact of additional sexual relationships outside the couples. [Read More at The Lancet](#)

Credit: Ajit Solanki/Associated Press

## PREVENTING ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE: LOOK TO THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY

Antimicrobial resistance is quickly becoming a global crisis and risks reversing a century of progress in health. Some organizations have already geared up and are tackling the issue from its roots. In a new report, the United Nations Interagency Coordination Group (IACG) on Antimicrobial Resistance estimates that antibiotic resistance could cause 10 million deaths each year by 2050. According to the IACG report, approximately 35% of common human infections are already resistant to currently available medicines in some OECD member countries, while resistance rates are as high as 80-90% in some low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). "The world is already feeling the economic and health consequences as crucial medicines become ineffective. Without investment from countries in all income brackets, future generations will face the disastrous impacts of uncontrolled antimicrobial resistance," WHO said. As the Lancet Planetary Health found that interventions that restrict antibiotic use in food-producing animals reduce antibiotic-resistant bacteria in such animals by up to 39. [Read More at IPS News](#)



Credit: Germán Miranda/IPS.



## W.H.O. CALLS FOR POINT-OF-CARE DIAGNOSTICS FOR STIs

The World Health Organization is calling for more attention and investment in the development of point-of-care diagnostics for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) as new data reveal there was no "substantial decline" since 2012. In 2016, there were 376 million new cases, including 127 million new cases of chlamydia, 87 million for gonorrhea, 6.3 million for syphilis, and 156 million for trichomoniasis. WHO experts attribute the large number of cases to complacency, lack of awareness, tools for testing, and access to services. "We need point-of-care tests that are cheap, affordable and available. Additionally, we need more data to make a case for STIs" says Teodora Wi, medical officer for STIs, WHO. WHO is currently developing a product profile and on public consultation with manufacturers to look into point-of-care diagnostics for STIs, similar to a dip test or pregnancy test that costs \$1 or \$2. [Read More at Devex](#)

Credit: UNICEF Ethiopia / 2017 / Mulugeta Ayene / CC BY-NC-ND



## SPOTLIGHT ON OPINION

### ZOMBIE GMO MYTHS

Some widespread notions about GMOs—especially that they are “needed to feed a growing world”—are wrong and simply refuse to die. My concern about GMOs is that they are being used very poorly right now, and without larger social and environmental consequences in mind. Plus, their use is largely driven by profit, which makes me nervous. And even the more enlightened proponents of GMOs still seem to overlook to the longer-term environmental, economic and social impacts of this technology. Looking forward, I think we will need new hybrids of organic and conventional agriculture, taking some of the best environmental and agricultural benefits of both, and bringing them to scale. But more importantly, we need to look at the larger food system, and realize that our diets and food waste are a huge part of the problem today—and they can also be a big part of our future solutions. [Read More at Medium/ Global Eco Guy](#)

Credit: Darrin Zammit Lupi/Reuters

## THE DEVASTATING IMPACT OF TRUMP'S GLOBAL GAG RULE

On June 5, the International Women's Health Coalition launched *Crisis in Care: Year two impact of Trump's global gag rule*, detailing the direct effect of anti-abortion policies and the broader ways in which they are threatening the work of NGOs that support women and vulnerable groups around the world. The latest global gag rule—also known as the expanded Mexico City Policy and, officially, as the “protecting life in global health assistance” policy—was issued by Donald Trump on Jan 23, 2017. The Trump administration goes further, applying these restrictions to nearly all federal global health assistance, including, for the first time, HIV funding through PEPFAR. The effects on a broad range of sexual and reproductive health services is particularly concerning in light of recent global data from WHO on the persistently high prevalence and incidence of sexually transmitted infections. It reveals the policy has little to do with fostering health and everything to do with politics. [Read More at The Lancet](#)



Credit: Andrew Caballero-Reynolds/AFP/Getty Images



## SPOTLIGHT ON INDIGENOUS WELLNESS

### AS AN INDIGENOUS WOMAN, I WAS TRIGGERED BY THE MMIWG REPORT. HERE'S WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN NOW

“The true power of the inquiry does not lie in the hands of the government. It lies with us—the survivors, families and people who the inquiry is about.” My experience is minimal compared to those of the families involved in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and those of others who decided not to be involved in the inquiry process. However, the fundamentals of how the colonial systems in this country, on stolen lands, often maintain the oppressive, systemic racism and genocidal practices against Indigenous peoples, specifically Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQIA, is the same. A section that is missing in the report is the suggested actions for Indigenous leaders and Indigenous communities where positive and preventative changes are already taking place. [Read More at Chatelaine](#)

Credit: Darryl Dyck/The Canadian Press

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*Commending a new report from Australia for laying “bare the unvarnished truth about the desperate situation humans, and our planet, are in, painting a disturbing picture of the real possibility that human life on Earth may be on the way to extinction, in the most horrible way.”*

Retired Admiral Chris Barrie, Chief of the Australian Defence Force from 1998 to 2002 and former Deputy Chief of the Australian Navy, now working for the Climate Change Institute at the Australian National University, Canberra.

For more see: [New Report Suggests 'High Likelihood of Human Civilization Coming to an End' Starting in 2050](#)



Credit: Jeremy Piper

## EVENTSTABLE

DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	REGISTER
June 10th-21st	5th McGill Summer Institute in Infectious Diseases and Global Health	Montreal Canada	<a href="http://mcgill-idgh.ca">http://mcgill-idgh.ca</a>
June 10th-22nd	Health Systems Summer Institute	Baltimore Maryland	<a href="https://www.jhsph.edu/departments/international-health/continuing-education/institutes/health-systems-summer-institute/index.html">https://www.jhsph.edu/departments/international-health/continuing-education/institutes/health-systems-summer-institute/index.html</a>
June 24th-28th	Global Ecological Integrity Group	Trieste Italy	<a href="http://www.globalecointegrity.org">www.globalecointegrity.org</a>
June 24th-29th	Trieste Conference of the Global Ecological Integrity Group	Trieste Italy	<a href="https://www.globalecointegrity.org/">https://www.globalecointegrity.org/</a>
September 14th-18th	Latin American Summit of Sustainable Communities	Intikamari, Azulay, Ecuador	<a href="https://redcasalatina.org/se-viene-el-ecco-2019/">https://redcasalatina.org/se-viene-el-ecco-2019/</a>
Oct 7th-11th	Climate Change and the Role of Nuclear Power	Vienna Austria	<a href="https://www.iaea.org/atoms4climate">https://www.iaea.org/atoms4climate</a>
Oct 15th-18th	Global Symposium of Citizenship, Governance and Accountability in Health	New Delhi India	<a href="http://copasahglobalsymposium2019.net/overview.html">http://copasahglobalsymposium2019.net/overview.html</a>
Nov 22nd-24th	2nd International Symposium on Community Health Workers	Dhaka Bangladesh	<a href="http://chwsymposium2019.icddrb.org/abstract_submit">http://chwsymposium2019.icddrb.org/abstract_submit</a> <b>Deadline for submissions: 30 June</b>
April 28th-May 1, 2020	2020 International Congress on Integrative Medicine and Health	Cleveland Ohio	<a href="http://www.icimh.org/#">http://www.icimh.org/#</a> Pre-congress workshop application deadline: June 28, 2019



[@PlanetaryWeekly](#)



[@PlanetaryHealthWeekly](#)



[Planetary Health Weekly](#)



## SPOTLIGHT ON MEDIA – NEW BOOK

### ‘ONE PLANET’ CITIES – SUSTAINING HUMANITY WITHIN PLANETARY LIMITS

BY DAVID THORPE



Credit: David Thorpe /Twitter

#### Book review by Willow Allento

One of the new resources councils in the Swansea, UK region will potentially use a framework developed by The Fifth Estate contributor and sustainability educator, David Thorpe. He has worked with experts from around the globe to develop a pathway and toolkit for a shift at the local government level towards “One Planet” communities. The methodology, case studies and resources have been compiled into a new book, ***‘One Planet’ Cities – Sustaining Humanity within Planetary Limits***. The book tackles procurement comprehensively across all the fundamental elements of a city or neighbourhood including housing, transport, energy, technology, public space, food, water, industries, finance and governance. Thorpe also leverages his deep expertise in researching and writing about sustainable construction to cover topics including low-carbon design, materials and energy systems for buildings in great technical depth.

[Read More at The Fifth Estate](#)



# 10 FACTS YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY KNOW ABOUT AIR POLLUTION



Credit: NASA•YouTube

The United Nations warned on World Environment Day, with nine out of 10 people on the planet now breathing polluted air: Burning fossil fuels for power, transport, and industry is a major contributor to air pollution as well as the main source of planet-warming carbon emissions — and tackling both problems together could bring substantial benefits for public health. Here are some facts on the human impacts of air pollution and its links with climate change:

1. Air pollution kills 800 people every hour or 13 every minute.
2. Some pollutants contribute to both climate change and local air pollution, including black carbon or soot.
3. Of the five main sources of air pollution are indoor burning of fossil fuels, wood, and other biomass to cook, heat and light homes.
4. Household air pollution causes about 3.8 million premature deaths each year.
5. 93% of children worldwide live in areas where air pollution exceeds WHO guidelines.
6. Air pollution is responsible for 26% of deaths from ischemic heart disease, 24% of deaths from strokes, 43% from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and 29% from lung cancer.
7. 97% of cities in low- and middle-income countries with more than 100,000 inhabitants do not meet the WHO minimum air quality levels.
8. About 25% of urban ambient air pollution from fine particulate matter is contributed by traffic, 20% by domestic fuel burning, and 15% by industrial activities including electrical generation.
9. Keeping global warming "well below" 2 degrees Celsius (3.6F) could save about a million lives a year by 2050 through reducing air pollution alone.
10. In the 15 countries that emit the most planet-warming gases, the cost of air pollution for public health is estimated at more than 4% of GDP.

[Read More at Global Citizen](#)



## HOW TO ADDRESS THE MIDWIFE CHALLENGES THREATENING MATERNAL CARE



Credit: Dominic Chavez / The Global Financing Facility / CC BY-NC-ND

Gender-based violence, poor salaries and staff shortages are demotivating midwives and jeopardizing the quality of maternal care. Unlike other sectors, nurses and midwives cannot go on strike to protest because of the lives at risk. According to the “Midwives’ Voices, Midwives’ Realities” report, 20% of midwives have to look for other means of income on top of their full-time midwifery jobs, 37% of midwives have experienced harassment, and 30% working in Africa deal with poor management due to insufficient staffing. Strong leadership, not just among organizations but as individuals within the health community, is one way to tackle these. “Stand with midwives, say that midwifery matters, walk the talk’ said Franka Cadée, midwife and president of the International Confederation of Midwives, who also acknowledged the role of technology in allowing midwives to focus on providing care while using digital tools to help address capacity issues.

[Read More at Devex](#)



## PUBLIC MARKETS SELLING UGANDAN GIRLS FOR AS LITTLE AS \$14



Credit: Unsplash/Antoine Pluss

For years there have been shocking reports from migrant workers about domestic slavery in the Middle East. And now eastern Uganda is becoming a hotspot for recruiting women and girls, effectively bought in what Ozy calls public slave markets. Ozy reports: At fast-spreading weekly markets, some women are promised jobs in the Gulf only to be sold once they get there, while others — many of them girls between the ages of 10 and 18 — are directly and publicly “bought” as slaves in Uganda and then resold in the Middle East, according to Ugandan authorities, Interpol, independent experts, legislators, victims and their families. Officially, Uganda bans its citizens from seeking work in most Middle Eastern countries. But the ban hardly works when Ugandans are promised well-paying jobs abroad, often triple what they could make at home. The government should ensure that the rights of children are respected and the act of selling them in markets is brought to an end.

[Read More at Freedom United](#)



## IN NEW ROUND OF TESTS, MONSANTO'S WEEDKILLER STILL CONTAMINATES FOODS MARKETED TO CHILDREN



Credit: General Miller

Major food companies like General Mills continue to sell popular children's breakfast cereals and other foods contaminated with troubling levels of glyphosate, the cancer-causing ingredient in the herbicide Roundup. The weedkiller, produced by Bayer-Monsanto, was detected in all 21 oat-based cereal (e.g., Cheerios) and snack products sampled in a new round of testing commissioned by the Environmental Working Group. All but four products contained levels of glyphosate higher than what EWG scientists consider protective for children's health with a sufficient margin of safety. EWG and 19 food companies recently delivered more than 80,000 names on a petition urging the Environmental Protection Agency to sharply limit glyphosate residues allowed on oats and prohibit its use as a preharvest drying agent. The only way to quickly remove this cancer-causing weedkiller from foods marketed to children is for companies like General Mills and Quaker to use oats from farmers who do not use glyphosate as a desiccant. [Read More at EWG](#)



## SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION

### HOW MEDICAL EDUCATION BECAME A BUSINESS, ONE POLICY CHANGE AT A TIME



Credit: GETTY/STEVE DEBENPORT

Till 2009, the official stance in India was that education could not be for sale or a for-profit venture. So on paper, all private colleges were run by trusts or charitable societies. Yet, the fact that many made illegal profits through capitation fees, hugely inflated tuition fees and other charges was an open secret. In February 2010, the then UPA government allowed companies registered under the Companies Act to open medical colleges, though with the ironical caveat that “permission shall be withdrawn if the colleges resort to commercialization.” “All this is only about producing more doctors and not about the quality of doctors suited to our needs. Doctor shortage is in rural areas, but with no fee regulation only the affluent will become doctors. Will they serve where the shortage is?” asked Chhaya Pachauli, a public health activist from Rajasthan. India’s experience has been that regulation of private colleges has failed miserably, as both a parliamentary committee and the Supreme Court observed. What reason is there to believe things will get any better, ask the activists.

[Read More at The Times of India.](#)



Signs of Spring: New Growth  
Near Humphrey, Ontario  
June 15, 2019



Credit: David Zakus

## THIS NEWSLETTER IS FREE

To Subscribe/Unsubscribe & Access All Previous Issues and Indexes:  
[planetaryhealthweekly.com](http://planetaryhealthweekly.com)

## CONTACT US



@PlanetaryWeekly



planetaryhealthweekly@gmail.com



@PlanetaryHealthWeekly



Planetary Health Weekly

Publisher and Editor: Dr. David Zakus, [david.zakus@utoronto.ca](mailto:david.zakus@utoronto.ca)

Production: Eunice Anteh & Aimée-Angélique Bouka

Subscription Services: Elisabeth Huang

Social Media: Evans Oppong

Website: Gaël Chetaille

Yearly Index: Michael Davies-Venn, Maame Efua De-Heer & Giacomo Di Donato

