



## Environment – Documents on the Web – Fall 2011

### GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

#### CLIMATE CHANGE -- GLOBAL ISSUES

##### TWELFTH MEETING OF THE LEADERS' REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MAJOR ECONOMIES FORUM ON ENERGY AND CLIMATE: CHAIR'S SUMMARY

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. Fact Sheet. November 23, 2011.

<http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/fs/2011/177699.htm>

The twelfth Meeting at the Leaders' Representative level of the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate was held in Crystal City, Virginia, November 17 - 18, 2011. It was attended by ministers and officials from the seventeen major economies, as well as the United Nations, with Argentina, Barbados, Ecuador, New Zealand, Singapore, and Spain also participating in the session. Algeria and Mali were also invited. Minister Mashabane, speaking for the South African Presidency, emphasized the need for a balanced package in Durban that makes operational the Cancun agreements, which many participants also highlighted.

##### UN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: RIO+20

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. Fact Sheet. November 9, 2011.

<http://www.state.gov/g/oes/sus/rio20/176889.htm>

The UN Conference on Sustainable Development, or Rio+20, will be a landmark event in international discussions on sustainable development. Rio+20 will commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and will take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 20-22, 2012. The United States is committed to using the Rio+20 Conference to: promote a green economy and green growth, incorporating environmental and social concerns into economic development planning; improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the UN in support of national sustainable development efforts; involve stakeholders at all levels to promote sustainable development; and build on our successes of the past twenty years to catalyze future action.

##### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS: UNITED STATES VIEWS ON RIO+20

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. Submission to the United Nations. November 1, 2011.

<http://www.state.gov/g/oes/sus/releases/176863.htm>

The United States welcomes the opportunity to join the global community and engage representatives from across society to chart a course for the future of sustainable development. At the upcoming UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) we aspire to explore ways to better integrate the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, building on the successes of the 1992 Earth Summit and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. Since we last convened, world population has risen to 7 billion and is expected to increase to 9 billion by 2050, with many still living on less than \$2.00 a day. Rio+20 must prioritize resource productivity and efficiency as ways to promote sustainable development. At the same time, global institutions have shifted to recognize the rise, roles, and responsibilities of major emerging economies. Within this new landscape, we recognize that sustainable development is not a luxury; it is a necessity for countries at all stages of development.

#### ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE LEADERS' REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MAJOR ECONOMIES FORUM ON ENERGY AND CLIMATE: CHAIR'S SUMMARY

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. Fact Sheet. September 17, 2011.

<http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/fs/2011/174944.htm>

The eleventh Meeting at the Leaders' Representative level of the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate was held in Washington, D.C., September 16 - 17, 2011. It was attended by ministers and officials from the seventeen major economies, as well as the United Nations, with Barbados, Colombia, New Zealand, Singapore, and Spain also participating in the session. Argentina, Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Egypt were also invited. Participants emphasized the importance of agreeing on a balanced package in Durban, and discussed in detail how to succeed in doing this.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE: CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES AND POLICY TOOLS

Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 29, 2011. 29 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41973.pdf>

Congress has, over the past three decades, authorized and funded federal programs to improve understanding of climate changes and their implications. Climate changes have potentially large economic and ecological consequences, both positive and negative, which depend on the rapidity, size, and predictability of change. Many experts have concluded that, to achieve a given policy goal, strategies using complementary policy tools can increase cost-effectiveness, alleviate burdens on particular constituencies, and address additional concerns of policy-makers. This report seeks to support Congress as it debates and modifies the mix of federal programs that may influence the climate or adaptation to its changes.

#### CHANGES IN THE ARCTIC: BACKGROUND AND ISSUES FOR CONGRESS

Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 8, 2011. 82 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41153.pdf>

The diminishment of Arctic sea ice has led to increased human activities in the Arctic, and has heightened interest in, and concerns about, the region's future. The United States, by virtue of Alaska, is an Arctic country and has substantial interests in the region. Record low extent of Arctic sea ice in 2007 focused scientific and policy attention on its linkage to global climate change, and to the implications of projected ice-free seasons in the Arctic within decades. The Arctic has been projected by several scientists to be perennially ice-free in the late summer by the late 2030s.

## CLIMATE CHANGE -- DOMESTIC ISSUES

### EPA AND NHTSA PROPOSE TO EXTEND THE NATIONAL PROGRAM TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GASES AND IMPROVE FUEL ECONOMY FOR CARS AND TRUCKS U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). November 16, 2011. 9 pages.

<http://www.epa.gov/otaq/climate/documents/420f11038.pdf>

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) are issuing a joint proposal extending the National Program to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve fuel economy for model year 2017 through 2025 light-duty vehicles. EPA is proposing national greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions standards under the Clean Air Act, and NHTSA is proposing Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act as amended by the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA). The standards proposed would apply to passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty passenger vehicles, covering model years 2017 through 2025. The proposed standards are projected to require on an average industry fleet wide basis -- that is all passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium duty passenger vehicles (including all SUVs) -- 163 grams/mile of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in model year 2025, which is equivalent to 54.5 miles per gallon (mpg) if the vehicles were to meet this CO<sub>2</sub> level all through fuel economy improvements.

### CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION: FEDERAL EFFORTS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION COULD HELP GOVERNMENT DECISION MAKING

Government Accountability Office (GAO). November 16, 2011. 13 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d12238t.pdf>

According to the National Academies, USGCRP, and others, greenhouse gases already in the atmosphere will continue altering the climate system into the future, regardless of emissions control efforts.

Therefore, adaptation -- defined as adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climate change -- is an important part of the response to climate change. This testimony addresses (1) the data challenges that federal, state, and local officials face in their efforts to adapt to a changing climate, (2) the actions federal agencies could take to help address these challenges, and (3) federal climate change strategic planning efforts.

### FEDERAL ACTIONS FOR A CLIMATE RESILIENT NATION: PROGRESS REPORT OF THE INTERAGENCY CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION TASK FORCE

Executive Office of the President. October 28, 2011. 32 pages.

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ceq/2011\\_adaptation\\_progress\\_report.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ceq/2011_adaptation_progress_report.pdf)

Extreme weather and other climate change impacts pose significant social, economic, and environmental risks to the United States. The U.S. Government has a responsibility to reduce climate risks to public health and safety, economic well-being, natural resources, and Federal programs and services. While much work remains, this report describes important Federal progress toward the Task Force's strategic vision of a resilient, healthy, and prosperous Nation in the face of a changing climate. This report provides that update in five key adaptation areas that align with the policy goals set forth in 2010: Integrating Adaptation into Federal Government Planning and Activities; Building Resilience to Climate

Change in Communities; Improving Accessibility and Coordination of Science for Decision Making; Developing Strategies to Safeguard Natural Resources in a Changing Climate; and Enhancing Efforts to Lead and Support International Adaptation.

#### EPA AND NHTSA ADOPT FIRST-EVER PROGRAM TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND IMPROVE FUEL EFFICIENCY OF MEDIUM-AND HEAVY-DUTY VEHICLES

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). August 9, 2011. 8 pages.

<http://www.epa.gov/otaq/climate/documents/420f11031.pdf>

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) are announcing a first-ever program to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and improve fuel efficiency of heavy-duty trucks and buses. This fact sheet contains an overview of this new national program. The Heavy-Duty National Program will reduce fuel use and GHG emissions from medium- and heavy-duty vehicles, from semi trucks to the largest pickup trucks and vans, as well as all types and sizes of work trucks and buses in between. The program will enhance American competitiveness and job creation, improve energy security, benefit consumers and businesses by reducing costs for transporting goods, and spur growth in the clean energy sector. Vehicles covered by this program make up the transportation segment's second largest contributor to oil consumption and GHG emissions. This comprehensive program is designed to address the urgent and closely intertwined challenges of dependence on oil, energy security, and global climate change.

#### PAVING THE WAY TOWARD CLEANER, MORE EFFICIENT TRUCKS

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). August 2011. 3 pages.

<http://www.epa.gov/otaq/climate/documents/420f11032.pdf>

Under new rules announced by the Administration today, the nation's fleet of medium- and heavy-duty trucks will be required to meet fuel efficiency and greenhouse gas emission standards for the first time ever beginning in 2014. Developed jointly by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with support from the trucking industry, the State of California and leaders from the environmental community, the groundbreaking national program will improve energy and national security, benefit consumers and businesses, reduce harmful air pollution, and lower costs for transporting goods while spurring job growth and innovation in the clean energy technology sector.

#### STRENGTHENING THE SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING OF CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON FRESHWATER RESOURCES OF THE UNITED STATES: REPORT TO CONGRESS

Federal Interagency Panel on Climate Change and Water Data and Information. August 2011. 56 pages.

<http://www.doi.gov/news/pressreleases/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageid=260567>

Freshwater resources are vulnerable to a number of stressors, and a changing climate can exacerbate other stressors and creates new risks to the Nation's food security, energy security, and overall economic health. This report provides a general overview of the challenges that a changing climate poses for water resource managers in the context of other water-resources stressors. In particular, the report considers water resources measurement and modeling systems that are relevant to climate change adaptation. Recommendations are focused on Federal actions to strengthen these systems to inform water management decisions at the Federal, State, and local levels. This report draws from and builds on a

number of recent climate and water documents that have been produced across the Federal, State, local, Tribal, and private water sectors.

## GREEN ECONOMY

### REMARKS BY PRESIDENT OBAMA AND FORMER PRESIDENT CLINTON ON WE CAN'T WAIT: BETTER BUILDINGS INITIATIVE

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. December 2, 2011.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/12/02/remarks-president-obama-and-former-president-clinton-we-cant-wait-better>

Making our buildings more energy efficient is one of the fastest, easiest and cheapest ways for us to create jobs, save money, and cut down on harmful pollution. It is a trifecta, which is why you've got labor and business behind it. It could save our businesses up to \$40 billion a year on their energy bills -- money better spent growing and hiring new workers. It would boost manufacturing of energy-efficient materials. And when millions of construction workers have found themselves out of work since the housing bubble burst, it will put them back to work doing the work that America needs done. So this is an idea whose time has come.

### WE CAN'T WAIT: PRESIDENT OBAMA ANNOUNCES NEARLY \$4 BILLION INVESTMENT IN ENERGY UPGRADES TO PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BUILDINGS

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. December 2, 2011.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/12/02/we-cant-wait-president-obama-announces-nearly-4-billion-investment-energy>

President Obama today announced nearly \$4 billion in combined federal and private sector energy upgrades to buildings over the next 2 years. These investments will save billions in energy costs, promote energy independence, and, according to independent estimates, create tens of thousands of jobs in the hard-hit construction sector. The \$4 billion investment announced today includes a \$2 billion commitment, made through the issuance of a Presidential Memorandum, to energy upgrades of federal buildings using long term energy savings to pay for up-front costs, at no cost to taxpayers. In addition, 60 CEOs, mayors, university presidents, and labor leaders today committed to invest nearly \$2 billion of private capital into energy efficiency projects; and to upgrade energy performance by a minimum of 20% by 2020 in 1.6 billion square feet of office, industrial, municipal, hospital, university, community college and school buildings.

### ENERGY STAR: PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADDITIONAL REVIEW OF EPA'S DECISIONS COULD STRENGTHEN THE PROGRAM

Government Accountability Office (GAO). September 2011. 48 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11888.pdf>

American consumers, businesses, utilities, and federal and state agencies rely on the Energy Star product labeling program to identify more efficient products that lower their energy costs. Even with the program's successes, several reports by GAO and others have identified weaknesses in the Energy Star program. The program, which began in 1992 and was reauthorized in 2005, has been jointly administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Energy (DOE). In 2009, the agencies signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that outlined changes to address

these weaknesses. The changes included identifying EPA as the lead agency, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of each agency, as well as instituting third-party testing of products. GAO was asked to examine (1) the status of EPA's and DOE's implementation of changes to the Energy Star program under the MOU and (2) program partners' views of the Energy Star program and changes that are under way.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

### DESALINATION: TECHNOLOGIES, USE, AND CONGRESSIONAL ISSUES

Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 15, 2011. 14 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R40477.pdf>

In the United States, desalination technologies are increasingly used for municipal and industrial water supplies and reclamation of contaminated supplies. Desalination processes generally treat seawater or brackish water to produce a stream of freshwater, and a separate, saltier stream of water that has to be disposed (often called waste concentrate). At issue for Congress is the federal role in desalination research, demonstration and full-scale facilities, and regulatory requirements. Constraints on wider adoption include financial, environmental, regulatory issues and concerns.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO THE SENATE: AGREEMENT ON PORT STATE MEASURES TO PREVENT, DETER, AND ELIMINATE ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED, AND UNREGULATED FISHING

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. November 14, 2011.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/14/message-president-senate-agreement-port-state-measures-prevent-deter-and>

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to its ratification, the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing, done at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in Rome, Italy, on November 22, 2009 (the "Agreement"). The Agreement established, for the first time at the global level, legally binding minimum standards for port states to control port access by foreign fishing vessels, as well as by foreign transport and supply ships that support fishing vessels.

### PRESIDENT OBAMA SUBMITS PORT STATE MEASURES AGREEMENT TO SENATE

U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesperson. November 14, 2011.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/11/177154.htm>

On November 14, President Obama submitted to the Senate, for its advice and consent, a new treaty designed to combat illegal fishing activities worldwide. The treaty, known as the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, will help ensure that illegally harvested fish do not enter the stream of commerce.

### STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT ON THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE ANNOUNCEMENT

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. November 10, 2011.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/10/statement-president-state-departments-keystone-xl-pipeline-announcement>

I support the State Department's announcement today regarding the need to seek additional information about the Keystone XL Pipeline proposal. Because this permit decision could affect the health and safety of the American people as well as the environment, and because a number of concerns have been raised through a public process, we should take the time to ensure that all questions are properly addressed and all the potential impacts are properly understood.

#### BRIEFING ON ALTERNATIVE ROUTES FOR THE KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

U.S. Department of State, Kerri-Ann Jones, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. November 10, 2011.

<http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/remarks/2011/176996.htm>

This afternoon I wanted to share with you a decision that the Department has taken, and we've taken a decision regarding the Keystone XL pipeline project to seek additional information regarding potential alternative routes. And these potential alternative routes that we would be looking into will be within the state of Nebraska. When we released the Final Environmental Impact Statement in August, at that point we began the national interest period, which we kicked off with a period of extensive public comment. During that period, we had meetings in the states where the potential -- the states that the potential pipeline would cross through as well as in Washington, D.C., and we also met with many of the state officials.

#### THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA) IN THE 112TH CONGRESS: CONFLICTING VALUES AND DIFFICULT CHOICES

Congressional Research Service (CRS). November 8, 2011. 23 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41608.pdf>

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) was enacted to increase protection for, and provide for the recovery of, vanishing wildlife and vegetation. Under ESA, species of plants and animals (both vertebrate and invertebrate) can be listed as endangered or threatened according to assessments of their risk of extinction. Habitat loss is the primary cause for listing species. Once a species is listed, powerful legal tools are available to aid its recovery and protect its habitat. Accordingly, when certain resources are associated with listed species -- such as water in arid regions like California, old growth timber in national forests, or free-flowing rivers -- ESA is seen as an obstacle to continued or greater human use of these resources. ESA may also be controversial because dwindling species are usually harbingers of broader ecosystem decline or conflicts. As a result, ESA is considered a primary driver of large-scale ecosystem restoration issues. This report discusses oversight issues and legislation introduced in the 112th Congress to address ESA implementation and management of endangered and threatened species.

#### FISHERY, AQUACULTURE, AND MARINE MAMMAL: ISSUES IN THE 112TH CONGRESS

Congressional Research Service (CRS). November 4, 2011. 30 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41613.pdf>

Fish and marine mammals are important resources in open ocean and nearshore coastal areas; many federal laws and regulations guide their management as well as the management of their habitat. Commercial and sport fishing are jointly managed by the federal government and individual states. States generally have jurisdiction within 3 miles of the coast. Beyond state jurisdiction and out to 200

miles in the federal exclusive economic zone (EEZ), the federal government (National Marine Fisheries Service, NMFS) manages fisheries under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) through eight regional fishery management councils. Beyond 200 miles, the United States participates in international agreements relating to specific areas or species. The level of appropriations for fisheries, aquaculture/hatchery, and marine mammal programs administered by the NMFS and the Fish and Wildlife Service may be an issue during the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress amid pressures to reduce federal spending.

#### ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AND WATER USE: IMPACTS OF POTENTIAL OIL SHALE DEVELOPMENT ON WATER RESOURCES

Government Accountability Office (GAO). August 24, 2011. 18 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11929t.pdf>

Oil shale deposits in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming are estimated to contain up to 3 trillion barrels of oil -- or an amount equal to the world's proven oil reserves. About 72 percent of this oil shale is located beneath federal lands managed by the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management, making the federal government a key player in its potential development. Extracting this oil is expected to require substantial amounts of water and could impact groundwater and surface water. This testimony summarizes (1) what is known about the potential impacts of oil shale development on surface water and groundwater, (2) what is known about the amount of water that may be needed for commercial oil shale development, (3) the extent to which water will likely be available for such development and its source, and (4) federal research efforts to address impacts to water resources from commercial oil shale development.

#### EPA'S REGULATION OF COAL-FIRED POWER: IS A "TRAIN WRECK" COMING?

Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 8, 2011. 50 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41914.pdf>

Given the central role of electric power in the nation's economy, and the importance of coal in power production, concerns have been raised recently about the cost and potential impact of regulations under development at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that would impose new requirements on coal-fired power plants. Six of the rules, which have drawn much of the recent attention, are Clean Air Act regulations. Two others are Clean Water Act rules, and one is a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act rule. The majority are expected to be promulgated over the next 18 months. All together, these rules have been characterized by critics as a regulatory "train wreck" that would impose excessive costs and lead to plant retirements that could threaten the adequacy of electricity capacity (i.e., reliability of supply) across the country, especially from now through 2017.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL LITIGATION: CASES AGAINST EPA AND ASSOCIATED COSTS OVER TIME

Government Accountability Office (GAO). August 2011. 57 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11650.pdf>

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) faces numerous legal challenges as it implements the nation's environmental laws. Several statutes, such as the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, allow citizens to file suit against EPA to challenge certain agency actions. Where EPA is named as a defendant, the Department of Justice provides EPA's legal defense. If successful, plaintiffs may be paid for certain attorney fees and costs. Payments are made from the Department of the Treasury's Judgment

Fund -- a permanent fund available to pay judgments against the government, as well as settlements resulting from lawsuits -- or EPA's appropriations. GAO was asked to examine (1) the trends in and factors affecting environmental litigation for fiscal years 1995 through 2010 and (2) Justice's recent costs and recent plaintiff payments from the Judgment Fund and EPA.

## POLLUTION AND WASTE

### PESTICIDE USE AND WATER QUALITY: ARE THE LAWS COMPLEMENTARY OR IN CONFLICT?

Congressional Research Service (CRS). November 8, 2011. 19 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32884.pdf>

This report provides background on the emerging conflict over interpretation and implementation of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Clean Water Act (CWA). For the more than 30 years since they were enacted, there had been little apparent conflict between them. But their relationship has recently been challenged in several arenas, including the federal courts and regulatory proceedings of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In this report, a brief discussion of the two laws is followed by a review of the major litigation of interest. EPA's efforts to clarify its policy in this area are discussed, including a regulation issued in 2006 that was subsequently vacated by a federal court, as well as possible options for EPA and Congress to address the issues further.

### ANIMAL WASTE AND WATER QUALITY: EPA'S RESPONSE TO THE WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE COURT DECISION ON REGULATION OF CAFOS

Congressional Research Service (CRS). November 8, 2011. 20 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL33656.pdf>

In October 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a regulation to revise a 2003 Clean Water Act rule governing waste discharges from large confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs). This action was necessitated by a 2005 federal court decision. EPA's efforts to revise the 2003 rule were controversial, particularly regarding the "duty to apply" for a permit and agricultural stormwater exemption provisions. Environmental groups strongly criticized EPA's actions, arguing that the Waterkeeper Alliance court had left in place several means for the agency to accomplish much of its original permitting approach, but instead EPA chose not to do so.

### ANIMAL WASTE AND HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES: CURRENT LAWS AND LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Congressional Research Service (CRS). November 8, 2011. 13 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL33691.pdf>

The animal sector of agriculture has undergone major changes in the last several decades: organizational changes within the industry to enhance economic efficiency have resulted in larger confined production facilities that often are geographically concentrated. These changes, in turn, have given rise to concerns over the management of animal wastes and potential impacts on environmental quality. Federal environmental law does not regulate all agricultural activities, but certain large animal feeding operations (AFOs) where animals are housed and raised in confinement are subject to regulation. The issue of applicability of these laws to livestock and poultry operations -- especially the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA, the Superfund law) and the

Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) -- has been controversial and has drawn congressional attention.

**WATER QUALITY ISSUES IN THE 112TH CONGRESS: OVERSIGHT AND IMPLEMENTATION**  
Congressional Research Service (CRS). November 7, 2011. 25 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41594.pdf>

Much progress has been made in achieving the ambitious goals that Congress established more than 35 years ago in the Clean Water Act (CWA) to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. However, long-standing problems persist, and new problems have emerged. Water quality problems are diverse, ranging from pollution runoff from farms and ranches, city streets, and other diffuse or "nonpoint" sources, to toxic substances discharged from factories and sewage treatment plants.

**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: EPA NEEDS TO TAKE ADDITIONAL ACTIONS TO HELP ENSURE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION**

Government Accountability Office (GAO). October 2011. 48 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d1277.pdf>

The concept of environmental justice is based on the belief that communities with large numbers of minority or low-income residents frequently shoulder a disproportionate share of environmental and health risks. Many of these communities are located in areas within close proximity to sources of pollutants that can adversely affect both the environment and human health. For more than 15 years, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been responsible for leading the federal government's approach to environmental justice -- that is, the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

**NITROGEN IN AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS: IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSERVATION POLICY**  
U.S. Department of Agriculture. September 2011. 89 pages.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR127/ERR127.pdf>

Nitrogen is an important agricultural input that is critical for crop production. However, the introduction of large amounts of nitrogen into the environment has a number of undesirable impacts on water, terrestrial, and atmospheric resources. This report explores the use of nitrogen in U.S. agriculture and assesses changes in nutrient management by farmers that may improve nitrogen use efficiency. It also reviews a number of policy approaches for improving nitrogen management and identifies issues affecting their potential performance. Findings reveal that about two-thirds of U.S. cropland is not meeting three criteria for good nitrogen management. Several policy approaches, including financial incentives, nitrogen management as a condition of farm program eligibility, and regulation, could induce farmers to improve their nitrogen management and reduce nitrogen losses to the environment.

**EXCESS URANIUM INVENTORIES: CLARIFYING DOE'S DISPOSITION OPTIONS COULD HELP AVOID FURTHER LEGAL VIOLATIONS**

Government Accountability Office (GAO). September 2011. 62 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11846.pdf>

Uranium is a key component in the production of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. The Department of Energy (DOE) manages the nation's surplus uranium, which is derived in part from former nuclear weapons production. In 2008, DOE published a uranium management plan that set a target for DOE uranium sales and transfers to avert harm to the domestic uranium industry. In 2009, DOE began using natural uranium to pay for cleanup work at a former uranium enrichment facility in Ohio, without having identified such transactions in its 2008 plan. As directed, GAO reviewed DOE's uranium management program. This report examines (1) DOE's uranium transactions and plans for future transactions, (2) the extent to which these transactions were consistent with DOE's uranium management plan, and (3) the extent to which these transactions were consistent with federal law.

#### CIVILIAN NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL

Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 30, 2011. 28 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL33461.pdf>

Management of civilian radioactive waste has posed difficult issues for Congress since the beginning of the nuclear power industry in the 1950s. Federal policy is based on the premise that nuclear waste can be disposed of safely, but proposed storage and disposal facilities have frequently been challenged on safety, health, and environmental grounds. Although civilian radioactive waste encompasses a wide range of materials, most of the current debate focuses on highly radioactive spent fuel from nuclear power plants.

#### CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401: BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 30, 2011. 9 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/97-488.pdf>

Section 401 of the Clean Water Act requires that an applicant for a federal license or permit provide a certification that any discharges from the facility will comply with the act, including water quality standard requirements. Disputes have arisen over the states' exercise of this authority in protecting water quality. For the most part, the debate over the Section 401 certification issue has been between states and hydropower interests. A 1994 Supreme Court decision which upheld the states' authority in this area dismayed development and hydropower interest groups. The Court revisited these issues in a 2006 ruling that unanimously upheld the authority of states to condition hydropower licenses by exercising Section 401. The dispute between states and industry groups about Section 401 authority has been a legislative issue on several occasions, but Congress has not modified the provision's scope.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH: ACTION NEEDED TO SUSTAIN AGENCIES' COLLABORATION ON PHARMACEUTICALS IN DRINKING WATER

Government Accountability Office (GAO). August 2011. 57 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11346.pdf>

Drinking water in some metropolitan areas contains concentrations of pharmaceuticals, raising concerns about their potential impact on human health. The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate contaminants, including pharmaceuticals, in public drinking water systems if they may adversely affect human health among other criteria. Pharmaceuticals may enter drinking water supplies from several pathways, including discharge from wastewater facilities. GAO was asked to provide information on the (1) extent to which pharmaceuticals occur in drinking water and their effects, if any, on human health; (2) U.S. and other countries' approaches to reducing their occurrence; and (3) challenges, if any, that EPA faces in determining whether to regulate pharmaceuticals.

## AFTERMATH OF THE FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI INCIDENT

### REMARKS AT HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON NUCLEAR SAFETY

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. September 22, 2011.

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2011/09/173763.htm>

[The Fukushima Daiichi] crisis, if the world needed one, is a very stark reminder that nuclear power requires comprehensive security precautions. Although nuclear safety has been a priority concern in the international community for years, it is clear that we need to redouble our efforts and our thinking as to how to imagine and then put in place reactions to whatever might occur. The United States faced a core meltdown just 180 miles from here at Three Mile Island. The world recently marked the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster. None of us is immune. And on each of these occasions, the IAEA and nuclear regulatory bodies have moved to determine what went wrong and to try to prevent it from happening again. But it's imperative that every nuclear country be prepared for scenarios that include multiple severe hazards and prioritizes public safety. I think we have to take this opportunity to update our risk and safety assessments in nuclear power plants, to continue improving our international standards for nuclear safety, and strengthen our global emergency preparedness.

### FINANCING RECOVERY AFTER A CATASTROPHIC EARTHQUAKE OR NUCLEAR POWER INCIDENT

Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 25, 2011. 23 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41968.pdf>

In the aftermath of the recent East Coast earthquake (and shut down of the North Anna nuclear power plants) and Japan's technological and natural disaster, U.S. policymakers are asking if it could happen here and, if so, how associated costs would be financed. In the event of a major natural disaster, several catastrophe risk financing and insurance issues could arise, including (1) the need to revisit the nature, extent, and timing of potential earthquake and tsunami hazards in the United States; (2) the adequacy of nuclear third-party liability insurance capacity; and (3) the challenges of financing recovery from natural disasters and making earthquake insurance more affordable. The latter challenge is largely a function of the national financial markets' capacity to absorb the cost and economic burden of a devastating mega-earthquake.

## AFTERMATH OF THE DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL

### DEEPWATER HORIZON: COAST GUARD AND INTERIOR COULD IMPROVE THEIR OFFSHORE ENERGY INSPECTION PROGRAMS

Government Accountability Office (GAO). November 2, 2011. 22 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d12203t.pdf>

The April 2010 explosion of the Deepwater Horizon, a mobile offshore drilling unit (MODU), showed that the consequences of an incident on an offshore energy facility can be significant. A key way to ensure that offshore energy facilities are meeting applicable security, safety, and production standards is through conducting periodic inspections of the facilities. The Coast Guard and the Department of the Interior share oversight responsibility for offshore energy facilities. The Coast Guard is to conduct

security inspections of such facilities, whereas, based on an agreement between the two agencies, the Department of the Interior is to conduct safety compliance inspections on some offshore facilities on behalf of the Coast Guard as well as its own inspections to verify production.

#### DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL: ACTIONS NEEDED TO REDUCE EVOLVING BUT UNCERTAIN FEDERAL FINANCIAL RISKS

Government Accountability Office (GAO). October 2011. 63 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d1286.pdf>

On April 20, 2010, an explosion of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig leased by BP America Production Company (BP) resulted in a significant oil spill. GAO was requested to (1) identify the financial risks to the federal government resulting from oil spills, particularly Deepwater Horizon, (2) assess the Coast Guard's internal controls for ensuring that processes and payments for spill-related cost reimbursements and claims related to the spill are appropriate, and (3) describe the extent to which the federal government oversees the BP and Gulf Coast Claims Facility cost reimbursement and claims processes.

#### THE 2010 DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL: NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT UNDER THE OIL POLLUTION ACT

Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 25, 2011. 20 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41972.pdf>

The 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill leaked an estimated 4.1 million barrels of oil into the Gulf of Mexico, damaging the waters, shores, and marshes, and the fish and wildlife that live there. The Oil Pollution Act (OPA) allows state, federal, tribal, and federal governments to recover damages to natural resources in the public trust from the parties responsible for the oil spill. The process established by OPA for assessing the damages to natural resources is known as Natural Resources Damage Assessment (NRDA). In the three steps of the NRDA process, the Trustees are required to solicit the participation of the responsible parties and design a restoration plan. This plan is then paid for or implemented by the responsible parties.

### **THINK TANKS AND RESEARCH CENTERS**

*The opinions expressed in these publications do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Government*

### **CLIMATE CHANGE -- GLOBAL ISSUES**

#### MAKING PROGRESS IN DURBAN

Center for Climate and Energy Solutions. December 2011. 2 pages.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/Making-Progress-Durban.pdf>

The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Durban is an opportunity to strengthen the international climate framework. The top priority should be implementing the Cancún Agreements with steps to: 1) improve the transparency of countries' efforts, and 2) strengthen support for developing countries, including a new Green Climate Fund. If established, a second commitment period under the

Kyoto Protocol should be transitional in nature. Looking ahead, parties should set the longer-term aim of working toward a comprehensive binding agreement.

#### THE DURBAN CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS

The Brookings Institution. November 23, 2011.

[http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/1123\\_climate\\_change\\_hultman.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/1123_climate_change_hultman.aspx)

From November 28 to December 9, international energy and environment delegates will be gathering in Durban, South Africa for the annual round of the U.N. climate change policy negotiations. For the most part, this year's agenda tackles issues of moderate or low controversy, and are aimed at filling out provisions that were sketched out in last year's meeting in Cancun. These issues include: the design of the Green Climate Fund; the design of a new Technology Mechanism; and finalizing the Cancun Adaptation Framework. In addition to these relatively technical agenda items, there are some issues that will no doubt draw much of the international attention even though they are probably not as consequential. The first of these issues is the Kyoto Protocol.

#### IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CLIMATE FINANCE: KEY LESSONS

Environmental Defense Fund, Climate Policy Initiative, Brookings Institution, and Overseas Development Institute. November 23, 2011. 20 pages.

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2011/1123\\_climate\\_finance\\_sierra/1123\\_climate\\_finance\\_sierra.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2011/1123_climate_finance_sierra/1123_climate_finance_sierra.pdf)

Flows of finance to developing countries to support climate mitigation and adaptation efforts are growing in speed and scale, toward the target formalized in the Cancun Agreements to increase flows from developed to developing countries to \$100 billion a year by 2020. Ensuring that this money is well spent, and hence maximizing its impact and effectiveness, will of course be critical for achieving outcomes and maintaining support. However, the tools and methods that are now being used to estimate, measure, monitor and disseminate the impact of public climate finance will not be sufficient to support this expansion. With many international institutions and bilateral agencies boosting their climate portfolios, as well as the creation of the Green Climate Fund, the time is ripe to examine current practices to improve the effectiveness of climate finance.

#### DARKENING SKIES ON THE ROAD TO DURBAN -- PART II

Yale Center for the Study of Globalization. November 23, 2011.

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/darkening-skies-road-durban-part-ii>

In tackling climate change, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change must negotiate among parties that are poles apart and the equally vehement interests of developers and conservationists. In this second and final article of a two-part series, the pivotal battleground of the Amazon is analyzed. Divided among nine nations and home to more than 30 million, the Amazon is a huge carbon sink and considered the lungs of the world. But it's also a vast source of natural wealth, offering potential for mining, tourism, timber, agriculture development and more. Nearly half of the Amazon is under protection as indigenous lands or nature preserves, and the author advocates that planning include the region's indigenous people. Coordinating the Amazon's 400 diverse indigenous cultures, though, could be as challenging as securing a global response from the nearly 200 nations meeting in Durban.

#### DARKENING SKIES ON THE ROAD TO DURBAN -- PART I

Yale Center for the Study of Globalization. November 21, 2011.

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/darkening-skies-road-durban-part-i>

The discomfort over record floods, droughts and wildfires is merging views around the globe -- with many hoping for decisive action from the more than 200 nations gathering for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Durban. Climate change, as the dominant issue of our time, demands global cooperation, writes the author in the first article of a two-part series. Instead, nations cling to old habits, institutions and self-interest, long after their reliability is tested and questioned. China's exceptionally fast rise has followed the traditions of the West by depending on fossil fuels. "China has chosen the same path as the countries that industrialized in the 19th century," the author writes. "As China commits to fossil fuels, the globe will find it harder to choose a new path." He concludes that the planet's future health ultimately rests with Asian capitals.

#### THE GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE REGIME

Council on Foreign Relations. November 21, 2011.

<http://www.cfr.org/climate-change/global-climate-change-regime/p21831>

Climate change is one of the most significant threats facing the world today. In November 2011, the International Energy Agency warned that the world may be fast approaching a tipping point concerning climate change, and suggested that the next five years will be crucial for greenhouse gas reduction efforts. The multi-faceted threats posed by climate change demand policies that address both mitigation and adaptation. Operationally, this will require a variety of flexible partnerships among national, bilateral, and multilateral actors, and a combination of short-term and long-term strategies.

#### DELIVERING ON US CLIMATE FINANCE COMMITMENTS

Peterson Institute for International Economics. November 2011. 39 pages.

<http://www.iie.com/publications/wp/wp11-19.pdf>

At the United Nations climate change conference in Copenhagen in 2009 and Cancun in 2010, the United States joined other developed countries in pledging to mobilize \$100 billion in public and private sector funding to help developing countries reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a warmer world. With a challenging US fiscal outlook and the failure of cap-and-trade legislation in the US Congress, America's ability to meet this pledge is increasingly in doubt. This paper identifies, quantifies, and assesses the politics of a range of potential US sources of climate finance. It finds that raising new public funds for climate finance will be extremely challenging in the current fiscal environment and that many of the politically attractive alternatives are not realistically available absent a domestic cap-and-trade program or other regime for pricing carbon. Washington's best hope is to use limited public funds to leverage private sector investment through bilateral credit agencies and multilateral development banks.

#### MULTILATERAL CLIMATE EFFORTS BEYOND THE UNFCCC

Center for Climate and Energy Solutions. November 2011. 20 pages.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/Regime-brief.pdf>

A number of established multilateral regimes offer important avenues for climate mitigation efforts complementary to those of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Tackling discrete dimensions of the climate challenge in regional, sectoral and other global venues can yield action on multiple fronts, contributing toward closing the gap between national pledges and the UNFCCC goal of limiting warming to 2 degrees Celsius. This brief examines ongoing and potential efforts in the

International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the Montreal Protocol, and the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution.

#### BUILDING THE CLIMATE CHANGE REGIME: SURVEY AND ANALYSIS OF APPROACHES

United Nations Environment Programme and World Resources Institute. October 2011. 88 pages.

[http://pdf.wri.org/working\\_papers/building\\_the\\_climate\\_change\\_regime.pdf](http://pdf.wri.org/working_papers/building_the_climate_change_regime.pdf)

The purpose of this paper is to help climate change negotiators, other government officials, international institutions, and civil society experts as they jointly work to build the post-2012 international climate regime. The climate regime is defined here as the set of international, national and sub-national institutions and actors involved in addressing climate change. The paper seeks to identify concrete pathways for building a regime capable of delivering a level of action consistent with the objective of the Convention. It does so by surveying and analyzing the academic literature as well as proposals by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and governments. The authors group proposals according to the key issue they tackle in the design of the regime and the “approach” they take. The five key issues discussed are: options under the UNFCCC to increase ambition; options outside the UNFCCC to increase ambition; sharing the mitigation effort under the UNFCCC; the role of various actors in tracking country performance on mitigation; and the legal form of a future climate agreement.

#### CHINA -- LEADER OR LAGGARD ON THE PATH TO A SECURE, LOW-CARBON ENERGY FUTURE?

Center for Strategic and International Studies. September 26, 2011. 54 pages.

[http://csis.org/files/publication/110923\\_Ladislaw\\_ChinaLeaderLaggard\\_Web.pdf](http://csis.org/files/publication/110923_Ladislaw_ChinaLeaderLaggard_Web.pdf)

There has been a great deal of talk about whether and how China will manage its need to provide enough energy to ensure continued economic growth while avoiding the local and global environmental impacts of its energy production and use. To listen to the political discourse, China is either a global leader on clean energy technologies and transformation or the largest source of emissions with serious, systemic local environmental degradation. How can it at once be a low-carbon leader and a laggard? In reality, the outlook for China’s future energy use is enormously complicated and does not lend itself to a simple categorization of “leader” or “laggard.” This report seeks to clarify key aspects of China’s efforts to pursue a secure, low-carbon pathway and the challenges the government faces.

#### COMMON METRICS: COMPARING COUNTRIES’ CLIMATE PLEDGES

Pew Center on Global Climate Change. September 2011. 12 pages.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/country-pledge-brief.pdf>

More than 80 countries listed climate mitigation pledges for 2020 under the Copenhagen Accord. The Cancún Agreements anchored these pledges within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Unlike the mitigation targets taken by developed countries under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol -- fixed reductions in emissions from an agreed base year -- the new mitigation pledges take a variety of forms. To enable a better understanding of the mitigation pledges offered under the Copenhagen Accord and the Cancún Agreements, this analysis converts the 2020 pledges of eleven major economies into four common metrics: percent change in greenhouse gas emissions from 1990; percent change from 2005; percent change from “business as usual”; and percent change in emissions intensity from 2005.

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION DYNAMICS

Migration Policy Institute and European University Institute. September 2011. 18 pages.

<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/climatechange-2011.pdf>

Climate change is a new driver of human migration, and is expected by many to dwarf all other factors in its impact. But while there is growing concern about climate change, far less agreement exists about what kinds of effects will be felt where, by whom, and precisely when. Human displacement is a result of a complex mix of factors, and some of the more commonly repeated predictions of the numbers of people who will be displaced by climate change are not informed by a full understanding of the dynamics of migration. The report analyzes the salient mechanisms of displacement: sea level rise, higher temperatures, disruption of water cycles, and increasing severity of storms. It also examines the ensuing migration responses and proposes recommendations to offset the severity of displacement.

## THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND: OPTIONS FOR MOBILIZING THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The Brookings Institution. August 26, 2011. 22 pages.

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2011/0830\\_green\\_climate\\_fund\\_sierra/0830\\_green\\_climate\\_fund\\_sierra.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2011/0830_green_climate_fund_sierra/0830_green_climate_fund_sierra.pdf)

The private sector is a critical player in moving to a climate compatible future. To have a chance at maintaining the climate at 2 degrees over pre-industrial levels, economies will need to transform. This implies significant investment in both mitigation and adaptation to help move countries onto climate compatible pathways. The public sector has a critical role in setting goals, building the enabling environment, and investing in research, development and public infrastructure in ways that support the transition. But businesses, households and the capital markets that fund them will be responsible for the bulk of the investment needed. Developing countries are looking to use the momentum coming from their low-emission development and resilience strategies to create new businesses and jobs. Private sector investment in climate compatible development does bring economic development opportunities, but it also requires sufficient access to finance.

## HOW TO ACCOMMODATE 9 BILLION AND SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT -- PART I

Yale Center for the Study of Globalization. August 25, 2011.

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/accommodate-9-billion-save-environment-part-i>

Crises anticipated from climate change won't wait for political action. In the first of two articles, the author describes distrust among nations that led to the failure of the Copenhagen summit. In a highly interconnected world with discussions stretching over decades, small adjustments in energy policies or carbon emissions create winners and losers. Maneuvering for competitive advantage is so intense that setting agendas for talks has evolved into a long process; developed countries refuse to accept terms approved by previous conventions, and developing nations hedge on monitoring, reporting and verification. The author concludes that "the long and bumpy road of climate negotiations is littered with broken promises" and setting off on the path of sustainable development entails hard choices.

## GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RIO+20 AND BEYOND

The Brookings Institution. August 8, 2011.

[http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0808\\_global\\_environmental\\_quality\\_brown.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0808_global_environmental_quality_brown.aspx)

In June 1972, the United Nations convened the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. The conference led to the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Each decade since Stockholm and its lofty principles, the UN has held a conference to review

the past 10 years and make plans for the future: 1982 in Nairobi, 1992 in Rio de Janeiro (the "Earth Summit"), and 2002 in Johannesburg. If there has been a trend over the past 40 years, it is greater emphasis on development and social issues and less on simply protecting the environment where humans live. But the principal commonality of these four UN conferences is that they have expressed big ideas and big plans, with not so much to show for them in the aftermath. The next conference is scheduled for June 2012, once again in Rio de Janeiro, and is known informally as Rio+20. One hopes for the best next summer, but expectations are low.

## CLIMATE CHANGE -- DOMESTIC ISSUES

MODEST RISE IN NUMBER SAYING THERE IS "SOLID EVIDENCE" OF GLOBAL WARMING  
The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. December 1, 2011. 12 pages.

<http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/12-1-11%20Global%20warming%20release.pdf>

The percentage of Americans who say there is solid evidence of global warming has increased modestly over the past two years. Currently, 63% say there is solid evidence that the earth's average temperature has been getting warmer over the past few decades. In October 2009, 57% expressed this view. The number saying global warming is a very serious problem also has ticked up -- to 38% currently from 32% last year; 35% said this in 2009. Nonetheless, substantially fewer Americans say there is solid evidence of global warming than did so from 2006 to 2008. And in those years, higher percentages viewed global warming as a very serious problem than do so today. Nearly four-in-ten (38%) say that global warming is occurring mostly because of human activity, such as the burning of fossil fuels, which also is slightly higher than last year (34%). From 2006-2008, 47% said global warming was mostly caused by human activity.

## THOUGHTS ON A CARBON TAX

The Brookings Institution. November 7, 2011.

[http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/1107\\_carbon\\_tax\\_morris.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/1107_carbon_tax_morris.aspx)

The potential role for a carbon tax in a broader tax reform package is timely and economically important. This paper addresses two aspects of the issue: the economics and the politics. It makes good economic sense to embed a carbon tax in a broader tax reform package. If you're going to "go big" on deficit reduction, it makes sense to include a carbon tax, and likewise if you're going to do serious climate policy, it makes sense to raise revenue for deficit reduction or to offset other taxes. Despite the strong economic case, the political challenges to a carbon tax are many, and they aren't just from anti-tax Republicans who don't believe in the science of climate change. Some of the headwind to a carbon tax derives from tepid enthusiasm from Democrats and the environmental community.

## THE DEBATE OVER GREENHOUSE GAS CAP-AND-TRADE

Council on Foreign Relations. November 3, 2011.

<http://www.cfr.org/climate-change/debate-over-greenhouse-gas-cap--trade/p14231>

Central to Kyoto policy is an arrangement in which emissions are capped and industry and governments are allowed to generate and trade emissions allowances or offsets. The Obama administration and Democratic lawmakers have failed to follow through on pledges to enact legislation that would establish mandatory emissions targets for U.S. industries due to Republican opposition. However, some U.S. states have created trading schemes. The European Union, meanwhile, continues to expand its Emissions

Trading Scheme (ETS) -- created in 2005 and credited with helping it meet Kyoto targets. Challenges with the rollout of Europe's carbon market -- the largest and most mature in the world -- offer lessons for crafting new cap-and-trade policies.

#### CLEAN ENERGY STANDARDS: STATE AND FEDERAL POLICY OPTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Center for Climate and Energy Solutions. November 2011. 81 pages.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/Clean-Energy-Standards-State-and-Federal-Policy-Options-and-Implications.pdf>

A clean energy standard (CES) is one approach to increase the proportion of our electricity generated by clean sources, and has recently received bipartisan support at the federal level. This paper points out that absent significant new policies to promote clean energy, the share of total U.S. electricity generation obtained from clean energy sources will likely not increase by more than a few percentage points over the next 25 years. Such a reality will mean the U.S. would forgo substantial important benefits, including growth of new industries, diversification of the energy supply to limit exposure to fuel price volatility and regulatory risk associated with particular energy sources, and the mitigation of environmental and public health impacts from electricity generation. A CES warrants consideration by policymakers at all levels as a potential tool for achieving the many benefits of a clean energy transition.

#### EVALUATING “CASH-FOR-CLUNKERS: PROGRAM EFFECTS ON AUTO SALES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Resources for the Future. October 2011. 41 pages.

<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-DP-10-39-REV.pdf>

“Cash-for-Clunkers” was a \$3 billion program that attempted to stimulate the U.S. economy and improve the environment by encouraging consumers to retire older vehicles and purchase more fuel-efficient new vehicles. The authors investigate the effects of this program on new vehicle sales and the environment. Using Canada as the control group in a difference-in-differences framework, they find that the program increased new vehicle sales by about 0.36 million during July and August of 2009, implying that approximately 45 percent of the spending went to consumers who would have purchased a new vehicle anyway. Results suggest no gain in sales beyond 2009 and hence no meaningful stimulus to the economy. In addition, the program will reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by only 9 to 28.4 million tons, implying a cost per ton ranging from \$91 to \$288 even after accounting for reduced criteria pollutants.

#### FACING THE STORM: INDIAN TRIBES, CLIMATE-INDUCED WEATHER EXTREMES, AND THE FUTURE FOR INDIAN COUNTRY

National Wildlife Federation. August 2011. 28 pages.

<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/Media-Center/Reports/Archive/2011/~//media/A3897238E6D245C0BB65F56AEBBA0977.ashx>

North American Indian Tribes are especially harmed by climate change, as more ecological shifts and more frequent, more extreme weather events occur. Because Tribes are heavily dependent on natural resources, severe weather events like droughts, floods, wildfires, and snowstorms make tribal communities particularly vulnerable and impact Native Americans more than they impact the general population. This report provides a basis for Tribes to consider how they may be affected by changes in climate and weather extremes and steps they can take to proactively address these impacts.

## GREEN ECONOMY

### **PARTISAN DIVIDE OVER ALTERNATIVE ENERGY WIDENS**

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. November 10, 2011. 8 pages.

<http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/11-10-11%20Energy%20release.pdf>

Public support for increased federal funding on research into alternative energy technology, including solar technology, has decreased substantially since the early months of the Obama administration, with nearly all the decline coming from Republicans and Republican-leaning independents. Overall, 68% of the public favors increasing federal funding for research on wind, solar and hydrogen energy technology while 26% are opposed. From 2006 through early 2009, roughly 80% supported increased federal funding for alternative energy research. A narrow majority of the public (52%) thinks that government investment is necessary to develop new energy technology. About four-in-ten (39%) say that businesses will produce needed energy technology without government support.

### **GOBBLING LESS GAS FOR THANKSGIVING: HOW CLEAN CARS WILL CUT OIL USE AND SAVE AMERICANS MONEY**

Environment America Research & Policy Center. November 2011. 18 pages.

[http://www.environmentamerica.org/uploads/0d/76/0d76a59c956a37dcb3209f185e9ef621/AME\\_gobbler\\_eport\\_final.pdf](http://www.environmentamerica.org/uploads/0d/76/0d76a59c956a37dcb3209f185e9ef621/AME_gobbler_eport_final.pdf)

America's dependence on oil threatens our environment, our economy, and our national security. Whether it is the scars left by the oil spills in the Yellowstone and Kalamazoo rivers and the Gulf of Mexico, the \$1 billion that American families and businesses send overseas every day for oil, or the nearly 2 billion metric tons of global warming pollution emitted annually which fuels more and more extreme weather, these problems demand that we break our dependence on oil. America has the technology and the workforce ready and willing to build cleaner, more fuel-efficient cars that help break our dependence on oil. Ending this dependence will reap enormous benefits for our environment and our economy. The Obama administration should move clean cars into the fast lane by keeping the 2017-2025 clean car standards free of loopholes, and ensuring that new cars and light trucks achieve a standard of at least 54.5 mpg by 2025.

### **THE BUSINESS OF INNOVATING: BRINGING LOW-CARBON SOLUTIONS TO MARKET**

Pew Center on Global Climate Change. October 2011. 142 pages.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/LowCarbonInnovation.pdf>

Innovation is key to addressing climate change, and businesses are the engines of innovation. As the United States recovers from a deep and prolonged recession, many economists view innovation, particularly innovation in low-carbon energy, as a key pathway toward sustained economic growth. Business innovation can provide solutions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, at the same time as they bring bottom-line value in terms of cost reduction, enhanced performance or competitive edge. Yet there is uncertainty regarding the precise shape and timing of current energy policies and future action on climate change, particularly in the United States. This creates challenges for companies to efficiently allocate resources and make strategic bets on bringing to market products and services that will provide value for customers in the long term. Leading companies, in the face of this uncertain policy landscape, are developing and launching low-carbon technologies and solutions that provide value for customers in terms of cost, reliability and competitive advantage, in addition to carbon emission reductions.

## THE JOBS CASE FOR CONSERVATION: CREATING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH STEWARDSHIP OF AMERICA'S PUBLIC LANDS

Center for American Progress. September 2011. 39 pages.

[http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/09/pdf/public\\_land.pdf](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/09/pdf/public_land.pdf)

This report looks at recent research on the direct, indirect, and induced jobs created by the conservation economy -- recreation, renewable energy, restoration, and sustainable land management. Good stewardship of public lands provides tremendous public health and social benefits, such as clean air and clean water, but equally important are the jobs it creates -- jobs that are especially important to rural communities located closest to America's public lands.

## A GREEN BANK IS THE RIGHT TOOL FOR JOBS: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SETTING UP A CLEAN ENERGY FINANCE ENTITY

Center for American Progress. September 2011. 13 pages.

[http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/09/pdf/green\\_bank.pdf](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/09/pdf/green_bank.pdf)

Over the next 10 years, the United States needs to move from a fossil-fuel-based economy to one powered by clean, domestic energy. The U.S. also needs to reverse the current jobs crisis in a time of tight federal budgets and financial austerity. The solution is a Green Bank, which is the right tool to unlock private capital investment to renew America's energy infrastructure and create jobs. This memo outlines a specific proposal to improve private capital markets for clean energy investment in the United States through the development of a dedicated independent Green Bank, which can be pursued either as a stand-alone facility or within the context of a broader program of infrastructure finance.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

### ENERGY FOR WATER AND WATER FOR ENERGY

The Atlantic Council of the United States. October 2011. 32 pages.

[http://www.acus.org/files/publication\\_pdfs/403/111011\\_ACUS\\_EnergyWater.PDF](http://www.acus.org/files/publication_pdfs/403/111011_ACUS_EnergyWater.PDF)

Many factors are driving increasing public and government leaders' interest in energy and water issues throughout the world. Global population continues to grow and with it demand for freshwater supplies for agriculture, industry, energy and recreation. The majority of this growth will be in emerging and developing countries that are already experiencing water and energy security challenges. Insecure energy supplies are bumping up against reductions in water supplies that are also becoming more costly. Heightened awareness of changes in climate patterns further drives the current debate. The United States faces energy and water challenges as well. The energy sector is the fastest growing water consumer, and the growth is mainly in areas of the country that are facing stressed water supplies and intense competition for these limited freshwater supplies.

### HOW TO ACCOMMODATE 9 BILLION AND SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT -- PART II

Yale Center for the Study of Globalization. August 30, 2011.

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/accommodate-9-billion-save-environment-part-ii>

Those who care about the life of future generations recognize that today's unbridled economic growth is unsustainable, and the world must prepare for 9 billion inhabitants by 2050, contends the author in the

second article of a two-part series. Asia cannot afford to mimic the American lifestyle and would be wise to ignore western encouragement for greater consumption in pursuit of economic growth. India and China each have triple the US population. “Asian governments must immediately recognize that a bleak future lies ahead if Asians attempt to live out an aspiration to consume like Americans,” the author writes. Instead, Asian nations could step up as global leaders by emphasizing sustainability and challenging conventional thinking in the US that disregards traditional lifestyles, prioritizes individual rights over the public good, and craves rather than penalizes excess. Resource management must be central to all policymaking, and requires that non-essential goods and services reflect true costs.

#### IN THE US, CLEAN WATER IS NO GUARANTEE

Yale Center for the Study of Globalization. August 11, 2011.

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/us-clean-water-no-guarantee>

Americans use twice as much water as Europeans do and pay half as much for it. Low fees lead many Americans to take their abundant supplies for granted. Globally, most water is used for irrigation purposes, but in the US, thermoelectric generation requires more water. “During an economic recession, protecting water supplies takes a back seat to industries that promise jobs,” notes the author. The small not-for-profit water industry is highly fragmented, with tens of thousands of waterworks under state and local jurisdiction and a hodgepodge of laws that can only lead to shortages and conflicts. Severe drought throughout the South already strains groundwater supplies. Conservatives express anxiety about dependence on foreign oil supplies, yet show little concern about the future of water supplies. The United States could be making a mistake prioritizing energy production over protection of its water supply.

#### ENERGY IN FOOD

The Atlantic Council of the United States. August 2011. 5 pages.

[http://www.acus.org/files/publication\\_pdfs/403/081611\\_ACUS\\_EnergyFood.PDF](http://www.acus.org/files/publication_pdfs/403/081611_ACUS_EnergyFood.PDF)

How much energy does it take to put a meal on a plate? Modern food supply is a worldwide industry and the food market is a global one. Energy has been the key to both shaping the industry and making distant markets available to producers. Advanced energy technologies in food supply are one of the factors that have helped make food more abundant and affordable. On the other hand, policies looking at reducing food energy intensity are often fractious along national borders, of limited scope along the food life cycle, and prone to negatively impacting food production. It is time to look for a more coherent approach to an issue that affects the daily bread of every human being on the planet, the author claims.

#### FUTURE FRIENDLY FARMING: SEVEN AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES TO SUSTAIN PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

National Wildlife Federation. August 2011. 62 pages.

<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/Media-Center/Reports/Archive/2011/~media/54D87336A358404084B1F0B0A2D9A03B.ashx>

America’s farmers provide food, fuel, and fiber for a growing nation. They also provide other valuable services like water management, water filtration, soil protection, recreation, and wildlife habitat. Today, people are placing increasing demands upon our lands for more goods and services. As a result, America’s farmers and foresters must obtain the most from our lands while protecting these precious resources to meet the needs of future generations. In order to sustain ourselves and future Americans, farmers and foresters must take a fresh look at how they manage the land. Increased variability in

commodity prices, input costs, and weather patterns is leading to increased uncertainty for farmers. In an ever-changing world and industry, those best able to consistently produce while reducing costs will hold a competitive advantage. The innovative future friendly farming practices outlined in this report can help growers gain an economic advantage by reducing their costs while increasing their crop yields, productivity, and revenue.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

### CAPTURING RAINWATER FROM ROOFTOPS: AN EFFICIENT WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY THAT INCREASES SUPPLY AND REDUCES POLLUTION

Natural Resources Defense Council. November 2011. 25 pages.

<http://www.nrdc.org/water/files/rooftoprainwatercapture.pdf>

Many communities in the United States face serious threats to a safe, steady supply of water. These include a longstanding reliance on centralized water delivery systems that results in urban areas and agencies largely overlooking opportunities to integrate alternate local sources of water to meet their water supply needs; the unnecessary use of potable water for non-potable uses, such as outdoor landscape irrigation and indoor toilet flushing; climate change; and continually increasing areas of impervious surfaces in our landscape that result in stormwater runoff carrying pollution to our rivers, lakes, and beaches. Although the problems of water supply and water pollution can be complex, practical solutions for both are available now, such as capturing and using rainwater from rooftops.

### ROOFTOPS TO RIVERS II: GREEN STRATEGIES FOR CONTROLLING STORMWATER AND COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOWS

Natural Resources Defense Council. November 2011. 134 pages.

<http://www.nrdc.org/water/pollution/rooftopsII/files/rooftopstoriversII.pdf>

An estimated 10 trillion gallons a year of untreated stormwater runs off roofs, roads, parking lots, and other paved surfaces, often through the sewage systems, into rivers and waterways that serve as drinking water supplies and flow to our beaches, increasing health risks, degrading ecosystems, and damaging tourist economies. But cities of all sizes are saving money by employing green infrastructure as part of their solutions to stormwater pollution and sewage overflow problems. Green infrastructure helps stop runoff pollution by capturing rainwater and either storing it for use or letting it filter back into the ground, replenishing vegetation and groundwater supplies. Examples of green infrastructure include green roofs, street trees, increased green space, rain barrels, rain gardens, and permeable pavement. These solutions have the added benefits of beautifying neighborhoods, cooling and cleansing the air, reducing asthma and heat-related illnesses, lowering heating and cooling energy costs, boosting economies, and supporting American jobs.

### VULNERABLE SHARKS IN THE ATLANTIC OCEAN: THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Oceana. November 2011. 10 pages.

[http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/reports/Vulnerable\\_Sharks\\_in\\_the\\_Atlantic\\_Ocean\\_FINAL.pdf](http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/reports/Vulnerable_Sharks_in_the_Atlantic_Ocean_FINAL.pdf)

Many shark species migrate great distances across our oceans, crossing various jurisdictional boundaries along the way. These sharks, like tunas and swordfish, call large swaths of the oceans home and their populations cannot be claimed or effectively managed by any one country. Because highly migratory

species require international cooperation for effective management, Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) have been established to manage fisheries for these species with the goal of long-term sustainability. In the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) is the most relevant and appropriate international organization to manage highly migratory species, including sharks. Of the 48 Contracting Parties to ICCAT, 46 are signatories to UNCLOS and 43 have ratified it. As UNCLOS is a legally binding agreement, management of highly migratory shark species in the Atlantic should be a priority for ICCAT Contracting Parties.

#### ECONOMIC FIXES SHOULD NOT WORSEN ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS

Yale Center for the Study of Globalization. October 19, 2011.

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/economic-fixes-should-not-worsen-environmental-crisis>

During economic crises, political leaders often urge suspension of environmental protections to save jobs. That is a mistake, argues the author, because the economy ultimately depends on a healthy environment and sustainable use of resources. The current financial crisis presents an opportunity for governments to restructure their economies in sustainable ways. Yet standard measures of economic performance fail in detecting environmental harm, even as researchers connect increasing global reliance on fossil fuels with extreme events that cause massive loss of human life. Competitive emerging economies are repeating unsustainable patterns of fossil-fuel dependence started by developed nations. Recent financial packages to aid the global economy not only neglect environmental rescue but exacerbate risks by reinforcing the dependency on fossil fuels. Clinging to unsustainable traditions will not lead to financial recovery, the author warns, and a shift toward alternative sources of energy is inevitable.

#### CONSERVATION WORKS: HOW CONGRESS CAN LOWER THE DEFICIT AND PROTECT WILDLIFE & PUBLIC HEALTH

National Wildlife Federation. October 2011. 20 pages.

[http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/Media-Center/Reports/Archive/2011/~//media/PDFs/Wildlife/Conservation/ConservationWorks\\_final.ashx](http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/Media-Center/Reports/Archive/2011/~//media/PDFs/Wildlife/Conservation/ConservationWorks_final.ashx)

Over the past year, the traditional legislative process has cut conservation disproportionately. These cuts to conservation threaten the future of our country's environmental and economic health, undermining the infrastructure that ensures we have clean air to breathe, water to drink, land to enjoy, and habitat for our country's wildlife. Further cuts to conservation will mean dirtier air, dirtier water and an overall weakening of our quality of life at a time when we cannot afford to lose any more. To address America's budget deficit, Congress created a 12-member "Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction" as a way to step outside the traditional bounds of the legislative process and partisan posturing during this critical time. As the federal deficit continues to grow, the National Wildlife Federation sees the work of the Joint Committee as an historic opportunity for Congress to set our country on a path toward a fiscally sustainable future by protecting programs that create jobs, save lives, and safeguard wildlife while cutting certain environmentally harmful subsidies.

#### FORAGE FISH: FEEDING THE CALIFORNIA CURRENT LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM

Oceana. October 2011. 44 pages.

[http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/reports/Forage\\_Fish\\_OCEANA\\_2011\\_final.pdf](http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/reports/Forage_Fish_OCEANA_2011_final.pdf)

The term “forage species” means any fish or invertebrate species that contributes significantly to the diets of other fish, birds, mammals, or sea turtles, or otherwise contributes disproportionately to ecosystem function and resilience due to its role as prey. This report examines the role of forage species in the California Current marine ecosystem, the threats to forage species populations, and the management structures currently in place. At the multiple levels of state, federal, and international management, it identifies major gaps in the conservation of the overall forage base that provides the food supply in this ecosystem. It documents numerous cases of mismanagement and ample reason for concern, including overly aggressive harvest rates, forage species declines, and a failure by fishery managers to account for existing information on the prey consumption needs of larger animals when making management decisions.

#### FEAST AND FAMINE IN THE GREAT LAKES: HOW NUTRIENTS AND INVASIVE SPECIES INTERACT TO OVERWHELM THE COASTS AND STARVE OFFSHORE WATERS

National Wildlife Federation. October 2011. 44 pages.

<http://www.nwf.org/~media/PDFs/Regional/Great-Lakes/GreatLakes-Feast-and-Famine-Nutrient-Report.ashx>

Recent research indicates the Great Lakes have undergone profound changes over the past two decades, and ongoing changes related to various stressors threaten the ecological health of the lakes in ways unseen since human development in the region began. The widespread changes in the Great Lakes nutrient cycle that are causing simultaneous feast and famine require sophisticated responses; one-size-fits-all measures are unlikely to succeed. Three overarching approaches can help address this dichotomy. First, management actions based on whole-lake objectives alone (or alternatively, focusing on one part of the system, such as offshore waters) are unlikely to be successful. Second, although implementation of policies specific to nutrients and invasive species (in particular invasive mussels) is critical, we need to explore policies that can address both stresses in an integrated way. Finally, further nutrient reductions (particularly in targeted watersheds) are essential.

#### AFTER THE STORM: HOW GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE CAN EFFECTIVELY MANAGE STORMWATER RUNOFF FROM ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

Natural Resources Defense Council. September 2011. 14 pages.

<http://www.nrdc.org/water/files/afterthestorm.pdf>

Stormwater runoff from roads and highways pollutes and erodes America’s water bodies, imposing health, financial, and environmental costs on local communities. These costs can be avoided or significantly reduced by ensuring that roadways incorporate runoff controls that retain stormwater onsite. Green infrastructure, in particular, is an especially effective method for retaining stormwater that also generates a wide range of economic and social benefits beyond improved water quality. To ensure that these benefits are enjoyed by communities across the United States, legislative and administrative decision makers at the federal and state levels should provide incentives and requirements for these controls to be implemented at all road and highway facilities.

#### THE EUROPEAN UNION AND FISHING SUBSIDIES

Oceana. September 2011. 16 pages.

[http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/reports/EU\\_Subsidies\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_FINAL-1.pdf](http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/reports/EU_Subsidies_Report_FINAL_FINAL-1.pdf)

The world’s oceans are at risk of irreversible collapse. Most of the world’s fisheries are fully exploited or, worse, overexploited and depleted. In Europe, the oceans are equally in crisis. Only a minority of

commercially fished stocks have even been assessed or managed. Of the fish stocks that have been scientifically assessed in the Northeast Atlantic and Mediterranean, the majority are overfished. An increasing number of marine species are threatened, with some nearing extinction. The EU fishing industry receives a significant amount of government subsidies, which have promoted the massive overcapacity of European fishing fleets. The European fishing fleet is estimated to be two to three times greater than what sustainable limits would allow. This paper attempts to provide as complete an overview as possible on the sources and amounts of subsidies available to the EU fishing sector for the most recent year available. The paper also provides a country-by-country analysis and evaluation of subsidy intensity as an indicator of economic performance.

#### NO MORE DRILLING IN THE DARK: EXPOSING THE HAZARDS OF NATURAL GAS PRODUCTION AND PROTECTING AMERICA'S DRINKING WATER AND WILDLIFE HABITATS

National Wildlife Federation. August 2011. 24 pages.

<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/Media-Center/Reports/Archive/2011/~media/6A99FFD279F04BAF8493D876A2EBC841.ashx>

In recent years, there has been explosive growth in industry activities to extract natural gas from shale formations located throughout America. While the growth of the natural gas industry has provided some economic benefits to local economies, it has also been accompanied by growing public fears. In particular, concern and opposition have centered on the process of hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) used to extract shale gas. This report provides an overview of unconventional gas drilling and the key concerns and potential threats that such drilling raises for America’s land, water, air and wildlife. It also provides a number of recommendations for addressing and reducing related environmental impacts.

#### BETWEEN A ROCK AND A DRY PLACE: THE IMPACT OF OIL SHALE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE COLORADO RIVER BASIN WATER SUPPLY

Natural Resources Defense Council. August 2011. 44 pages.

<http://www.nrdc.org/water/files/oilshalecobasin.pdf>

As the price of oil increases, so does the interest in oil shale as a source of energy to fuel U.S. demand. Oil shale development has been explored for decades, but no viable industry has resulted due to overwhelming costs, technical challenges, and environmental impacts, not the least of which is the impact on water. Oil shale is found largely in the arid northwestern region of Colorado; processing it requires significant amounts of water -- on average, an estimated three to five barrels for each barrel of oil produced. A full-scale oil shale industry producing 1.55 million barrels of oil a day would require approximately 360,000 acre-feet of water a year -- roughly one-and-a-half times the amount of water used by Denver per year. The water supply impact of this demand would not only affect agriculture and cities in the region, but could have an impact on all Colorado River Basin water users, even those as far away as Southern California.

#### A BLUEPRINT FOR MOVING TOWARD SUSTAINABLE TROPICAL SHRIMP TRAWL FISHERIES

World Wildlife Fund. August 2011. 144 pages.

[http://assets.panda.org/downloads/tst\\_blueprint\\_august\\_2011\\_1.pdf](http://assets.panda.org/downloads/tst_blueprint_august_2011_1.pdf)

Some 1.3 million t of tropical shrimp are caught annually throughout the world. An approximate estimate<sup>1</sup> is that 419,000 trawlers from 65 countries catch shrimp, generating employment for around

900,000 fishers. On top of this, there are hundreds of thousands of coastal/artisanal fishers using a variety of fishing gears, including small trawls, trammel nets, bag nets, and seines. Shrimp trawling is considered one of the most unselective and damaging fishing methods in the world. Bycatch of commercial and non-commercial species may significantly outweigh catches of target species. This, along with the impacts of bottom trawls on the benthic environment, can result in significant negative impacts on marine ecosystems. There are a few limited examples of what can be considered well-managed tropical shrimp trawl (TST) fisheries. This report seeks to (1) identify and understand the critical problems found in tropical shrimp trawl fisheries and their causes, and (2) create, based on examples of best practice and potential solutions, a “blueprint” which can support a transition of TST fisheries to more sustainable practices.

## POLLUTION AND WASTE

### AMERICA'S BIGGEST MERCURY POLLUTERS: HOW CLEANING UP THE DIRTIEST POWER PLANTS WILL PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH

Environment America Research & Policy Center. November 2011. 23 pages.

<http://www.environmentamerica.org/uploads/15/cb/15cb3dda2fb92bf259e68c3ef4952311/AME-Biggest-Mercury-Polluters---WEB.pdf>

Power plants continue to release large amounts of toxic pollutants, including mercury, into our air. In 2010, two-thirds of all airborne mercury pollution in the United States came from the smokestacks of coal-fired power plants. In other words, power plants generate more airborne mercury pollution than all other industrial sources combined. Mercury is a potent neurotoxicant. Mercury exposure during critical periods of brain development can contribute to irreversible deficits in verbal skills, damage to attention and motor control, and reduced IQ. In 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed the first national standards limiting mercury and other toxic air pollution from existing coal- and oil-fired power plants. Implementing these standards will protect public health.

### THE DELAY GAME: HOW THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY DUCKS REGULATION OF THE MOST TOXIC SUBSTANCES

Natural Resources Defense Council. October 2011. 28 pages.

<http://www.nrdc.org/health/files/IrisDelayReport.pdf>

For decades, the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) efforts to protect the public from health risks of hazardous chemicals have been hindered by chemical companies and the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), the main law used to regulate chemicals in the United States. The legal system has given the chemical industry “home field advantage” for 35 years by placing the burden of proof on the government to establish that chemicals are harmful. This approach has allowed the industry to win almost every fight over whether a chemical is harmful, simply by raising repeated questions about scientific studies, asking for assessments to be revisited, and otherwise playing what the authors call “the delay game.” This paper examines the role of the chemical industry, polluters, their paid consultants, and trade associations in preventing the EPA from reaching conclusions about the toxicity and human health risks of hazardous chemicals. Through the case studies of three common chemicals and widespread pollutants -- trichloroethylene (TCE), formaldehyde, and styrene -- this paper reveals how industry has manipulated the regulatory process to prevent science-based assessments of toxicity and human health risks from becoming policy.

## DANGER IN THE AIR: UNHEALTHY AIR DAYS IN 2010 AND 2011

Environment America Research & Policy Center. September 2011. 61 pages.

[http://www.environmentamerica.org/uploads/a5/b3/a5b3d23af6c6244b89e9417d84e9f11b/DangerInTheAirReport\\_AME\\_PRINT.pdf](http://www.environmentamerica.org/uploads/a5/b3/a5b3d23af6c6244b89e9417d84e9f11b/DangerInTheAirReport_AME_PRINT.pdf)

Pollution from power plants and vehicles puts the health of America's children and families at risk.

Ground-level ozone, the main component of smog, is one of the most harmful and one of the most pervasive air pollutants. According to the American Lung Association, nearly half of all Americans -- 48 percent -- still live in areas with unhealthy levels of smog pollution. Studies show that on days with high concentrations of smog pollution in the air, children and adults suffer more asthma attacks, increased respiratory difficulty, and reduced lung function. Exposure to smog pollution can exacerbate respiratory illness and even cause premature death. Sensitive populations including children, the elderly, and people with respiratory illness are particularly at risk of the adverse health effects of air pollution.

## AFTERMATH OF THE FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI INCIDENT

### THREE STRIKES AND OUT? NUCLEAR ENERGY IN THE UNITED STATES IN THE WAKE OF THREE MILE ISLAND, CHERNOBYL AND FUKISHIMA

The Brookings Institution. November 2011. 3 pages.

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/articles/2011/11\\_nuclear\\_energy\\_ebinger/11\\_nuclear\\_energy\\_ebinger.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/articles/2011/11_nuclear_energy_ebinger/11_nuclear_energy_ebinger.pdf)

Since President Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech before the United Nations in December 1953, nuclear energy in the United States has been seen in the 1954 words of Levi Strauss either as a vital source of electricity that within fifteen years would be "too cheap to meter" or as a Faustian bargain with the devil that has no place in the world's future energy mix. While Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and Fukushima may not have killed the industry completely, they began to sow the seeds of its burial -- a tragedy that will not be easily overcome with no alternative scalable electricity source imminently on the horizon.

### NUCLEAR POWER SAFETY CONCERNS

Council on Foreign Relations. September 23, 2011.

<http://www.cfr.org/europerussia/nuclear-power-safety-concerns/p10534>

The March 2011 Japanese earthquake and tsunami that severely damaged the Fukushima Daiichi power plant has dampened what had been a renewed interest in nuclear power twenty-five years after the explosion at Chernobyl in northern Ukraine. That interest was sparked by rising energy demands in emerging markets and developing nations as well as the need to reduce use of fossil fuels in response to climate change, making nuclear more attractive though less competitive than other types of power. But the 2011 Fukushima incident has led to new scrutiny of plant safety regulations and emergency measures, and to questions about reactor design and how to deal with spent nuclear fuel. Still, while experts say Fukushima is likely to have some impact on nuclear power going forward, it is unlikely to be as disruptive for the industry as Chernobyl.

## AFTERMATH OF THE DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL

**FALSE SENSE OF SAFETY: SAFETY MEASURES WILL NOT MAKE OFFSHORE DRILLING SAFE**

Oceana. October 2011. 32 pages.

[http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/reports/OffshoreSafetyReport\\_Oceana\\_10-18-11.pdf](http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/reports/OffshoreSafetyReport_Oceana_10-18-11.pdf)

Just a few months after the worst offshore spill in world history was finally plugged, the Obama administration lifted its short-lived offshore drilling moratorium. In the year since, numerous drilling permits have been issued by the government and offshore drilling has gone right back to full steam ahead. The government and industry, in justifying this growth in offshore drilling, have pointed to new safety measures implemented since the Deepwater Horizon by BOEMRE, the offshore regulator. Those safety measures, government and industry have said, make offshore drilling safer. Despite these claims, there has been little detailed analysis of what effect these new safety measures will have on the safety of offshore operations, both for humans and the environment.

Previous issues of Environment -- Documents on the Web are available at:

<http://france.usembassy.gov/web-alert.html>