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## GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

### **U.S. TSUNAMI PREPAREDNESS: FEDERAL AND STATE PARTNERS COLLABORATE TO HELP COMMUNITIES REDUCE POTENTIAL IMPACTS, BUT SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES REMAIN**

**United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), June 2006. (06AD191)**

The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami raised questions about U.S. preparedness for such an event. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) leads U.S. detection and warning efforts and partners with federal and state agencies in the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP) to reduce tsunami risks. In 2005, Congress appropriated \$17.24 million in supplemental funding to enhance these efforts. This report:

- \* Identifies U.S. coastal areas facing the greatest tsunami hazard and the extent to which potential impacts have been assessed;
- \* Discusses the effectiveness of the existing federal tsunami warning system;
- \* Describes efforts to mitigate the potential impacts of tsunamis on coastal communities; and
- \* Assesses NOAA's efforts to develop long-range plans for federal tsunami programs.

NOAA has determined that the Pacific coast states of Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington, as well as Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in the Caribbean Sea, face the greatest tsunami hazard. The east and Gulf coasts are relatively low-hazard areas. While high-hazard areas have been identified, limited information exists on the likely impacts of a tsunami in those areas.

The at-risk communities GAO visited have mitigated potential tsunami impacts through planning, warning system improvements, public education, and infrastructure protection, but the level of implementation varies considerably by location. Furthermore, few communities participate in NOAA's preparedness program, according to NOAA officials, because they perceive the threat of a tsunami to be low. While the nationwide expansion of NOAA's tsunami-related activities and NTHMP is under way, the future direction of these efforts is uncertain because they lack long-range strategic plans. NOAA has yet to identify long-range goals, establish risk-based priorities, and define performance measures to assess whether its tsunami-related efforts are achieving the desired results.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d06519.pdf> [pdf format, 65 pages]

### **WILDLAND FIRE REHABILITATION AND RESTORATION**

**United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), June 2006**

The Forest Service and BLM use similar procedures to identify rehabilitation and restoration needs, but differ in how they plan and fund related projects. Given the variety of ecosystems they manage, Forest Service field staff have the discretion to locally prioritize projects, and the agency addresses them through various programs with appropriations from multiple accounts. In contrast, BLM has a standard process for planning needed rehabilitation projects and, through a

single account, funds projects for up to 3 years after fires. For restoration projects—that is, work needed beyond 3 years after a fire—BLM requires them to be addressed through other programs such as rangeland management.



(...) Forest Service and BLM officials face different challenges to addressing their rehabilitation and restoration needs. Forest Service officials cited factors such as competing priorities within constrained budgets and controversy over certain activities. Agency officials said that controversy over harvesting burned timber can be exacerbated by the limited scientific research available to guide such decisions. BLM officials cited challenges to achieving long-term success when seeding burned areas. The agency is taking several steps to improve success rates.

<http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d06670high.pdf>

Complete Report: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d06670.pdf>

## **2006 ATLANTIC HURRICANE OUTLOOK**

**United States Department of Commerce, National Weather Service, Climate Prediction Center. May 22, 2006. (06AD118)**

Hurricane season in the North Atlantic begins June 1. The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) urges populations in North America, Central America and the Caribbean to brace themselves for another higher than average hurricane season. NOAA says that a very active hurricane season is looming, and encourages individuals to make preparations to better protect their lives and livelihoods.

For the 2006 north Atlantic hurricane season, NOAA is predicting 13 to 16 named storms, with eight to 10 becoming hurricanes, of which four to six could become 'major' hurricanes of Category 3 strength or higher.

<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/outlooks/hurricane.shtml> [html format, 5 printed pages]

## **TEMPERATURE TRENDS IN THE LOWER ATMOSPHERE: STEPS FOR UNDERSTANDING AND RECONCILING DIFFERENCES**

**Thomas R. Karl, Susan J. Hassol, Christopher D. Miller, and William L. Murray, editors, 2006 A Report by the Climate Change Science Program and the Subcommittee on Global Change Research, May 2, 2006.**

The U.S. Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) issued the first of 21 reports May 2, with findings that improve technical knowledge about climate change and human influences on temperature trends. The report, Temperature Trends in the Lower Atmosphere: Steps for Understanding and Reconciling Differences, also says that data show clear evidence of human influences on the climate system due to changes in greenhouse gases, aerosols and stratospheric ozone. According to a statement by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

(NOAA), the report tackles some long-standing issues that have hampered understanding of changes in atmospheric temperatures and their causes. The major issue was an apparent discrepancy in the rate of global average temperature increase for Earth's surface compared with higher levels of temperature increase in the atmosphere.

<http://www.climate-science.gov/Library/sap/sap1-1/finalreport/sap1-1-final-all.pdf>

## **CONGRESSIONAL DOCUMENTS (HEARINGS, REPORTS, ETC.)**

### **CLIMATE CHANGE: UNDERSTANDING THE DEGREE OF THE PROBLEM Government Reform Committee Hearing, July 20, 2006**

U.S. government scientists testified before a U.S. congressional committee July 20, trying to dispel any remaining doubts that climate change -- and the human role in it -- is a real phenomenon documented by abundant scientific research.

House Government Reform Committee Chairman Tom Davis, a Republican from Virginia, urged the issue be discussed in a nonpartisan way.

“For too long, the political dialogue on climate change has been dominated by black-and-white grandstanding, either finger-wagging or head-in-the-sand denial and denunciation,” he said. “There has been no reasonable discourse.”

<http://reform.house.gov/GovReform/Hearings/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=46863>

### **TESTIMONY OF JAMES L. CONNAUGHTON, CHAIRMAN, WHITE HOUSE COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, BEFORE THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM July 20, 2006**

The administration believes that the most effective way to engage developing countries is to focus not solely on climate change, but rather on a broader development agenda that promotes economic growth, reduces poverty, provides access to clean water and modern sanitation, enhances agricultural productivity, provides energy security, reduces pollution, and mitigates greenhouse gas emissions

<http://reform.house.gov/UploadedFiles/CEQ%20-%20Connaughton%20Testimony.pdf>

### **INTRODUCTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE: WRITTEN STATEMENT BY DR. THOMAS R. KARL, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL CLIMATIC DATA CENTER, NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA), U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**For An Oversight Hearing before The Committee On Government Reform, U.S. House Of  
Representatives July 20, 2006**

The U.S. Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) integrates federal research on global climate change, as sponsored by thirteen federal agencies.<sup>1</sup> CCSP is a multi-agency program charged with: investigating natural and human-induced changes in the Earth's global environmental system; monitoring, understanding, and predicting global change; and providing a sound scientific basis for national and international decision-making. The CCSP combines the near-term focus of the Administration's Climate Change Research Initiative — including a focus on advancing the understanding of aerosols and carbon sources and sinks and improvements in climate modeling — with the breadth of the long-term research elements of the US Global Change Research Program.

<http://reform.house.gov/UploadedFiles/NOAA%20-%20Karl%20Testimony.pdf>

## THE WHITE HOUSE

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS MARINE NATIONAL MONUMENT

**A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America, June 15, 2006**

In the Pacific Ocean northwest of the principal islands of Hawaii lies an approximately 1,200 nautical mile stretch of coral islands, seamounts, banks, and shoals. The area, including the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve, the Midway National Wildlife Refuge, the Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, and the Battle of Midway National Memorial, supports a dynamic reef ecosystem with more than 7,000 marine species, of which approximately half are unique to the Hawaiian Island chain. This diverse ecosystem is home to many species of coral, fish, birds, marine mammals, and other flora and fauna including the endangered Hawaiian monk seal, the threatened green sea turtle, and the endangered leatherback and hawksbill sea turtles. In addition, this area has great cultural significance to Native Hawaiians and a connection to early Polynesian culture worthy of protection and understanding.



<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/06/20060615-18.html>

## **THINK TANKS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### **BROOKINGS INSTITUTION**

#### **A CREDIBLE FOUNDATION FOR LONG TERM INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Warwick J. McKibbin, Nonresident Senior Fellow, Global Economy and Development;**

**Peter J. Wilcoxon, Nonresident Senior Fellow, Economic Studies**

***Brookings Discussion Papers in International Economics No. 171, June 2006***

To succeed in reducing carbon dioxide emissions, a climate policy must establish credible long-term incentives for investments in new energy-sector capital and in research and development. We argue that credibility implies that international agreements should focus on enhancing coordination and collaboration between countries, rather than on coercion. At the national level, credibility requires political and economic incentives that can be provided by long-term tradable emissions permits, but it needs more flexibility than can be provided by a conventional permit system. We argue that the best mechanism for providing credible long-term incentives is a hybrid system of long and short term emissions permits. Key aspects of the system would be coordinated across countries but the permits would be issued and traded solely within national borders.

View full paper: <http://www.brook.edu/views/papers/mckibbin/200606bdpie171.pdf> [PDF - 90KB]

#### **ETHANOL: LESSONS FROM BRAZIL**

**By David B. Sandalow, Environment Scholar, Foreign Policy Studies**

**The article was published in an Aspen Institute volume titled "*A High Growth Strategy for Ethanol.*" May 2006**

Ethanol is hot. In the United States, production increased by more than 20% in 2005. The nation's 97 ethanol plants are operating at close to full capacity, with another 33 plants under construction. Politicians from President George W. Bush to Senator Richard Lugar to Senator Barack Obama to Democratic National Committee Chair Howard Dean all support aggressive programs to promote ethanol.

Yet today ethanol provides only about 3% of the United States' transportation fuel. Few experts expect this figure to increase to more than 7% by 2010. In Brazil, in contrast, ethanol provides more than 40% of the fuel for transportation. Flex-fuel cars – capable of running on gasoline or ethanol -- grew from less than 1% of the Brazilian new car market in 2001 to more than 70% today.

As the United States explores ways to reduce oil dependence, many observers are looking south for guidance. This paper summarizes the history of the Brazilian ethanol program, describes the

program's current status and considers lessons for the United States from the Brazilian experience.

View Full Article: [http://www.brook.edu/views/articles/fellows/sandalow\\_20060522.pdf](http://www.brook.edu/views/articles/fellows/sandalow_20060522.pdf) (PDF—36kb)

### **CASE CLOSED: THE DEBATE ABOUT GLOBAL WARMING IS OVER**

**Gregg Easterbrook, Visiting Fellow, Governance Studies, Economic Studies**

***Issues in Governance Studies*, June 2006; Originally published as a Working Paper in May 2006**

Here's the short version of everything you need to know about global warming. First, the consensus of the scientific community has shifted from skepticism to near-unanimous acceptance of the evidence of an artificial greenhouse effect. Second, while artificial climate change may have some beneficial effects, the odds are we're not going to like it. Third, reducing emissions of greenhouse gases may turn out to be much more practical and affordable than currently assumed.

This brief will address the three points above and, in an appendix, offer non-jargon explanations of the most important recent findings of greenhouse science. But the pressing point of this briefing is not so much scientific as it is practical—that action against artificial global warming may not prove nearly as expensive or daunting as commonly believed. Greenhouse gases are an air pollution problem, and all air pollution problems of the past have cost significantly less to fix than projected, while declining faster than expected. This gives cause to hope that artificial greenhouse gases can be controlled reasonably cheaply and without wrenching sacrifices to the global economy. And if there is a chance of an economical approach to greenhouse-gas reduction, then what are we waiting for? Let's start now.

View Full Paper <http://www.brook.edu/views/papers/easterbrook/20060517.pdf> (PDF—303kb)

### **COMMISSION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION**

**TOXIC CHEMICAL RELEASES IN NORTH AMERICA CONTINUE TO DECLINE;  
Commission for Environmental Cooperation reports 9 percent drop from 2002 to 2003  
By Bridget Hunter, Washington File Staff Writer, July 27, 2006**

Washington -- The amount of toxic chemicals released in North America continued to decline in 2003, according to a report released July 27 by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC).

Canada, the United States and Mexico are parties to the CEC, which was created under the provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The annual *Taking Stock* report presents data that show total releases of industrial chemicals fell by 9 percent in North America from 2002 to 2003, and have decreased by 20 percent since 1998, the first year in which the report was generated. In 2003, nearly 3 million metric tons of

chemicals were released into North American air, land or water from 23,816 facilities, according to the report.

The report is based on data derived from the Canadian National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) and the U.S. Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) as well as selected data from Mexico.

[http://italy.usembassy.gov/viewer/article.asp?article=/file2006\\_07/alia/a6072708.htm](http://italy.usembassy.gov/viewer/article.asp?article=/file2006_07/alia/a6072708.htm)

## **EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

### **PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY IN THE 10 NEW MEMBER STATES - NATURA 2000 NETWORK MAKING PROGRESS EC Brussels, 18 July 2006**

The biodiversity of the ten new Member States which joined the EU in 2004 is particularly rich. It is crucial for the EU to protect it in order to halt biodiversity loss in Europe by 2010.

Significant progress has been achieved in implementing EU nature protection legislation in those countries but important gaps remain. Almost 11% of the territory of the new member States taken as a whole is protected under the Birds Directive and over 12% has been proposed for protection under the Habitats Directive, as part of the EU-wide Natura 2000 network of high value nature areas. However, the percentages range from less than 3% in Malta and 8% in Poland to more than 25% in Slovakia under the Birds Directive and from about 4% in Poland to more than 31% in Slovenia under the Habitats Directive.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/06/292&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

### **BATHING WATER: LARGE MAJORITY OF BEACHES CONTINUES TO MEET EU STANDARDS EC Brussels, 9 June 2006**

A large majority of bathing sites across the EU-25 continued to meet EU cleanliness standards in 2005, according to the annual bathing water report presented by the European Commission today. However, the proportion of compliant sites decreased slightly in coastal areas and more significantly at inland bathing sites like lakes and rivers. Coming just before the bathing season begins, the report provides useful water quality information for the millions of people who visit Europe's beaches each summer. While 96% of coastal bathing sites met the mandatory standards of the EU bathing water directive[1] last year, the proportion of inland waters in compliance continued to fall, decreasing by almost four percentage points to 86%. These falls were mainly due to insufficient sampling of water quality which counts as non compliance.

Stavros Dimas, Commissioner for Environment, said: "It is very encouraging that the water continues to be clean for bathers at well over 95% of Europe's coastal waters. However, I am concerned at the worsening compliance rate at inland bathing sites and would urge public authorities to step up the required testing and clean-up efforts. "

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/761&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

## **BATHING WATER QUALITY: ANNUAL REPORT, 2005 BATHING SEASON**

- The summary for the EU is available in all 20 official languages.
- The country reports can be consulted for each member state
- In the Atlas you can search for beaches throughout Europe and see their complete water quality history.

[http://ec.europa.eu/water/water-bathing/report\\_2006.html](http://ec.europa.eu/water/water-bathing/report_2006.html)

## **BATHING WATER QUALITY. THE NEW BATHING WATER DIRECTIVE EC 2006/7/**

Europeans are very concerned about water quality in sea, coasts, rivers and lakes. They put good bathing water quality on the first line when judging their immediate living environment.

Knowing they have clean and safe water to swim or play in is an important factor in their choice of a holiday or weekend destination. Also for the tourist industry, clean and safe water is an important argument to attract visitors to an area.

[http://ec.europa.eu/water/water-bathing/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/water/water-bathing/index_en.html)

## **HERITAGE FOUNDATION**

### **THE SENATE SHOULD ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO DEEPWATER OIL AND NATURAL GAS**

**by Ben Lieberman**

**Heritage Foundation WebMemo #1173, July 25, 2006**

The Senate is considering a bill to open up a natural gas-rich portion of the eastern Gulf of Mexico known as the Lease Sale 181 area. Though a modest step in the direction of increased domestic energy production, the bill would not accomplish nearly as much as the Deep Ocean Energy Resources Act of 2006 (DOER Act) recently passed by the House. The Senate should consider a bolder, more comprehensive approach—such as the DOER Act—that does more to meet the nation’s energy needs.

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/wm1173.cfm>

**THE DEEP OCEAN ENERGY RESOURCES ACT OF 2006: STATE CONTROL, INCREASED SUPPLY, AND LOWER PRICES**

by Ben Lieberman

Heritage Foundation WebMemo #1140, June 28, 2006

Congress passed a 1,700-page energy bill last year and has since introduced hundreds of additional energy bills. Unfortunately, most of these measures will not bring down oil and natural gas prices. In contrast, the Deep Ocean Energy Resources Act of 2006 (DOER Act, H.R. 4761), would expand domestic offshore oil and natural gas production and is a strong step towards more affordable and stable energy supplies.

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/wm1140.cfm>

Text of the DOER Act of 2006:

[http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/OCS\\_Website/DOER\\_Act\\_HR\\_4761.pdf](http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/OCS_Website/DOER_Act_HR_4761.pdf)

**STATUS OF TROPICAL FOREST MANAGEMENT 2005**

International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). May 23, 2006.



This ITTO report, which probes the state of tropical forestry in 33 countries in Asia, the Pacific, Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa, shows that the area of sustainably managed tropical forests has expanded from less than one million hectares (2.4 million acres) in 1988 to at least 36 million hectares (87 million acres) in 2005.

The 814 million hectares examined in the ITTO report represent the total area of natural tropical forests that meet the ITTO definition of "permanent forest estate" -- lands whose landowners (mainly governments) intend to manage them for sustainable production or as protected areas. Under sustainable production, timber harvesting and other revenue-generating activities (such as collecting fruits, nuts and medicinal plants) are allowed, but must not destroy the forests. Those forests maintained as protected areas are those where landowners will endeavor to maintain the forest's pristine state. But the report warns that some 95 percent of the forests remain unprotected-and progress will be fleeting unless the international community ensures that nations benefit economically from maintaining their tropical forests.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

<http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pageId=270>

## **MILLENNIUM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT**

### **SPECIAL ISSUE ON THE MILLENNIUM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT**

*Sustainable Development Update (Issue 2-3, 2006) (6/1/2006)*



Includes the following articles:

- Healthy Ecosystems Key to Poverty Alleviation
- Invest in Ecological Infrastructure in Poor Countries
- The Future for Ecosystems and Human Well-Being Can Be Bright
- We Need to Value Ecosystem Services More Comprehensively
- Sustainability School: Ecosystem Services

<http://www.millenniumassessment.org/en/Journal.aspx>

## **NASA**

### **NASA EXPLAINS PUZZLING IMPACT OF POLLUTED SKIES ON CLIMATE 07.13.06**

NASA scientists have determined that the formation of clouds is affected by the lightness or darkness of air pollution particles. This also impacts Earth's climate.

In a breakthrough study published today in the online edition of *Science*, scientists explain why aerosols -- tiny particles suspended in air pollution and smoke -- sometimes stop clouds from forming and in other cases increase cloud cover. Clouds not only deliver water around the globe, they also help regulate how much of the sun's warmth the planet holds. The capacity of air pollution to absorb energy from the sun is the key.

[http://www.nasa.gov/vision/earth/environment/pollution\\_clouds.html](http://www.nasa.gov/vision/earth/environment/pollution_clouds.html)

## **NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**

### **IMPACTS OF OCEAN ACIDIFICATION ON CORAL REEFS AND OTHER MARINE CALCIFIERS: A GUIDE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

**A report from a workshop sponsored by the National Science Foundation, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the U.S. Geological Survey, June 2006**



Worldwide emissions of carbon dioxide from fossil fuel burning are dramatically altering ocean chemistry and threatening marine organisms, including corals, that secrete skeletal structures and support oceanic biodiversity. This landmark report summarizes the known effects of increased atmospheric carbon dioxide on these organisms, known as marine calcifiers, and recommends future research for determining the extent of the impacts.

[http://www.ucar.edu/communications/Final\\_acidification.pdf](http://www.ucar.edu/communications/Final_acidification.pdf)

## **NATIONAL CENTER FOR ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH**

### **NEW RADAR TECHNIQUE LOCATES STORM-FUELING MOISTURE**

**NCAR News Release, August 1, 2006**

BOULDER—People planning ball games, picnics, and other outdoor events may soon have more precise short-term forecasts of rainfall, thanks to an observing strategy now being tested by the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). An NCAR field project this summer is, for the first time, using multiple Doppler weather radars to track water vapor in the lower atmosphere. Measuring the low-level moisture is expected to help forecasters pin down the locations and timing of storms that might rage a few minutes to a few hours later.

<http://www.ucar.edu/news/releases/2006/refractt.shtml>

## **NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA)**

### **HEAT – THE NUMBER ONE NON-SEVERE WEATHER RELATED KILLER IN THE UNITED STATES**

**NOAA Magazine, August 2, 2006**

Of all the natural hazards in the United States, heat is the number one non-severe weather related killer. Unlike the roar of an approaching tornado, heat waves kill with silence. In an average year, about 175 Americans succumb to the effects of summer heat, according to the NOAA Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services and the NOAA National Climatic Data Center. In the 40-year period from 1936 through 1975, nearly 20,000 people were killed in the United

States by the effects of heat and solar radiation. In the disastrous heat wave of 1980, more than 1,250 people died. Through improved heat-wave forecasting, plus greater public awareness and education, NOAA is working to help reduce the number of heat-related deaths.

<http://www.magazine.noaa.gov/stories/mag208.htm>

## **NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL**

### **THE VANISHING BEE**

**Sharon Levy**

**NRDC *OnEarth*, Summer 2006 Issue**

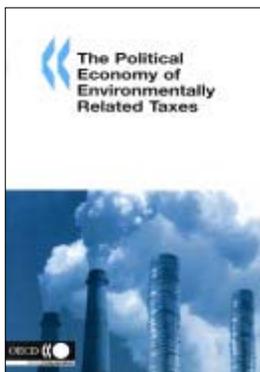
A number of pesticides used by farmers and by consumers in the home and garden pose a serious threat to the health of humans and animals, including bees. Through the efforts of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and a coalition of public interest groups, public health professionals, and farm labor activists, Congress unanimously passed the Food Quality Protection Act in 1996, which requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reassess the safety of all pesticides now on the market. The deadline to complete this process is fast approaching: August 2006.

<http://www.nrdc.org/onearth/06sum/bees1.asp>

## **ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT'S (OECD)**

### **THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

**OECD Policy Brief, June 2006**



Is it true that environmental policies hit the pockets of poorer households harder than those of wealthier ones? And that the poor receive less of the benefit of such policies as they are more likely to live closer to industry or hazardous waste treatment plants and further from parks or the countryside? This is a widespread perception, and in many cases one that is supported by the available evidence. Concern about the social dimension of environmental policy is nothing new – indeed, the importance of considering simultaneously the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development has been stressed since the concept was spelled out in the “Brundtland Report” in 1987. And the need to analyse the social-environmental interface is one of the key

priorities of the OECD’s Environmental Strategy for the First Decade of the 21st Century.

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/31/0/36958774.pdf>

**PROGRESS ON ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES  
AN ANALYSIS OF BROAD TRENDS**

**Frédéric Gagnon-Lebrun and Shardul Agrawala**  
**OECD, May 2006**

This paper provides an assessment of broad trends in progress on assessment and implementation of adaptation to climate change in “developed countries”, defined here as being Member states of the OECD and/or Parties listed under Annex I of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Primary inputs to this analysis are the National Communications (NCs) by these countries to the UNFCCC. NCs follow a standardised reporting format which facilitates cross-national comparison. They also reflect “whole government” perspectives. At the same time, however, the coverage of particular issues within these documents need not be comprehensive, nor might it necessarily reflect policy priorities on the ground.

Therefore, this paper also examines other policies and projects which highlight progress on implementing adaptation, but which have not been reflected in the NCs.

The analysis shows that climate change impacts and adaptation receive limited attention within the NCs relative to the discussion of greenhouse gas emissions and mitigation policies. Within the discussion on impacts and adaptation in the NCs, it is the assessment of future climatic changes and impacts that tend to dominate. The discussion on adaptation, meanwhile, is often limited to the identification of generic options.

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/49/18/37178873.pdf>

**UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)**

**DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TAKE THE LEAD IN TAKING CARE OF THE PLANET**  
**UNEP Press Release, Aug 1 , 2006**

500 groups to take part in a worldwide environmental clean-up this September  
Sydney, Australia, 1 August 2006 – Some 500 organisations, ranging from local community groups and schools to nationwide campaigns and government departments from 119 countries, will participate in the annual Clean Up the World Weekend on 15-17 September 2006.

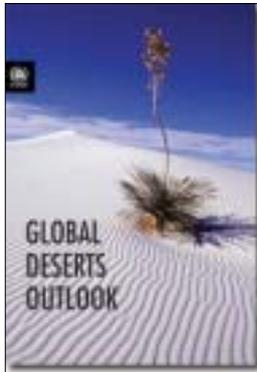
As members of the Clean Up the World campaign, they will engage in a wide range of activities, including clean ups of local streets, waterways, parks and beaches, environmental projects such as tree planting, energy conservation and water recycling, and education programmes. The overwhelming majority of these groups come from developing countries.

<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=484&ArticleID=5319&l=en>

For more information, visit <http://www.cleanuptheworld.org>.

## GLOBAL DESERTS OUTLOOK.

United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). June 5, 2006. (06AD161)



This major report sets out some basic facts about deserts:

- \* Almost one-quarter of the earth's land surface - some 33.7 million square kilometers - has been defined as "desert" in some sense. These deserts are inhabited by over 500 million people, significantly more than previously thought.
- \* The desert cores remain pristine in many parts of the world, representing some of the planet's last remaining areas of total wilderness.
- \* The desert fringes in many places suffer high pressures from human activities and include several of the most threatened terrestrial eco-regions of the world.

(...) The report stresses that not all the changes need necessarily be harmful. Some may have clear benefits for indigenous people and other desert residents, and even the wider world. Most deserts have sunlight and temperature regimes that favor-possibly surprisingly-sites for shrimp and fish farms in locations like Arizona and the Negev desert in Israel. Such ventures offer new and potentially environmentally friendly livelihoods for local people and businesses. Eventually these and other developments that make use of the unique features of deserts could also help relieve the pressure on mangroves and sensitive coastlines, which are currently being cleared for shrimp ponds. Meanwhile, many species of animal and plant life that "are remarkably adapted to the harsh and often unpredictable desert world, promise new sources of drugs, industrial products and crops."

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

Full Report:

<http://www.unep.org/geo/gdoutlook/> [Table of Contents, sections in html format, various pagings]

Executive Summary:

[http://www.unep.org/geo/news\\_centre/pdfs/executive\\_summary.pdf](http://www.unep.org/geo/news_centre/pdfs/executive_summary.pdf) [English-language version, pdf format, 8 pages]

## AFRICA ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK 2 – OUR ENVIRONMENT, OUR WEALTH UNEP Report, 2006



The book profiles Africa's environmental resources as an asset for the region's development. The report highlights the opportunities presented by the natural resource base to support development and the objectives of the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The report underscores the need for sustainable livelihoods, and the importance of environmental initiatives in supporting them. Emphasis is put on what should and can be done with existing (remaining) environmental assets, in the context of identified constraints (issues), rather than focusing on what has been already lost.

<http://www.unep.org/dewa/africa/aeo2%5Flaunch/>

## **WORLD BANK**

### **LITTLE GREEN DATA BOOK 2006** **World Bank. April 2006. ( 06AD108)**



The Little Green Data Book is the World Bank's annual comprehensive guide to environmental statistics. With data for 48 indicators in 222 countries, territories and regions, it provides a statistical portrait of the state of the world and the impact of human activity. According to this year's edition, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions worldwide have now topped 24 billion metric tons (the most recent comprehensive data are for 2002), an increase of 15 percent compared to 1992 levels. The rapidly expanding economies of China and India are showing a rapid increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. China, which is already the second largest polluter, has increased its emissions by 33 percent between 1992 and 2002, while India's emissions have grown 57 percent in the same period. This trend will likely continue as economic activity grows.

Currently, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions stem mainly from rich countries, with the United States contributing 24 percent of total emissions and the countries of the European Monetary Union contributing 10 percent. But the share of developing country contributions to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is rapidly increasing. The report says that from 2000 to 2002, global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions increased by 2.5 percent annually, and about two-thirds of this increase came from low- and middle-income countries.

The report warns that, by and large, countries with large endowments of fossil energy resources choose to consume rather than to invest the returns generated by energy resources. Countries such as Angola, Nigeria, and Venezuela, that now enjoy high energy returns, have negative saving rates. In these countries, total wealth is declining, posing a serious risk on the sustainability of future growth rates.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTEEI/936214-1146251511077/20916989/LGD\\_B2006.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTEEI/936214-1146251511077/20916989/LGD_B2006.pdf)  
[pdf format, 240 pages]

## **WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)**

### **PREVENTING DISEASE THROUGH HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS: TOWARDS AN ESTIMATE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL BURDEN OF DISEASE**

**A. Prüss-Üstün and C. Corvalán**

**World Health Organization (WHO). June 16, 2006. (06AD185)**

This report states that health disorders with the largest absolute burden attributable to modifiable environmental factors are the following:

\* Diarrhea. An estimated 94% of the diarrheal burden of disease is attributable to environment, and associated with risk factors such as unsafe drinking-water and poor sanitation and hygiene.

\* Lower respiratory infections. These are associated with indoor air pollution related largely to household solid fuel use and possibly to second-hand tobacco smoke, as well as to outdoor air pollution. In developed countries, an estimated 20% of such infections are attributable to environmental causes, rising to 42% in developing countries.

\* 'Other' unintentional injuries. These include injuries arising from workplace hazards, radiation and industrial accidents; 44% of such injuries are attributable to environmental factors.

\* Malaria. The proportion of malaria attributable to modifiable environmental factors (42%) is associated with policies and practices regarding land use, deforestation, water resource management, settlement siting and modified house design.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

Links to the Full Report (106 pages), and Executive Summaries in English (19 pages) and Spanish (19 pages):

[http://www.who.int/quantifying\\_ehimpacts/publications/preventingdisease/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/quantifying_ehimpacts/publications/preventingdisease/en/index.html)

## **THE WORLD CONSERVATION UNION (IUCN)**

### **RELEASE OF THE 2006 IUCN RED LIST OF THREATENED SPECIES REVEALS ONGOING DECLINE OF THE STATUS OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS IUCN, 2 May 2006**



The number of known threatened species reaches 16,119. The ranks of those facing extinction are joined by familiar species like the polar bear, hippopotamus and desert gazelles; together with ocean sharks, freshwater fish and Mediterranean flowers. Positive action has helped the white-tailed eagle and offers a glimmer of hope to Indian vultures

Too big to publish as a book, the Red List is available online as a searchable database by species, country, threat, year or habitat.

<http://www.redlist.org/>

## **WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE**

### **CONSERVATION BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, COST-SHARE AND WATER QUALITY TRADING PROGRAMS.**



**Suzie Greenhalgh, Mindy Selman and Michael Taylor**  
**WRI Policy Note, July 2006**

Outlines economic and "fairness" reasons why supporting the sale of the cost-share portion of agricultural nutrient and sediment reductions is not the most appropriate policy for the USDA and other government agencies to adopt.

[http://pdf.wri.org/pn\\_envmks\\_conservation\\_cost\\_share.pdf](http://pdf.wri.org/pn_envmks_conservation_cost_share.pdf)

## **PAYING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE: INVESTING IN FARMERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Suzie Greenhalgh, Mindy Selman, And Jenny Guiling**  
**WRI Policy Note, July 2006**

Farm Bill conservation programs are in high demand in the United States, with the number of applications in almost all major programs far exceeding the total funds available (See Table 1). For instance, the budget for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)<sup>1</sup> in the last couple of years has only been able to fund 26–60 percent of applicants applying to the program. Given the large number of applicants for conservation programs and the limited amount of funds available, allocating program funds to produce the greatest environmental outcome becomes important.

[http://pdf.wri.org/pn\\_envmkts\\_paying\\_for\\_performance.pdf](http://pdf.wri.org/pn_envmkts_paying_for_performance.pdf)

## **RESEARCH REPORT: HOT CLIMATE, COOL COMMERCE: A SERVICE SECTOR GUIDE TO GREENHOUSE GAS MANAGEMENT**

**By Samantha Putt del Pino, Ryan Levinson, John Larsen**  
**WRI 2006, ISBN: 1-56973-616-2 (60 pages)**



Climate change is a global challenge with serious consequences for our social and economic infrastructure as well as the natural environment. The greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that cause climate change are emitted mainly from burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas. Because heavy industry is a leading source of GHG emissions, most of the business-focused programs responding to the problem emphasize participation by "emitters", manufacturers and utilities. Action by industry alone, however, is not enough. Long-term solutions require emission reduction efforts by the entire economy, and this publication addresses service-sector companies such as banks, law firms, retailers, and real estate managers. Even though they are not considered large emitters, these companies do emit GHGs and can help mitigate climate change through changes in their energy use and the products and services they offer.

Service-sector companies contribute to climate change through their electricity use, heating, cooling and travel. They have an opportunity to influence their operations, supply chains, customers, employees and other stakeholders to help change those behaviours necessary to curb the most dangerous effects of climate change. This guide provides a brief overview of climate change science and expected impacts, the connection between climate change and the service sector and discusses the business case for action. This is followed by the core of the guide which is a practical, step-by-step manual for service-sector businesses ready to begin responding to climate change.

[http://business.wri.org/pubs\\_description.cfm?PubID=4137](http://business.wri.org/pubs_description.cfm?PubID=4137)

## **WORLD WILDLIFE FUND**

### **TIGER HABITAT DOWN FROM JUST A DECADE AGO, NEW STUDY FINDS** **WWF Press Release, 07/20/2006**

WASHINGTON - The most comprehensive scientific study of tiger habitats ever done finds that the big cats reside in 40 percent less habitat than they were thought to a decade ago. The tigers now occupy only 7 percent of their historic range.

This landmark study, commissioned by the Save The Tiger Fund and produced by some of the world's leading tiger scientists at World Wildlife Fund, Wildlife Conservation Society, the Smithsonian's National Zoological Park and Save The Tiger Fund, calls for specific international actions to safeguard remaining populations. The study finds that conservation efforts such as protection from poaching, preservation of prey species, and preservation of tigers' natural habitat have resulted in some populations remaining stable and even increasing. But it concludes that long-term success is only achieved where there is a broad landscape-level conservation vision with buy-in from stakeholders.

The report and related materials can be downloaded at <http://www.tigermaps.org>

## **ARTICLES FROM U.S. JOURNALS** **(Contact the IRC for copies)**

### **ATOMIC BALM?**

**Gertner, Jon**

*New York Times Magazine*, July 16, 2006, pp. 36//49 (AA06267)

Summary: "For the first time in decades," the article begins, "increasing the role of nuclear power in the United States may be starting to make political, environmental and even economic sense." Today 103 reactors in the U.S. provide 20% of its electricity; some plants provide much higher percentages of electricity for their particular regions. No new plant has been approved for construction in the U.S. since 1978, the newest plant came online in 1996. It is unlikely that the plants will operate for much more than 60 years each. This presents a significant long-term problem for utility companies -- whether they should begin replacing the nuclear plants now, or whether coal will continue to be plentiful or cheap. Industry experts anticipate caps on carbon emissions that will significantly raise the cost of producing electricity from coal, and are skeptical about alternative fuels as major sources of electricity. Natural gas prices are high already. The author runs through the long list of pros and cons to building new nuclear power plants, including arguments that utilities, instead of increasing electricity, should be encouraging consumers to reduce their needs. Still, the author concludes that building new plants may indeed be reasonable. "The fact is," one nuclear expert is quoted as saying, "there is no perfect way of generating electricity. There are byproducts of every type."

### **WADING IN WASTE**

**Mallin, Michael A.**

*Scientific American*, Vol. 294, No. 6, June 2006, pp. 52-59 (AA06248)

Summary: Rapid and poorly-planned development in recent years along coastal areas of the southeastern United States has resulted in increased pollution advisories and closures affecting beaches and shellfish beds. Most resulted from high counts of fecal bacteria from animal and human waste washed into the water; such pollution can cause liver disease, gastrointestinal disorders, and infections of the eyes, ears, skin and lungs. The author, an aquatic ecologist at the University of North Carolina, studies the effect of impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots and rooftops on the health of tidal creeks. Reducing impervious surfaces to reduce storm water runoff, creating vegetation buffers along streams, preserving and restoring wetlands, and constructing appropriate sewage and storm water treatment systems are methods that can be used to reduce fecal bacterial contamination of coastal waters.

### **BRAVE NUCLEAR WORLD?**

**Charman, Karen**

*World Watch*, Vol. 19, No. 4, July/August 2006, pp. 12-18 (AA06246)

Summary: The author examines the technical feasibility of managing nuclear power. The article begins with a quick review of the ongoing health impacts of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster and then spotlights the serious concerns of several experts on the current oversight practices of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission in managing aging American nuclear power plants. New designs, such as the pressurized water reactor (PWR) and related configurations may not meet the safety claims of the manufacturers. Nuclear waste disposal is a problem without a ready solution, and reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel is complex and expensive, leaving more waste to manage. The article concludes by stating that a significant increase in nuclear power production would not do enough to combat climate change and notes that increased investment in renewable energy is needed. This edition features the 2006 Goldman Environmental Prize Winners.

### **RESCUING A PLANET UNDER STRESS**

**Brown, Lester R.**

*Futurist*, vol. 40, no. 4, July-August 2006, pp. 18-25 (AA06245)

Summary: The Earth cannot sustain the levels of energy and resource consumption of the Western lifestyle if it is adopted by hundreds of millions of people in developing nations, writes the president of the Earth Policy Institute. The world must move toward a new economic model powered by renewable energy -- such as wind, solar, geothermal and biofuels -- and by a manufacturing strategy which designs and creates all products for ultimate recycling. Technology and knowledge of how to achieve this new economic model is well within the human grasp, if not already available, but making the transition before economic decline and environmental collapse begin is the difficult thing. Brown suggests movement to an honest market which gives weight to factors currently overlooked or ignored -- the indirect prices of production, the cost of environmental damage and consequences to future generations.

Available online at <http://www.wfs.org/summariesja06.htm>

**PANDA, INC.**

**Warren, Lynn**

*National Geographic*, vol. 210, no. 1, July 2006, pp. 42-59 (AA06227)

Summary: The Giant Panda, the world's most famous species atop the endangered list, may finally be getting the boost it needs to become a self-sustaining captive population. The panda business, throughout the world, is an expensive one. The cost for a zoo in the U.S. to keep giant pandas averages USD 2.6 million a year, and if cubs are entered into the equation, that amount climbs even higher. The U.S. is committed to building the relationship with China, not just on a diplomatic level, but on a scientific one as well. Ten years ago, the Chinese government did not have money or knowledge to run a functional panda research and mating habitat, or to pay for increased security and protection for natural habitat lands. With U.S. resources and know-how, China now has a new center that recently produced 16 newborn cubs in 2005/2006. The U.S. also gains panda loans from China to continue to research the fascinating species, and continue the breeding process, as seen in the newborn Tai Shan, born in July 2005 at the National Zoo. Why spend so much money, time and energy on the black and white bears? Because they are so darn cute.

**THE TOXIC LEGACY OF HURRICANE KATRINA**

*E: The Environmental Magazine*, Vol. 17, No. 2, March/April 2006, pp. 26-35 (AA06206)

Summary: In a special series on the environmental after-effects of Hurricane Katrina, well-known war correspondent and founder of the Blue Frontier Campaign David Helvarg gives an eye-witness account of the devastation shortly after the disaster in an article and photo essay, THE STORM THIS TIME. E Magazine editor Jim Motavalli reports on the chemical residues left behind in the flood sediments in ARSENIC AND OLD WASTE. He notes that residents have been warned to avoid contact with the sediments deposited by the floodwaters that contain arsenic, dioxin and other chemicals; the sediments have dried and are now wind-blown dust. Some report the existence of the "Katrina cough" and a high-level of respiratory illnesses. Charlie Cray, director of the Center for Corporate Policy, covers clean-up contractors in BUSINESS AS USUAL, in which he reports on several problems with sub-contractors, "no-bid contracts" and price gouging. By December 2005, the Department of Homeland Security's Inspector General had already opened 188 cases of potential misconduct. A short side-bar explores the current work of Goldman Environmental Prize Winner Margie Eugene-Richard in trying to get large corporations in the region to help communities to clean-up and rebuild while improving the environmental performance of their own facilities.

**URBAN WATERSHED MANAGEMENT: SUSTAINABILITY, ONE STREAM AT A TIME Platt, Rutherford**

*Environment*, vol. 48, no. 4, May 2006, pp. 26-42 (AA0619)

Summary: The author, professor of geography at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, writes that modern cities have tended to cut the bonds between humans and the natural world, at the same time have had a growing adverse impact on their natural surroundings. This has had the

greatest impact on regional watersheds, from artificial drainage, channels and floodwalls, to increased impervious cover, which alters the local stream hydrology and increases flood hazards. Platt notes that the urban proportion of the world's population is projected to be 60 percent within a generation, overcoming this "human/nature apartheid" is critical in making urban environments more sustainable. The article features successful urban watershed management programs in Washington, D.C., Boston, Houston, and Portland, Oregon.

### **TRACKING U.S. GROUNDWATER: RESERVES FOR THE FUTURE?**

**Alley, William**

*Environment*, vol. 48, no. 3, April 2006, pp. 10-25 (AA06189)

Summary: The author, chief of the Office of Ground Water at the U.S. Geological Survey, notes that because groundwater is invisible, it is taken for granted. In recent decades, as the human population and its demands on water supplies has increased, so has groundwater depletion, spreading from isolated pockets to large regions in many countries around the world. The growing awareness of groundwater supplies as a critical natural resource has raised concerns about better monitoring and management. Alley notes that in the U.S., groundwater management decisions are usually made at a local or state level; however, underground aquifers often cross jurisdictional lines, which drives the need for a national or multi-jurisdictional effort. He notes that the general location and size of the aquifers is known, but that insufficient data has been collected, which hampers the decision-making process after problems have materialized. He argues that long-term monitoring of groundwater supplies is essential to ensure that problems can be addressed before they reach the crisis stage.

### **ANYTHING INTO OIL**

**Lemley, Brad**

*Discover*, Vol. 27, No. 4, April 2006, pp. 46-51 (AA06171)

Summary: Lemley detailed the thermal conversion process (formerly called the thermal depolymerization process) of using heat and pressure to convert waste materials into fuel oil and other recyclable materials in May 2003, and he provided an update on the challenges of starting full-scale processing in July 2004. Now he reports on the operation of the first commercial biorefinery in the world that can make oil from a variety of waste. This plant converts turkey slaughterhouse waste into fuel oil, high-grade fertilizer and water. Start-up delays, technical adjustments and higher operating costs have resulted in financial losses, but the owner of the plant expects it to begin operating at a profit because a federal government subsidy for renewable diesel fuel went into effect in early 2006. Future plans for the company include building plants in Europe to process beef slaughterhouse waste because it is expected that the process will destroy prions, the proteins that cause mad cow disease. The company has also demonstrated the process for automobile recyclers using their waste of plastics, fabrics, rubber and nylon that currently is dumped in landfills.

## **THE DANGERS OF OCEAN ACIDIFICATION**

**Doney, Scott**

*Scientific American*, vol. 294, no. 3, March 2006, pp. 58-65 (AA06147)

Summary: Global warming and the rise of ocean levels has attracted a great deal of attention recently, but a lesser-known effect of mankind's burning of fossil fuels has been its effect on the acidity levels in the world's oceans. About half of all the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution has been absorbed by the ocean. The absorbed CO<sub>2</sub> is turned into carbonic acid, and lowers the pH level, adversely affecting the ability of many forms of marine life, such as coral and shellfish, to build hard parts out of calcium carbonate. The author notes that, within a century, the Southern Ocean will become corrosive to the tiny shellfish that form a key link in the marine food chain. While some species of phytoplankton might benefit from the growing presence of CO<sub>2</sub> in the ocean, the increased oceanic acidity levels will have a harmful effect on other forms of marine life.

## **FOR THE LOVE OF LEMURS**

**Conniff, Richard**

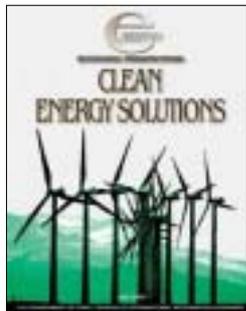
*Smithsonian*, vol. 37, no. 1, April 2006, pp. 102-109 (AA06146)

Summary: Patricia Wright, a social worker-turned-scientist, is one of foremost champions of lemurs, primates unique to the island of Madagascar. She advocated for creating the nation's Ranomafana National Park in order to protect the lemur habitat, and helped to secure U.S. Agency for International Development funding to operate the park. Wright is also credited with building local and national cooperation in the country to sustain the park. "I didn't know how to make a national park," Wright told the author. "What I did was brainstorm with the Malagasy [as people from Madagascar are known] here and with the people in the Department of Water and Forests. They had to be a part of it, or it wasn't going to work at all."

Available online at <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/issues/2006/april/lemurs.php>

## **CLEAN ENERGY SOLUTIONS**

**eJournalUSA: Economic Perspectives, Jul 2006**



Projected dramatic increases in energy consumption in the coming decades, combined with a higher risk of climate change, require a massive global response based on technological innovation and the power of the marketplace. Experts and government officials describe the options before us, including renewable energy, novel vehicles, and low-carbon power generation, and discuss the best ways leading to a sustainable energy future.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/ites/0706/ijee/ijee0706.htm>

*If you need help in locating the materials online  
or wish to receive a hardcopy of a featured  
article, please contact the IRC staff.*