

Global Warming / Climate Change Newsletter

June 2019

(The complete version of this newsletter is available only in Japanese. These are some of the English language articles used in the latest edition of the Japanese newsletter.)

Introduction

Britain's first climate refugees?

May 2019

Gwynedd council in Wales has decided it can no longer defend homes in Fairbourne from rising sea levels driven by increasing global temperatures. In 26 years the council will begin to move the 850 residents out of their homes.

Fairbourne will become the first town in the UK to be decommissioned as a result of climate change. It may also create hundreds of climate refugees: residents are not expected to receive compensation for the loss of their homes, and resettlement plans are unclear. Caught between the sea and the mountains, Fairbourne cannot relocate inland.

Sea levels around the UK have risen by 15.4cm since 1900, and the Met Office expects them to rise by as much as 1.12m from modern levels by 2100. Villages such as Happisburgh (35) and Hemsby (18) have already lost homes to the sea.

Some Fairbourne residents claim that the village has been unfairly singled out by Gwynedd. They argue that flooding was much worse in Aberystwyth, Barmouth and Borth in 2014. (Editor: Like many of us, they are in denial.)

A 2018 report for the government Committee on Climate Change found nearly 530,000 properties at risk on the English coast. By the 2080s, up to 1.5m homes will be at risk of flooding, with more than 100,000 homes at risk from coastal erosion. Lead author of the report, Jim Hall, says existing plans to protect the coast are unfunded and unrealistic, and that **the public are being kept in the dark** about the real risks. "The situation on the coast is a timebomb," he says from Oxford University, where he is professor of climate and environmental risk.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/may/18/t-his-is-a-wake-up-call-the-villagers-who-could-be-britains-first-climate-refugees>

Causes

Tourists view first drift ice

January 2019

Drift ice season has arrived here and, with it, boatloads of tourists coming to catch a glimpse of the stunning natural phenomenon. On the first day alone, two ice-breaking ships

taking more than 1,000 tourists to see it left a local port. (Editor: Both tourists and organizers are irresponsible.)

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201901310032.html>

Rainforests razed

April 2019

Millions of hectares of pristine tropical rainforest were destroyed in 2018 with beef, chocolate and palm oil among the main causes. Clear-cutting of primary forest by loggers and cattle ranchers in Brazil dominated the destruction but losses were also high in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Indonesia. The current logging and burning of tropical forests releases more carbon dioxide than our remaining forests could possibly absorb.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/apr/26/morning-mail-shorten-rebuffs-greens-biden-enters-race-ra-inforest-razed>

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/28/david-attenborough-documentary-climate-anxiety-bbc>

Resource extraction causes half carbon emissions

March 2019

Extraction industries are responsible for half of the world's carbon emissions and more than 80% of biodiversity loss, according to a study by UN Environment. Pulling materials out of the ground and preparing them for use together account for 53% of the world's carbon emissions – even before accounting for any fuel that is burned.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/mar/12/r-source-extraction-carbon-emissions-biodiversity-loss>

Sharp rise in methane levels

February 2019

Dramatic rises in atmospheric methane are threatening to derail plans to hold global temperature rises to 2C, scientists have warned. Methane's impact is 34 times greater than CO2 over a 100-year period.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/feb/17/methane-levels-sharp-rise-threaten-paris-climate-agreement>

<https://unfccc.int/news/new-methane-signs-underline-urGENCY-to-reverse-emissions>

Digital Economy's massive electricity consumption

The Digital Economy — supercomputers, megaservers, the cloud — uses a tenth of the world's electricity. A server

room at a data center can use enough electricity to power 180,000 homes. The number of households that can be powered using the amount of power that Bitcoin mining uses is around 6.5 million in the US.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_economy

Effects

Ocean warming faster than thought

January 2019

Scientists found that the oceans are heating up 40 per cent faster on average than a UN panel estimated five years ago. The rising water temperatures are already killing off marine ecosystems, raising sea levels and making hurricanes more destructive.

<https://www.theage.com.au/world/north-america/ocean-warming-faster-than-thought-new-research-finds-20190111-p50qgo.html>

Ice

January, May 2019

The Arctic region is warming roughly twice as fast as the rest of the planet. Sea ice is being lost at a rate of more than 10,000 tonnes per second. Greenland's melting ice, which causes sea levels to rise, disappeared four times faster in 2013 than in 2003. Glaciers are vanishing before our eyes, having shrunk to the lowest levels ever recorded, and are now melting faster than ever.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/05/observer-view-of-pressing-need-to-save-the-arctic>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/24/military-buildup-in-arctic-as-melting-ice-reopens-northern-borders>

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/01/23/world/science-health-world/greenland-ice-melts-four-times-faster-decade-flowing-sea-center-mass-study/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2019/jan/08/when-the-ice-melts-the-catastrophe-of-vanishing-glaciers>

Record-wet and record-dry months increase

December 2018

More and more rainfall extremes are observed in regions around the globe – triggering both wet and dry records, a new study shows.

<https://www.pik-potsdam.de/news/press-releases>

Biodiversity crisis to put humanity at risk

May 2019

The world's leading scientists warn that the planet's life-support systems are approaching a danger zone for humanity. Up to 1 million species are at risk of annihilation, many within decades.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/may/03/climate-crisis-is-about-to-put-humanity-at-risk-un-scientist>

[s-warn](#)

Climate driving Central American migrants to US

December 2018

Thousands of Central American migrants arrive at the border each month, fleeing both grinding poverty and unchecked gang violence. Increasingly, they're also escaping a threat they might never mention to immigration agents: climate change.

<https://www.texasobserver.org/climate-change-migration-central-america-united-states/>

Solar panel recycling complex

Recycling solar panels is a relatively complex task because they contain many different types of materials. Panels contain metals, such as lead, copper, gallium and cadmium; an aluminum frame; silicon solar cells; and synthetic material that encapsulates the silicon. The various materials must be separated to be properly recycled.

<https://earth911.com/eco-tech/recycle-solar-panels/>

Resistance

Oil firms spending millions lobbying

March 2019

The largest five stock market listed oil and gas companies spend nearly \$200m a year lobbying to delay, control or block policies to tackle climate change.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/mar/22/top-oil-firms-spending-millions-lobbying-to-block-climate-change-policies-says-report>

Fossil fuel subsidies

Wealthy countries spend US\$50-90 billion annually subsidizing fossil fuels.

Catholic Religious Australia

<https://www.arcc.org.au/>

Airlines stall in tackling climate change

March 2019

Airlines are doing too little in the fight against global warming. ANA, Japan Airlines, Korean Air and Singapore Airlines have the highest emissions intensities.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/03/06/business/airlines-stall-tackling-climate-change-ana-united-delta-rate-best-managing-risks-tpi-investor-group/>

Brain biases prevent climate action

March 2019

We know that climate change is happening. We also know that it's the result of increased carbon emissions from

human activities like land degradation and the burning of fossil fuels. And we know that it's urgent.

We lack the collective will to address climate change because of the way our brains have evolved over the last two million years. "We have evolved to pay attention to immediate threats. We overestimate threats that are less likely but easier to remember, like terrorism, and underestimate more complex threats, like climate change." <http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20190304-human-evolution-means-we-can-tackle-climate-change>

Commentary

Social collapse

May 2019

Climate change has been moving much faster than scientists predicted. Things are going to get very bad within the lifetime of some of us now living. Scientists have been under constant pressure to downplay the dangers and extent of climate change, and not to scare the mob.

<https://theecologist.org/2019/may/08/social-collapse-and-climate-breakdown>

A burning world

February 2019

Beginning in 2011, about a million Syrian refugees were unleashed on Europe by a civil war inflamed by climate change and drought; much of the 'populist moment' the west is passing through now is the result of panic produced by the shock of those migrants. The likely flooding of Bangladesh threatens to create 10 times as many. And then there will be the refugees from sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the rest of south Asia – 140 million by 2050, the World Bank estimates.

There is almost no chance we will avoid that scenario. The Kyoto Protocol achieved practically nothing; in the 20 years since we have produced more emissions than in the 20 years before.

At 2°C, the ice sheets will begin their collapse, bringing, over centuries, 50 metres !!! of sea-level rise. An additional 400 million people will suffer from water scarcity, major cities in the equatorial band of the planet will become unlivable, and even in the northern latitudes heatwaves will kill thousands each summer. There would be 32 times as many extreme heatwaves in India, and each would last five times as long, exposing 93 times more people. This is our best-case scenario. At 3°C, southern Europe would be in permanent drought, and the average drought in Central America would last 19 months longer. In northern Africa, the figure is 60 months longer: five years. At 4°C, there would be 8m more cases of dengue fever each year in Latin America alone and close to annual global food crises.

Damages from river flooding would grow thirtyfold in Bangladesh, twentyfold in India, and as much as sixtyfold in the UK. Globally, damages from climate-driven natural disasters could pass \$600tn – more than twice the wealth that exists in the world today. Conflict and warfare could double.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/feb/02/the-devastation-of-human-life-is-in-view-what-a-burning-world-tells-us-about-climate-change-global-warming>

"We are losing the race"

January 2019

The world is "losing the race" against climate change, UN chief Antonio Guterres warned. The UN secretary-general said the commitments made in Paris were already "not enough."

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/01/25/world/science-health-world/losing-race-climate-change-u-n-chief-tells-davos-gathering/>

UN chief warns of "total disaster"

May 2019

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the world must dramatically change the way it fuels factories, vehicles and homes to limit future warming to a level scientists call nearly impossible. The alternative "would mean a catastrophic situation for the whole world," Guterres told The Associated Press. He said, the world has to change, not in small incremental ways but in big "transformative" ways, into a green economy with electric vehicles and "clean cities."

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/05/09/world/science-health-world/u-n-chief-warns-total-disaster-global-warming-not-stopped-via-nearly-impossible-curbs/>

Human survival in doubt, U.N. warns

May 2019

"If we continue living in this way, engaging with each other and the planet in the way we do, then our very survival is in doubt," said Mami Mizutori, special representative of the U.N. secretary-general for disaster risk reduction.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/05/16/world/climate-change-pollution-epidemics-quakes-growing-threats-put-human-survival-doubt-u-n-warns/>

Pope Francis on doomsday predictions

"Doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain. We may well be leaving to coming generations debris, desolation and filth." Pope Francis: *Laudato si*, #161

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/environment/where-science-warnings-fail-can-moral-force-push-us-out-climate-inertia>

Social collapse is now inevitable.

<https://www.lifeworth.com/deepadaptation.pdf>

Former fire chief slams politicians

February 2019

Decorated Australian firefighter Greg Mullins, a former NSW Fire and Rescue Commissioner, says climate change is contributing to bushfires so horrendous that homes and lives cannot be protected, and the federal government will not acknowledge the link because it has failed on emissions reduction policy.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/astounded-former-fire-chief-unloads-on-politicians-over-climate-change-in-action-20190204-p50v10.html>

Positive News

Greta Thunberg

March 2019

One day last summer, aged 15, she skipped school, sat down outside the Swedish parliament – and inadvertently kicked off a global movement that has spread to more than 70 countries. Her parents tried to dissuade her. Classmates declined to join. Passersby expressed pity and bemusement at the sight of the then unknown 15-year-old sitting on the cobblestones with a hand-painted banner.

At the age of eight, when she first learned about climate change, she was shocked that adults did not appear to be taking the issue seriously. She discovered she had remarkable powers of persuasion, and her mother, an opera singer, gave up flying, which had a severe impact on her career. Her father became a vegetarian.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/11/greta-thunberg-school-girl-climate-change-warrior-some-people-can-let-things-go-i-cant>

Editor: Only 200 participated in the global school strike in Japan on March 15 this year. Disgraceful.

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190520/p2a/00m/0in/011000c>

'Outrage justified': Attenborough backs school strikers

April 2019

The outrage of the students striking from school over climate change inaction is “certainly justified”, according to Sir David Attenborough.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/apr/26/david-attenborough-backs-school-climate-strikes-outrage-greta-thunberg>

Conventional campaigns won't prevent our extinction

May 2019

Extinction Rebellion members occupied key locations in central London and elsewhere, stopping traffic, gluing themselves to things, even smashing the occasional oil company window. More than a thousand people were arrested and as a result the climate and ecological crisis is finally on the political agenda. Over the course of the fortnight at least 30,000 new members joined the movement.

Extinction Rebellion believes that the only way to prevent our extinction is through mass participation civil disobedience – thousands of people breaking the laws of our governments until they are forced to take action to protect us. In less than a year Extinction Rebellion has gone from 15 people in a room to creating the biggest organized civil disobedience campaign in British history.

The UK Parliament became the first in the world to declare a climate and environment emergency.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/01/extinction-rebellion-non-violent-civil-disobedience>

<https://theecologist.org/2019/may/09/climate-emergency-turning-words-action>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3csydcq>

<https://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/local-news/extinction-rebellion-protest-london-alisongreen-16144466>

As Erica Chenoweth's historical research reveals, for a peaceful mass movement to succeed, a maximum of 3.5% of the population needs to mobilise.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/15/rebellion-prevent-ecological-apocalypse-civil-disobedience>

Costa Rica goes carbon neutral

April 2019

Costa Rica is embarking on an ambitious plan to become completely carbon neutral by 2050.

<https://theecologist.org/2019/apr/29/costa-rica-goes-carbon-neutral>

Karina Miotto

Brazilian Karina Miotto has devoted her entire life to protecting the Amazon. Each time a report is published about increased deforestation in her beloved rainforest, Karina becomes consumed in grief. But each time, she goes deeper within herself and her community, further strengthening her love for that portion of the planet where she lives, and repurposes herself into her next action to protect the Amazon.

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2019/jan/08/when-the-ice-melts-the-catastrophe-of-vanishing-glaciers>

Immediate fossil phaseout could arrest climate change

January 2019

Climate change could be kept in check if a phaseout of all fossil fuel infrastructure were to begin immediately, according to research.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jan/15/immediate-fossil-fuel-phaseout-could-arrest-climate-change-study>

Germany phases out coal

January 2019

The Coal Commission established by the German government recommends to phase out coal - with an end date in the 2030s.

<https://www.pik-potsdam.de/news/press-releases>

UK's first week without coal for electricity

May 2019

Britain has gone a week without burning coal for electricity for the first time since the 19th century.

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190509/p2g/00m/0bu/024000c>

Key climate ruling against coal mine

May 2019

A "game-changing" court decision blocking a coal mine in New South Wales in part because of its climate change impacts will stand after the project proponent dropped plans to appeal against the verdict.

<https://www.theage.com.au/environment/climate-change/key-climate-ruling-against-coal-mine-stands-after-miner-defines-to-appeal-20190508-p511d1.html>

These residents stopped a coal mine

February 2019

A NSW court sent shock waves through the nation's mining industry earlier this month when it rejected a coal mine planned in Gloucester, a dairy and beef farming area on the state's mid-north coast. The reason, in part, was the mine's impact on climate change. This is an example of climate litigation.

<https://www.theage.com.au/environment/climate-change/these-residents-stopped-a-coal-mine-made-history-and-sent-ripples-through-boardrooms-around-the-world-20190214-p50xw9.html>

US judge halts hundreds of drilling projects

March 2019

In the first significant check on the Trump administration's "energy-first" agenda, a US judge has temporarily halted hundreds of drilling projects for failing to take climate change into account. The decision stems from an environmental lawsuit. WildEarth Guardians, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and the Western Environmental Law Center sued the BLM for failing to calculate and limit

the amount of greenhouse gas emissions from future oil and gas projects.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/mar/20/judge-halts-drilling-climate-change-trump-administration>

Human composting

May 2019

Washington became the first US state to legalize human composting after its governor signed a bill in a bid to cut carbon emissions from burials and cremations. Every human body cremated uses as much energy in the form of gas and electricity as a 500 mile car trip, and releases on average 400Kgs of CO2 per body into our atmosphere.

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/washington-becomes-first-us-state-to-legalize-human-composting-2040983>

<https://www.quora.com/How-much-CO2-air-pollution-is-caused-by-human-cremation>

Japan

Government energy policy

April 2019

An advisory panel created by Prime Minister Abe to look at long-term growth strategies for Japan based on the Paris Agreement (PA) released its recommendations in April. The recommendations state that Japan's strategy should aim for the ultimate goal of a decarbonized society as early as possible in the second half of this century, and contribute to the PA's long-term objectives, including limiting global warming to 1.5°C.

However, the recommendations don't suggest strengthening Japan's current 80% reduction goal by 2050, and just reiterate current targets. This lack of ambition is inconsistent with the 1.5°C target. The recommendations do not propose to raise the level of ambition for 2030 targets, do not delve into more specific measures, and do not signal the shifts in policies and measures that are most needed now.

Notably, construction plans are under way for many coal-fired power plants in Japan. If the aim is really to be consistent with the PA, coal must be completely phased out by 2030. Also, Japan must stop providing assistance for coal power overseas.

The recommendations list several problematic technologies that are still far from being practical, such as carbon capture and storage (CCS), carbon capture and utilization (CCU), space-based solar and next-generation nuclear power. Hiroshi Segawa, professor of energy and environment at the University of Tokyo, believes "the government is probably giving priority to heavy industrial firms who manufacture nuclear plants."

<https://www.kiconet.org/eng/info/press-release/2019-04-02/LTS>

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Cover-Story/Why-Japan-finds-coal-hard-to-quit>

No Coal Japan

New website: <http://www.nocoaljapan.org/>

Greenhouse gas emissions fall

April 2019

Japan's greenhouse gas emissions fell 1.2% in fiscal 2017. However, emissions from homes rose 0.6%.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/04/16/national/japans-greenhouse-gas-emissions-fell-1-2-fiscal-2017-use-renewables-increased/>

<https://www.jiji.com/jc/article?k=2019041600334&g=eco>

MUFG moves to drastically cut coal-power loans

April 2019

Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group Inc. (MUFG) is set to scale back loans for coal-fired plants by up to half by fiscal 2030. Japan's three megabanks were among the top four in a list of institutions offering loans for coal-fired plants from 2016 to September 2018. Mizuho Financial Group Inc. (MFG) topped the list with \$12.8 billion (about 1.4 trillion yen), while MUFG ranked second with \$9.9 billion, according to the report. Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp. (SMBC) came fourth with \$4.2 billion.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201904120063.html>

Osaka Gas quits Nishi-Okinoyama Power Station

April 2019

Osaka Gas announced it would pull out of a partnership to build the Nishi-Okinoyama Power Station, a new expansion plan for a coal-fired power plant in Ube City, Yamaguchi Prefecture. Osaka Gas states that it reached this decision after a comprehensive review with its own investment criteria, considering changes in the business environment and future risks involving the electrical power sector.

<https://www.kiconet.org/eng/press-release/2019-04-24/Ube-coal>

Japanese investors back renewables

March 2019

Major Japanese investors, including those most indebted to coal, are seeking to back large-scale renewables projects across Asia, marking a 'monumental' shift that energy market analysts say is "the start of the end for thermal coal".

At the same time, Japanese banks and trading houses are walking away from coal investments, selling out of Australian mines and scrapping plans to build coal-fired power.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/mar/18/e>

[energy-analysts-forecast-the-end-of-coal-in-asia-as-japanese-investors-back-renewables](https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Cover-Story/Why-Japan-finds-coal-hard-to-quit)

70% of prefectures yet to set up legally required centers to fight climate change

January 2019

Almost 70 percent of Japan's 47 prefectural governments have not compiled plans to set up regional climate change adaptation centers as required under a new law for the promotion of measures to mitigate damage from global warming.

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190128/p2a/00m/0na/004000c>

Impoverished Countries

Africa and climate change

Report by the Institute for Security Studies 2018

The Current Path forecasts presented in this report suggest that Africa will continue to have little capacity to adapt to climate change.

<https://issafrica.org/research/africa-report/africa-and-climate-change-projecting-vulnerability-and-adaptive-capacity>

Carteret Island going under

March 2019

More than 2,000 people on the atolls of Carteret Island (Papua New Guinea) find that food is scarce when tides flood the coasts and hinterland, destroying basic food crops. The islands are expected to be uninhabitable by 2040.

<http://www.looppng.com/png-news/caritas-png-holds-governments-task-83344>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ursula_Rakova

People on the frontline are fighting back

An Extinction Rebellion Friends of Greta Schools' Alarm Whistling Exercise was launched in some schools in Accra, Ghana in January 2019. The Phulbari Solidarity Group is a network of Bangladeshis who are campaigning against coal mining in their country, which is one of the most climate-vulnerable places in the world.

<https://www.resurgence.org/magazine/article5307-a-global-rebellion.html>

Catholic News

Philippine bishops lead

January 2019

Catholics in the Philippines, more than anywhere else, have brought the encyclical *Laudato si'* to life and made it their own. *Laudato si'* was published in June 2015. Within a

month the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines released a strong statement backing the central concerns of the encyclical: ecology, stewardship, and concern for the poor. The effort to combat climate change seemed so important to them that they invoked the Mandatum of Holy Thursday, saying: "caring about climate change and its deleterious and devastating effects on all, but especially on impoverished and struggling nations and communities ... is how, today, we must wash each others' feet."

Their efforts on the ground reflect the vigor of this statement. Church groups have lobbied for clean energy; fought the spread of polluting industries, deforestation, and mining; engaged indigenous communities in planting trees; and worked for solar-energy access for off-grid communities in poor areas.

The response of the US Catholic Bishops' Conference to *Laudato si'* has been weak, fragmented, and unimaginative. The most recent statement on climate change posted on the USCCB website is from 2001.

https://international.la-croix.com/news/living-into-laudato-si/9242?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=e-mail&utm_content=16-01-2019&utm_campaign=newsletter_crx_lci&PMID=ca4ce0563e46285947a35389589f090c#

Bishop opposes coal-fired plant north of Manila

February 2019

Bishop Daniel Oca Presto of San Fernando in the Philippines has thrown his weight behind moves to stop the construction of a 670-megawatt coal-fired power plant, which he claims would destroy the local environment.

https://international.la-croix.com/news/bishop-issues-manifesto-opposing-coal-fired-plant-north-of-manila/9422?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=e-mail&utm_content=08-02-2019&utm_campaign=newsletter_crx_lci&PMID=ca4ce0563e46285947a35389589f090c#

French Diocese begins ecological 'conversion'

May 2019

The Diocese of Angers in France held its first study day on integral ecology.

<https://international.la-croix.com/news/angers-diocese-in-france-begins-its-ecological-conversion/10110>

Can moral force push us out of climate inertia?

April 2019

"We are theologically still very narrow when it comes to reconceiving the human person within the wider realm of creation," said Franciscan Sr. Ilia Delio, a theologian at Villanova University. While there have been many good books, papers and academic panels, she said she sees little theological change stemming from *Laudato si'*, or other church documents on the environment, so far.

Part of the issue Delio sees is that the Church has yet to

fully embrace evolution theologically and, with it, how the human person is seen and understood in a world of dynamic change and complexity. "What has come through again and again in parish survey results is a lack of urgency and a lack of prioritization."

At their November 2018 meeting, the U.S. bishops were expected to discuss, and perhaps vote on, joining the Catholic Climate Declaration. Neither happened.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/environment/where-science-warnings-fail-can-moral-force-push-us-out-climate-inertia>

Catholic hospitals face own carbon footprints

April 2019

Catholic and other health care providers are recognizing how the effects of climate change, such as stronger and more destructive wildfires, are harming human health and will only worsen as the planet warms.

But as the medical community examines its response to climate change, a discomfiting realization has become apparent: They're part of the problem. Hospitals represent one of the largest sources of the air pollutants warming the planet. The US health care industry as a whole accounts for roughly 10 percent of the nation's total greenhouse gas emissions.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/environment/do-no-harm-catholic-hospitals-confront-their-own-carbon-footprints>

News from Global Catholic Climate Movement

★☐ CAFOD has launched a new campaign, Renew Our Common Home, to call people to renew our common home and petition the UK government to achieve net zero greenhouse emissions by 2045.

★☐ CIDSE has launched Change for the Planet – Care for People to inspire individuals and communities to commit to sustainable ways of life.

★☐ Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea has launched a Sustainability initiative, An Integrated Approach to Sustainable Living.

★☐ The Focolare Movement, GreenAccord, and GCCM will share a talk about the Amazon at Earth Village, a mass event connected to Earth Day.

★☐ FOCSIV, GCCM, and other organizations will meet members of the Italian Parliament to discuss solutions to the climate crisis.

★☐ Caritas Ecuador organized a meeting with Amazonian communities to discuss the upcoming synod on the Amazon.

★☐The Social-Pastoral Vicariate of Madrid published an Earth Day discussion guide.

★☐The Conference of the Franciscan Family in Brazil held an all-day forum to discuss the synod on the Amazon and its implications for Brazil.

★☐The Austrian Bishops' Conference announced its divestment from fossil fuels as part of our Catholic divest-invest campaign.

★☐Through our Eating Simply project, over 1,100 people have committed to honour Catholic heritage and live more sustainably by eating plant-based meals for Lent.

★☐On March 15, members of Laudato Si' Generation in seven countries participated in the global climate strikes.

★☐The Vatican held a conference on 'Religions and the Sustainable Development Goals' in March.

Amazon Synod

April 2019

The synod on the pan-Amazonian region will take place this October. Bishops from around the world will take part. The Amazon rainforest serves as the 'world's lung', where global emissions of carbon dioxide can be turned into oxygen. The Amazon is experiencing significant deforestation, which displaces indigenous communities who have long called the region home and also accelerates global warming of the globe.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/environment/protect-earth-change-lifestyles-say-church-indigenous-leaders>

Dioceses pledge fossil fuel divestment

May 2019

Several dioceses located near important maritime trade centers and ports are among the dozen latest Catholic institutions to commit to divest financial holdings from fossil fuels.

Among them are Panama City Archdiocese, the Catholic Church in Greece, San Carlos Diocese of the Philippines, Malta Archdiocese and Naples Archdiocese.

More than 90% of global trade travels by sea, with shipping accounting for an estimated 2% to 3% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Many large ships operate on "heavy fuel oil," a high-sulfur type of oil that releases noxious gases, including sulfur, that can be especially harmful to the health of those aboard, particularly crews who spend long durations at sea.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/environment/dioceses-major-maritime-areas-pledge-fossil-fuel-divestment>

The holy spirit of Extinction Rebellion

May 2019

Christians were prominent amongst the climate change protesters who controversially brought London to a standstill last week. The former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams lent his support; Church of England vicars led opening and closing prayers at major events; and the Anglican church of St John's, Waterloo, let protesters sleep inside, charge their phones and wash. Catholic leaders have largely kept quiet. [Editor: ?*!]

"I'm hoping our representatives won't just settle for some debate in Parliament," said Phil Kingston, 83, a charming, garrulous grandfather and veteran social justice protester, one of the Catholics participating. "At least people are talking about it," Passionist priest Martin Newell pointed out. "I feel we've shifted the debate. This was never going to be a one-off – it's a campaign."

"I don't think people in parishes know enough about the emergency. There needs to be a lot of education and I think the clergy are blocking that," said Collins. "In my own parish we are trying to introduce *Laudato si'* to people. The message that we're destroying the Earth is coming from the very top, but it is not filtering down." "The bishops are moving – the English and Welsh bishops' conference has a worker on the environment now – but nowhere near fast enough," Fr Newell observed.

Fr Newell went so far as to call the Extinction Rebellion a movement of the Holy Spirit. "It's like an incarnation of the kingdom of God."

[The Tablet, 4 May 2019](#)

"Change lifestyles" - Church, indigenous leaders

March 2019

Guatemalan Bishop Alvaro Ramazzini said he notices when he visits family in the US that almost anywhere he goes, the lights seem to be on — even in the daytime, even if there's enough natural light to illuminate the space. To him, it signals a culture that he says has to change. Ramazzini offered as an example the manufactured need for the newest lines of smartphones, which render products released just a year earlier obsolete. The consumer does not stop to consider who might be sacrificing him or herself in another part of the world to manufacture those types of object others want, but do not need.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/environment/protect-earth-change-lifestyles-say-church-indigenous-leaders>

'What Can I Do?'

My booklet will soon be published. It will be free, but only in Japanese.