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LATEST NEWS IN SUSTAINABILITY

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PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LIVING AND RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR PLANET

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- NGO Sustainability Team

“An understanding of the natural world, and what’s in it is a source of not only great curiosity but great fulfilment.”

– David Attenborough

Murat Kurum

The UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) is the international treaty process started by the UN in 1994 to address the climate crisis on a global scale. Since its founding the UNFCCC has facilitated the establishment of significant international agreements including the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and the 2015 Paris Agreement.

The IPC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) is another group within the United Nations whose goal is to provide governments with comprehensive



(Headshot - TRT Haber)

scientific data about the environment and climate change to guide policy decisions. The IPC assesses scientific research from independent sources and compiles this information into reports that they distribute to governments across the world.

Together, these two organizations provide the institutional and scientific framework for international climate negotiations, including the annual Conference of Parties (COP) summit. At this event, delegates from over 190 member nations meet to review emissions goals, assess implementation efforts, and make decisions about UNFCCC trajectories. This year, the thirty-first Conference of Parties (COP31) summit will take place this year in Antalya, Türkiye, from November 9th to 20th.

Murat Kurum, Türkiye's Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, was appointed COP31 President on December 26, 2025. Prior to his political career Kurum received a degree in Civil Engineering and a master's degree in Urban Transformation, and was employed as an engineer in developing urban infrastructure. He was appointed to his role as Türkiye's Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in 2018 and was reappointed in 2024.

As minister, Kurum has focused heavily on developing an affordable urban housing program and to date has overseen the construction of approximately 365,000 housing units. He was also fundamental in orchestrating essential natural disaster relief and restoration following the 2023 Kahramanmaraş earthquakes, managing the building operations of upwards of 180,000 disaster relief structures. Kurum is currently working on the Zero Waste project, a program launched by Türkiye's first lady Emine Erdoğan to minimize waste production, streamline energy production, and promote recycling. Kurum also represents Türkiye as the nation's international climate diplomat in the UNFCCC process. During the COP31 summit he will be working alongside Chris Bowen, Australia's Minister for Climate Change and Energy, who will be serving as the President of Negotiations.

“Sonnet XVII”

By Craig Santos Perez

*I don't love you as if you were rare earth metals, diamonds,
or reserves of crude oil that propagate war:
I love you as one loves most vulnerable things,
urgently, between the habitat and its loss.*

*I love you as the seed that doesn't sprout but carries
the heritage of our roots, secured, within a vault,
and thanks to your love the organic taste that ripens
from the fruit lives sweetly on my tongue.*

*I love you without knowing how, or when, the world will end—
I love you naturally without pesticides or pills—
I love you like this because we won't survive any other way,
except in this form in which humans and nature are kin,
so close that your emissions of carbon are mine,
so close that your sea rises with my heat.*

Source:

Perex. Sonnet XVII. The New Republic.
<https://newrepublic.com/article/140282/love-poems-time-climate-change>

“California Approves Carbon Market Overhaul Opposed by Environmentalists”

By Alejandro Lazo, *San Francisco Chronicle*



Photo: Damian Dovarganes, AP Photo

The ten members of the California Air Resources Board approved a revamping of the state’s carbon market which would change revenue for state climate programs from about \$4 billion to half at around \$2 billion. This change comes with deep opposition from environmentalists and key lawmakers who warned the shift could give billions in free pollution permits to polluters at the expense of “climate, health and affordability,” according to Bahram Fazeli, policy director at Communities for a Better Environment. The subsidy program would reduce the permits polluters are required to buy while granting them a pool of free pollution permits valued around \$4 billion. While clean energy companies may be eligible for the permits, oil companies could gain more free permits than required for their emissions. However, officials assert the permits will only be allocated to companies with decarbonization as their mission in order to address global market pressure.

[Full article](#)

“New York Leads in Controlling Heat-Trapping Methane. That Could Change”

By Hilary Howard, *The New York Times*



Photo: Spencer Platt/Getty Images

Methane, with a CO₂ equivalent of about 28 to 30 over a 100-year time period and is sourced from landfills, pipeline malfunctions and cows, among other sources. Over a 20-year period, however, the equivalent jumps to 80 times that of CO₂. The governor of New York, Kathy Hochul, would like to change to the former measurement to reduce pressure on farmers, natural gas businesses and waste management facilities. The burden of higher costs from actions like the war in Iran and coal and oil priorities from the current administration are falling on consumers. Their long-term safety may be compromised by climate change, extreme weather and sea level rise because there is a reduction to New York’s renewable energy transition. Scientists from Columbia, Beijing Universities, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and others sent a letter to the governor asking her to consider methane more seriously. Also, calculations for New York’s greenhouse gas emissions consider those of Pennsylvania and West Virginia because they feed New York’s consumption. This would change under Ms. Hochul’s proposition and lead to an appearance of “clean” gas, although the emissions were only removed from the ledger.

[Full article](#)

“What Doesn’t Kill a Soil Microbe Makes it Stronger”

By Emma Bryce, *Anthropocene Magazine*



Photo: Anthropocene Magazine

Disturbances to a system can make it more resilient and this may be true when considering the tilling, prodding and intensive management that soils have undergone with modern agriculture. Researchers collected samples from European and Asian soil samples in a Nature Food study that showed the artificial experimental soils to have a higher heat tolerance and functionality under heat stress. Also, agricultural soils survived and functioned better under warm conditions than the natural soils. Also, insertion of microbe strains from tolerant cropland varieties of soil enhanced resilience and functionality under stress for wetland soil, originally the least naturally heat-resistant of the samples collected. While they exposed soils to 25°C temperatures, this may not encapsulate the entirety of heat that soils are exposed to globally and may not be representative of the outcome for microbes. There are many downsides to the practices that created these soils, including loss of soil carbon and soil quality, but the research points to advancements in "agricultural microbiome engineering" to benefit the natural world.

[Full article](#)

“The Okavango Wilderness Gives Up Its Most Vital Secrets”

By Brendan Borrell, *National Geographic*

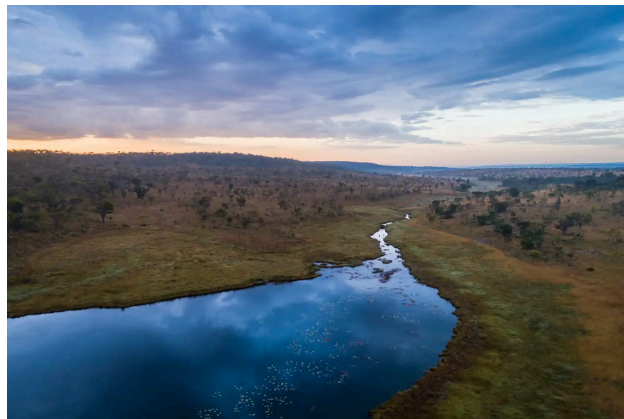


Photo: Kostadin Luchansky / National Geographic Okavango Wilderness Project

The spongelike peatlands of the Angolan highlands feed major rivers that in turn provide water for communities and the abundance of biodiversity that inhabit the area. The Okavango Delta is part of a collection of marshes, islands and water bodies in the Kalahari Desert. Angola is just one of three countries that are part of this ecological hotbed of activity, extending also to Namibia and Botswana. Researchers, supported by the National Geographic Society, created the Okavango Wilderness Project to determine the source of the freshwater ecosystem and catalog the wildlife therein. Along their journey in the mekoro, or flat-bottom canoes, the team came across over 70 new species and were able to capture 360-degree camera panoramic images every minute from the boats. The researchers found the highlands to hold more than 100 trillion gallons of water, sustained by peat as opposed to ice. The Angolan water tower is a Wetland of International Importance, designated as such under the global treaty the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

[Full article](#)

“Inside the Labs Racing to Save The World's Coral Reefs”

By Simmone Shah, *Times*



Photo: Britta Jaschinski

Scientists are developing innovative techniques to help save the world's coral reefs as rising ocean temperatures and repeated bleaching events threaten their survival. One promising approach involves cryopreservation, where coral tissues, sperm, and larvae are frozen using liquid nitrogen and stored in "coral biobanks." These collections preserve genetic diversity and could help restore reefs in the future. Researchers are also breeding more heat-tolerant corals and experimenting with assisted evolution to improve coral resilience in warming oceans. While these scientific advances offer hope, experts stress that reef restoration alone cannot solve the problem. Coral reefs continue to face growing threats from climate change, marine heatwaves, pollution, and ocean acidification. Scientists view these conservation efforts as a way to buy time and preserve reef ecosystems while broader action is taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect ocean health.

[Full article](#)

“Atlantic meridional overturning circulation slowdown modulates atmospheric rivers in a warmer climate”

By Mohima Sultana Mimi et. al., *Nature*

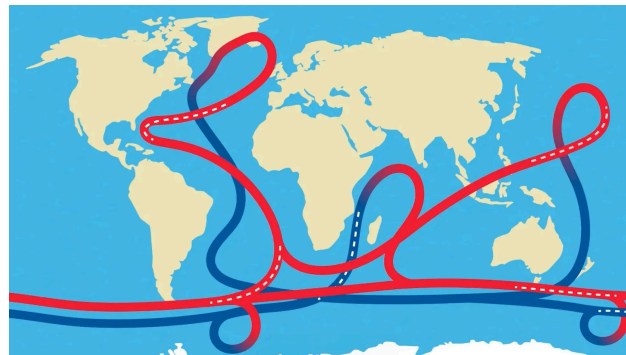


Illustration: The National Oceanography Centre

Researchers have developed a new way to understand chemical bonding by examining the quantum entanglement between electrons within molecules. Using a framework called Maximally Entangled Atomic Orbitals, the study demonstrates that many traditional concepts of chemistry, including bond strength, electron sharing, aromaticity, and molecular structure, can be explained through patterns of quantum entanglement. The researchers found that this approach not only captures conventional chemical bonds but also provides insight into more complex bonding arrangements and reaction processes that are often difficult to describe using existing models. By linking chemical behavior directly to fundamental quantum properties, the findings offer a more unified perspective on how atoms form bonds and interact, potentially improving our understanding of molecular structure, reactivity, and the underlying principles of chemistry.

[Full Article](#)

“Scientists Discover Massive Natural Hydrogen Source Beneath Canada”

By University of Toronto, *ScienceDaily*



Photo: Barbara Sherwood Lollar

Hydrogen gas can be a tool for clean energy, especially when it comes in the form of “white hydrogen”. Scientists in Canada have found ancient rocks below the surface that are creating this gas which, from one site alone, could produce 4.7 million kilowatts or the equivalent of 400 homes’ use of energy each year. With the shift away from hydrogen produced using coal, petroleum or natural gas, “green” hydrogen made from renewables and this “white” hydrogen could help reduce dependence on imported hydrocarbon-based fuels. Also, with the coexistence of preexisting mining operations found near the sites of white hydrogen, there is less need for added transportation systems to move the fuel.

[Full article](#)

“Ukraine can help Europe meet its battery material needs, experts say”

By Chloé Farand, *Climate Home News*



Photo: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images

Ukraine has the potential to become a major supplier of the critical minerals needed for Europe's clean energy transition. The country holds significant reserves of graphite, manganese, lithium, titanium, and other materials used in electric vehicle batteries, renewable energy technologies, and energy storage systems. Experts believe that developing Ukraine's mining and processing industries could help Europe reduce its dependence on imported battery materials, particularly from China, while also supporting Ukraine's post-war economic recovery. However, realizing this opportunity will require substantial investment, infrastructure development, and long-term political stability, as ongoing conflict and the location of some mineral deposits in contested regions continue to present significant challenges. By strengthening partnerships with Ukraine, Europe could improve the security of its battery supply chain while advancing its broader climate and energy goals.

[Full Article](#)

“An exceptionally early heat wave shatters records and brings deaths in Europe”

By The Associated Press, *NPR*



Photo: Kin Cheung/AP

An intense and unusually early heat wave swept across Western Europe breaking temperature records across countries including the United Kingdom, France, Spain, and Ireland. Temperatures climbed above 35°C (95°F) in parts of the UK and reached nearly 40°C (104°F) in some areas of southern Europe—levels more typical of midsummer than spring. The extreme heat was linked to multiple deaths, including drownings and heat-related illnesses, prompting health warnings from governments and emergency services. Scientists and climate experts noted that human-caused climate change is making heat waves more frequent, intense, and longer-lasting, raising concerns that Europe remains insufficiently prepared for the growing public health risks associated with extreme heat.

[Full article](#)

“America the Undammed”

By Cara Buckley, *The New York Times*



Photo: Laure Andrillon/Reuters

Dams can have environmental impacts that extend to dismantling migratory fish efforts, increasing flooding extent or trapping debris. 4,900 miles of waterways from more than 30 states of the United States were reconnected last year which helps mitigate these impacts. The remaining 92,000 dams include 17,000 that are at high risk hazards if they fail, so the liability for people and the environment can be avoided by these practices. The success story can be embodied by the decommissioning of two hydropower dams in Northern California which haven't produced electricity in five years, a project that put, “fish over people”. Major dams on the Klamath River in Oregon and California have also been dismantled in the past five years in an environmental win. When costs to upkeep hydropower dams through repairs and licensing are greater than the benefits, this can be an added incentive for removal.

[Full article](#)

Coastal Communities Adapting to Sea Levels Rising

By Juan Pineda



Photo: Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines (PSDS) / WCU

As climate change causes sea levels to rise, our ability to take action becomes smaller over time. This creates many challenges for communities along the shoreline facing the severity of coastal flooding. These challenges threaten infrastructure, local resources, and public safety. These risks will continue to increase so governments have to adapt to developing strategies that can protect residents, wildlife, and essential infrastructure, while promoting a long term sustainable solution.

A successful example of Climate Adaptation can be found in Anacortes, Washington, where city officials recognized their water treatment plan was susceptible to future flooding. If they were to relocate their facility, it would be impractical. Therefore, the city decided to rebuild the plant while incorporating resilient measures into its design. These improvements included elevating infrastructure above projected flood levels, strengthening its foundation, and using waterproof concrete. Overall, this project took climate projections into account that inspected potential challenges, allowing professionals to prepare rather than dismissing these risks.

The Anacortes case represents the importance of addressing climate change, proactive planning, and building resilience. This project incorporated these projections into future investments minimizing long term impacts to help vulnerable communities. Since sea levels will continue to rise worldwide, coastal communities are susceptible and in need of prioritization. By including protection measures and infrastructure that can strategically adapt, investing in that adaptation can help these communities not be engulfed by waters, allowing for future generations to prosper and persevere.

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