NGO SUSTAINABILITY

GLOBAL WARNING 1.2°C

LATEST NEWS IN SUSTAINABILITY
NO. 164 | June 2025

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LIVING AND RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR PLANET
ngosustainability@gmail.com | unngosustainability.org

Consultative Status, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Observer Status, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UN Global Compact

Your comments are always welcome. Please provide feedback here.
Feel free to reproduce and share.
- NGO Sustainability Team

"The activist is not the man who says the river is dirty. The activist is the man who cleans up the river."
- Ross Perot

Holmes Rolston III

Holmes Rolston III (1932-2024) was a pioneer in the environmental philosophy field, known as the "father of environmental ethics". Rolston was a pastor at a Presbyterian church before he was dismissed due to his scientific interests and time spent in nature, which conflicted with his congregational expectations. This set Rolston on a transformative intellectual journey, launching him into the world of environmental ethics. Rolston was trained in both theology and science, eventually becoming a philosophy professor where he posed the question "Does nature have value apart from human use?". In his 1975 essay "Is There an Ecological Ethic?" Rolston answers this question. In this major philosophical work he asserts that nature has intrinsic value, catalyzing the first big environmental ethics movement.

In his writings he challenges the scientific, religious, and philosophical view of nature as inert or utilitarian. Rolston continued his defense for the environment throughout the years, opposing the idea that nature was merely a human perception. During his 40-year career as a philosophy professor at Colorado State University, Rolston continued to integrate science, ethics, and

Source: New York Times

religion, publishing many influential works such as "Philosophy Gone Wild" and "Genes, Genesis, and God". Rolston received the prestigious Templeton Prize in 2003 for his work bridging science and religion. He believed that the values that are embedded in nature are the foundation to human meaning and existence. After a life full of bridging the gap between religion and nature, as well as being a fierce environmentalist, Rolston passed away in 2024 at age 92 in Fort Collins, Colorado.

"A Minor Bird"

By Robert Frost

I have wished a bird would fly away,

And not sing by my house all day;

Have clapped my hands at him from the door

When it seemed as if I could bear no more.

The fault must partly have been in me.

The bird was not to blame for his key.

And of course, there must be something wrong

In wanting to silence any song.

Robert Frost is a renowned American poet, known for his introspection into human emotions through nature. His poem "A Minor Bird" expresses his annoyance at a bird's song, but reflects that the problem is not with the bird but lies in himself. This highlights Frost's theme of self-awareness and the human tendency to resist what we don't understand.

Source: A Minor Bird by Robert Frost." Robert Frost, www.robertfrost.org/a-minor-bird.jsp2

“Supreme Court narrows scope of environmental reviews”
By Justin Jouvenal and Maxine Joselow, *The Washington Post*

Photo: Getty Images

The Trump administration's increased tariffs are anticipated to increase the cost of renewable energy technology, impacting the clean-energy production of the United States. Green Technology material exporters such as the European Union, China, and Southeast Asia will be subject to the tariffs based on their production of solar panels, wind turbines, and batteries for electric vehicles. Simultaneously, the tariffs have altered the dynamics of trading on a global scale. China is shifting its clean-tech exports to developing countries like Pakistan and Brazil. India is now seen as a potential trading prospect by the U.S. due to lower tariffs. Experts such as Vanessa Sciarra from the American Clean Power Association expressed the concerns that the U.S. unpredictable shifting of trade policy will impact affordable and reliable energy for the American people.
Full Article

“US Senate panel seeks to cut unspent US climate, clean energy funds,”
By Valerie Volcovic, *Reuters*

Photo: Getty Images

On Wednesday, June 4th, a proposal by the Senate Environment Committee was submitted, stating that all unspent funds appropriated for climate programs under the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act are to be cut. These rescinded funds would be redistributed to developers of oil wells or pipelines to help their projects speed through environmental reviews, essentially completely reversing the use of the funds. This legislation would additionally pause a fee on methane emissions from oil and gas for ten years, further disincentivizing clean energy projects. The bill hardly passed because it completely repealed the 2022 IRA, and many senators were interested in keeping a portion of the IRA’s tax credits for economic reasons.
full article

“UN Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report 2025”
By: UN Secretary General

Photo: Getty Images

The United Nations’ 2025 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) Progress Report shows that global efforts are losing momentum, with about 47% of targets showing little or no progress, and 18% showing a decline from 2015. Factors like geopolitical tensions, economic shocks, and climate change are also slowing down any progression in reducing poverty, alleviating hunger, as well as environmental protection. This report highlights the need for immediate action to reverse these trends and accelerate progress towards the SDGS

full article

“In Vietnam, farmers reduce methane emissions by changing how they grow rice”
By: Aniruddha Ghosal, *Associated Press*

Photo: Getty Images

Some Vietnamese farmers are using new practices that require less water and fertilizer for growing rice. This benefits the environment because rice paddies produce lots of methane, a potent greenhouse gas, because rice has to grow in flooded fields where methane-producing microbes thrive. This new technique, known as alternate wetting and drying, uses less water because the rice field is not always submerged, which also means less methane is produced. Also, to ensure the exact amount of fertilizer is used, farmers are using drones, especially since it's harder to find workers for the farms. These methods enable farmers to use 40% less rice seed and 30% less water while experiencing the same yield.

Full article

“AI-Powered Innovations for SDGs”
By: Kate Selig, *NY Times*

Photo: Getty Images

A study was conducted by researchers at Google, who explored how artificial intelligence can actually help to accelerate the progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The paper highlights AI applications in areas like healthcare, education, and climate change, which demonstrates the technology’s potential to tackle complex societal challenges as well as advance sustainable development.

full article

“Many families in Uganda stuck with unhealthy dirt floors are finding an affordable alternative.”
By: Diana Taremwa Karakire, *Associated Press*

Photo: Getty Images

Dirt floors in poorer countries like Uganda can lead to health complications like respiratory issues and jigger infections. EarthEnable has found how to seal the floor with clay-based materials, which has helped improve people's health. The clay floor is also 70 percent cheaper than the concrete floor, which helps poorer families. Also, concrete creates lots of emissions, so EarthEnable’s clay floor has positive environmental implications as well.

full article

“California’s Yurok Tribe gets back ancestral lands that were taken over 120 years ago”
By: Dorany Pineda, Terry Chea, and Godofredo Vasquez, Associated Press

Photo: Getty Images

After a 23-year battle, the Yurok Tribe has regained around 73 square miles of ancestral land along the Klamath River in California. The Tribe was restricted from this land because of private Timber ownership, but they are now able to restore the ecosystems, revive ancestral practices, and re-strengthen their cultural ties to the land. The Yurok plan to use a slash-and-burn method to remove invasive species, restore prairies, and create a wildlife habitat. They also plan to address climate threats to their area as well as create jobs for their tribal members. This reclaiming of land highlights how Indigenous land management is employed for ecological resilience and the preservation of biodiversity.

full article

“To Save Rhinos, conservationists are removing their horns”
By Sammy Westfall, Washington Post

Photo: Getty Images

Being called a “necessary evil”, many individuals are turning to the practice of dehorning Rhinos in order to protect them from poachers. This has been proven to reduce poaching by 78% in reserves in South Africa. Currently, there are fewer than 28,000 rhinos globally, with the species black rhinos being critically endangered, with 6,500 of them left. By removing the rhinos' horns via chainsaw, many poachers do not have an incentive to capture them.

full article

“These surreal trees survived for centuries. Scientists worry for their future.”
By: Annika Hammerschlag, *Associated Press*

Photo: Getty Images

An island in Yemen, Socotra, is home to the iconic dragon's blood tree. This tree is known for its unique shape and ecological importance, but it is facing the dangers of extinction due to worsening cyclones, invasive goat grazing, and the ongoing civil war in Yemen. The dragon’s blood tree is a slow-growing plant, necessary for trapping water and supporting the island's ecosystems. The article discusses how local families, such as the Keybanis, have started running small nurseries to protect dragon’s blood saplings, but they are struggling due to a lack of resources and national support. The trees are vital to the island's biodiversity and tourism, sustaining many locals' livelihoods as well as the environment. Scientists warn that urgent action is needed in order to prevent any irreversible damage.

full article

“To make electricity cheaper and greener, connect the world’s grids.”

By: *The Economist*

Photo: Getty Images

As the energy sector becomes more globalized and nations become more comfortable with importing electricity, global power prices will decrease. These international cables and transmission links are beneficial for all parties involved, including the planet. Importing energy would reduce the need for redundant power plants that are only used when demand peaks. Additionally, it would generate savings on one side of the cable, as one market will inevitably have higher prices than another. It also makes renewable energy sources more attractive for the future, as now energy would be able to be exported when it is abundant instead of being wasted. Diversifying sources of supply multiplies economic benefits while also reducing dependence on a single supplier, to protect from geopolitical threats.

full article

United Nations Ocean Conference June 2025

By Ella Liebel

The 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference took place from June 9 - 13th in Nice, France. There were many milestones made throughout this conference to help keep our Oceans clean and safe. The High Seas Treaty, which is an agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction(BBNJ), was brought closer the necessary 60 ratifications to go into force by the September 2025 UN General Assembly meeting.
The 30 by 30 Marine Protection Goal had over 60 heads of state and 190 ministers back commitments to protect 30% of global oceans by 2030, in line with the High Seas Treaty.

The Deep-sea Mining Moratorium, which includes a coalition of 33 countries including the EU, pushed for a temporary prohibition on deep-sea mining outside national boundaries. The final highlight was the Azores being spotlighted as a global example of successful marine conservation. During this conference nation states and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) presented their climate action. Firstly, India pledged to ratify the High Seas Treaty and called for more heavily enforced marine ecosystem protections. Australia vowed to ratify the High Seas Treaty by year end, strengthen their domestic plastic pollution efforts, and boost their protected zones up to 30% by 2030. The Friends of Marine Life (FML) organization urged for stricter maritime laws, highlighting the pollution incidents in the Arabian Sea. Lastly, the French NGO Bloom accused the French government of overestimating their marine protecting efforts, specifically concerning the bottom fish trawling bans.

The conference concluded with a tone of cautious optimism, with nation leaders praising the strong momentum that was generated for ocean protection through multinational cooperation. The French president Emmanuel Macron, the host of the conference, described the convention as a “turning point” for oceanic governance. Macron made a powerful statement on deep sea exploration stating, “It’s completely crazy to exploit and drill in places we don’t know. It’s frenzied madness... The deep sea is not for sale.” - Emmanuel Macron. This statement aligns

with France's commitment to put a moratorium on deep sea mining, as well as their promise to expand their marine protected areas. The Costa Rican President Rodrigo Chaves praised the historic progress towards protecting international waters. Chaves commented on the world's relationship to the ocean, "For decades now... we have treated the ocean as a sort of infinite pantry or food store, but also we've treated it as a global waste dump." - Rodrigo Chaves. Costa Rica has made promising advancements to keep the ocean clean, with 30% of its marine territory protected and a new promise to deploy satellite tracking and environmental service payments to combat illegal fishing and help coastal conservation efforts. The UN Ocean Conference finished early, exemplifying the quick consensus by nations on key objectives, most notably the additional ratifications of the High Seas Treaty. Many coastal states and smaller island nations celebrated the conference, finding a new sense of validation after years of advocacy; however, some called for more equitable financing for the implementation of environmental technology/techniques.

NGO's, like Greenpeace and Bloom, provided mixed reactions. These two welcomed the new commitments made by certain nations, like the increase in treaty ratifications and pledges to protect marine areas, but warned that declarations have to be followed up with legally binding enforcement. They also said that there must be clearer action on issues such as deep-sea mining and destructive fishing. Public comments online reflected a sense of hope tattered with skepticism. Many users emphasized the importance of nations turning their promises into tangible ocean recovery techniques and results.

Source:

2025 UN Ocean Conference
https://unfoundation.org/2025-un-ocean-conference/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=19556432845&gbraid=0AAAAD9kiAePA2FBnqUvn1T9PytDM8t74&gclid=CjwKCAjw6s7CBhACEiwAuHQckmqslMvjrXtRDg2QxJNTmvbLDdDzApwHBZ4yO5EHAioxTqjkLxI8kxoCfLYQAvD_BwE

Producer: Roma Stibravy, NGO Sustainability President
Editors: Ella Liebel, Clemson University
Stella Sussman, The Ohio State University

Contributors: NGO Sustainability Interns and Associates

Corporate Sponsors

MAKE A DIFFERENCE!
BECOME A MEMBER OF NGO SUSTAINABILITY!
SEE CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
unngosustainability.org
ngosustainability@gmail.com