

NEWSLETTER

NGO Sustainability

In Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council



May 2020

Phil Levieff: Founder of TecKnow



Phil Levieff is the founder of TecKnow, turning office buildings, businesses, and homes into "smart living ecosystems."

Levieff believes we are at a defining moment where people have the power to choose what the world's future will look like, by choosing sustainable energy and lifestyle. He says that we now get to "live in a [sustainable] world that we design," as people have access to data and facts about climate change.

TecKnow makes the shift to more sustainable living with Tesla Powerwalls, which works essentially as a battery charging during the day as the sun shines, while also storing that energy to be used at night. This provides 100% of the solar energy used in a house. As an example, he has created a house in Simsbury, Connecticut that is completely off-grid, using a combination of technologies.

For TecKnow to implement sustainable energy it takes collaboration between scientists, political leaders, and a willingness from people to be proactive in the fight against climate change.

“ ‘Last Best Chance to Stop Runaway Climate Change’ ”



Somini Sengupta

UNFCCC

The Paris Agreement has failed to hold countries accountable to their pledges to reduce their emissions and keep the increase in temperature below 2 degrees celsius. According to information from the group Climate Action Tracker, global temperatures are on a path to increase by 3.3 degrees celsius. This is largely caused by countries that have favored wealthy gas and oil corporations over safe environmental practices.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/14/climate/paris-climate-future-poland.html>

“BP Sets Tough Goal: Zero Emissions by 2050”



Daniel Leal-Olivas/Agence France-Presse/Getty Images

Brad Plumer

Without revealing many details, BP has pledged to eliminate or offset their emissions by 2050. The company says that they emit 50 million tons of greenhouse gases annually from oil extraction operations and refineries. They also emit an additional 360 million tons annually when their oil and gas are sold and used. Environmentalists are skeptical that BP can achieve this goal.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/climate/bp-greenhouse-gas-emissions.html>

“Calculating Air Pollution’s Death Toll, Across State Lines”



Brandon Thibodeaux/The New York Times

Henry Fountain

A study revealed that premature deaths due to air pollution were caused by pollution that travels from one state to another. In Delaware, more than 90% of premature deaths were due to polluted air that had come from other states. Regulations to curb cross-state emissions would reduce deaths in the U.S.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/climate/air-pollution-health.html>

“Air Pollution Raises Risk For People in Pandemic”



France-Presse/Getty Images

Zoë Schlanger

Exposure to air pollution can increase someone's chance of contracting COVID-19 and increase their likelihood of having severe symptoms. While staying inside, it is important to be conscious of indoor air pollution and reduce it as much as possible. Some ways to do that are: opening windows when cooking, investing in an air purifier, and avoiding cigarettes and vapes.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/27/climate/climate-pollution-coronavirus-lungs.html?searchResultPosition=2>

“Oil and Gas Production Found to Pose Bigger Climate Threat Than Was Recognized”



Gabriella Demczuk/The New York Times

Hiroko Tabuchi

Methane emissions can increase temperatures on Earth more than 80 times as much as carbon dioxide can over a 20 year period. A study led by Benjamin Hmiel, a researcher at the University of Rochester, found that human activity was a much larger contributor to methane emissions than was estimated. The emissions coming from the burning of fossil fuels, oil production, and gas production were underestimated by 25 to 40%.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/19/climate/methane-flaring-oil-emissions.html>

“New Research Links Air Pollution to Higher Coronavirus Death Rates”



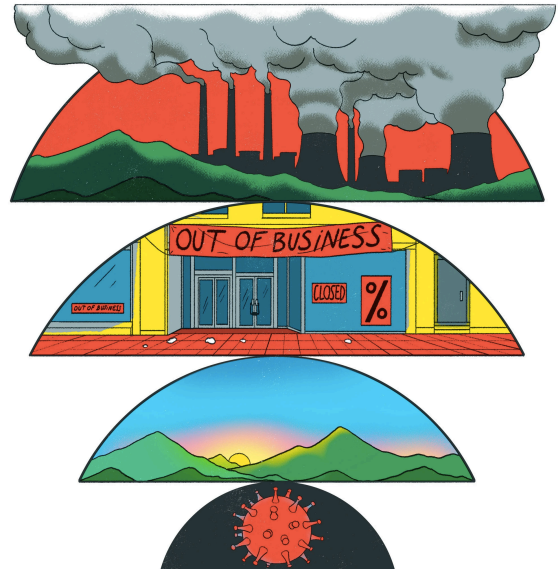
Kevin C. Cox/Getty Images

Lisa Friedman

Researchers from Harvard found a link between air pollution and COVID-19 patients with severe symptoms. Air pollution damages the lungs over time, which can compromise a patient's ability to fight off COVID-19. As a result, patients in areas with high levels of pollutants are 15% more likely to die from COVID-19 than patients from areas with cleaner air.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/07/climate/air-pollution-coronavirus-covid.html>

“What the Coronavirus Means for Climate Change”



Cristina Daura

Meehan Crist

While people stay home from work due to the coronavirus, pollution is decreasing. In February, China's lockdown resulted in their carbon emissions dropping by 25%. However, there is cause to worry that once the threat of COVID-19 has been quelled countries will focus on recovering their economies rather than rebuilding them to be environmentally conscious.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/27/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-climate-change.html>

“A Town Risks Its Gritty Livelihood for a Breath of Fresh Air”



Dmitry Kostyukov/The New York Times

Adam Nossiter

The citizens of Fos-sur-Mer, France are largely employed by the steel, oil, and petrochemical factories in their town. It has led to a cancer rate that is double France’s rate and much higher asthma rate than the national average. A study showed that the pollution caused by these factories affected workers and non-working citizens of the town equally. The citizens of Fos-sur-Mer ultimately decided to take the companies that owned these factories to court.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/world/europe/france-pollution-fos-sur-mer.html>

“Big Rigs Begin to Trade Diesel for Electric Motors”



Alec Lesser/The New York Times

Susan Carpenter

Medium and heavy-duty trucks cause about 8% of carbon emissions in the U.S. The eCascadia was invented as an electric alternative to the typical truck running on diesel. Although electric trucks are more expensive, they would significantly reduce the trucking industry’s impact on the climate.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/19/business/electric-semi-trucks-big-rigs.html>

“Staying Power Means Sustainable Fashion”



Dolly Faibyshev/The New York Times

Vanessa Friedman

Industries have begun to switch to sustainable practices, but the fashion industry hasn't been at the forefront of these movements. Cotton production uses a lot of water, and also material dyes that pollute water. It can be hard to make sustainable clothing because that usually means recycled fabric and materials that aren't very likely to be sold. However, fashion designers could make their brands more sustainable by creating clothes that people love and are durable.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/style/New-york-fashion-week-gabriela-hearst-coach-rodarte.html>

“Murdoch Scion Planning to Invest in Environment”



Bryan Bedder/Getty Images/National Geographic

Michael J. de la Merced

James Murdoch has always been an advocate for climate action, while the Murdoch corporation has not. His father describes himself as a “climate change skeptic.” When the family sold their company, News Corp, which owns publications like The Wall Street Journal and New York Post, Murdoch got a share of the money. In contrast, he plans to invest this money in start-ups that aim to reduce plastic use as well as a climate focused partnership with France and Germany's governments.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/business/dealbook/james-murdoch-environment.html>

“Bezos Pledges \$10 Billion



Emma Howells/The New York Times

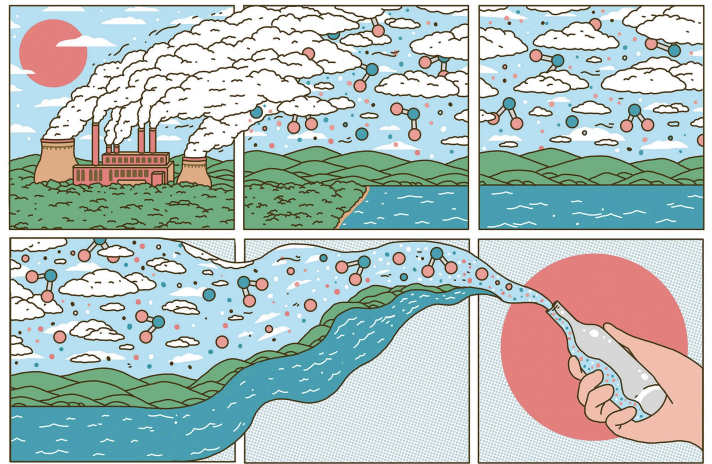
Karen Weise

Jeff Bezos committed to spending \$10 billion to fight climate change in a fund called the Bezos Earth Fund¹. He said that Amazon would be carbon neutral by 2040 and meet the goals of the Paris Agreement 10 years early. Bezos has also proposed the idea of exploring space as a way to move heavy industry off of the Earth.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/17/technology/jeff-bezos-climate-change-earth-fund.html>

¹ The Bezos Earth Fund is a \$10 billion dollar fund created by Jeff Bezos, which will provide grants to businesses and entrepreneurs who are working to address climate change.

“Chasing a \$7 Million Climate



Evan Cohen

Christopher Flavelle

A contest that awarded inventors who could use carbon dioxide gas and make a profitable product delayed due to the coronavirus, which put climate change on the back-burner in terms of global issues. Some of the finalists for the contest included a business that could make carbon dioxide into concrete, and jet fuel and other types of fuel from carbon dioxide.

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/30/climate/xprize-carbon-coronavirus.html>

**TO BECOME A MEMBER OF NGO
SUSTAINABILITY AND/OR TO MAKE
DONATIONS:** Please visit

www.unngosustainability.org