



THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE NEWS

Thursday 25 September 2008

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Other Environment News

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UNEP and the Executive Director in the News

Coverage of UNEP's Green Jobs Report:

Reuters: "Green" energy should create 20 million jobs by 2030: U.N.

Wed Sep 24, 2008 12:58pm EDT

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - Development of alternative energy should create more than 20 million jobs around the world in coming decades as governments adopt policies to address the depletion of resources, according to a U.N. report released on Wednesday.

Some 2.3 million people around the world already work in alternative energy jobs with half of them in biofuels, said the report, "Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World," commissioned and funded by the U.N.'s Environment Program.

Speedy creation of the jobs will depend on countries implementing and broadening policies including capping emissions of greenhouse gases, and the shifting of subsidies from the oil and natural gas sector, to new energy including wind, solar and geothermal power, it said.

"If we do not transform to a low-carbon economy we will miss a major opportunity for the fast tracking of millions of new jobs," Achim Steiner, UNEP director, told reporters.

He said movement toward the jobs will occur even if the world does not come to a new agreement by the end of next year on stabilizing and then cutting greenhouse gases. That's because global population is headed toward 8 billion or 9 billion by 2050, while new resources like metals, oil and gas are becoming more expensive to find, he said.

But if the world waits 10 years to take serious action on greenhouse gases the costs for moving to a green economy will be much higher, he said.

President George W. Bush walked away from the U.N.'s carbon-capping Kyoto Protocol early in his first term, saying it would raise costs and unfairly exempt rapidly developing countries from emissions limits. Delegates from across the world will try to reach a successor agreement to the Kyoto pact in a U.N. meeting in Copenhagen late next year.

BIOFUEL JOBS

The report was written before the U.S. credit crisis reshaped Wall Street and reverberated around the world raising fears that many sectors could be slowed, including alternative energy.

Steiner said it would be a mistake to ditch green energy policies during the current financial crisis because in the long term the new jobs will make economies stronger and help make goods with less oil and gas.

The report said some 12 million new jobs could be created by 2030 in biofuels-related agriculture and industry.

Biofuel critics say current U.S. ethanol, which is mostly made from corn, does little to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But companies are racing to make cleaner, next-generation ethanol from sources including crop waste and rapidly growing non-food crops like switch grass and poplar trees.

The report said many jobs in the biofuels industry are unfair to workers. "Much of the employment on sugarcane and palm oil plantations in countries like Brazil, Colombia, Malaysia and Indonesia is marked by poor pay and dangerous working conditions," it said.

"There is also concern that large-scale biofuels production might drive large numbers of people off their land in future years," it said. "Close scrutiny" will be needed to determine what portion of biofuel jobs can be counted as decent jobs, it added.

Manufacturing, installing, and maintaining solar panels should add 6.3 million jobs by 2030 while wind power should add more than 2 million jobs. Even more jobs could be created in the building, recycling, and clean-vehicle manufacturing sectors, the report said.

(Reporting by Timothy Gardner, editing by Jackie Frank and Eric Beech)

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AFP: Environment-friendly products output to double: UN

7 hours ago

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Production of environmentally friendly goods is set to double, with turnover of 2.7 trillion dollars a year by 2020, a report released Wednesday at the United Nations said.

"We are not talking about niche markets anymore. We are talking about millions of jobs that are emerging across the global economy," said Achim Steiner, UN Environment Program executive director.

"It is the entrepreneurial world, because of what is happening in terms of the natural resources markets on the global market place, that is pushing for this," he told journalists at the UN General Assembly in New York.

The program's report on the green industry said that 2.3 million people are employed in the renewable energy sector alone -- half of them in developing countries. About 2.1 million could be working in wind energy and 6.3 million in solar energy by 2030, the report said.

Already the renewable energy industry employs more people than the fossil fuels sector, according to the report.

"The transition has already started," said Juan Somavia, director general of the International Labour Organization.

"In Germany renewable the energy sector will be larger than automobile and machine manufacturing in the next ten years. In France energy efficiency and renewable already employs more than the car industry," he said.

But Somavia also cautioned: "We need to make sure that green jobs are decent jobs. Millions of workers are involved in recycling discarded computers and mobile phones, but they are often in bad quality jobs: the first thing that goes to the recycle bin are safety and healthy rules."

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BBC News: UN forecasts boom in 'green jobs'

Solar panels will be a booming industry, says the report

The UN says millions of new jobs will be created worldwide over the next few decades by the development of alternative energy technologies.

More than a million people already work in biofuels, but a UN report says that could rise by 12 million by 2030.

It says "green jobs" depend on a shift of subsidies from oil and natural gas to wind, solar, and geothermal power.

New jobs could also include the expansion of recycling and making environmentally friendly vehicles.

The report, 'Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World', was commissioned and funded by the UN's Environment Programme (Unep). It says the manufacture, installation and maintenance of solar panels should add 6.3 million jobs by 2030, while wind power should add more than two million jobs.

Major opportunity

Unep director Achim Steiner said that if the world did not transform to a low-carbon economy it would "miss a major opportunity for the fast tracking of millions of new jobs". The report was written before the current global economic crisis. However, Mr Steiner said that to ditch green energy policies because of the crisis would be a mistake because in the long term the new jobs will make economies stronger and help make goods with less oil and gas.

Solar powered vehicles are already being developed
Late next year, delegates from around the world will try to reach a successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol to control climate change, in a UN meeting in Copenhagen. But Mr Steiner said the movement toward green jobs would happen whether there was an agreement or not.

He said that was because the world's population is heading toward eight or nine billion by 2050, and resources like metals, oil and gas are becoming more expensive to find. If the world waits 10 years to take serious action on greenhouse gases the costs for moving to a green economy will be much higher, he said.

Workers 'at risk'

The report raised concerns for those involved in the manufacture of biofuels - fuels made from renewable sources such as plants or plant-derived material.

"Much of the employment on sugarcane and palm oil plantations in countries like Brazil, Colombia, Malaysia and Indonesia is marked by poor pay and dangerous working conditions," it said.

"There is also concern that large-scale biofuels production might drive large numbers of people off their land in future years," it said.

"Close scrutiny" will be needed to determine what portion of biofuel jobs can be counted as decent jobs, it added.

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Guardian (UK): UN: Tackling climate change will boost - not destroy - jobs

A UN report is hailed as crucial to overcoming global resistance from the labour movement, which for many years opposed the Kyoto agreement amid fears that members would lose their jobs

- [Juliette Jowit](#)
- guardian.co.uk,
- Thursday September 25 2008 00:01 BST
- [Article history](#)

Far from destroying jobs, tackling climate change will boost employment, claims a major new report published today by the UN and the international labour movement.

The [Green Jobs](#) study goes even further than the British government's Stern report in 2006, which urged countries to invest money in reducing emissions and adapting to climate change to avoid much greater costs later.

The latest report has been hailed as crucial to overcoming global resistance from the labour movement, which for many years opposed the Kyoto agreement to cut greenhouse gas emissions amid fears that members would lose their jobs.

"That was not something I'm particularly proud of," said Guy Ryder, general secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), who said the movement had since accepted the United Nations-recommended emissions cut of 80% by 2050.

"This is a major turnaround," said Ryder. "It's not perhaps because we have become wiser, it's because we have managed to integrate the notion of action against climate change with the green job agenda. And what this report shows is it's perfectly possible to reconcile those two interests in a way that doesn't threaten worker interests but actually promotes them in the long term. The biggest threat to the jobs and livelihoods of our members in future is to do nothing."

However Achim Steiner, executive director of the UN environment programme (UNEP), called on governments to do more to support the emerging industries - comparing the need for intervention to that offered by the US and other governments to rescue failing financial institutions. ([Watch the press conference here.](#))

"Imagine for a moment if some of those stimulus packages could be targeted towards not maintaining and sustaining the old economy of the 20th century but investing in the new economy of the 21st century," said Steiner. "Millions of jobs, millions of enterprises and above all millions of opportunities for new entrants in the global economy."

The ITUC, the International Labour Office (ILO), the International Organisation of Employers, and UNEP commissioned the Worldwatch Institute and Cornell University to conduct a study into how many jobs would be created in the "green economy".

The report focused on the key areas considered to have the most potential to make improvements: energy supply, energy efficiency, transport, "basic" industries (such as iron and steel, aluminium, cement, paper and pulp), along with recycling, agriculture and forestry.

The report said "millions" of new jobs would be created, based on other studies forecasting that the global market for environmental services and products would double by 2020, and reports that "clean technology" was booming.

"New jobs will be created, others will be adapted, and some will fade out," said Juan Somavia, the ILO director general.

Jobs would be lost in some fossil fuel-intensive industries like steel and cement, but more jobs would be created than lost in switching from fossil fuel to renewable energy generation and from mass car use to more public transport, said Stephen Pursey, the ILO policy director.

The report did not estimate a total figure because all jobs would have to become "greener", but "on current performance it looks like there will be more opportunities than losses," said Pursey.

Critics have warned that more labour-intensive "green" industries could be a less efficient way of producing goods and services than those they replaced. But such measures of wealth did not take account of the harm caused by pollution and other impacts such as climate change, said Pursey. "Can we shift to a way of capturing more accurately the things we aspire to, [such as] cleaner, less polluted cities to live in," he added.

The most important condition for benefiting from the green economy was clear public policies and incentives, said the report, which cited the examples of government support for energy efficiency in Germany and a scheme to install 1m solar panels in rural villages in Bangladesh, supported by the not-for-profit organisation Grameen Bank.

However the report also called for better working conditions for people in some sectors of the green economy, such as waste disposal and recycling. To help the poorest countries and most vulnerable workers benefit, governments needed to diversify economies, ensure social protection and train workers for new skills, said Somavia.

"Building a low carbon economy is not only about technologies or finances, it's about peoples and societies, it's about a cultural change to greater environmental consciousness and opportunities for decent work, so essentially it's about leadership – in government, in business, in trade unions, in local authorities, in international organisations, in NGOs [non governmental organisations], but particularly in the political world," said Somavia.

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Economic Times (India): Green economy projected to double by 2020: UN

25 Sep, 2008, 0650 hrs IST, AGENCIES

NEW YORK: The so-called green economy is booming across the globe and the market for environmental products and services is likely to double by 2020, according to a UN study.

Efforts to combat climate change have already created millions of new "green jobs" and opened up fresh sectors for economic growth as countries around the world [invest](#) in new technologies, the report said Wednesday. UN officials urged governments to keep going despite a global economic crisis.

"The world will spend hundreds of billions of dollars in the next 12 months on stabilising the global economy. Imagine for a moment if some of the stimulus packages could be targeted towards investing in the new economy of the 21st century," Achim Steiner, head of the UN Environment Programme, told reporters.

The UN report, released on the sidelines of an annual UN summit marking a new year for the General Assembly, projected the global market for "green" products and services would double to \$2.74 billion by 2020. The study also warns that many poorer countries, who have suffered most from the effects of climate change, are being left out of the

boom. Shifting developing economies from dirty to clean industries is as crucial for reducing global warming as it is for pulling many developing regions out of poverty, the UN said. In a separate move on global warming Wednesday, the UN launched a new initiative to help developing countries combat deforestation, which contributes about 20 per cent of greenhouse-gases entering the atmosphere.

Nine countries, including Indonesia, Congo and Vietnam have agreed to take part. Norway has pledged \$35 million to start off the programme.

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The Peninsula: Green energy to create 20 million jobs by 2030: UN

This article also featured in: Business Spectator, Australia; Reuters India; Javno.hr, Croatia; San Diego Union Tribune, United States; stv.tv, UK; Reuters AlertNet, UK; Reuters; Livemint, India

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Source: Reuters

United Nations • Development of alternative energy should create more than 20 million jobs around the world in coming decades as governments adopt policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, according to a UN report released yesterday.

Some 2.3 million people already work in green energy jobs with half of them in biofuels, said the report "Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World," commissioned and funded by the UN's Environment Programme. Creation of the jobs will depend on countries implementing and broadening policies, including capping emissions of greenhouse gases and shifting of subsidies from old energy forms to new ones, in the effort to slow global warming, it said.

The report was written before the US credit crisis reshaped Wall Street and reverberated around the world, which could slow many sectors, including alternative energy. It said some 12 million new jobs could be created by 2030 in biofuels-related agriculture and industry.

Biofuel critics say current US ethanol, which is mostly made from corn, does little to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But companies are racing to make cleaner, next-generation ethanol from sources including crop waste and rapidly growing non-food crops like switch grass and poplar trees. The report said many jobs in the biofuels industry are unfair to workers. "Much of the employment on sugarcane and palm oil plantations in countries like Brazil, Colombia, Malaysia and Indonesia is marked by poor pay and dangerous working conditions," it said.

"There is also concern that large-scale biofuels production might drive large numbers of people off their land in future years," it said. "Close scrutiny" will be needed to determine what portion of biofuel jobs can be counted as decent jobs, it added.

Manufacturing, installing, and maintaining solar panels should add 6.3 million jobs by 2030 while wind power should add more than 2 million jobs. Even more jobs could be created in the building, recycling, clean vehicle manufacturing sectors, the report said. The world will try to reach an successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol in a UN meeting in Copenhagen late next year.

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The China Post: Green energy may create 20 mil. jobs by 2030

Reuters

Thursday, September 25, 2008

UNITED NATIONS -- Development of alternative energy should create more than 20 million jobs around the world in coming decades as governments adopt policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, according to a U.N. report released on Wednesday.

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Creation of the jobs will depend on countries implementing and broadening policies, including capping emissions of greenhouse gases and shifting of subsidies from old energy forms to new ones, in the effort to slow global warming, it said.

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Focus News: UN forecasts boom in 'green jobs' **25 September 2008 | 04:20 | FOCUS News Agency**

United Nations. The UN says millions of new jobs will be created worldwide over the next few decades by the development of alternative energy technologies. More than a million people already work in biofuels, but a UN report says that could rise by 12 million by 2030, BBC informed.

It says "green jobs" depend on a shift of subsidies from oil and natural gas to wind, solar, and geothermal power.

New jobs could also include the expansion of recycling and making environmentally friendly vehicles.

The report, 'Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World', was commissioned and funded by the UN's Environment Programme (Unep). It says the manufacture, installation and maintenance of solar panels should add 6.3 million jobs by 2030, while wind power should add more than two million jobs.

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Scoop.co.nz: Combating Climate Change Creates Millions Of Jobs

Thursday, 25 September 2008, 12:24 pm

Press Release: United Nations

Combating climate change could create millions of jobs, says UN-backed study

24 September 2008 – Tackling climate change could potentially generate millions of new employment opportunities, according to a new United Nations-backed study – the first of its kind on the emergence of a “green economy” and its impact on labour – released today.

Entitled “Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World,” the publication shows how efforts to address global warming and slash greenhouse gas emissions are leading to new “green” jobs in many sectors. This, in turn, has resulted in increased investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The report – a joint effort by the UN International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Trade Union Confederation and the International Organization of Employers – includes recommendations in the run-up to next year’s UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, which seeks to create a successor pact to the Kyoto Protocol, whose first-round commitments end in 2012.

“What this report is about from the perspective of sustainability is to show the policymakers that with the right incentives, the right research and development support programmes, there is massive potential here for new economic sectors to emerge,” UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner said at a news conference in New York.

He noted that amid the current financial turmoil seen in different parts of the world, countries will spend hundreds of billions of dollars in coming months to stabilize the global economy.

“Imagine for a moment if some of the stimulus packages that are now being developed could be targeted towards not maintaining and sustaining the old economy of the 20th century but investing in the new economy of the 21st century,” he stated.

The report highlights the importance of boosting investment access for developing countries and increasing energy efficiency in buildings and industry, among other things.

But it also points to how climate change is adversely affecting workers and their families who depend on agriculture and tourism for their livelihoods.

Too few green jobs are being created for the most vulnerable, the study warns, with 1.3 billion of the world’s working poor – or 43 per cent of the global workforce – earning less than \$2 a day.

It also stresses the need for “just transitions” for those affected by the switch to a more green economy with access to new employment opportunities, noting the importance of dialogue among governments, workers and employers to ease potential tensions and to ensure that all sectors are involved in developing more coherent environmental, economic and social policies.

“We need to make sure that green jobs are decent jobs,” said ILO Director-General Juan Somavia. “As the report makes clear, building a low-carbon economy is not only about technology or finances, it’s about peoples and societies. It’s about a cultural change to a greater environmental consciousness and opportunities for decent work.

“New jobs will be created, others adapted and some will fade out. In order to keep the political will and the public support, we will have to put policies in place that have to focus from the beginning on those at the receiving end of this transition,” he stated.

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Afrique en ligne: Landmark study forecasts millions of jobs in emerging green economy

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - A new landmark study on the impact of an emerging global "green economy" on the world of work says efforts to tackle climate change could result in the creation of millions of new "green jobs" in the coming decades.

Entitled "Green Jobs: Towards Decent work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World", the report says changing patterns of employment and investment, resulting from efforts to reduce climate change and its effects are already generating new jobs in many sectors and economies and could create millions more in both developed and developing countries.

The report, released Wednesday, was funded and commissioned by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) under a joint Green Jobs Initiative with the International Labour Office (ILO), the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Organisation of Employers (IOE). However, the report found that the process of climate change would continue to have negative effects on workers and their families, especially those whose livelihoods depended on agriculture and tourism.

Action to tackle climate change as well as to cope with its effects is therefore urgent and should be designed to generate decent jobs, suggested the report, produced by the Worldwatch Institute, with technical assistance from the Cornell University Global Labour Institute.

Though the report is generally optimistic about the creation of new jobs to address climate change, it also warned that many of these new jobs can be "dirty, dangerous and difficult".

Sectors of concern, especially but not exclusively in developing economies, include agriculture and recycling where all too often low pay, insecure employment contracts and exposure to health hazardous materials need to change fast.

What's more, it says too few green jobs are being created for the most vulnerable: the 1.3 billion working poor (43 per cent of the global workforce) in the world with earnings too low to lift them and their dependants above the poverty threshold of US\$2 per person, per day, or for the estimated 500 million youth who will be seeking work over the next ten years.

Green jobs reduce the environmental impact of enterprises and economic sectors, ultimately to levels that are sustainable.

The report focused on "green jobs" in agriculture, industry, services and administration that contribute to preserving or restoring the quality of the environment.

It also called for measures to ensure that they constitute "decent work" that helps reduce poverty while protecting the environment.

The report said that climate change itself, adaptation to it and efforts to arrest it by reducing emissions have far-reaching implications for economic and social development, for production and consumption patterns and thereby for employment, incomes and poverty reduction.

These implications harbour both major risks and opportunities for working people in all countries, but particularly for the most vulnerable in the least developed countries and in small island states.

In addition, the report called for "just transitions" for those affected by transformation to a green economy and for those who must adapt to climate change with access to alternative economic and employment opportunities for enterprises and workers.

The study suggested that meaningful social dialogue between government, workers and employers would be essential not only to ease tensions and support better informed and more coherent environmental, economic and social policies, but for all social partners to be involved in the development of such policies.

Among its key findings, the report said that the global market for environmental products and services was projected to double from US\$ 1,370 billion per year at present to US\$ 2,740 billion by 2020.

Half of this market is in energy efficiency and the balance in sustainable transport, water supply, sanitation and waste management.

Sectors that will be particularly important in terms of their environmental, economic and employment impact are energy supply, in particular renewable energy, buildings and construction, transportation, basic industries, agriculture and forestry.

Clean technologies are already the third largest sector for venture capital after information and biotechnology in the United States, while green venture capital in China more than doubled to 19 per cent of total investment in recent years.

While 2.3 million people have in recent years found new jobs in the renewable energy sector alone, the potential for job growth in the sector is huge, the report said.

Employment in alternative energies may rise to 2.1 million in wind and 6.3 million in solar power by 2030 as renewable energy generates more jobs than employment in fossil fuels.

Projected investments of US\$ 630 billion by 2030 would translate into at least 20 million additional jobs in the renewable energy sector.

The report provided examples of massive green jobs creation, throughout the world, such as: 600,000 people in China who are already employed in solar thermal making and installing products such as solar water heaters; and in Nigeria, a biofuels industry based on cassava and sugar cane crops might sustain an industry employing 200,000 people.

India could generate 900,000 jobs by 2025 in biomass gasification of which 300,000 would be in the manufacturing of stoves and 600,000 in areas such as processing into briquettes and pellets and the fuel supply chain; and in South Africa, 25,000 previously unemployed people are now employed in conservation as part of the 'Working for Water' initiative.

"A sustainable economy can no longer externalise environmental and social costs. The price society pays for the consequences of pollution or ill health for example, must be reflected in the prices paid in the marketplace. Green jobs therefore need to be decent work", the report said.

According to the report, delivery of a deep and decisive new climate agreement when countries get together for the crucial UN climate convention meeting in Copenhagen in late 2009 will be vital for accelerating green job growth.

Addis Ababa - 24/09/2008

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The Hindu: “Green economy” can create millions of jobs, says ILO report

Aarti Dhar

Report warns that many of new jobs can be “dirty, dangerous and difficult” Too few green jobs are being created for the most vulnerable

NEW DELHI: A new study on the impact of an emerging global “green economy” suggests that efforts to tackle climate change could result in the creation of new “green jobs” in the coming decades.

The report, “Green Jobs: Towards Decent Works in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World,” brought out by the International Labour Organisation, says changing patterns of employment and investment resulting from efforts to reduce climate change and its effects are already generating new jobs in many sectors and economies, and could create millions more in both developed and developing countries.

Urgent action

However, the process of climate change, already under way, will continue to have a negative effect on workers and their families, especially those whose livelihoods depend on agriculture and tourism. Action to tackle climate change as well as to cope with its effects is therefore urgent and should be designed to generate decent jobs.

Though the report is generally optimistic about the creation of new jobs, it warns that many of these jobs could be “dirty, dangerous and difficult.” Sectors of concern, especially but not exclusively in developing economies, include agriculture and recycling, where all too often low pay, insecure employment contracts and exposure to health-hazardous materials need to change fast.

The report says that too few green jobs are being created for the most vulnerable: the 1.3 billion working poor (43 per cent of the global workforce) in the world with earnings

too low to lift them and their dependents above the poverty threshold of \$ 2 per person per day, or for the estimated 500 million youths who will be seeking work over the next 10 years.

The global market for environmental products and services is projected to double from the present \$ 1,370 billion per year to \$ 2,740 billion by 2020, according to this study. Half of this market is in energy efficiency and the balance in sustainable transport, water supply, sanitation and waste management.

Key sectors

Sectors that will be particularly important in terms of their environmental, economic and employment impact are energy supply, in particular renewable energy, buildings and construction, transportation, basic industry, agriculture and forestry. The report suggests that 2.3 million people have in the recent years found jobs in the renewable energy sector alone. Employment alternative energies may rise to 2.1 million in wind power and 6.3 million in solar power by 2030.

Renewable energy generates more jobs than employment in fossil fuels. Projected investments of \$ 630 billion by 2030 will translate into at least 20 million additional jobs in the renewable energy sector.

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Courier Mail: 'Green energy will create 20m jobs'

This article also appeared in: Melbourne Herald Sun, Australia; Adelaïdenow, Australia; The Mercury, Australia; NEWS.com.au, Australia; Daily Telegraph, Australia; PerthNow, Australia; The Australian, Australia

Article from: Reuters

From correspondents in Brussels

September 25, 2008 02:57am

DEVELOPMENT of alternative energy should create more than 20 million jobs around the world in coming decades as governments adopt policies to address the depletion of resources, according to a UN report.

Some 2.3 million people around the world already work in alternative energy jobs with half of them in biofuels, said the report.

Speedy creation of the jobs will depend on countries implementing and broadening policies including capping emissions of greenhouse gases, and the shifting of subsidies from the oil and natural gas sector, to new energy including wind, solar and geothermal power, it said.

"If we do not transform to a low-carbon economy we will miss a major opportunity for the

fast tracking of millions of new jobs," Achim Steiner, UNEP director, told reporters.

He said movement toward the jobs will occur even if the world does not come to a new agreement by the end of next year on stabilising and then cutting greenhouse gases because global population is headed toward 8 billion or 9 billion by 2050, while new resources like metals, oil and gas are becoming more expensive to find.

But if the world waits 10 years to take serious action on greenhouse gases the costs for moving to a green economy will be much higher, he said.

US President George W. Bush walked away from the UN's carbon-capping Kyoto Protocol early in his first term, saying it would raise costs and unfairly exempt rapidly developing countries from emissions limits.

Delegates from across the world will try to reach a successor agreement to the Kyoto pact in a UN meeting in Copenhagen late next year.

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Environmental Expert: Landmark study projects millions of `green jobs`, environmental market to double to US\$2,740bn

Source: International Labour Organization (ILO)

Published Sep. 24, 2008

A new, landmark study on the impact of an emerging global "green economy" on the world of work says efforts to tackle climate change could result in the creation of millions of new "green jobs" in the coming decades. The new report entitled Green Jobs: Towards Decent work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World, says changing patterns of employment and investment resulting from efforts to reduce climate change and its effects are already generating new jobs in many sectors and economies, and could create millions more in both developed and developing countries.

However, the report also finds that the process of climate change, already underway, will continue to have negative effects on workers and their families, especially those whose livelihoods depend on agriculture and tourism. Action to tackle climate change as well as to cope with its effects is therefore urgent and should be designed to generate decent jobs.

Though the report is generally optimistic about the creation of new jobs to address climate change, it also warns that many of these new jobs can be "dirty, dangerous and difficult". Sectors of concern, especially but not exclusively in developing economies, include agriculture and recycling where all too often low pay, insecure employment contracts and exposure to health hazardous materials needs to change fast.

What's more, it says too few green jobs are being created for the most vulnerable: the 1.3 billion working poor (43 per cent of the global workforce) in the world with earnings too low to lift them and their dependants above the poverty threshold of US\$2 per person, per day, or for the estimated 500 million youth who will be seeking work over the next 10 years.

Green jobs reduce the environmental impact of enterprises and economic sectors, ultimately to levels that are sustainable. The report focuses on “green jobs” in agriculture, industry, services and administration that contribute to preserving or restoring the quality of the environment. It also calls for measures to ensure that they constitute “decent work” that helps reduce poverty while protecting the environment.

The report says that climate change itself, adaptation to it and efforts to arrest it by reducing emissions have far-reaching implications for economic and social development, for production and consumption patterns and thus for employment, incomes and poverty reduction. These implications harbour both major risks and opportunities for working people in all countries, but particularly for the most vulnerable in the least developed countries and in small island States.

The report calls for “just transitions” for those affected by transformation to a green economy and for those who must also adapt to climate change with access to alternative economic and employment opportunities for enterprises and workers. According to the report, meaningful social dialogue between government, workers and employers will be essential not only to ease tensions and support better informed and more coherent environmental, economic and social policies, but for all social partners to be involved in the development of such policies.

Among other key findings in the report:

The global market for environmental products and services is projected to double from US\$1,370 billion per year at present to US\$2,740 billion by 2020, according to a study cited in the report.

Half of this market is in energy efficiency and the balance in sustainable transport, water supply, sanitation and waste management. In Germany for example, environmental technology is to grow fourfold to 16 per cent of industrial output by 2030, with employment in this sector surpassing that in the country’s big machine tool and automotive industries. Sectors that will be particularly important in terms of their environmental, economic and employment impact are energy supply, in particular renewable energy, buildings and construction, transportation, basic industries, agriculture and forestry.

Clean technologies are already the third largest sector for venture capital after information and biotechnology in the United States, while green venture capital in China more than doubled to 19 per cent of total investment in recent years.

2.3 million people have in recent years found new jobs in the renewable energy sector alone, and the potential for job growth in the sector is huge. Employment in alternative energies may rise to 2.1 million in wind and 6.3 million in solar power by 2030.

Renewable energy generates more jobs than employment in fossil fuels. Projected investments of US\$630 billion by 2030 would translate into at least 20 million additional jobs in the renewable energy sector.

In agriculture, 12 million could be employed in biomass for energy and related industries. In a country like Venezuela, an ethanol blend of 10 per cent in fuels might provide one million jobs in the sugar cane sector by 2012.

A worldwide transition to energy-efficient buildings would create millions of jobs, as well as “greening” existing employment for many of the estimated 111 million people already working in the construction sector.

Investments in improved energy efficiency in buildings could generate an additional 2-3.5 million green jobs in Europe and the United States alone, with the potential much higher in developing countries.

Recycling and waste management employs an estimated 10 million in China and 500,000 in Brazil today. This sector is expected to grow rapidly in many countries in the face of escalating commodity prices.

The report provides examples of massive green jobs creation, throughout the world, such as: 600,000 people in China who are already employed in solar thermal making and installing products such as solar water heaters; in Nigeria, a bio fuels industry based on cassava and sugar cane crops might sustain an industry employing 200,000 people; India could generate 900,000 jobs by 2025 in biomass gasification of which 300,000 would be in the manufacturing of stoves and 600,000 in areas such as processing into briquettes and pellets and the fuel supply chain; and in South Africa, 25,000 previously unemployed people are now employed in conservation as part of the ‘Working for Water’ initiative.

Pathways to green jobs and decent work

“A sustainable economy can no longer externalize environmental and social costs. The price society pays for the consequences of pollution or ill health for example, must be reflected in the prices paid in the marketplace. Green jobs therefore need to be decent work”, the report says.

The report recommends a number of pathways to a more sustainable future directing investment to low-cost measures that should be taken immediately including: assessing the potential for green jobs and monitoring progress to provide a framework for policy and investment; addressing the current skills bottleneck by meeting skill requirements because available technology and resources for investments can only be deployed effectively with qualified entrepreneurs and skilled workers; and ensuring individual enterprises’ and economic sectors’ contribution to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases with labour-management initiatives to green workplaces.

The report finds that green markets have thrived and transformation has advanced most where there has been strong and consistent political support at the highest level, including targets, penalties and incentives such as feed-in laws and efficiency standards for buildings and appliances as well as proactive research and development.

The report says that delivery of a deep and decisive new climate agreement when countries meet for the crucial UN climate convention meeting in Copenhagen in late 2009 will be vital for accelerating green job growth.

The report was funded and commissioned by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) under a joint Green Jobs Initiative with the International Labour Office (ILO), and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Organization of Employers (IOE), which together represent millions of workers and employers worldwide.

(Note 2). It was produced by the Worldwatch Institute, with technical assistance from the Cornell University Global Labour Institute.

ILO Director-General, Juan Somavia; UNEP Executive Director, Achim Steiner; the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) General Secretary Guy Ryder and the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) Vice President Ronnie Goldberg will present the report in New York at the United Nations Press Briefing Room (room S-226) at 09h00 on 24 September 2008. The press conference will be available on webcast at: <http://www.un.org/webcast/>

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UN News Centre: Combating climate change could create millions of jobs, says UN-backed study

Beech tree wood, Krapina (Croatia)

24 September 2008 – Tackling climate change could potentially generate millions of new employment opportunities, according to a new United Nations-backed study – the first of its kind on the emergence of a “green economy” and its impact on labour – released today.

Entitled “Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World,” the publication shows how efforts to address global warming and slash greenhouse gas emissions are leading to new “green” jobs in many sectors. This, in turn, has resulted in increased investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The report – a joint effort by the UN International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Environment Programme (**UNEP**), the International Trade Union Confederation and the International Organization of Employers – includes recommendations in the run-up to next year’s UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, which seeks to create a successor pact to the Kyoto Protocol, whose first-round commitments end in 2012.

“What this report is about from the perspective of sustainability is to show the policymakers that with the right incentives, the right research and development support programmes, there is massive potential here for new economic sectors to emerge,” UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner **said** at a news conference in New York.

He noted that amid the current financial turmoil seen in different parts of the world, countries will spend hundreds of billions of dollars in coming months to stabilize the global economy.

“Imagine for a moment if some of the stimulus packages that are now being developed could be targeted towards not maintaining and sustaining the old economy of the 20th century but investing in the new economy of the 21st century,” he stated.

The report highlights the importance of boosting investment access for developing countries and increasing energy efficiency in buildings and industry, among other things.

But it also points to how climate change is adversely affecting workers and their families who depend on agriculture and tourism for their livelihoods.

Too few green jobs are being created for the most vulnerable, the study warns, with 1.3 billion of the world's working poor – or 43 per cent of the global workforce – earning less than \$2 a day.

It also stresses the need for “just transitions” for those affected by the switch to a more green economy with access to new employment opportunities, noting the importance of dialogue among governments, workers and employers to ease potential tensions and to ensure that all sectors are involved in developing more coherent environmental, economic and social policies.

“We need to make sure that green jobs are decent jobs,” said ILO Director-General Juan Somavia. “As the report makes clear, building a low-carbon economy is not only about technology or finances, it’s about peoples and societies. It’s about a cultural change to a greater environmental consciousness and opportunities for decent work.

“New jobs will be created, others adapted and some will fade out. In order to keep the political will and the public support, we will have to put policies in place that have to focus from the beginning on those at the receiving end of this transition,” he stated.

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AsiaOne, Singapore: 20m jobs from green energy

This article also featured in: Straits Times, Singapore

Wed, Sep 24, 2008

Reuters

UNITED NATIONS - DEVELOPMENT of alternative energy should create more than 20 million jobs around the world in coming decades as governments adopt policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, according to a UN report released on Wednesday.

Some 2.3 million people already work in green energy jobs with half of them in biofuels, said the report 'Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World,' commissioned and funded by the UN's Environment Programme.

Creation of the jobs will depend on countries implementing and broadening policies, including capping emissions of greenhouse gases and shifting of subsidies from old energy forms to new ones, in the effort to slow global warming, it said.

The report was written before the US credit crisis reshaped Wall Street and reverberated around the world, which could slow many sectors, including alternative energy.

It said some 12 million new jobs could be created by 2030 in biofuels-related agriculture and industry.

Biofuel critics say current US ethanol, which is mostly made from corn, does little to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

But companies are racing to make cleaner, next-generation ethanol from sources including crop waste and rapidly growing non-food crops like switch grass and poplar trees.

The report said many jobs in the biofuels industry are unfair to workers. 'Much of the employment on sugarcane and palm oil plantations in countries like Brazil, Colombia, Malaysia and Indonesia is marked by poor pay and dangerous working conditions,' it said.

'There is also concern that large-scale biofuels production might drive large numbers of people off their land in future years,' it said.

'Close scrutiny' will be needed to determine what portion of biofuel jobs can be counted as decent jobs, it added.

Manufacturing, installing, and maintaining solar panels should add 6.3 million jobs by 2030 while wind power should add more than 2 million jobs. Even more jobs could be created in the building, recycling, clean vehicle manufacturing sectors, the report said.

The world will try to reach an successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol in a UN meeting in Copenhagen late next year.

The United States is alone among industrialised countries in rejecting the carbon-capping Kyoto pact.

President George W. Bush has said the pact would raise costs and unfairly leave rapidly developing countries like India and China without greenhouse gas limits.

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Umwelt

Politik: UNO erwartet Boom von Ökotechnologien

Umweltbezogene Technologien sind nach Einschätzungen der Vereinten Nationen auf dem Vormarsch. So soll sich der Markt Umweltprodukte- und Dienstleistungen bis 2020 verdoppeln.

Die Vereinten Nationen rechnen mit einer massiven Expansion des Weltmarkts für umweltbezogene Technologien. Der Markt für Umweltprodukte und -dienstleistungen werde sich bis 2020 auf 2,74 Billionen Dollar weltweit verdoppeln, hieß es in einem am Mittwoch in New York vorgestellten Gutachten des UN-Umweltprogramms UNEP. Allein die Solarenergie werde bis 2030 etwa 6,3 Millionen Menschen Arbeit geben, die Windenergie 2,1 Millionen Menschen. Derzeit seien 2,3 Millionen Menschen im Sektor der erneuerbaren Energien beschäftigt, die Hälfte von ihnen in Entwicklungsländern.

„Wir sprechen nicht mehr über einen Nischenbereich“, sagte UNEP-Chef Achim Steiner

in New York. „Wir sprechen über Millionen von Arbeitsplätzen, die in der globalisierten Wirtschaft entstehen werden.“ Nach Einschätzung des Generaldirektors der Internationalen Arbeitsorganisation (ILO), Juan Somavia, hat „der Übergang längst begonnen“. Als Beispiel führte er Deutschland an, wo die Beschäftigtenzahl in der Branche der erneuerbaren Energie in zehn Jahren diejenige der Traditionsbranchen Automobil- und Werkzeugbau überholen werde.

Steiner forderte die Politik auf, der Entwicklung Rechnung zu tragen. Die Wirtschaft sei im Bereich der erneuerbaren Energien inzwischen weiter als die politischen Entscheidungsträger, es seien staatlicherseits mehr Programme zur Forschung und Entwicklung in diesem Bereich nötig. In Anspielung auf den 700 Milliarden Dollar schweren Rettungsplan der US-Regierung für die Finanzbranche sagte er: „Stellen Sie sich mal einen Moment vor, dass gewisse Programme nicht darauf abzielen, die alte Ökonomie des 20. Jahrhunderts zu wahren, sondern in die neue Ökonomie des 21. Jahrhunderts zu investieren.“

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Le Monde: Le marché des produits et services respectueux de l'environnement va doubler (rapport)

AFP 24.09.08 | 17h16

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Le marché des produits et services respectueux de l'environnement va doubler, passant de 1.370 milliards de dollars par an à 2.740 milliards USD par an en 2020, selon un rapport diffusé mercredi en marge de l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU.

"Nous ne parlons plus de niches. Nous parlons de millions d'emplois qui émergent dans l'économie globalisée", a déclaré à la presse Achim Steiner, directeur exécutif du Programme pour l'environnement de l'ONU (PNUE).

Ce rapport sur les "Jobs verts" souligne que "2,3 millions de personnes ont trouvé un emploi ces dernières années dans le seul secteur de l'énergie renouvelable", dont la moitié dans les pays en développement.

Il estime que l'énergie éolienne et l'énergie solaire pourront employer respectivement 2,1 millions et 6,3 millions de personnes en 2030.

"Le secteur de l'énergie renouvelable emploie déjà davantage de personnes que le secteur des hydrocarbures", selon cette étude. En outre, "des investissements prévus de 630 milliards de dollars doivent apporter en 2030 au moins 20 millions d'emplois supplémentaires".

"La transition a déjà commencé", a dit Juan Somavia, directeur général de l'Organisation internationale du travail (OIT), en soulignant qu'"en Allemagne le secteur de l'énergie renouvelable dépassera celui de l'industrie automobile et des machines-outils au cours des dix prochaines années".

"En France, le secteur de l'énergie renouvelable emploie déjà davantage que l'industrie automobile", a-t-il fait valoir.

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Liberation.fr: Eco-Terre

L'avenir est aux emplois verts

G.La.

QUOTIDIEN : jeudi 25 septembre 2008

Du grain à moudre pour les tenants de la croissance verte : «des dizaines de millions d'emplois verts» pourraient être créés dans le monde dans les années à venir, selon un rapport publié hier par le Programme des Nations unies pour l'environnement (PNUE) et l'Organisation internationale du travail (1).

Selon cette étude, d'ici à 2020, le marché mondial des produits et services liés à l'environnement devrait doubler, pour atteindre 2 740 milliards de dollars. La moitié de ce marché concerne l'efficacité énergétique, puis viennent les transports, l'eau, l'assainissement ou les déchets.

«Nous ne parlons plus de niches, nous parlons de millions d'emplois qui émergent dans l'économie mondialisée», a commenté Achim Steiner, directeur du PNUE, estimant que «c'est le monde de l'entreprise qui est derrière ce phénomène», plus que les politiques publiques. Les énergies renouvelables, par exemple, ont un potentiel considérable, aussi bien dans les pays du Nord que dans les pays en développement. Les auteurs citent le cas du Bangladesh où un programme photovoltaïque projette d'installer un million de systèmes domestiques d'ici à 2015. A l'échelle planétaire, 20 millions d'emplois pourraient être créés dans ce secteur d'ici à 2030.

Le rapport insiste sur le «double enjeu», environnemental et social : les emplois verts sont ainsi amenés à relier réduction de la pauvreté et protection de l'environnement, rendant ces «objectifs complémentaires plutôt que conflictuels».

«Cela signifie qu'il faut investir dans la création d'emplois et dans une transition juste, a commenté Guy Rider, secrétaire général de la Confédération internationale des syndicats. Et, surtout, il faut s'assurer que les emplois verts sont des emplois décents, respectueux des droits fondamentaux des travailleurs.»

(1) «Emplois verts : pour un travail décent dans un monde durable, à faibles émissions de carbone» www.unep.org/labour_environment/features/greenjobs-report.asp

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French Xinhuanet: ONU: Des dizaines de millions d'emplois "verts" pourraient être créés à l'avenir

2008-09-25 14:17:33

NEW YORK (Nations Unies), 24 septembre (Xinhua) -- Des dizaines de millions de "nouveaux emplois verts" pourraient être créés dans les décennies à venir, grâce aux investissements réalisés à travers le monde dans la lutte contre le changement climatique, selon une nouvelle étude présentée mercredi en marge du débat général de la 63e Assemblée générale de l'ONU.

L'étude intitulée "Emplois verts : Vers un travail décent dans un environnement durable à faible taux de carbone" et menée par le Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement (PNUE) et l'Organisation internationale du travail (OIT) souligne que les efforts pour lutter contre le changement climatique ont déjà généré de nouveaux emplois dans de nombreux secteurs économiques.

-- le marché mondial des produits et des services verts pourra doubler de 1.370 milliards de dollars maintenant à 2.740 milliards de dollars en 2020.

-- les secteurs qui seront particulièrement importants dans les domaines écologique, économique et de la création d'emplois concernent les énergies renouvelables, l'industrie du bâtiment, les transports, les industries de base, l'agriculture et la sylviculture.

-- les technologies vertes constituent déjà le troisième plus grand secteur aux Etats-Unis, derrière l'information et la biotechnologie, tandis que les entreprises vertes en Chine ont plus que doublé ces dernières années pour atteindre 19% du total des investissements.

-- 2,3 millions de personnes ont retrouvé de nouveaux emplois dans le secteur des énergies renouvelables, tandis que l'énergie éolienne et solaire créera respectivement 2,3 et 6,3 millions d'emplois d'ici à 2030.

-- les investissements planifiés de 630 milliards de dollars dans les énergies renouvelables d'ici à 2030 créeront au moins 20 millions d'emplois supplémentaires.

Toutefois l'étude souligne que de nouveaux emplois peuvent être "sales, dangereux et difficiles". Dans les pays en développement, l'agriculture et les activités de recyclage offrent souvent des emplois dangereux pour la santé, avec des bas salaires et des contrats précaires.

L'étude estime également que trop peu d'emplois verts sont créés pour les plus vulnérables, dont les 1,3 milliard de travailleurs pauvres (43% de la population active mondiale) dans le monde ou les quelques 500 millions de jeunes qui chercheront du travail au cours des dix prochaines années.

Lors d'une conférence de presse au siège de l'ONU, le directeur exécutif du Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement, Achim Steiner, a pris pour exemple la production de centaines de millions de pneumatiques qui sont généralement jetés après usage, ce qui pose de graves problèmes à l'environnement.

Il a dit avoir rencontré un entrepreneur de Malaisie qui entend recycler de vieux pneus et produire ainsi un "caoutchouc vert" qui sera utilisé par un grand fabricant de chaussures.

Selon M. Steiner, des actions de ce type ne peuvent plus être considérées comme de simples niches commerciales et il faut plutôt les percevoir comme des initiatives permettant de créer des millions d'emplois.

Il a aussi rappelé qu'environ 300 milliards de dollars sont investis chaque année dans les industries liées aux énergies fossiles, alors qu'en 60 ans, 17 milliards seulement l'ont été pour renforcer l'efficacité énergétique. Ces chiffres montrent qu'il existe un potentiel énorme d'orientation de l'économie, a ajouté le directeur exécutif du PNUE.

De son côté, le directeur général de l'Organisation internationale du travail, Juan Somavia, a estimé que la transition représentait un défi d'ampleur mondiale pour les entreprises et les employés.

Selon lui, les gouvernements et le monde du travail doivent apporter leur aide pour faire en sorte que cette transition se passe bien.

La transition en question est déjà en cours, a-t-il dit, citant l'exemple de l'Allemagne où le secteur des énergies renouvelables dépassera dans les 10 ans à venir en importance celui de l'industrie automobile ou des machines-outils.

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Adnmundo: Buscan generar empleos verdes Los esfuerzos por combatir el cambio climático podrían generar millones de “empleos verdes” en las próximas décadas.

El informe fue elaborado por la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT) y el Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente (PNUMA).

Algunos empleos verdes están siendo creados, pero la mayoría ya existen y se sustentan en profesiones y ocupaciones tradicionales, señaló Ana Belén Sánchez, especialista en cambio climático de la OIT.

Por ejemplo, citó el caso de las industrias y tecnologías de generación de energía eólica y solar, las cadenas de suministro muchas veces están formadas por industrias tradicionales, como la siderúrgica y la de fabricación de piezas para maquinaria.

“Aunque existen casi dos millones de empleos verdes en todo el mundo, todavía existe gran potencial de seguir creándolos. Podríamos multiplicar este número por muchísimas veces y hacer que la economía fuera más verde, más sostenible. El problema al que ahora nos enfrentamos, es que estos empleos no siempre son dignos, decentes”, recalcó.

Muchos son de bajos ingresos y se encuentran en el sector informal, añadió la experta.

Para que esos empleos contribuyan a evitar un cambio climático peligroso y ofrecer trabajo decente, la OIT y el PNUMA recomiendan, entre otras cosas, el establecimiento de marcos de políticas sólidos, coherentes y estables.

También consideran esencial el liderazgo gubernamental y acelerar los progresos en materia de eficiencia energética y de fuentes sostenibles de energía.

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Prensa Latina: Enfrentamiento a cambio climático generaría millones de empleos, ONU

Naciones Unidas, 24 sep (PL) Un nuevo estudio de varias agencias de la ONU afirmó hoy que el enfrentamiento al cambio climático generaría millones de empleos si se dedicaran recursos y se invirtiera en la economía del siglo XXI.

Preparado por la Organización Internacional del Trabajo, el Programa del Medio Ambiente (PNUMA) y las organizaciones internacionales de Sindicatos y de Empleadores, el documento aborda el tema de la labor en una "economía verde".

Titulado Trabajo Verde; hacia la labor adecuada en un mundo sostenible bajo en emisiones de carbón, el reporte asegura que las acciones para contener el calentamiento global conducen a la creación de empleos ecológicos en varias esferas.

El informe incluye propuestas y recomendaciones a la Conferencia sobre Cambio Climático del próximo año en Copenhague, Dinamarca, donde se debe acordar un documento que sustituya el Protocolo de Kyoto, que caducará en 2012.

Achim Steiner, director ejecutivo del PNUMA, dijo hoy que el informe presenta desde la perspectiva de la sostenibilidad cómo con incentivos adecuados, investigaciones y programas de apoyo existe un potencial laboral a desarrollar.

En medio de la actual crisis financiera en diversas partes del mundo, los países gastarán miles de millones en los próximos meses para estabilizar la economía global, apuntó el funcionario en declaraciones en esta sede.

Imaginen por un momento si algunos de los paquetes de estímulo ahora en fase de preparación pudieran ser destinados no a mantener la vieja economía del siglo XX, sino a invertir en la nueva economía del siglo XXI, subrayó.

El informe alerta que muy pocos trabajos verdes han sido creados para los más vulnerables, cuando mil 300 millones de pobres, es decir, el 43 por ciento de la fuerza laboral mundial, tiene ingresos menores a dos dólares diarios.

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Reuters: U.N. launches program to cut deforestation emissions

Wed Sep 24, 2008 6:33pm EDT

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - The United Nations launched a program on Wednesday that it hopes could be the foundation for a system in which rich countries would pay poor ones to slow climate change by protecting and planting forests.

The new program, called Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation Program, or UN-REDD, will assist nine developing countries, including Bolivia, Indonesia and Zambia, in establishing systems to monitor, assess and report forest cover.

"Forests are worth more alive than dead ... and their ecosystem services and benefits are worth billions if not trillions of dollars if only we capture these in economic models," said Achim Steiner, the executive director of the U.N. Environment Program.

Clearing forests for timber and farmland in developing nations emits nearly 20 percent of the greenhouse gases blamed for climate change, according to the U.N.'s climate science panel. Trees store heat-trapping carbon dioxide as they grow and release it when they rot or are burned.

Tropical countries are pushing to include UN-REDD in the successor to the Kyoto Protocol on global warming. Delegates representing countries around the globe are scheduled to meet in Copenhagen at the end of next year in hopes of hammering out a successor to the pact, which expires in 2012.

Under such a plan, the tropical countries would generate tradable carbon credits by saving and planting trees. Indonesia, for example, has the potential to be compensated \$1 billion a year if its deforestation rate was reduced to 1 million hectares annually, the U.N. estimated.

Presumably, rich countries would buy the credits to meet their own emission limits, like the way European Union countries have invested in credits representing emissions cuts generated by clean energy projects in poor countries.

Not everyone agrees such a program would be a good idea. Barry Gardiner, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown's special envoy for forests, said in an interview earlier this month that the model of avoided deforestation is flawed and risks alienating voters in rich countries.

Gardiner proposed instead that rich countries should simply make payments to tropical nations based on the size of existing forests. If countries continued to log or burn they could be expelled from the scheme.

Almost all nations at a round of fractious U.N. climate treaty talks in Ghana last month expressed support for including ways to avoid deforestation in a new U.N. pact.

Norway, which is looking for ways to offset carbon dioxide emissions from its growing natural gas export business, donated \$35 million to finance the initial phase of UN-REDD.

(Reporting by Timothy Gardner, editing by Cynthia Osterman)

(Additional reporting by Gerard Wynn in London)

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Antara News (Turkey): Global forum for sport, environment to explore climate change solutions

Jakarta, (ANTARA News) - After 4.7 billion people watched the largest sporting event in history, the Beijing Olympics, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) analyzes the impact of sport on climate change.

How can sport organizations reduce their greenhouse gas emissions? And what role can they play as the world is called upon to `UNite to combat climate change`, according to a UNEP press statement from Bangkok on Thursday.

The 2008 Global Forum for Sport and Environment (G-ForSE), with the theme Climate Change: Changing our Carbon Footprint, will address these questions in Alicante, Spain from 4 to 6 October 2008.

UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner, the Spanish Secretary of State for Climate Change Teresa Ribera, as well as more than 100 high level officials and experts from international sports organizations and federations, organizers of major sporting events and civil society groups will come together for the 5th edition of the G-ForSE to discuss solutions and promote a low-footprint approach to sports, as well as ways in which sports can be used to raise awareness on climate change.

The Forum will coincide with the launch of the 10th edition of the Volvo Ocean Race, which will travel 37,000 miles across five oceans, four continents and 11 ports around the world, UNEP press statement said. (*)

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Le Monde: Journée mondiale de l'environnement: l'édition 2009 au Mexique 23.09.08 | 00h47

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Le Mexique a été choisi comme siège de l'édition 2009 de la Journée mondiale de l'environnement, célébrée chaque 5 juin, pour son "engagement croissant" dans la lutte contre le changement climatique, ont annoncé les Nations unies lundi à Mexico.

Le programme des Nations unies pour l'environnement (PNUE, UNEP), organisateur de l'évènement, a choisi pour thème "Ta planète a besoin de toi, unis contre le changement climatique", ont précisé le président mexicain Felipe Calderon et le directeur exécutif du PNUE, Achim Steiner, à l'issue d'un entretien dans la capitale mexicaine.

"La décision reflète en partie l'engagement croissant et le rôle politique de ce pays d'Amérique latine dans la lutte contre le changement climatique, y compris sa participation accrue dans les marchés du carbone", souligne un communiqué du PNUE.

M. Steiner a souligné le "contraste" du Mexique, confronté à nombre de problèmes environnementaux, dans la capitale en particulier, mais qui "fait partie d'un groupe

d'économies en développement qui poussent leurs dirigeants vers la conclusion d'un nouveau traité climatique, élarge et décisif".

Le Mexique "a encore beaucoup de problèmes de haute contamination atmosphérique urbaine, de la dépendance aux hydrocarbures à la dégradation du sol et la nécessité de lutter contre la pauvreté", a-t-il également déclaré.

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Other Environment News

AP: Heavyweights talk world issues at Clinton event

By DEEPTI HAJELA, Associated Press Writer *Wed Sep 24, 4:19 PM ET*

NEW YORK - Bill Clinton's annual summit of world leaders and celebrities opened Wednesday with the former president sharing the stage with rock star Bono and dignitaries including his former vice president, who warned that humanity is struggling in the fight against climate change.

Al Gore pointed to a number of natural disasters as evidence, including storms in Haiti, hurricanes on the Gulf Coast and fires in California.

"Since we met here last year, the world has lost ground to the climate crisis," Gore said at the opening session of the Clinton Global Initiative. "This is a rout. We are losing badly."

The initiative, now in its fourth year, draws world leaders, celebrities, activists and scholars for three days of discussions about pressing global issues including climate change and poverty. It coincides with the General Assembly meeting taking place on the other side of town at the United Nations.

Gore was joined at the opening plenary session by Clinton, Queen Rania of Jordan, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, Bono and E. Neville Isdell, chairman of the board of directors for Coca-Cola.

Clinton asked Bono whether the current financial crisis would affect the ability to meet global goals to improve life for the world's poorest people — a cause central to the musician's humanitarian work.

Bono questioned nations' funding priorities, referring to the proposed federal bailout of the financial industry.

"It is extraordinary to me that you can find \$700 billion to save Wall Street and the entire G-8 can't find \$25 billion to save 25,000 children who die every day of preventable disease and hunger," he said.

"Bankruptcy is a serious business," Bono said, but he added, "this is moral bankruptcy."

Eight years after they left the White House and weeks before another election, Clinton and Gore avoided politics and exchanged pleasantries as Gore thanked Clinton for his efforts with the summit.

Former President George H.W. Bush made an unexpected appearance at the end of the session, announcing that he and Clinton were working together again to raise money for the victims of Hurricane Ike.

The former presidents first teamed up to raise \$11 million for tsunami victims, then worked to raise private money to help victims of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Participants in the Clinton Global Initiative are asked to take concrete steps to tackle specific global problems. Some of those commitments are announced during the four-day meeting.

On Wednesday, Lance Armstrong, who is planning a return to cycling and next year's Tour de France, said his foundation would commit \$8 million over the next five years to a global awareness campaign for cancer, including a meeting that would convene in Paris after the tour.

"This must be a global health priority. It is the reason we are here today," he said, adding that racing his bicycle all over the world is the best way to promote the effort.

Close to 60 current and former world leaders were expected at the conference. Presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama were also expected to take part.

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Reuters: Gore urges civil disobedience to stop coal plants

Wed Sep 24, 2008 3:29pm EDT

By Michelle Nichols

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Nobel Peace Prize winner and environmental crusader Al Gore urged young people on Wednesday to engage in civil disobedience to stop the construction of coal plants without the ability to store carbon.

The former U.S. vice president, whose climate change documentary "An Inconvenient Truth" won an Academy Award, told a philanthropic meeting in New York City that "the world has lost ground to the climate crisis."

"If you're a young person looking at the future of this planet and looking at what is being done right now, and not done, I believe we have reached the stage where it is time for civil disobedience to prevent the construction of new coal plants that do not have carbon

capture and sequestration," Gore told the Clinton Global Initiative gathering to loud applause.

"I believe for a carbon company to spend money convincing the stock-buying public that the risk from the global climate crisis is not that great represents a form of stock fraud because they are misrepresenting a material fact," he said. "I hope these state attorney generals around the country will take some action on that."

The government says about 28 coal plants are under construction in the United States. Another 20 projects have permits or are near the start of construction.

Scientists say carbon gases from burning fossil fuel for power and transport are a key factor in global warming.

Carbon capture and storage could give coal power an extended lease on life by keeping power plants' greenhouse gas emissions out of the atmosphere and easing climate change.

But no commercial-scale project exists anywhere to demonstrate the technology, partly because it is expected to increase up-front capital costs by an additional 50 percent.

So-called geo-sequestration of carbon sees carbon dioxide liquefied and pumped into underground rock layers for long term storage.

(Additional reporting by Timothy Gardner; Editing by Christine Kearney and Xavier Briand)

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AFP: EU must keep climate plans despite economic crisis: Brussels

Wed Sep 24, 5:44 PM ET

BRUSSELS (AFP) - Europe must not water down its plans to tackle global warming despite the current financial crisis, EU Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas said on Wednesday.

"There is an economic crisis, a financial crisis, an energy crisis and there is a climate crisis," Dimas told reporters after talks with Poland's environment minister.

"The climate crisis is permanent. All the other crises today, tomorrow, I hope will pass but the climate crisis is a permanent threat for the globe.

"We have to face it and we cannot really change our objectives because of a crisis that happens this month or the other," he said.

In January, the European Commission, the EU's executive arm, proposed a series of measures with the overall aim of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent from 1990 levels by 2020.

One of the measures was to bring the level of renewable energy up to 20 percent of total consumption.

Poland and some other member states have "expressed concerns" at reaching the targets and "we take them into account," said Dimas.

He said some tinkering with the plans could take place by year-end so as not to create economic and social problems, but "without diluting the environmental integrity of the proposal."

Polish MP Jerzy Buzek and Environment Minister Maciej Nowicki said the EU proposals' main goal, the 20 percent reduction of CO2 emissions by 2020, was not up for discussion.

"We want the best way, the optimal way," said Buzek.

"And also not very costly," added Nowicki.

They acknowledged that the energy sector must be modernised and that energy prices would have to rise in order to work towards the goal.

Nowicki did not repeat the threat he made earlier this month that Warsaw would block the climate package if it did not suit Poland.

Asked about this point by AFP, the minister merely burst into laughter.

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AFP: WHO says climate change poses health risks

Wed Sep 24, 4:33 PM ET

MANILA (AFP) - The World Health Organization on Wednesday warned Asia Pacific countries that they could be vulnerable to health risks and food shortages as a result of climate change.

Climate change is among the topics being discussed in a regional WHO conference being held in Manila, and governments are being pushed to put health issues in their national climate change mitigation plans, officials said.

Outgoing WHO regional director Shigeru Omi said that while they have been successful in dealing with controlling diseases, focus should shift to addressing "global health security" arising from global warming.

"A warmer planet has contributed to some diseases, such as dengue, now occurring in areas where it was never seen before," Omi said in a statement.

"Heat waves and droughts are among the many factors contributing to the current food crisis," he added. "Rising oceans could soon threaten our low-lying island states and areas in the Pacific."

A draft paper being discussed at the conference called for a regional framework of action to protect human health from climate change.

The paper said health risks include heat stress, waterborne and food-borne diseases associated with extreme weather events and malnutrition.

"These risks and diseases are not new, and the health sector already is tackling these problems," the paper noted.

"However, the capacity to cope with potentially increasing levels of these risks and diseases is limited, particularly in developing countries."

There remains a "limited" political commitment to include health considerations "in efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change," the paper said.

"There is also insufficient awareness among the general public about climate change and its impact on health," it said.

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**ROA MEDIA UPDATE
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UN In The News

Cameroun : Réchauffement ; La planète au défi des réfrigérants alternatifs - La reconstitution de la couche d'ozone assujettie à l'application du protocole de Montréal et ses amendements.

Quotidien Mutations (Yaoundé) : La 14e édition de la journée internationale pour la protection de la couche d'ozone s'est célébrée au Cameroun et le reste de la planète, le 16 septembre dernier. Sous le thème, "le protocole de Montréal: Un partenariat mondial pour les bienfaits mondiaux", les manifestations ont permis de révéler aux populations les vertus du protocole de Montréal qui a fait réduire "de 95% les substances appauvrissant la couche d'ozone (Sao), assurant ainsi la protection de cette dernière pour les générations présentes et futures". Pour autant, cet optimisme est à tempérer dans la mesure où le secrétaire général des Nations unies, Ban Ki Moon souligne qu'après "avoir subi les assauts chimiques pendant des décennies, elle aura peut-être besoin d'une cinquantaine d'années pour se rétablir pleinement". Cette manifestation intervient des jours seulement après la réunion des réseaux ozone d'Afrique, du 08 au 11 septembre dernier.

Une évaluation plus ou moins exacte de sa situation sera possible, de l'avis des experts, lors de la réunion de Copenhague sur les changements climatiques en 2009. D'ici à là, un autre bilan pourra être dressé sur le niveau de la couche de gaz contenue dans la stratosphère et qui protège la vie sur terre contre les rayons ultraviolets émis par le soleil et que l'on appelle ozone. Les facteurs à considérer lors du choix d'un frigorigène de remplacement sont: Le potentiel d'appauvrissement de la couche d'ozone, l'impact sur le réchauffement climatique, la toxicité et l'inflammabilité du frigorigène, les performances thermodynamiques (T°/P)?, la durée de vie atmosphérique du frigorigène, la compatibilité avec les matériaux utilisés dans le système et la miscibilité et la compatibilité avec les lubrifiants.

Toutes choses pouvant garantir à la couche d'ozone sa capacité à filtrer les rayons ultraviolets (Uv-B). Selon de nombreux scientifiques, lorsque les Uv-B arrivent au niveau de la terre, ils créent différentes formes de cancers notamment de la peau. Mais aussi des cataractes des yeux, la baisse du système de défense et la dégradation du phytoplancton. Ces désagréments causés aux êtres humains sont multipliés à la dimension de la surface terrestre où le réchauffement provoque différentes formes de dégradations. On cite: Le changement climatique, l'avancée des déserts, la destruction des écosystèmes etc. Pour y faire face le Cameroun ratifié (le 30 août 1989) au même titre que 192 autres pays les conventions de Montréal et de Vienne. A la suite du ministre camerounais de l'Environnement et la Protection de la Nature (Minep), Pierre Hélé, le coordonnateur local du programme ozone, Enoch Peter Ayuk, promet la ratification des autres amendements.

Mais déjà, au 31 décembre 2009, prévue en Afrique comme point de départ du gel de la production des hydro chlorofluorocarbones (Hcfc). Cette mesure devra cependant

prendre vigoureusement effet en 2013. Le protocole de Montréal prévoit l'élimination des Hcfc 2020 pour les pays développés et 2030 pour les pays en développement (contrairement aux prévisions antérieures visant 2030 et 2040 respectivement). Plus concrètement, les pays développés ont convenu de réduire leur production et leur consommation de 75% dès 2010, puis de 90% en 2015. Les pays en développement ont quant à eux, ont accepté une réduction de 10% en 2015, qui passera à 35% en 2020 et à 67,7% en 2025. L'accord envisage malgré tout que les pays en développement pourront continuer d'utiliser pendant la période 2030-2040 une petite quantité de Hcfc équivalant à 2,5% de leur consommation originelle.

Pour compenser ces efforts, le Fonds multilatéral (Fm) a été établi en 1989, avec le Pnud, le Pnue, l'Onudi et la Banque mondiale comme agences d'exécution au service des Pays en développement pour leur apporter le soutien financier et l'assistance technique requise pour se conformer au calendrier du protocole de Montréal. En 1994, le Fm est mis en place pour aider les pays d'Europe de l'Est et l'Ex Union soviétique. Le Protocole de Montréal relatif à des substances qui appauvrissent la couche d'ozone a été adopté le 16 septembre 1987 et il est entré en vigueur le 1er janvier 1989. A leurs deuxième, quatrième, septième, neuvième et onzième réunions, les parties au protocole de Montréal ont adopté, conformément à la procédure énoncée au paragraphe 9 de l'article 2 du Protocole, des décisions portant ajustement et réduction des volumes de production et de consommation des substances réglementées inscrites aux annexes du protocole. Les amendements de Londres et Copenhague quant à eux ont été ratifiés par le pays respectivement le 08 juin 1992 et le 25 juin 1996. L'administrateur de programme du Pnue, Blaise Horisberger appelle certains Etats dont le Cameroun, à ratifier les amendements de Montréal et Beijing à le faire.

Pour Comprendre

Des produits à éviter

L'Ozone a été identifié comme un constituant naturel de l'atmosphère. C'est un gaz bleuâtre composé de trois atomes d'oxygène. 90% de l'ozone atmosphérique se trouve concentré dans la stratosphère entre 15 et 35 km. On parle d'appauvrissement de la Couche d'ozone quand l'équilibre naturelle qui existe entre la production et la destruction de l'ozone stratosphérique est déplacé dans le sens de la destruction. Cette situation est créée quand il y a interférence entre l'ozone et des produits synthétiques appelés substances qui détruisent l'ozone (Sao). Ce sont des substances synthétiques chimiques organiques qui ont été inventées vers les années 28 et qui ont la propriété d'être stable et inflammable. Mais qui avaient malheureusement le pouvoir de détruire la couche d'ozone. Ceux sont les Chloro fluoro carbures (Cfc). Les Cfc sont largement utilisés dans la réfrigération.

Aussi, les Cfc sont utilisés dans les véhicules de transports, les trains de marchandises, les bateaux et la climatisation des bâtiments. Les Cfc se rencontrent aussi dans l'industrie du polyuréthane, phénolique, polystyrène etc. mais aussi comme solvant dans le processus d'assemblage électronique, dans le nettoyage de précision et pour le dégraissage industriel. On en trouve également dans le domaine des laques, déodorant, mousse à raser, insecticides, produits et pharmaceutiques. Le Bromure de Methylene est un pesticide qui a un large spectre de contrôle des insectes, des vers de terre, de mauvaises herbes, des maladies, des rongeurs... Depuis 1930 ce produit est utilisé dans la culture industrielle. Il est surtout aussi utilisé pour des opérations de quarantaine.

Cameroun: Diagnostic ; Ozone - Les environnementalistes ne cessent de le clamer : l'une des plus grosses menaces qui pèsent sur la planète, c'est la dégradation de la couche d'ozone.

Quotidien Mutations (Yaoundé) : La perte de cette couche protectrice mettrait en péril la vie sur terre au travers de toutes sortes de radiations provoquant des cancers et autres maladies graves. S'il est vrai que les premiers trous d'ozone ont été aperçus il y a une dizaine d'années déjà, personne n'est près de dire avec exactitude ce qui pourrait se passer à grande échelle en cas de progression d'une telle dégradation. Et qu'importe les cris alarmistes des spécialistes, le monde continue de se comporter comme si la couche d'ozone était éternelle. Et pourtant, crie les spécialistes, le monde entier ne s'est jamais autant exposé à la déconfiture qu'en ces années où la pollution s'est accentuée, fragilisant chaque jour davantage les écosystèmes terrestres.

C'est le changement climatique. Mais au-delà du débat scientifique, bien des observateurs continuent de penser que la question du changement climatique n'est que l'affaire des autres. En Afrique, on continue de penser naïvement que les effets de la dégradation du climat à l'échelle planétaire ne vont jamais nous atteindre. Et même quand pour faire bonne conscience les dirigeants consentent à prêter une oreille aux cris de détresse des organismes spécialisés, ils signent à tour de bras traités et accords qui, dans la pratique, restent lettres mortes. Il va falloir revoir nos politiques environnementales. Car aujourd'hui, il ne s'agit plus de discours, mais de réalités palpables dont les effets rejaillissent sur le quotidien des populations qui, sans doute, ne réalisent pas encore totalement ce qui se passent. Et pourtant...

Comme on a pu l'entendre par le passé pour d'autres lointaines contrées, le niveau de la mer a commencé aussi à s'élever au Cameroun. Le débit des précipitations annuelles baisse, créant des pénuries d'eau et, conséquemment, de la sécheresse. Les maladies telles que le paludisme s'aggravent... L'Afrique a accusé une baisse de sa production agricole de 0,4 % par habitant entre 2000 et 2004. Elle a par ailleurs le taux de déforestation le plus élevé au monde avec une perte annuelle de 40000 km², ou 0,18 % de son territoire. Les variations saisonnières actuelles ne sont qu'un indicateur de ces changements, avec des répercussions réelles sur l'activité agricole des populations paysannes. Les agriculteurs déjà touchés par les perturbations du cycle de l'eau, doivent désormais faire face à la menace permanente des inondations, sécheresses et pollutions diverses appelées à s'aggraver.

Pendant ce temps, l'on continue en Afrique d'avoir des comportements porteurs d'incertitudes comme l'abattage sauvage du couvert forestier, l'importation massive des gaz appauvrissant la couche d'ozone, très souvent avec la caution des autorités. La preuve par les frigos usagers qui retrouvent chez nous une seconde jeunesse alors qu'en occident ils sont jugés impropres à l'environnement. La faute à la pauvreté qui, ici, empêche tout effort de mise au vert. La faute aussi à nos dirigeants qui ne vont jamais plus loin que le discours autour de la protection de la couche d'ozone, faisant de ce combat un simple fonds de commerce. Peut-être aussi parce qu'ils n'ont jamais su quelles étaient nos priorités. Car à dire vrai, les questions de protection de la couche d'ozone sont si lointaines et aériennes qu'on devrait peut-être commencer par des choses simples comme l'aménagement du cadre de vie.

General Environment News

Congo-Brazzaville: Orders to Demolish Makeshift Fuel Stations

[UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): The government of the Republic of Congo has ordered the demolition of all unauthorised makeshift petrol stations located in residential areas in a move to prevent risks posed by the unsafe storage of fuel.

"These products are dangerous, their sale and usage needs to be done with respect to hygiene, security and the environment," Charles Alain Obanga, the Secretary General of l'Agence de Regulation de l'Aval Petrolier (ARAP), the national fuel body, told IRIN in the capital Brazzaville. ARAP has the responsibility of regulating and monitoring the stocking and selling of fuel products in the country. Those found selling fuel illegally will pay fines and be imprisoned, the agency warned.

As a precautionary measure all legal service stations are required to have fire extinguishers as well as valid operating licenses. The sale of petroleum products in residential areas has remained prevalent in the capital as in other towns despite the danger it poses. In August, a domestic fuel store caused a fire in the 16th arrondissement of Talanga burning 10 houses and leaving some people homeless.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809240769.html>

South Africa: 'USS Theodore Not Welcome Here'

[Cape Argus](#) (Cape Town): Environmental lobby group Earthlife Africa says it will oppose the docking of the USS Theodore Roosevelt - one of the world's most powerful nuclear vessels - in South African waters in October. The massive nuclear-powered US aircraft carrier is expected to arrive in Table Bay on a courtesy visit between October 1 and 10 on invitation from the SA Navy. The 332 metre US aircraft carrier, nicknamed "the Big Stick" or TR, has 5 700 people on board, carries 90 aircraft and saw her first action in the 1991 Gulf War.

The exact date of arrival of the super-carrier and its mission destination cannot be released for security reasons. But the Western Cape branch of Earthlife Africa says they don't want the vessel "anywhere near" Cape Town. Earthlife Africa spokesperson Keenen van Wyk said that although there wasn't much they could do to stop the vessel from entering South African waters, they would protest outside the harbour as soon as the carrier arrives. He said Earthlife Africa was also in the process of submitting a memorandum to the National Nuclear Regulator (NNR) to have the visit cancelled.

Any nuclear-powered vessel entering South Africa's waters must apply for a license from the NNR. The license application involves safety reports, environmental impact reports and public comment. The document is believed to have been granted to the vessel earlier in September, but is still open to public comment until the end of September.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809240537.html>

Uganda: Mbabazi Sold Wetland to NSSF, Says Nema

[The Monitor](#) (Kampala): About one in four acres that Security Minister Amama Mbabazi and businessman Amos Nzeyi sold to the National Social Security Fund are in a wetland, the National Environment Management Authority confirmed to Parliament yesterday. Nema Executive Director Aryamanya Mugisha yesterday told MPs investigating the

controversial transaction that 116.18 acres out of the 463.87 that NSSF paid for are in a wetland, which is protected from development under the law.

MPs on the Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises committee had asked Nema to carry out an environmental audit of the land after Mr Mbabazi denied claims, made earlier by legislators after a visit to the site, that part of the land was a wetland.

Presenting a written and video report to MPs yesterday, Nema specialist Francis Ogwal said: "Approximately 25 per cent; 116.18 acres of the total area of 463.87 acres is a wetland," he said. Yesterday's revelations mean that out of the 99.22 acres sold by Mr Mbabazi to NSSF through his company, Arma Limited, 41.75 acres are in a wetland. Out of the 364.65 acres that Mr Nzeyi sold to the Fund, 74.43 acres are in a wetland. According to Nema, the wetland in Temangalo connects to two rivers; Kanyogoga and Kanywamusayi. <http://allafrica.com/stories/200809240063.html>

Uganda: Telecoms Team Up to Reverse Costs

The Monitor (Kampala): Global telecommunication companies led by Kenya's Safaricom have unveiled an environmentally friendly initiative that will encourage them to exploit energy-cost saving sources, towards lower communication tariffs for consumers. United under the Global Systems for Mobile communications Association (GSMA), 25 leading telecoms including MTN Uganda and Zain, on Thursday started the Green Power for Mobile programme at a meeting in Nairobi, Kenya.

The programme is meant to help the mobile industry use renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, or sustainable biofuels, to power 118,000 new and existing off-grid base stations in developing countries by 2012. Base stations are a combination of power generators and telecommunication masts used to relay wireless communications to people. By achieving powering that number of base stations on renewable energy, it would save up to 2.5 billion litres of diesel per annum and cut annual global carbon emissions by up to 6.3 million tonnes, according to information sent to Daily Monitor, by the association on September 18.

The GSMA, the global trade body for the mobile industry forecasts that by 2012 up to 50 percent of new off-grid base stations in the developing world could be powered by renewable energy. <http://allafrica.com/stories/200809240140.html>

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UNEP or UN in the news

Global forum for sport, environment to explore climate change solutions

Jakarta, (ANTARA News) - After 4.7 billion people watched the largest sporting event in history, the Beijing Olympics, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) analyzes the impact of sport on climate change.

How can sport organizations reduce their greenhouse gas emissions? And what role can they play as the world is called upon to `UNite to combat climate change`, according to a UNEP press statement from Bangkok on Thursday.

The 2008 Global Forum for Sport and Environment (G-ForSE), with the theme Climate Change: Changing our Carbon Footprint, will address these questions in Alicante, Spain from 4 to 6 October 2008.

UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner, the Spanish Secretary of State for Climate Change Teresa Ribera, as well as more than 100 high level officials and experts from

international sports organizations and federations, organizers of major sporting events and civil society groups will come together for the 5th edition of the G-ForSE to discuss solutions and promote a low-footprint approach to sports, as well as ways in which sports can be used to raise awareness on climate change.

The Forum will coincide with the launch of the 10th edition of the Volvo Ocean Race, which will travel 37,000 miles across five oceans, four continents and 11 ports around the world, UNEP press statement said.

<http://www.antara.co.id/en/arc/2008/9/25/global-forum-for-sport-environment-to-explore-climate-change-solutions/>

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Combating Climate Change Creates Millions Of Jobs

Thursday, 25 September 2008, 12:24 pm

Press Release: United Nations

Combating climate change could create millions of jobs, says UN-backed study

24 September 2008 – Tackling climate change could potentially generate millions of new employment opportunities, according to a new United Nations-backed study – the first of its kind on the emergence of a “green economy” and its impact on labour – released today.

Entitled “Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World,” the publication shows how efforts to address global warming and slash greenhouse gas emissions are leading to new “green” jobs in many sectors. This, in turn, has resulted in increased investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The report – a joint effort by the UN International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Trade Union Confederation and the International Organization of Employers – includes recommendations in the run-up to next year’s UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, which seeks to create a successor pact to the Kyoto Protocol, whose first-round commitments end in 2012.

“What this report is about from the perspective of sustainability is to show the policymakers that with the right incentives, the right research and development support programmes, there is massive potential here for new economic sectors to emerge,” UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner said at a news conference in New York.

He noted that amid the current financial turmoil seen in different parts of the world, countries will spend hundreds of billions of dollars in coming months to stabilize the global economy.

“Imagine for a moment if some of the stimulus packages that are now being developed could be targeted towards not maintaining and sustaining the old economy of the 20th century but investing in the new economy of the 21st century,” he stated.

The report highlights the importance of boosting investment access for developing countries and increasing energy efficiency in buildings and industry, among other things.

But it also points to how climate change is adversely affecting workers and their families who depend on agriculture and tourism for their livelihoods.

Too few green jobs are being created for the most vulnerable, the study warns, with 1.3 billion of the world's working poor – or 43 per cent of the global workforce – earning less than \$2 a day.

It also stresses the need for “just transitions” for those affected by the switch to a more green economy with access to new employment opportunities, noting the importance of dialogue among governments, workers and employers to ease potential tensions and to ensure that all sectors are involved in developing more coherent environmental, economic and social policies.

“We need to make sure that green jobs are decent jobs,” said ILO Director-General Juan Somavia. “As the report makes clear, building a low-carbon economy is not only about technology or finances, it’s about peoples and societies. It’s about a cultural change to a greater environmental consciousness and opportunities for decent work.

“New jobs will be created, others adapted and some will fade out. In order to keep the political will and the public support, we will have to put policies in place that have to focus from the beginning on those at the receiving end of this transition,” he stated.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0809/S00566.htm>

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Group Maps Communities Tackling Climate Change

Thursday, 25 September 2008, 10:48 am

Press Release: Joint Press Release

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Clean Up the World

Media Release

24 September 2008

Clean Up the World maps communities tackling Climate Change

For the first time ever, communities worldwide taking action to protect the environment as part of the Clean Up the World campaign will have the opportunity to plot their activities using a new online mapping function.

Developed with the support of Google, Clean Up the World's technology partner, the new website will give participating groups the chance to profile and share their environmental activities as part of the Clean Up the World Weekend, 19-21 Sept, and the year-round campaign.

The Australian founder and chairman of the campaign, Ian Kiernan AO* said many of this year's Clean Up the World activities will be focused on limiting the impacts of climate changes under the campaign's theme 'Start today....Save tomorrow – Clean Up Our Climate'.

"Tens of millions of people around the world taking simple actions is the perfect first step towards protecting the Earth for our future generations," Mr Kiernan said.

"All over the world people are seeing the devastating effects of climate change. Clean Up the World provides every person and every community with the opportunity to do something about it."

"Now, thanks to Clean Up the World's use of Google Maps, we have the tool to visually show the extent of environmental action being undertaken around the world and motivate new communities to get involved in the campaign."

Participating organisations and their volunteers will take part in a range of activities designed to improve the environment such as waste reduction and recycling, water and energy conservation, and revegetation.

The Clean Up the World campaign is in its 16th year and has the support of the United Nation's Environment Programme (UNEP).

Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP, praised the efforts of organisations across the world involved in the Clean Up the World campaign.

"Climate change is the number one issue facing humanity at the turn of the 21st century - lives are threatened as is the very fabric of all countries and communities. So let's all start today to save tomorrow." he said.

* AO Order of Australia awarded for distinguished service of a high degree to Australia or to humanity at large.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0809/S00561.htm>

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United Nations launches TV channel on YouTube

Press Trust of India, Wednesday, September 24, 2008, (New York)

The United Nations has launched its television channel on YouTube, a popular video sharing web site, in an effort to reach a broader and younger audience on a range of issues on the world body's agenda.

The programmes to be aired on the channel, are produced by UN Television (UNTV) along with the organisation's various agencies and their funds, and will cover topics such as climate change, development, human rights, peace and security.

Some of the current stories posted on site address the fight against prejudice of India's dalits, the ecological threats to the Galapagos Islands, the UN's monthly news magazine that spotlights the world's forgotten stories.

The UN is also partnering with YouTube to launch a joint campaign "In MY Name" with NGOs like Oxfam, GPAC and Save the Children to draw attention to the Millennium Development Goals the set of eight anti-poverty targets world leaders have pledged to achieve by 2015.

As part of the campaign, Black Eyed Peas singer Will.i.am will ask citizens from every country to upload footage to YouTube supporting the MDGs by stating their name, their country and, if desired, a request to their government to end poverty.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon intends to join the online petition by the Black Eyed Peas artist.

The partnership with YouTube is the latest effort by the UN to use new media to reach a varied audience. The world body recently drew on SMS mechanics for the International Day of Peace "Txt 4 Peace" campaign encouraging people across the world to send messages of peace.

An innovative partnership was also forged between Internet giant Google and the UN Environment Programme to map environmental projects across the globe.
<http://www.ndtv.com/convergence/ndtv/story.aspx?id=NEWEN20080066532&ch=9/24/2008%2012:20:00%20PM>

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Green economy projected to double by 2020: UN

Sep 24th, 2008 | By Sindh Today | Category: World

New York, Sep 25 (DPA) The so-called green economy is booming across the globe and the market for environmental products and services is likely to double by 2020, according to a UN study.

Efforts to combat climate change have already created millions of new 'green jobs' and opened up fresh sectors for economic growth as countries around the world invest in new technologies, the report said Wednesday.

UN officials urged governments to keep going despite a global economic crisis.

'The world will spend hundreds of billions of dollars in the next 12 months on stabilising the global economy. Imagine for a moment if some of the stimulus packages could be targeted towards ... investing in the new economy of the 21st century,' Achim Steiner, head of the UN Environment Programme, told reporters.

The UN report, released on the sidelines of an annual UN summit marking a new year for the General Assembly, projected the global market for 'green' products and services would double to \$2.74 billion by 2020.

The study also warns that many poorer countries, who have suffered most from the effects of climate change, are being left out of the boom. Shifting developing economies from dirty to clean industries is as crucial for reducing global warming as it is for pulling many developing regions out of poverty, the UN said.

In a separate move on global warming Wednesday, the UN launched a new initiative to help developing countries combat deforestation, which contributes about 20 percent of greenhouse-gases entering the atmosphere.

Nine countries, including Indonesia, Congo and Vietnam have agreed to take part. Norway has pledged \$35 million to start off the programme.

<http://www.sindhtoday.net/world/23318.htm>

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Green energy should create 20m jobs by 2030:UN

NEW YORK -- Development of alternative energy should create more than 20 million jobs around the world in coming decades as governments adopt policies to address the depletion of resources, according to a UN report.

Some 2.3 million people around the world already work in alternative energy jobs with half of them in biofuels, said the report, "Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World," commissioned and funded by the UN's Environment Programme.

Speedy creation of the jobs will depend on countries implementing and broadening policies including capping emissions of greenhouse gases, and the shifting of subsidies from the oil and natural gas sector, to new energy including wind, solar and geothermal power, it said.

"If we do not transform to a low-carbon economy we will miss a major opportunity for the fast tracking of millions of new jobs," Achim Steiner, UNEP director, told reporters.

He said movement toward the jobs will occur even if the world does not come to a new agreement by the end of next year on stabilizing and then cutting greenhouse gases. That's because global population is headed toward 8 billion or 9 billion by 2050, while new resources like metals, oil and gas are becoming more expensive to find, he said.

But if the world waits 10 years to take serious action on greenhouse gases the costs for moving to a green economy will be much higher, he said.

US President George W. Bush walked away from the U.N.'s carbon-capping Kyoto Protocol early in his first term, saying it would raise costs and unfairly exempt rapidly developing countries from emissions limits. Delegates from across the world will try to reach a successor agreement to the Kyoto pact in a UN meeting in Copenhagen late next year.

Biofuel jobs

The report was written before the US credit crisis reshaped Wall Street and reverberated around the world raising fears that many sectors could be slowed, including alternative energy.

Mr Steiner said it would be a mistake to ditch green energy policies during the current financial crisis because in the long term the new jobs will make economies stronger and help make goods with less oil and gas.

The report said some 12 million new jobs could be created by 2030 in biofuels-related agriculture and industry.

Biofuel critics say current US ethanol, which is mostly made from corn, does little to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But companies are racing to make cleaner, next-

generation ethanol from sources including crop waste and rapidly growing non-food crops like switch grass and poplar trees.

The report said many jobs in the biofuels industry are unfair to workers. "Much of the employment on sugarcane and palm oil plantations in countries like Brazil, Colombia, Malaysia and Indonesia is marked by poor pay and dangerous working conditions," it said.

"There is also concern that large-scale biofuels production might drive large numbers of people off their land in future years," it said. "Close scrutiny" will be needed to determine what portion of biofuel jobs can be counted as decent jobs, it added.

Manufacturing, installing, and maintaining solar panels should add 6.3 million jobs by 2030 while wind power should add more than 2 million jobs. Even more jobs could be created in the building, recycling, and clean-vehicle manufacturing sectors, the report said.

<http://www.businessspectator.com.au/bs.nsf/Article/UPDATE-1-Green-energy-should-create-20-mln-jobs-by-JSP96?OpenDocument>

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United Nations launches TV channel on YouTube

24 Sep 2008, 1022 hrs IST,PTI

NEW YORK: The United Nations has launched its television channel on YouTube, a popular video sharing web site, in an effort to reach a broader and younger audience on a range of issues on the world body's agenda.

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http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Developmental_Issues/United_Nations_launches_TV_channel_on_YouTube/articleshow/3520616.cms

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UN launches TV channel on YouTube

9/24/2008 10:44:21 AM

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<http://www.timesnow.tv/NewsDtls.aspx?NewsID=16629>

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20m jobs from green energy

Wed, Sep 24, 2008, Reuters

UNITED NATIONS - DEVELOPMENT of alternative energy should create more than 20 million jobs around the world in coming decades as governments adopt policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, according to a UN report released on Wednesday.

Some 2.3 million people already work in green energy jobs with half of them in biofuels, said the report 'Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World,' commissioned and funded by the UN's Environment Programme.

Creation of the jobs will depend on countries implementing and broadening policies, including capping emissions of greenhouse gases and shifting of subsidies from old energy forms to new ones, in the effort to slow global warming, it said.

The report was written before the US credit crisis reshaped Wall Street and reverberated around the world, which could slow many sectors, including alternative energy.

It said some 12 million new jobs could be created by 2030 in biofuels-related agriculture and industry.

Biofuel critics say current US ethanol, which is mostly made from corn, does little to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

But companies are racing to make cleaner, next-generation ethanol from sources including crop waste and rapidly growing non-food crops like switch grass and poplar trees.

The report said many jobs in the biofuels industry are unfair to workers. 'Much of the employment on sugarcane and palm oil plantations in countries like Brazil, Colombia, Malaysia and Indonesia is marked by poor pay and dangerous working conditions,' it said.

'There is also concern that large-scale biofuels production might drive large numbers of people off their land in future years,' it said.

'Close scrutiny' will be needed to determine what portion of biofuel jobs can be counted as decent jobs, it added.

Manufacturing, installing, and maintaining solar panels should add 6.3 million jobs by 2030 while wind power should add more than 2 million jobs. Even more jobs could be created in the building, recycling, clean vehicle manufacturing sectors, the report said.

The world will try to reach a successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol in a UN meeting in Copenhagen late next year.

The United States is alone among industrialised countries in rejecting the carbon-capping Kyoto pact.

President George W. Bush has said the pact would raise costs and unfairly leave rapidly developing countries like India and China without greenhouse gas limits.

<http://news.asiaone.com/News/AsiaOne%2BNews/World/Story/A1Story20080924-89744.html>

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http://www.straitstimes.com/Breaking%2BNews/World/Story/STIStory_282034.html

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Ocean of garbage

PANKAJ SEKHSARIA

September 20 was Coastal Clean-up Day. But, is one day enough to clean up our coastlines?

Over 80 per cent of plastic that is found in the seas has been washed out from land. a visit to the coast will give you an idea of the scale of the crisis.

Here are some unbelievable facts of what garbage, mainly plastic waste, is doing to our oceans and the birds and animals that live in them.

According to the United Nations Environment Programme at least one million sea birds and about 100,000 marine mammals such as dolphins, whales and seals are killed by plastic every year.

Startling facts

A study conducted in the Netherlands found that 95 per cent of sea birds in the North Sea had plastic inside their stomachs; one bird in Belgium had 1600 pieces of plastic in its stomach. Nearly 600,000 tons of discarded plastic is believed to have settled at the bottom of the North sea.

There is so much plastic waste that is floating on our seas that researchers, scientists and regular ocean travellers refer to these as continents of plastic; a single plastic continent could weigh over three million tons.

One only needs to do a simple 'garbage in oceans' search on the Internet to actually find out the scale of the problem that we have created. Tens of thousands of pages of shocking information and pictures about the state of the oceans that cover 70 per cent of this planet. It is important also to bear in mind that this is a problem that is essentially created by humans. Over 80 per cent of the plastic that is found in the seas has been washed out from land – from our landfills, from our garbage cans – the plastic that we use and carelessly throw away day after day.

All of us may not have the opportunity to see what is happening in the far away oceans, a visit to any of our coast lines that is piled up with waste of all kinds gives us a good idea of the scale of this crisis.

Coastal Clean up day was on September 20, and was one effort at dealing with the problem when a large number of organisations and volunteers all over the world came together to clean up the coasts. The magnitude is such, that efforts like this can only make a small dent. A much better and long term solution, experts point out, is to adopt the 3R principle – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. That might be the only way out, because how much ever we clean up, the waste is not going away if we continue to generate it at the pace and quantities that we are presently doing.

<http://www.hindu.com/yw/2008/09/23/stories/2008092350030200.htm>

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The stormy appearance of climate change

Wednesday, September 24, 2008

THE devastation wrought by hurricanes Gustav, Hanna and Ike in the Caribbean has fuelled concern about the effects of global warming on the formation and intensity of tropical storms, an issue that has divided the scientific community and is causing alarm among island nations and coastal communities.

While the debate continues among climate experts, international bodies are studying the economic and social effects of the catastrophes caused by cyclones in the Caribbean basin, with the aim of designing and implementing adaptation measures to help countries cope with natural disasters.

"Over the next few years, we will continue to have active hurricane seasons, unless an El Nino episode happens, which brings a drop in activity in the Atlantic in any given year," said José Rubiera, the head of the national forecast centre of Cuba's Institute of Meteorology.

El Nino and La Nina are the extreme phases of the oceanic-atmospheric phenomenon known as the El Nino Southern Oscillation (Enso), which takes place in the equatorial region of the Pacific ocean every two to seven years, affecting different regions around the world to varying degrees, and especially South America.

La Nina is characterised by an atypical cooling of the surface waters of the ocean and an increase in the winds blowing east to west at the equator. The better known El Nino is the opposite: warmer surface waters and weaker winds.

"We will certainly continue to see intense hurricanes, associated with the heating up of the waters of the Atlantic ocean," said Rubiera.

Rising sea temperatures favour the formation of tropical storms. Some experts say the increased concentration of greenhouse gases has contributed — to what extent is still under debate in academic circles — to the heating up of the oceans by 0.5 degrees Celsius.

But there is no consensus on what impact the rise in temperature has had on the frequency or intensity of hurricanes.

In 2005, US scientists Judith Curry at Georgia Tech and Kerry Emmanuel at MIT published studies that reported an increase in the intensity of tropical cyclones worldwide since 1970, parallel to the phenomenon of the heating up of the oceans.

However, the annual average number of storms had remained steady, they said.

"There has been an increase in Atlantic tropical storm frequency since 1995, related to the 25- to 30-year cycles of hurricane activity, as has occurred at other periods during the 19th and 20th centuries," said Rubiera.

"In other parts of the world, the frequency of cyclone formation has not increased," he said.

"But the intensity of tropical storms is quite another matter: there does seem to be an increase in the number of intense hurricanes of categories 3, 4 and 5 (the maximum level on the Saffir-Simpson scale)," the expert said.

Between 1952 and 2000, Cuba was hit by only one near-category 3 hurricane, Flora, in 1963, in which over 1,000 people were killed in the eastern part of the island.

But in the period from 2000 to 2008, six high-intensity cyclones have pounded this Caribbean country, the most recent, Ike, traversing virtually the whole island from east to west.

The Saffir-Simpson scale classifies hurricanes according to their sustained wind speeds, from 119 kilometres per hour (category 1) to over 250 kilometres per hour (category 5).

In addition to gusting winds, waves and storm surges (above-normal sea levels caused by high winds piling up coastal water), torrential rain and tornadoes are the main causes of the destruction wrought by hurricanes.

"An interesting point is that this scale is quadratic, so that a category 2 hurricane does not cause twice as much damage as a category 1, but four times as much. A category 3 hurricane does not cause three times as much damage as a category 1, but nine times as much, and so on," Rubiera wrote in an article published in Enfoques magazine, produced by the IPS bureau in Cuba.

In the last few years the Caribbean region has been battered with particular ruthlessness by the devastating power of hurricanes.

In 2004, Grenada, a small English-speaking Caribbean island nation of approximately 90,000 people, suffered damages estimated at 889 million dollars, more than twice the country's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003, from the onslaught of hurricane Ivan.

Hurricanes Gustav and Ike caused estimated losses in Cuba of five billion dollars, including the destruction of more than 63,000 homes and the devastation of close to 100,000 hectares of crops, in a country with a serious housing deficit and where the agriculture industry is unable to feed its 11.2 million people. But only seven people were killed.

According to the official state newspaper Granma, the combined action of both hurricanes has been the most devastating in the history of these meteorological phenomena in Cuba, in terms of the magnitude of the material damages caused.

The situation is even worse in the impoverished Caribbean nation of Haiti, which was lashed by tropical storm Hanna, as well as hurricanes Fay, Gustav and Ike, leaving a death toll variously reported as over 300 (by the national civil protection unit) or over 600 (the official government figure) and an estimated one million homeless.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has launched an appeal for 108 million dollars for emergency relief and recovery efforts in Haiti.

"The fact is there is a cumulative effect, with new meteorological phenomena impacting on areas that have not yet fully recovered," says a report titled "El cambio climático en América Latina y el Caribe" (Climate Change in Latin America and the Caribbean), published by the United Nations Environment Programme (Unep) in 2006.

Another document, published by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in August 2006, called for the adoption of simultaneous mitigation and adaptation measures against natural disasters in the region, in the face of daunting climate forecasts for the coming years.

"We have to strike a balance between the urgent provision of shelters and roofs for the vulnerable population, and rebuilding houses and roofs with the strength and stability to withstand future hurricanes," said Susan McDade, resident coordinator of the United Nations System in Cuba.

"The challenge is to rebuild with higher quality standards and not just replace houses with others that will continue to be vulnerable to natural disasters. This will require coordination of the international community and working with the Cuban authorities," McDade said.

http://www.bt.com.bn/en/analysis/2008/09/24/the_stormy_appearance_of_climate_change

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Environment agency distributes reusable bags to shoppers

Wednesday, September 24, 2008

IN AN ongoing effort to raise awareness on utilising reusable bags in the country, the Department of Environment, Parks and Recreation (Jastre) distributed 350 bags to customers at the Hua Ho Department Store of the Petani Mall in Tutong District yesterday.

The department invited Tutong district officer, Hj Idris Hj Md Ali to distribute the bags together with the Hua Ho Department Store manager, Alex Lim and officers from the department.

Hj Mohd Rozaini Hj Rusli, a technical assistant at the department, said that it was hoped that the presence of the district officer would encourage the people to utilise the reusable bags whenever they visit the supermarket.

"He acts as a role model in today's campaign," he said.

The event began with the handing over of a reusable bag to the Tutong district officer from the senior officer of Jastre, Martinah Hj Tamit. This was followed by the presentation of the bag to Alex Lim, manager of the Tutong District store.

The campaign urges the public to reduce the overall use of plastic bags as much as possible, and to always bring and utilise reusable bags instead.

It is hoped that through this campaign, more awareness will be raised to consumers in realising the need to reduce their dependency on plastic bags in order to move towards a clean, green and low carbon lifestyle.

According to another officer from the department, the distribution of bags at supermarkets was to encourage the supermarket itself to start their own initiative in distributing reusable bags to its customers.

"We have already started to look into implementing the utilisation of reusable bags even before the campaign began in June this year," said Alex Lim, adding that there has been a discussion on the designs of their reusable bags.

The effect that plastic bags have on the environment needs to be broadcast more to the public and hopefully in time, people will slowly practise using reusable bags, he said.

"I'm aware of the hazardous effects that plastic bags have on the environment," said Hjh Norita of Kg Bukit Bendera as she pushed her trolley from the counter.

She said that she will definitely use the bag the next time she visits the supermarket.

However, Angie On of Kg Sg Besar admitted that she will only use it when she remembers to use the bag. "But I will use it. It's a good idea and I think it should have been implemented earlier," she said.

She added that it will be difficult to persuade the elderly to use the bags. "My mother prefers to use plastic bags as she would later use it to throw rubbish."

The campaign was a follow-up to the "Kick the Habit! Towards a Low Carbon Economy" initiative that was launched earlier in June in conjunction with United Nations Environmental Programme's (UNEP) World Environment Day this year.

According to Hj Mohd Rozaini, the next campaign will hit supermarkets in the Gadong area which is due to begin tomorrow.

http://www.bt.com.bn/en/home_news/2008/09/24/environment_agency_distributes_reusable_bags_to_shoppers

General environment news

Thousands stranded as storms hit China quake area

Reuters | Thursday, 25 September 2008

Continuous rain near the epicentre of China's May 12 earthquake has killed at least eight people and left 38 missing, with thousands stranded by mountain torrents, cave-ins and mudslides.

The downpours began to pound Mianyang city and surrounding countryside in Sichuan province, southwest China, on Monday night, Xinhua news agency said.

Mianyang encompasses Beichua and other areas that were the hardest-hit counties in the Sichuan earthquake, which killed at least 80,000 people.

In the latest disaster, at least 2,200 houses have collapsed and 6,500 people were stranded throughout the hilly region, Xinhua said. "Some pre-fabricated houses built after the quake and other residences were flooded," the report said.

More than 300 people were injured in the downpours, said an earlier report.

The rainstorms were separate to a typhoon which ploughed into a densely populated area of south China on Wednesday, triggering a "once-in-a-century storm tide" in several cities.

Earlier this month, a mudslide caused by the collapse of a mine waste reservoir killed more than 260 people in their village homes in northern China.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/sundaystartimes/4705262a6443.html>

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Typhoon sweeps HK, China, Vietnam

The Post Monitoring

HONG KONG: The authorities in southern China have evacuated more than 100,000 people from their homes as Typhoon Hagupit hit.

The weather system killed at least eight people in the Philippines, and closed schools in Hong Kong.

As it headed towards Guangdong province in southern China, the area was put on the highest level alert.

Authorities in Vietnam prepared to evacuate residents of coastal areas as it appeared the typhoon was heading south.

Trees were uprooted and traffic disrupted in Hong Kong. Flash floods hit low-lying areas and dozens of people were injured. Typhoon signals were lowered from Number 8 to Number 3 on Wednesday morning allowing businesses and schools to reopen. The typhoon made landfall in Guangdong province, which neighbours Hong Kong, just after dawn on Wednesday, with winds of 172 km/h (106 mph), Xinhua news agency reported.

It is predicted to hit Guangxi province, west of Guangdong, and the island of Hainan.

More than 50,000 ships and fishing vessels were called back to port and torrential rain and widespread flooding is forecast in China. Schools and kindergartens in southern China were ordered to close, and flights were likely to be cancelled or diverted, officials said. Streets had emptied, and some shops and business were closed.

The typhoon is expected bring heavy rain to Vietnam's north and could unleash major flooding, that country's weather centre reported. Officials were told to prepare stockpiles of food and medicine for areas likely to be isolated by floods.

The Vietnamese government warned that with floods came the risk of landslides in northern coastal and mountainous provinces. Landslides and flooding in the Philippines continues to trap at least 14 goldminers underground.

<http://thepost.com.pk/IntNewsT.aspx?dtlid=184767&catid=1>

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The greening of Metro Manila

ROSES & THORNS By Alejandro R. Roces
Thursday, September 25, 2008

One of the pleasant memories that I have of the pre-war days were the acacia trees that lined both sides of most streets. Now many people with good intentions are trying to substitute the flame tree for these acacia trees. The flame tree is unquestionably a beautiful tree when it is in bloom. But that is only for a few weeks. The rest of the time, it is not as attractive as the acacia tree.

It is my dream to, one day, see Metro Manila into a garden metropolis. We are now in our mid-eighties and it does not take much to see that I will not live long enough to realize that dream. But I still want this to happen for the benefit of my children, grandchildren and of course, the entire future generation.

Our cities are faced with the worsening problem of pollution that is caused by heavy traffic. To date, the only answer to this problem is to plant trees. Sad to say, no city in Metro Manila has gone into a program of greening their respective cities. As we said earlier, trees will definitely enhance the cities that make up Metro Manila. In Ayala Avenue, Makati, for instance, there is an aisle in the middle of the streets that is almost totally vacant. We hope to see the day that Makati City Hall turns that sector into a miniature forest. We do not want to be repetitive but it will first beautify the area; second, it will help bring down pollution.

We note that Bambi Harper, Intramuros Administration head, has scheduled the planting of flame trees at the Plaza Roma (formerly Plaza Mayor) fronting the Manila Cathedral and at the Maestranza Park beside the Pasig River. Again, maybe planting acacia trees would be better. Before this, we were saddened to see 29 age-old mahogany and rosewood trees at the Plaza Roma that were mercilessly cut down against Harper's instruction that the trees must be balled and moved to provide a better view of the Cathedral. As part of Bambi Harper's plan to re-launch Intramuros as a "new tourist destination", we strongly suggest incorporating the "greening" plan for the historic Walled City.

Maybe trees can be planted along the path that our martyred nationalist Dr. Jose P. Rizal treaded from the prison cell of Fort Santiago when he was about to be shot.

It is true that only God can make a tree but anyone can plant a tree. And when we plant a tree, it is something that will enhance the life of not only the present generation, but also of future generations. In short, a tree is one of the things that we can leave behind when we go to the next world.

<http://www.philstar.com/index.php?Opinion&p=49&type=2&sec=25&aid=2008092499>

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Global warming's causing malaria: Mayor

Statesman News Service

KOLKATA, Sept. 24: You may know all about the link between lost kingdoms and horseshoe nails without ever having anticipated this connection. And it isn't something out of Ripley's. No less a person than Kolkata's mayor has blamed the city's ever multiplying number of mosquitoes on ~ hold your breath ~ global warming! Yes, mayor Mr Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharyya claimed today that global warming is one of the reasons for rise in mosquito breeding thereby leading to increase in incidents of malaria in the city.

He said the Kolkata Municipal Corporation's (KMC) problems have been coupled with mosquitoes becoming resistant to the chloroquine drug.

Speaking at the KMC's monthly meeting, Mr Bhattacharyya said: "Till a few years back incidents of malaria were few. But with a change in global temperatures there has been a rise in malarial cases all over the world." He was replying to queries raised by the leader of the Opposition, Mr Jawed Ahmed Khan.

Mr Khan had brought an adjournment motion in the House over increasing incidents of malaria and dengue in the city.

Blaming the health department for its failure to tackle these cases, Mr Khan alleged that malarial figures have been manipulated. Contradicting KMC reports, the Trinamul Congress leader said there has been 12 deaths due of malaria.

He further questioned the surveillance work carried out by field workers of the civic body. Alleging that workers were making false entries in logbooks, he said that while surveillance work was never carried out in some Wards, like ward 66, entries have been made about visits made by health workers in those Wards.

Leader of Congress municipal party, Mr Pradip Ghosh, also lambasted the health department for its failure to curb malaria and dengue cases.

Questions were also raised as to why the KMC had failed to appoint assistant entomologists in all 15 of its boroughs. A suggestion to strengthen the vector control wing of the civic body was made way back in 2005 by Dr RN Bhatt of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Noida. Till date no appointment has been made. Explaining reasons for this non-appointment, member mayor-in-council (health), Dr Subodh De, said: "In order to make appointments, KMC has to surrender 15 vacant posts. But at present we do not have any vacant posts to surrender."

Refusing to accept KMC's 'failure' in controlling spread of malaria, Mr Bhattacharyya said: "Medical science has proven that malaria cannot be eradicated. But we will have to find ways to control it."

<http://www.thestatesman.net/page.news.php?clid=23&theme=&usrsess=1&id=224015>

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ROLAC MEDIA UPDATE
THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE NEWS
24 September 2008

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1- Caribbean - The Stormy Face of Climate Change

09 – 22 – 08

HAVANA, Cuba - The devastation wrought by hurricanes Gustav, Hanna and Ike in the Caribbean has fuelled concern about the effects of global warming on the formation and intensity of tropical storms, an issue that has divided the scientific community and is causing alarm among island nations and coastal communities.

While the debate continues among climate experts, international bodies are studying the economic and social effects of the catastrophes caused by cyclones in the Caribbean basin, with the aim of designing and implementing adaptation measures to help countries cope with natural disasters.

"Over the next few years, we will continue to have active hurricane seasons, unless an El Niño episode happens, which brings a drop in activity in the Atlantic in any given year," José Rubiera, the head of the national forecast centre of Cuba's Institute of Meteorology, told IPS.

"El Niño" and "La Niña" are the extreme phases of the oceanic-atmospheric phenomenon known as the "El Niño Southern Oscillation" (ENSO), which takes place in the equatorial region of the Pacific ocean every two to seven years, affecting different regions around the world to varying degrees, and especially South America.

La Niña is characterised by an atypical cooling of the surface waters of the ocean and an increase in the winds blowing east to west at the equator. The better known El Niño is the opposite: warmer surface waters and weaker winds.

"We will certainly continue to see intense hurricanes, associated with the heating up of the waters of the Atlantic ocean," said Rubiera.

Rising sea temperatures favour the formation of tropical storms. Some experts say the increased concentration of greenhouse gases has contributed -- to what extent is still under debate in academic circles -- to the heating up of the oceans by 0.5 degrees Celsius.

But there is no consensus on what impact the rise in temperature has had on the frequency or intensity of hurricanes.

In 2005, U.S. scientists Judith Curry at Georgia Tech and Kerry Emmanuel at MIT published studies that reported an increase in the intensity of tropical cyclones worldwide since 1970, parallel to the phenomenon of the heating up of the oceans. However, the annual average number of storms had remained steady, they said.

"There has been an increase in Atlantic tropical storm frequency since 1995, related to the 25- to 30-year cycles of hurricane activity, as has occurred at other periods during the 19th and 20th centuries," said Rubiera.

"In other parts of the world, the frequency of cyclone formation has not increased," he said.

"But the intensity of tropical storms is quite another matter: there does seem to be an increase in the number of intense hurricanes of categories 3, 4 and 5 (the maximum level on the Saffir-Simpson scale)," the expert said.

Between 1952 and 2000, Cuba was hit by only one near-category 3 hurricane, Flora, in 1963, in which over 1,000 people were killed in the eastern part of the island. But in the period from 2000 to 2008, six high-intensity cyclones have pounded this Caribbean country, the most recent, Ike, traversing virtually the whole island from east to west.

The Saffir-Simpson scale classifies hurricanes according to their sustained wind speeds, from 119 kilometres per hour (category 1) to over 250 kilometres per hour (category 5). In addition to gusting winds, waves and storm surges (above-normal sea levels caused by high winds piling up coastal water), torrential rain and tornadoes are the main causes of the destruction wrought by hurricanes.

"An interesting point is that this scale is quadratic, so that a category 2 hurricane does not cause twice as much damage as a category 1, but four times as much. A category 3 hurricane does not cause three times as much damage as a category 1, but nine times as much, and so on," Rubiera wrote in an article published in Enfoques magazine, produced by the IPS bureau in Cuba.

In the last few years the Caribbean region has been battered with particular ruthlessness by the devastating power of hurricanes.

In 2004, Grenada, a small English-speaking Caribbean island nation of approximately 90,000 people, suffered damages estimated at 889 million dollars, more than twice the country's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003, from the onslaught of hurricane Ivan.

Hurricanes Gustav and Ike caused estimated losses in Cuba of five billion dollars, including the destruction of more than 63,000 homes and the devastation of close to 100,000 hectares of crops, in a country with a serious housing deficit and where the

agriculture industry is unable to feed its 11.2 million people. But only seven people were killed.

According to the official state newspaper Granma, the combined action of both hurricanes has been "the most devastating in the history of these meteorological phenomena in Cuba, in terms of the magnitude of the material damages caused."

The situation is even worse in the impoverished Caribbean nation of Haiti, which was lashed by tropical storm Hanna, as well as hurricanes Fay, Gustav and Ike, leaving a death toll variously reported as over 300 (by the national civil protection unit) or over 600 (the official government figure) and an estimated one million homeless.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has launched an appeal for 108 million dollars for emergency relief and recovery efforts in Haiti.

"The fact is there is a cumulative effect, with new meteorological phenomena impacting on areas that have not yet fully recovered," says a report titled "El cambio climático en América Latina y el Caribe" (Climate Change in Latin America and the Caribbean), published by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 2006.

Another document, published by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in August 2006, called for the adoption of simultaneous mitigation and adaptation measures against natural disasters in the region, in the face of daunting climate forecasts for the coming years.

"We have to strike a balance between the urgent provision of shelters and roofs for the vulnerable population, and rebuilding houses and roofs with the strength and stability to withstand future hurricanes," Susan McDade, resident coordinator of the United Nations System in Cuba, told IPS.

"The challenge is to rebuild with higher quality standards and not just replace houses with others that will continue to be vulnerable to natural disasters. This will require coordination of the international community and working with the Cuban authorities," McDade said.

Source: <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=43952>

2- Argentina - International Dialogue on Climate Change

09 -22 – 08

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina. - "Adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer and financing" were the issues dealt with at the climate change meeting that drew environment ministers from 25 countries to the southern Argentine city of El Calafate. The meeting helped delineate "concrete proposals for building consensus" on the way to the 2009 Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, said Sandra Firpo, spokeswoman for Argentina's Secretariat of Environment and Sustainable Development.

The Sep. 15-18 meet was part of a series of informal talks that environment ministers

have been holding since 2005. Previous dialogues took place in Greenland, South Africa and Switzerland.

Source: <http://www.tierramerica.info/nota.php?lang=eng&idnews=eco&nro=389>

3- Brazil - Industries that Save Forests

09 – 22 -08

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil. - The industrial complex established in the Brazilian Amazon city of Manaus at a cost of heavy subsidies since 1967 has reduced deforestation in the northeastern state of Amazonas by 70 percent between 2000 and 2006.

The avoided emissions of climate changing carbon gases would be worth 10 billion dollars on the European carbon market according to a study by the Federal University of Amazonas, the Federal University of Pará, the Applied Economics Research Institute and the Piatã Institute, released on Sep. 12.

The industries there have concentrated the economy and the population in the capital, allowing the state to preserve 98 percent of its vegetation, says the report.

But "Amazonas has few roads and 70 to 80 percent of the population is urban. Road infrastructure would increase deforestation and reduce the weight of the industrial complex in containing" the process, Paulo Moutinho, of the non-governmental Environmental Research Institute of the Amazon, told Tierramérica.

Source: <http://www.tierramerica.info/nota.php?lang=eng&idnews=eco&nro=389>

4- Cuba - In Cuba, recovery is slow and uncertain

09 – 24 – 08

Cuba's recovery from what may be its worst natural disaster in modern times is especially bleak in remote areas.

SURGIDERO DE BATABANO, Cuba -Swamped by chest-high flooding caused by recent hurricanes, the humble residents of this desolate fishing village on Cuba's southern coast found one small cause for celebration recently: homemade ice cream.

On a clattering, old metal contraption rigged up in a drab concrete compound, Marlen Vargas López, a smiling soul with close-cropped hair, whipped up a fresh batch and pulled a lever to fill cone after cone with chocolate, the flavor of the day.

"It's refreshing," said one young man, stopped in front of the store in the scorching afternoon sun. ``At least it relieves the heat."

The ice-cream treat was about all there was for sale at El Recreo, one of the few shops open in the dismal location south of Havana. Clara Balladares Gomes, another store clerk, said there were no snacks, no bottled water and no soft drinks at the rundown outlet.

While the flooding from Hurricanes Gustav and Ike has receded, filthy pools of stagnant water still lined the streets in front of the wood shack homes on a recent afternoon, giving off a stench.

The shanties were scarcely habitable before the western region of Cuba -- from the Gulf of Batabanó to the agriculture-rich province of Pinar del Río -- was pummeled by back-to-back hurricanes within eight days beginning Aug. 30. Now, the homes are musty, and many roofs leak when it rains.

Spotting newcomers in the street, a middle-aged woman in worn shorts trailed after the visitors, offering to provide overnight accommodations and meals at a "*casa particular*," or private home that takes in guests.

Now, more than ever, she could use the money.

THE DEVASTATION

The twin natural disasters may be the worst to ever hit the communist island, with preliminary damage estimates for the two storms reaching an estimated \$5 billion. According to reports in the Cuban newspaper *Opciones*, more than 444,000 homes were damaged, with some 63,249 destroyed. The electric grid was badly crippled. Gustav wiped out more than 800 tons of premium Cuban tobacco.

Numerous other crops also have been damaged. Last week, along a main highway in Pinar del Río, a small group of field workers, kneeling in a field of shallow water, used their hands to pull plants by the roots. One weary worker lifted his head and explained that much of the crop "is damaged."

Hurricane preparedness and massive evacuations clearly helped to minimize human injuries. Even hotel rooms on the island include detailed information on what to do in case of a hurricane. Several locals said they are used to the storms and closely monitor their tracks to know if they need to respond.

THE RELIEF EFFORT

Despite the devastation in the village of Surgidero de Batabanó, small boys -- the sons of local fishermen -- played in the street, merrily sloshing in filthy puddles.

Elsewhere, the government seemed to be working hard on the relief effort. In tourist-popular Viñales last week, many government workers joined in a cleanup, and workers from the electrical company were out in full force in a bid to restore power, erecting new poles and stringing lines.

Cuban officials blame whatever shortcomings are encountered on the U.S. embargo.

In the state newspaper *Granma*, an article said that a half-century economic war against the island will make it more difficult to rebuild, given that Cuba is a small country with limited financial resources.

But the government has reported little about the repeated offers of aid by the United States, which have been consistently turned down.

In the remote area of Surgidero de Batabanó, there was little sign of government aid on a recent afternoon, although two large tractor-trailer trucks, loaded with building blocks, rumbled through town on a delivery.

Even so, the residents of Surgidero de Batabanó count themselves relatively lucky compared with their neighbors.

The village, which sits about 30 miles south of Havana, serves as a launching point for ferries to the Isla de la Juventud, or Isle of Youth, a popular tourist destination that was devastated by the two hurricanes.

The island, off Cuba's south coast, remains in the dark after the consecutive storms knocked out electricity.

A COMMUNITY IN RUIN

Formerly known as the Isle of Pines, the island has a prison that once served as a cell for a young revolutionary named Fidel Castro. After a failed attack on the Moncada army barracks in Santiago de Cuba on July 26, 1953, Castro and his accomplices were put on trial for the insurrection against Fulgencio Batista's government. At the trial, he declared he had no fear of prison, declaring that, "History will absolve me."

Most of the private homes on the isle that take in guests were among those leveled, making it difficult for residents who relied on precious tourist dollars. According to Cuban press reports, 80 percent of the poultry farming on the Isle of Youth also was seriously affected.

No one knows how long it will be before the isle will be able to restore enough infrastructure to attract tourists, who head there for its age-old cave paintings and outstanding coral reefs. But, for now, many travel officials are steering tourists away.

At Havana's airport last week, a ticket agent for Cubana airlines urged against visiting the Isle of Youth.

"Why would you want to go there?" she asked. "It's 100 percent finished."

The name of the correspondent who filed this report was withheld because the reporter did not have the journalist's visa required by the Cuban government to report from the island.

Source: <http://www.miamiherald.com/news/americas/story/698934.html>

5- Bolivia - Andean farmers yearn for Bolivia's warmer climates

09 – 23 – 08

CHACACHI, Bolivia - As Bolivia erupted into violence this month over President Evo Morales' leftist reforms, the future of farmers like Julio Mamani hangs in the balance.

Mamani, 44, lives in an adobe shack, burns cow dung to heat up his food, and works other people's land for food and money, feeding his family on the equivalent of \$2 a day.

Frost, drought and hailstorms regularly wipe out crops on the windswept Andean plateau where he lives, about 50 miles north of La Paz.

"Because I don't own land I feel like I've got nothing in life," Mamani said. "Thanks to Evo we're going to have a piece of the land that belongs to big land owners."

Dozens of families in Achacachi have been promised land in the tropical lowlands in eastern Bolivia under Morales' land redistribution plan.

But that plan, along with his broader socialist agenda, set off a violent reaction headed by big farming families in the agricultural heartland of the east.

The opposition blocked highways and occupied dozens of government buildings. The government has issued different numbers for the number of people killed, while local media puts the number at 13.

Morales, Bolivia's first Indian president, has increased state control of the economy and has distributed nearly 1 million hectares (2.47 million acres) of land to hundreds of indigenous peasants.

So far, he has handed out only government land, but a proposed new constitution would slash the limit on land ownership to up to 5,000 hectares (12,360 acres) from 50,000 hectares (123,600 acres), which would lead to the redistribution of private land.

DIVIDED SOCIETY

Traditionally, Bolivia's wealth was in the silver mines high in the Andes, but in the 1960s families from Europe, Asia and elsewhere moved into the eastern lowlands and turned them into a breadbasket of soy, sugar, rice and beef.

The country remains divided between poor indigenous people in the western highlands and whiter, wealthier people in the fertile lowlands. About 1 percent of landowners hold 66 of agricultural land.

"Not for a minute have we hesitated in our rejection of agrarian reform," said Guido Nayar, head of an influential agriculture federation in the eastern province of Santa Cruz, an opposition stronghold.

"They want to limit property for those who produce food but not for those who produce drugs," he said, a reference to coca leaf, the main ingredient of cocaine. Morales, a former coca grower, has promoted the legal use of coca leaf, which Indians use in rituals and chew to ward of hunger.

Almost every country in Latin America has tried at one time or another to break down a system where small elites own most of the land. Those elites traditionally fought back and even toppled the presidents who instituted agrarian reform, sometimes with U.S. backing.

Earlier this month, Morales expelled the U.S. ambassador and accused the United States of endorsing opposition protests in a bid to destabilize Morales.

Nayar said the government was using a 1950s model for agrarian reform that runs counter to modern, consolidated agriculture, a criticism echoed in places like Mexico, where redistribution has resulted in plots that are too small in some cases even to support a family.

BACKING

But Morales has won the support of other Latin American leaders, who will discuss Bolivia's situation on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in New York this week, and has vowed to forge ahead with his plans.

After taking office in January 2006, he first nationalized the energy sector, mining projects and the country's main telephone company and used the proceeds to fight poverty. The measures have been popular nationally, despite the resistance in the east, and he won 67 percent backing in a vote in August.

"We're starting the repossession process. It will be the end ... of large idle land holdings," says Cliver Rocha, head of the government land reform office.

The government wants to help more than 200,000 families by redistributing 8 million hectares (19.77 million acres) of land by 2011. To do so it will need to complete surveys and then seize land it determines is idle or owned illegally.

Rocha said the new campaign's focus is land grants to groups of landless Indians, "the historically dispossessed." Unlike in Bolivia's last big land reform effort, in 1953, people will not be able to sell their land, which will prevent speculation, he said.

Some 180 families are better off after moving to Santa Cruz, establishing a community called "Pueblos Unidos" on state land, said Silverio Vera of the Landless Movement, a land rights group.

"We have a school, small clinics, water tanks and we are sowing ... The families are doing well because we have access to work."

In Achacachi, where nearly 100 percent of the people voted for Morales in August, Mamani said he was hoping for a better life for his three children in Santa Cruz.

"With land and hard work we'll be able to move forward," he said, standing next to the dried manure he uses for fuel.

He won't miss the bitter cold of the Andes, where his family has lived for generations, he said. "I'm going to take a small picture of the mountains as a souvenir and I'll be fine looking at the picture."

Source:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUSTRE48N01M20080924?sp=true>

6- Guatemala - Lachuá, a Corner of the Guatemalan Jungle Resists

09 – 24 – 08

Guatemala's Laguna Lachuá National Park is a small corner of the Central American jungle that has withstood the advance of oil exploration, monoculture crops and road building, providing experiences in sustainable development under the indigenous people who live there.

GUATEMALA CITY, Guatemala. - The park extends across 14,500 hectares in the central department of Alta Verapaz and is the heart of a larger eco-region of 55,000 hectares that is home to the Q'eqchies peoples.

In their language, "lachuá" means "foul-smelling water", referring to the trace of sulfur. Located in the Ixcán zone, on the "Northern Transversal Strip", it is believed that the area remained safe from depredation because it was used as a hunting range by the Guatemalan army.

Today it is administered by the National Forest Institute (INAB), the Ministry of Agriculture and by the National Council for Protected Areas (CONAP).

Ten years ago, driven by the World Conservation Union (IUCN), the Lachuá project emerged, and is carried out by these entities, involving communities and the municipality of Cobán, with support of the government of the Netherlands.

The integrated participatory development model, with the 55 indigenous communities in the area, has led to positive results, project coordinator José López told Tierramérica.

The Q'eqchies are entrusted with preserving 1,994 hectares of forest, and for their work they received 82,000 dollars from INAB in 2006-07. In the same period, forest production from 1,290 hectares brought in more than 617,000 dollars, said López.

Tourism routes were developed in El Peyán Canyon, Rocjá Postila, the Salinas Nueve Cerros estate and in Laguna Lachuá. Furthermore, the community members participated in planting 9.6 hectares of pineapple and in selling the fruit. The goal is to reach about 50 hectares, with harvests providing a livelihood for 110 families.

Some 200 people work with 2,000 beehives that produce honey, with plans to expand to 5,000 hives that would provide income for 300 families.

Also planted in the area are avocado, lemon, orange, chili and cacao. In 2006, 70,000 cacao seeds were imported and planted on 98 hectares, providing a marketable crop but also increasing the absorption of carbon dioxide, the principal greenhouse gas.

In the Chixoy River, the residents raise tilapia fish, with the aim of harvesting 60,000 adults every six months.

In 2005, the indigenous communities created two Community Development Councils (COCODES) responsible for improving access to the eco-region, building eight schools, administering a scholarship fund and providing electricity to three communities.

The following year the Lachuá Park was declared a Ramsar wetlands site by the United Nations, due to its important role as habitat for animal species, especially migratory birds.

But this is no Garden of Eden. There is heavy pressure in the area to expand farmland, drill for oil and build highways.

Destruction in the area began in the 1970s, according to Luis Solan, in his study “Northern Transversal Strip: Neo-Colonization On the March”, when high-ranking military officers and business executives “dedicated themselves... to the accumulation of land in order to open the way for livestock and the exploitation of lumber resources.”

The invasion of the land has not disappeared, although López was cautious with respect to the land that belongs to the protected area, saying that they have not had problems so far.

In the park’s buffer zone, where the project are being carried out, 90 percent of the indigenous people are landowners. If more rural settlers establish themselves there it would be illegal seizure of the territory.

There are six communities facing this situation, both in the buffer zone and in the heart of the park, according to Raúl López, from the Agrarian Affairs Secretariat. “None of those cases is recent,” he told Tierramérica.

Two communities, which only work in the buffer zone, will be relocated. The other four occupied the land after it was declared a protected area, so “there is the possibility they will be expelled,” he said.

According to Solano, oil palm – to produce biodiesel – is grown on 55,000 hectares in Guatemala, but there are plans to expand to 150,000 hectares by 2012. Monoculture is advancing with the purchase of communal lands. The farmers who sell off their land then move elsewhere to settle other land.

Green Earth Fuels, property of investment funds The Carlyle Group, Riverstone Holdings and Goldman Sachs, this year acquired more than 25,000 hectares in La Soledad, Rubelsanto, Playitas and Ixcan – the latter three located near Lachuá.

In López’s opinion, lands that were previously open fields today are used to grow oil palm, and the project has committed the growers and the energy company in the same board, which “allows concerted action among all parties.” Furthermore, the Truostar Petroleum Corporation holds the license for exploiting crude oil in Tortugas and Atzam, 20 kilometers west of the Rubelsanto oil fields, also located near Lachuá.

In September 2005, PetroLatina Energy also obtained a license to operate in Tortugas and Atzam in an area of 31,000 hectares that includes areas of the buffer zone and near the heart of the park.

Meanwhile, the plan to build a highway through the Northern Transversal Strip has been postponed. For now it is a gravel road that would be turned into a 330-km highway as part of the plans for connecting Mexico, Guatemala, Belize and Honduras.

The project, granted by the government to the Solel Boneh company, does not include considerations for preserving the environment, nor does it question that the planned path would pass through the core of Lachuá park.

The current road follows "the edge of the park, which does not affect wildlife because it does not have much traffic," CONAP deputy secretary Gerardo Paiz told Tierramérica.

Modifying the route "depends on the government's political posture, given that the conservation of protected areas is gaining more importance day by day," said López.

Carlos Salvatierra believes that "if we don't conserve and ecologically recuperate other areas that are interconnected with Lachuá, it will be isolated and that endangers the quality of its ecosystems."

One of the problems for Guatemala's protected areas is "their lack of connection and the reduced size of many of them," he told Tierramérica.

López and Salvatierra agree that this model could be replicated in other places if it involves the local communities in the management of the natural resources.

When the Lachuá project draws to a close in 2009, its continuity will have to be taken up by five local organizations: the two COCODES and three farm partnerships, through the Lachuá Fund, which was set up in 2007 and unites the communities of the eco-region's 55,000 hectares.

Source: <http://www.tierramerica.info/nota.php?lang=eng&idnews=2860>

7- Haiti - Aid workers warn Haiti floods could trigger unrest

09 – 2 4 – 08

Up to 3 million people risk starvation in Haiti following back-to-back storms that have wiped out large swathes of agriculture, an aid agency has warned.

Aid workers fear the devastation could also spark more unrest in Haiti where violent protests over spiralling food prices rocked the country earlier this year and triggered the government's fall in April.

"In the next two months the situation will become more and more acute," ActionAid country director Raphael Yves Pierre said. "The risk of food riots is very imminent."

He estimated the loss of crops meant 2 to 3 million people could face starvation in Haiti - the poorest country in the western hemisphere - where over half the population survives

on less than a \$1 a day.

Christian Aid's country representative Prosperity Raymond said the whole of the Artibonite valley had been flooded, which is where 80 per cent of Haitian rice is grown. Many families have also lost livestock.

"Rice crops were destroyed near the point of harvesting, which can only put the price of this staple food even further out of the reach of many families," he added.

"I am very worried that we will see rioting in various parts of the country over the next few weeks as people grow frustrated with the speed of the government response."

Oxfam spokesperson Kristie Van de Wetering said colleagues in Cape Haitian in the north were reporting that food prices had already doubled.

She said flooding had also submerged a key bridge in the south, preventing trucks transporting agricultural produce from reaching the capital Port-Au-Prince. Drivers had been seen throwing food away because it was spoiling.

PRECARIOUS SITUATION

Four storms - Fay, Gustav, Hanna and Ike - have hammered Haiti since mid-August, killing hundreds of people and affecting hundreds of thousands more.

But the deluge and lack of infrastructure have made it hard to deliver relief to many of the worst affected places, including the port city of Gonaives, where people had to scramble onto roofs as the waters rose.

Aid workers said tens of thousands of people were huddled in shelters with no food, water, sleeping mats or latrines.

The only way of getting relief into Gonaives is by helicopter or boat, when the sea is calm enough.

The flooding has also destroyed bridges and submerged roads in many other parts of the country.

Aid workers warned violence could erupt among survivors unless supplies arrived fast. Oxfam's Van de Wetering described the situation on the ground as very tense and precarious.

Matt Marek, head of programmes in Haiti for the American Red Cross, said the damage to infrastructure was far worse than that caused by Tropical Storm Jeanne in 2004 when 3,000 people died in Gonaives.

"If people do not have (anything) desperation is going to cause people to possibly act violently and cause more insecurity," he added.

"We have a population that have already experienced a lot of hardship ... In the long run this is going to add to the misery of the global food crisis that people have been experiencing."

Marek expected the death toll from the recent storms to rise significantly as news came in from communities that had been cut off by the flooding.

He said the storms were particularly devastating because Haiti - a country long plagued by chronic political instability and violence - had shown signs of turning a corner.

"You get two years of progress and all of a sudden you get whacked by some natural disaster. And this is not just two steps back - it's four, five, six steps back after one step forward," he said.

Source: <http://www.caribbeanetnews.com/news-10767--6-6--.html>

8- Honduras - From Garbage to Micro-Enterprise

09 -22 – 08

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras. - Some 30 families from the community of El Volcán, in the central Honduran valley of Comayagua, launched a project this month to recycle garbage.

Their effort is part of an environmental, educational and micro-enterprise training initiative promoted by domestic and international groups.

Ángel López, who used to be an informal garbage collector, is now a microentrepreneur and is thinking on a grand scale. "We have become people with a business vision for the future. We are even learning to read and write to avoid errors in our accounting," he told Tierramérica.

The microbusiness he leads is known as "Nueva Esperanza" (New Hope) and is part of a project promoted by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organizations (FAO) and the National Center for Employment Education, in cooperation with the local government of Comayagua.

Source: <http://www.tierramerica.info/nota.php?lang=eng&idnews=eco&nro=389>

9- Mexico - Promising Invention for Spinal Injuries

09 – 22 – 08

MEXICO CITY, Mexico. - Mexican researchers have synthesized a polymer that promises to restore the electrical connections in a damaged spinal cord, which could help injured people recover mobility.

The technique has been tested in rats, in which 50 percent recovered the functioning of the spinal cord, researchers from the physics department of the Autonomous Metropolitan University (UAM) in Mexico City told Tierramérica.

There is great possibility that the polymer could be used in humans with spinal cord injuries, which, in conjunction with other medical treatments, could return mobility, according to Roberto Olayo, research coordinator.

The polymer they developed and synthesized in plasma is placed inside the spinal cord. It is biocompatible and helps the cells establish connections that had been interrupted by injury.

Source: <http://www.tierramerica.info/nota.php?lang=eng&idnews=eco&nro=389>

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ENVIRONMENT NEWS FROM THE UN DAILY NEWS

24 September 2008

New UN scheme seeks to combat climate change from deforestation

24 September - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today announced a pioneering initiative aimed at combating climate change through creating incentives to reverse the trend of deforestation, at an unveiling with Prime Minister of Norway Jens Stoltenberg.

The UN Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) Programme is designed to tip the fiscal balance in favour of sustainable management of forests, simultaneously bringing economic benefits to participating countries and contributing to significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

“Reducing deforestation in developing countries is a key element of addressing the global climate change challenge,” Mr. Ban said at the ceremony in New York.

“Sustainable forest and land use management are efficient adaptation, poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation strategies, he noted, adding that the initiative is “a concrete illustration of the UN system’s commitment to provide coordinated support to Member States in responding to their climate change challenges.”

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimated that the cutting down of forests is now contributing close to 20 per cent of the overall greenhouse gases entering the atmosphere.

“Fighting greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation is a priority for Norway now and also in the years to come. If we are successful with stage one, Norway will certainly continue support for the UN-REDD Programme,” said Mr. Stoltenberg, whose government is financing the initiative’s start up with \$35 million. Initially nine countries – Bolivia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Tanzania, Viet Nam and Zambia – will receive assistance through the Programme to reduce the role deforestation plays in amassing greenhouse gases.

The REDD initiative will support these countries as part of an international move to include REDD in new and more comprehensive climate change multilateral agreements to start post-2012, when the current Kyoto Protocol emissions reduction targets will end.

If REDD is included in a post-2012 UN climate change agreement it may lead to developed countries being able to pay developing nations for the emissions they have saved. Developing countries could receive significant payments which in turn could be used on much needed development projects.

A country such as Indonesia could potentially receive up to \$1 billion a year if its deforestation rate was reduced to one million hectares annually, according to some estimates.

The UN agencies coordinating the REDD project are the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the UN Development Programme <http://www.undp.org/>>(UNDP) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

Mr. Ban has pledged to do all he can to facilitate a global deal by the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December 2009, which seeks to create a successor pact to the Kyoto Protocol.

Today in New York, the Secretary-General met with President Kaczynski of Poland, Prime Minister Rasmussen of Denmark and Foreign Minister of Indonesia, Hassan Wirajuda – the current and future presidencies of the UNFCCC Conference of Parties.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Mr. Ban noted that the next round of talks slated to take place in Poznan, Poland, in December is “a crucial bridge to Copenhagen.” He added that there was a consensus that real progress must be made in Poznan in several key areas, including developed countries sending a clear signal that they are ready to discharge their responsibilities with regards to emissions reductions and financing to support developing countries’ own actions on climate change.

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Combating climate change could create millions of jobs, says UN-backed study

24 September - Tackling climate change could potentially generate millions of new employment opportunities, according to a new United Nations-backed study – the first of its kind on the emergence of a “green economy” and its impact on labour – released today. Entitled “Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World,” the publication shows how efforts to address global warming and slash greenhouse gas emissions are leading to new “green” jobs in many sectors. This, in turn, has resulted increased investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The report – a joint effort by the UN International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Trade Union Confederation and the International Organization of Employers – includes recommendations in the run-up to next year’s UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, which seeks to create a successor pact to the Kyoto Protocol, whose first-round commitments end in 2012.

“What this report is about from the perspective of sustainability is to show the policymakers that with the right incentives, the right research and development support programmes, there is massive potential here for new economic sectors to emerge,” UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner said at a news conference in New York. He noted that amid the current financial turmoil seen in different parts of the world, countries will spend hundreds of billions of dollars in coming months to stabilize the global economy.

“Imagine for a moment if some of the stimulus packages that are now being developed could be targeted towards not maintaining and sustaining the old economy of the 20th century but investing in the new economy of the 21st century,” he stated.

The report highlights the importance of boosting investment access for developing countries and increasing energy efficiency in buildings and industry, among other things.

But it also points to how climate change is adversely affecting workers and their families who depend on agriculture and tourism for their livelihoods.

Too few green jobs are being created for the most vulnerable, the study warns, with 1.3 billion of the world's working poor – or 43 per cent of the global workforce – earning less than \$2 a day.

It also stresses the need for “just transitions” for those affected by the switch to a more green economy with access to new employment opportunities, noting the importance of dialogue among governments, workers and employers to ease potential tensions and to ensure that all sectors are involved in developing more coherent environmental, economic and social policies.

“We need to make sure that green jobs are decent jobs,” said ILO Director-General Juan Somavia. “As the report makes clear, building a low-carbon economy is not only about technology or finances, it’s about peoples and societies. It’s about a cultural change to a greater environmental consciousness and opportunities for decent work.

“New jobs will be created, others adapted and some will fade out. In order to keep the political will and the public support, we will have to put policies in place that have to focus from the beginning on those at the receiving end of this transition,” he stated.

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World skyship race to promote World Heritage sites and environment – UNESCO

24 September - Zeppelins and skyships will take part in a global race in 2010 promoting world heritage sites as well as sustainable tourism that reduces the pollution and environmental stress on natural and cultural locations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) announced today.

The agency, in partnership with the World Air League, has scheduled 16 back-to-back races in which Zeppelins and skyships will cover 30,000 miles stopping at iconic sites including many on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

These include the Taj Mahal (India), the Coliseum (Italy), the Pyramids (Egypt), the Pre-Hispanic City of Teotihuacan (Mexico) and Greenwich (United Kingdom).

The event is designed to generate publicity for world heritage, as well as raise awareness of and funding for preservation, while demonstrating the skyship's potential contribution to sustainable tourism.

Skyships can reduce fuel consumption by 89 per cent when compared to long haul jet aircraft, and can cut energy consumption and associated greenhouse gas emissions by 75 per cent when measured up against road transportation, according to a UNESCO press release.

UNESCO and World Air League, a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in the United States, will also use the World Sky Race to develop educational activities, as well

as raise awareness of environmental issues, as the skyships make additional stops at notable sites such as Mount Fuji (Japan), and Kilauea Volcano, Golden Gate Bridge and Statue of Liberty (US).

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Mongolia issues call at UN for strategy to ensure global energy security

24 September - A comprehensive, global strategy is needed to ensure all countries have energy security, Mongolia's Prime Minister told the General Assembly tonight, voicing concern about the impact of recent oil price hikes and the need to develop greener sources of energy.

Addressing the Assembly's annual general debate, Sanjaa Bayar said it was critical to reduce global dependence on fossil fuels such as coal given the impact they have on the environment.

"Ensuring energy security is a challenge that requires a comprehensive solution both nationally and internationally," he said. "No country in the world is endowed with or has developed all possible energy sources. So each country has a vested interest in energy cooperation and has something to contribute to it."

Mr. Bayar praised the efforts of some UN Member States and international organizations to research, develop, deploy and transfer innovative energy technologies, particularly those from renewable or low-carbon sources.

By contrast, "the use of inefficient coal-burning technology causes air pollution, impacting negatively on the population's health and the environment."

The Prime Minister added that the development of clean coal technology is a priority for Mongolia, where coal is a major source of energy for electricity and heating.

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