



The Switch

**ANPED's newsletter on
sustainable consumption and production**

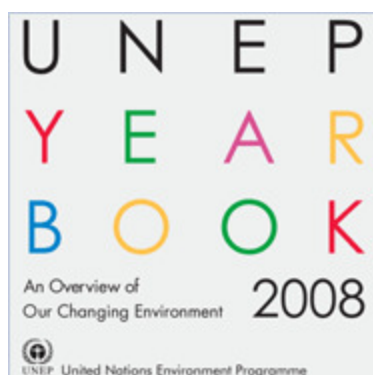
February 2008

The Switch is ANPED's monthly newsletter on initiatives that are making the switch to a society of sustainable consumption and production. The Switch includes recommended selected articles, interesting websites, and provides links to more in-depth information on new developments and publications. The Switch also keeps you updated on upcoming conferences and events.

If you have any input, recommendations or comments, please don't hesitate to contact the ANPED International Secretariat: erol.hofmans@anped.org.

To subscribe to The Switch, please visit www.anped.org.

UNEP Year Book 2008



The *UNEP Year Book 2008* (formerly the GEO Year Book) is the fifth annual report on the changing environment produced by the United Nations Environment Programme in collaboration with many world environmental experts.

The UNEP Year Book highlights the increasing complexity and interconnections of climate change, ecosystem integrity, human well-being, and economic development. It examines the emergence and influence of economic mechanisms and market driven approaches for addressing environmental degradation. It describes recent research findings and policy decisions that affect our awareness of and response to changes in our global environment.

Presenting the Year Book in Monaco, UNEP stated that investment in environmentally-friendly projects was rising fast and more and more corporations were driving to save energy, thus helping to combat carbon emissions. Power companies, international car manufacturers, metals and mining companies are praised for making inroads into their greenhouse-gas pollution. But oil, gas and chemicals are among the industries doing little or nothing to cut their contribution to the greenhouse-gas problem, the agency said.

"Hundreds of billions of dollars are now flowing into renewable and clean energy technologies and trillions more dollars are waiting in the wings, looking to governments for a new and decisive climate regime post-2012. ... Formidable hurdles remain as to whether these funds will ultimately seek out new, climate-friendly investments for the future or whether they will seek the lowest-common denominator by flowing into the polluting technologies of the past," UNEP's Executive Director Achim Steiner said.

You can read the UNEP Year Book at <http://www.unep.org/geo/yearbook/yb2008> .

SCP Action Plan to be Published in April



How to make sure that products are produced and consumed in a sustainable manner is a challenge the European Commission has sought to address in its 2003 Integrated Product Policy (IPP) proposal.

But the IPP has been criticised since the policy contains no legislative provisions to ensure the sustainability of products. In response to this criticism, the Commission consulted stakeholders and has begun formulating action plans on sustainable consumption and production (SCP), prepared by DG Environment, and on a sustainable industrial policy (SIP), prepared by DG Enterprise.

Originally scheduled for publication in December 2007, the Commission's SCP and SIP strategies may now be published in the middle of April, although no definite date has been set, according to a Commission spokesperson.

Below you can find links to further information on the *SCP Action Plan*:

- ANPED Recommendations to the EU SCP Action Plan:
<http://tinyurl.com/2eamvo>
- European Commission website on SCP and SIP:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/escp_en.htm
- European Commission Background Document to the Consultation on the Action Plans on SCP and SIP:
<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/environment/sip.pdf>
- Presentations of the European Commission at the Stakeholder Meeting on the SCP Action Plan, 2 October 2007:
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/pdf/presentation.zip>

Milan Imposes Congestion Charge



The city of Milan has started imposing a charge of up to 10 Euros on vehicles entering the city. The *eco-pass*, launched as a one-year trial, is being policed by cameras and 43 electric gates around an eight-kilometre square inner city area. Electric and hybrid vehicles are allowed to enter the congestion charge area for free.

The Mayor of Milan Letizia Moratti, in launching the charge, is predicting a 30 percent reduction in pollution levels and a 10 percent reduction in traffic.

"This is a new way to deal with the problem of pollution and health", said the Mayor. "This is a model that a lot of cities are looking at with interest."

Private and commercial vehicles are a leading source of greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants. Reducing vehicle use and using alternative forms of transportation and alternative fuels are some approaches to reducing these vehicular emissions.

London's Low Emission Zone



Trucks driving around the UK capital will be fined up to £200 per day if they are found to be over EU pollution standards in an attempt to improve the city's poor air quality. The initiative will be closely

watched in Brussels as the Commission is currently considering action to 'green' transport in Europe's cities.

Initially, the scheme applies only to large diesel trucks weighing over 12 tonnes. Cameras around the zone will check their number plates against a database of vehicles registered as meeting the EU's 'Euro' limits on emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and particulate matter (PM) – two pollutants found in exhaust fumes that are blamed for serious health and environmental problems.

Those exceeding the limits will be fined a daily fee of £200 and risk a further £1,000 fine if they fail to pay up. Truck-drivers from abroad also risk paying the fine unless they register their vehicle in advance and it meets the required standards.

The scheme will be extended to cover buses and coaches in July and to large vans and minibuses in October 2010.

Transport for London, which is implementing the £49 million *Low Emission Zone* project, says it will improve quality of life for Londoners and reduce the number of people suffering from asthma, cardiovascular disease and other health conditions, cutting healthcare bills by £250 million.

You can find more information about the initiative at <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/lez/2021.aspx> .

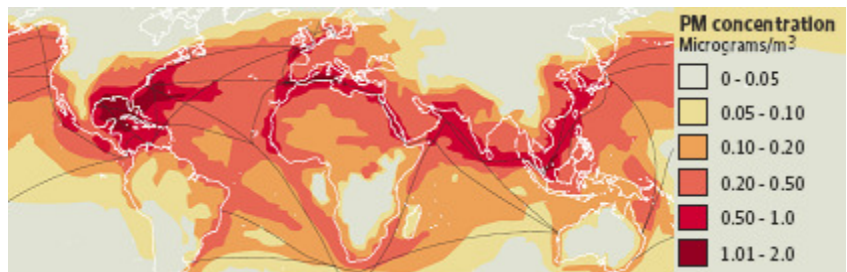
World Shipping Emissions Three Times Worse Than Thought



A leaked scientific report by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has revealed that annual carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from world shipping, which carries more than 90 percent of the world's traded goods by volume, reached 1.12 billion tonnes in 2007, about 3.5 percent of total global carbon emissions. The report also shows that growing international seaborne trade and related fuel consumption will raise CO₂ emissions from ships by 30 percent to 1.475 billion tonnes by 2020. Shipping and aviation emissions are rising rapidly but are not accounted for

in the international Kyoto Protocol on global warming, because of the complexity of attributing these emissions to individual states.

The U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change last year said aviation CO₂ emissions in 2002 were 492 million tonnes, far less than the IMO estimate of ship emissions even though the airline industry has come under far more scrutiny. Contacted about the



contents of the report, Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, chair of the IPCC, said: "This is a clear failure of the system. The shipping industry has so far escaped publicity. It has been left out of the climate change discussion. I hope [shipping emissions] will be included in the next U.N. agreement. It would be a cop-out if it was not. It tells me that we have been ineffective at tackling climate change so far."

The new study by a group of experts was finalized by the IMO in late December but only distributed to countries party to IMO regulations who met to set new pollution regulations last week. The estimate and future projections are much higher than what the trillion-dollar industry has estimated.

Sustainable Table



Produced and directed by Mischa Hedges, *Sustainable Table* is a feature documentary that takes an unadulterated look into the food you eat. What's on your plate? Where does it come from? What effects does it have on the environment and your body? What can you do to help? There are many questions about the sustainability of our current agricultural practices. This film tries to find some of the answers to problems that we face today and will face tomorrow.

Visit the website of the movie at <http://www.sustainabletablemovie.com> .

Improving Waste Management through Better Processing and Sustainable Consumption

European Environment Agency



"Europe cannot become complacent with regard to the continuing growth in waste," concludes the EEA in a report analysing how better management of municipal waste can contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs).

The EEA briefing predicts a significant decrease in net GHGs from municipal waste by 2020 - of more than 80% compared to the late 1980s. This is mainly thanks to increased recycling and waste recovery, as well as incineration combined with energy production and diverting waste away from landfill.

However, it warns that unsustainable consumption and production patterns in the long term may outweigh the improvements taking place in the waste management sector.

The agency predicts 25% growth in municipal waste between 2005 and 2020, driven by several factors, such as economic activity, demographic changes, technological innovations, lifestyle and patterns of consumption and production. It warns that increasing amount of waste could lead to saturation and increased GHG emissions due to inefficient management. Therefore it recommends keeping municipal waste to the minimum as the best course of action.

According to the EEA, each European citizen generated an average of 460 kg of municipal waste in 1995 and 520 kg in 2004, a figure which is expected to increase to some 680 kg by 2020, primarily due to an assumed sustained growth in private final consumption and a continuation of current trends in consumption patterns.

You can read the briefing at <http://tinyurl.com/2q6fag>.

Global Warming Affects Insect and Plant Behaviour



Insects will feast and leafy plants will suffer if temperatures warm and atmospheric carbon dioxide increases, according to a team of researchers who studied evidence of insect feeding on fossil leaves from before, during and after the Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum (PETM).

The PETM occurred 55.8 million years ago and was an abrupt global warming event linked to a temporary increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This event is comparable in size and rate to the current climate changes brought on by human activity. "Our study suggests that increased insect herbivory is likely to be a net, long-term effect of anthropogenic carbon dioxide increase and warming temperature," said the researchers in a newly published report.

The team found that the percent of leaves damaged by insects was 15 to 38 percent during the Paleocene and 33 percent during the Eocene, but increased to 57 percent during the intermediate PETM. This large increase in insect herbivory corresponded to a time of increased carbon dioxide and temperatures. The researchers also found that the increased feeding occurred in all plant species and that a more diverse array of insects fed on the leaves.

With more carbon dioxide available to plants, photosynthesis is easier and plants can make the same amount of food for themselves without having to put so much protein in their leaves. Consequently, when carbon dioxide increases, leaves have less protein and insects need to eat more to acquire the nutrients they need. While increased carbon dioxide is good for the plants in that they can increase growth, plants also suffer from increased feeding by insects.

The increase in insect feeding is a result of the tripling of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere during the PETM and the accompanying rise in temperature. The researchers think that increases in temperature and carbon dioxide levels during the PETM are good analogs for the future and therefore, that plants may eventually experience higher rates of feeding as humans put more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

You can read the report at <http://www.pnas.org/cgi/content/short/105/6/1960> .

IEA Policy Databases Updated



Since 1999, the International Energy Agency (IEA) has collaborated with governments to collect and classify national policies on climate change mitigation, renewable energy and energy efficiency. Online databases of these policies are available, which allow users to search for policy instruments dating back to 1999 (and sometimes earlier) according to the year of a policy's implementation, country, policy type, and sector, among others.

Among the most popular IEA websites, these databases are among the most comprehensive collections of national policies on renewable energy, energy efficiency and climate change mitigation for IEA member countries. They also contain information on some non-member countries, such as China, India, Mexico, Russia and South Africa.

With the assistance of government representatives, the IEA has recently updated the *Energy Efficiency Database* and the *Renewable Energy Database*.

The Energy Efficiency Database is located at http://www.iea.org/textbase/pm/index_effi.asp .

The Renewable Energy Database is located at <http://www.iea.org/textbase/pm/grindex.aspx> .

Biofuels Are Not Carbon-Neutral



Two papers published in Science Magazine suggest that biofuels are not carbon-neutral.

The first paper, *Land Clearing and the Biofuel Carbon Debt* (available at <http://tinyurl.com/2dhfss>), offers calculations based on the assumption that new land would have to be cleared for the production of biofuels. It calculates the carbon debt caused by that clearing, both from the destruction of the plants that are currently growing there and from the disruption of the normal soil ecology. The authors selected a number of scenarios for these calculations, including sugarcane and soybeans in Brazil, palm oil in Indonesia, and corn in the US. Using these figures, they calculated how long it would take for biofuel production to replace enough fossil fuel to compensate for this carbon debt. For palm oil, once the forest was cleared and the underlying peat decayed, it could take 840 years to offset the carbon debt. Soybeans in the Amazon clock in at 320 years. Ethanol in the U.S. stands at about 100 years. Only sugarcane in Brazilian savannah came in with a figure that appears useful on the timescales most scientists think we need to act, with a carbon debt repaid in only 17 years.

The second study, *Use of U.S. Croplands for Biofuels Increases Greenhouse Gases Through Emissions from Land Use Change* (available at <http://tinyurl.com/2718na>), bases its figures on similar calculations, and came up with similar conclusions. The authors go somewhat further by plugging the data into a global model of agricultural production, modelling the results of having the U.S. switch enough corn to the production of ethanol to generate 56 billion litres beyond what is currently expected for the next decade. This has a number of global repercussions. For one, U.S. exports of a variety of agricultural products drop; pork and chickens drop as food-stocks are diverted, while wheat and soybeans suffer from land being changed over to growing corn. Other countries might compensate, but their less-efficient agricultural practices require far more land, producing a net clearance of nearly 11 million hectares of land globally.

Earth Hour - 29 March 2008



In March 2007, 2.2 million people and 2100 Sydney businesses turned off their lights for one hour - *Earth Hour*. This massive collective effort reduced Sydney's energy consumption by 10.2% for one hour, which is the equivalent effect of taking 48,000 cars off the road for one hour. With Sydney icons like the Harbour Bridge and Opera House turning their lights off, and unique events such as weddings by candlelight, the world took notice. Inspired by the collective effort of millions of Sydneysiders, many major global cities are joining Earth Hour in 2008, turning a symbolic event into a global movement.

For more information, you can visit the Earth Hour website at <http://www.earthhour.org>.

SEED Awards 2008



Do you have an entrepreneurial or innovative idea that is locally-driven and has great potential to contribute to sustainable development in developing countries? Are you finding new ways of simultaneously improving incomes and strengthening livelihoods; tackling poverty and marginalisation; and managing and conserving natural resources and ecosystems? Are you developing a new concept that brings together people and organizations from different backgrounds - a project that challenges partners to pool their human, financial, and natural resources?

Do you need support to make your idea a reality, or to help you grow? If so, then we would like you to tell us about your idea.

The SEED Initiative is seeking submissions for *The 2008 SEED Awards for Entrepreneurship in Sustainable Development*. It welcomes innovative ideas from any group in a developing country, which is working in partnership with others to generate environmental and social benefits in an entrepreneurial way.

SEED Award Winners receive a tailored package of support services to help them to become established and to increase their impact. This includes access to relevant expertise and technical assistance, meeting new partners and building networks, developing business plans and identifying sources of finance. The Award is not a cash prize - but the services offered have a value of US\$25,000. The call is open until the 16 March 2008.

For more information about the SEED Awards, visit <http://tinyurl.com/23re9g> .

What a Way to Go



A middle class white guy comes to grips with Peak Oil, Climate Change, Mass Extinction, Population Overshoot and the demise of the American Lifestyle.

Heart-felt and poignant, *What a Way to Go: Life at the End of Empire* will touch you as very few things can. This documentary does a thorough job of presenting the pending mega-crisis in all of its aspects, and then goes even deeper to probe all of the causes, both technological and social. A careful viewing will leave you stunned, informed, and ready to step off the train and begin dismantling the tracks. Watch it yourself, and then present it to as many people as you can. Your life, and your children's lives, depend on it. Featuring interviews with Daniel Quinn, Derrick Jensen, Jerry Mander, Chellis Glendinning, Richard Heinberg, Thomas Berry, William Catton, Ran Prieur and Richard Manning.

Visit the website of the movie at <http://www.whatawaytogomovie.com> .

UNEP Database on National SCP Programmes



UNEP has launched an online clearinghouse for national SCP programmes as a contribution to the UN Marrakech Process on sustainable consumption and production.

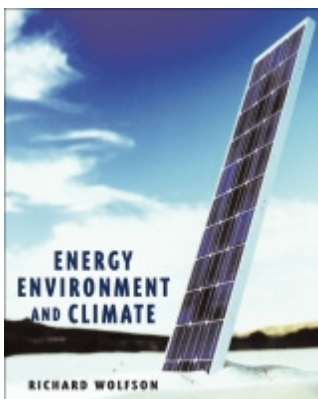
The database provides information on existing national SCP programmes, initiatives in their final stages of development and UNEP demonstration projects. UNEP compiled this clearinghouse to communicate knowledge regarding the development, implementation and monitoring of SCP programmes in an effort to foster their continual improvement. Countries interested in establishing their own SCP programmes are encouraged to utilise existing initiatives as examples of good practice.

The user-friendly platform is capable of searching diverse programme criteria including priority areas, status, type of programme, region and country name. Query results are displayed as country lists that link to individual national programme summaries with information on the status, vision, priorities and monitoring of the programmes. Relevant national SCP documents are also available for download in several languages.

The database is part of a UK government funded project to develop guidelines for national programmes on SCP.

The online clearinghouse is located at <http://tinyurl.com/2ak9cz>.

Energy, Environment and Climate



In a new study of energy use and global climate change, Richard Wolfson outlines basic science concepts as well as specific, contemporary applications in energy production and their environmental consequences. *Energy, Environment, and Climate* is structured on the premise that climate change is the dominant energy-related environmental issue of the twenty-first century.

Traditional concerns like pollution and conservation of energy resources are covered with clear, scientific explanations. Unique to this text, a full five chapters—about one-third of the content—are devoted to climate and an understanding of the energy-climate link.

You can order the book at <http://tinyurl.com/2zh23t>.

Upcoming Events – March 2008

3 – 4 March 2008, Ottawa, Canada

A Way Forward: Canadian and International Perspectives on Post-2012 Climate Policy. The purpose of the conference is to examine the scope and implications of the Action Plan agreed at the 2007 UN Climate Change Conference. Participants will consider what can be expected to take place over the next two years.

http://www.iisd.org/climate/kyoto/post_2012.asp .

10 – 12 March, Cape Town, South Africa

International Conference on Integrated Water Resources Management: Lessons from Implementation in Countries from the Global South and the Second Africa Regional Meeting of the National Committees of UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme. This event is aimed at sharing the experiences and lessons of countries from the global South on integrated water resources management (IWRM).

<http://tinyurl.com/2d7zla> .

12 March 2008, Hampstead Norreys, Berkshire, United Kingdom

Green Feast: Explore the Multiple Meanings of Sustainable Food. This event is organized by The Living Rainforest. Food is a hot topic, with consumers advised to make ethical food choices, like 'organic', 'fair trade' and 'rainforest friendly'. Explore the different and sometimes conflicting meanings of 'sustainable food' with leading experts in the field.

<http://livingrainforest.org/charity/spring-conferences> .

13 – 14 March 2008, Seville, Spain

Bern Convention Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change. This meeting is organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention).

<http://tinyurl.com/yw6bun> .

25 – 28 March 2008, Helsinki, Finland

Opportunities and Challenges of Responses to Climate Change for Indigenous and Local Communities, Their Traditional Knowledge and Biological Diversity. This meeting is organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

<http://www.cbd.int/meetings> .

29 March 2008, Worldwide

Earth Hour. In March 2007, 2.2 million people and 2100 Sydney businesses turned off their lights for one hour - Earth Hour. This massive collective effort reduced Sydney's energy consumption by 10.2% for one hour, which is the equivalent effect of taking 48,000 cars off the road for one hour. With Sydney icons like the Harbour Bridge and Opera House turning their lights off, and unique events such as weddings by candlelight, the world took notice. Inspired by the collective effort of millions of Sydneysiders, many major global cities are joining Earth Hour in 2008, turning a symbolic event into a global movement.

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