

'Just bury it under the seabed and pretend it never happened.' Can we save the world?

Every week, Maddyness looks at the good, the bad and the ugly in climate change news. Today, we look at the booming 'carbon removal' industry and tree-led innovation in Uzbekistan, New Zealand and Rwanda.

Temps de lecture : minute

28 October 2020

The US election, or as I like to call it, *the* climate election, draws closer by the minute. Donald Trump has managed to sneak in Amy Coney Barrett - who "has read things about climate change" but "would not say [she has] firm views on it" - as Supreme Court justice at the midnight hour.

However, it seems that the USA overall has woken up to the scale of the crisis, with a newly-published survey from Climate Insights suggesting more than 70% of residents across all states believe climate change has occurred. Even more encouragingly, majorities of 70+% in every state - from 71% in Mississippi to 92% in Rhode Island - condone restrictions on business' greenhouse gas emissions. Let's hope they take these beliefs with them to the polls next Tuesday.

Elsewhere, President Yoshihide Suga of Japan has promised carbon neutrality by 2050. He said:

"Here and now I declare our goal to emit zero greenhouse gases overall by 2050, or in other

words to be carbon neutral by that year.”

Policy plans remain vague but the mission will entail “next-generation solar panels”, “carbon recycling” and regulatory restructuring.

In a world first, Peru and Switzerland have signed a ‘carbon offset’ deal in line with Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. Essentially, Peru will receive finance for sustainability projects from Switzerland, who will in turn take credit (in terms of global goals) for subsequent cuts to emissions. Carbon markets often go under the radar, and certainly attract controversy. Here’s a handy infographic on the most hotly-contested points and some potential solutions.

GLOBAL CARBON MARKETS: 5 MAIN CHALLENGES AND 5 WAYS TO ADDRESS THEM

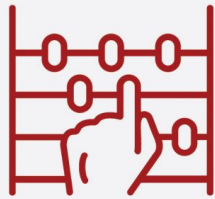
TOO MANY CREDITS AVAILABLE



THE USE OF OLD CDM CREDITS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED AFTER 2020



THE RISK OF DOUBLE COUNTING



ROBUST ACCOUNTING RULES ARE NEEDED, INCLUDING THE APPLICATION OF CORRESPONDING ADJUSTMENTS FOR EVERY CREDIT



PROTECTING LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT AND DELIVERING ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



MARKETS MUST INVOLVE LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN PROJECTS, AND HAVE SAFEGUARDS IN PLACE, SUCH AS A GRIEVANCE MECHANISM



DELIVERING OVERALL MITIGATION IN GLOBAL EMISSIONS



ALL CREDITS SHOULD BE PARTIALLY CANCELLED TO GO BEYOND ZERO-SUM OFFSETTING



AVOIDING PERVERSE INCENTIVES THAT HAMPER AMBITION



COUNTRIES SHOULD ADOPT AMBITIOUS CLIMATE TARGETS INSTEAD OF SELLING EMISSION REDUCTIONS



The big ideas

Maddyness recently published [this interview](#) with Hayden Wood, CEO of Bulb - the biggest green energy company in the UK, providing 100% renewable electricity and 100% carbon neutral gas to around 6% of the domestic market.

Beyond this, have a look at the ideas and innovations from across the spectrum of politics, social justice and big business that caught my eye this week:

- Revenues in the 'carbon removal' industry could soon start to compete with oil and gas, [a new study from Vivid Economics shows](#). The expectation is that negative emissions revenue will reach an annual \$1.4T by 2050.
- 'After decades spent extracting fossil fuels from the UK's North Sea, a consortium of oil companies is preparing to pump Britain's greenhouse gas emissions back beneath the seabed to help meet the government's climate ambitions', [writes Jillian Ambrose](#) of the UK's current efforts in carbon capture - led by BP.
- The Aral Sea was once only slightly smaller than Ireland, but is now officially dried up. Uzbekistan's Green Aral Sea [is attempting](#) to better the situation by planting drought-resistant saxual trees across what was once the seabed.
- Maori landowners are [making money for protecting](#) the Rarakau rainforest. Companies like Qantas Airlines are using the scheme to 'offset' their carbon emissions.
- In Rwanda, the €28M 'Green Amayaga' initiative [has launched](#) to restore degraded forests. It will create 150,000 green jobs.
- Should we be [building our houses](#) out of cork?
- Rice farming requires a lot of water and paddies emit methane. The UN and the Shanghai Agrobiological Gene Centre [have been working together](#) to develop drought-resistant strains of rice that don't need to

be planted in paddies.



- Branch magazine has launched, supported by ClimateAction.tech, to work towards ‘a just and sustainable internet for all’
- Either Kenya’s Amina Mohamed or Nigeria’s Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala look set to become the World Trade Organisation’s first female and first African leader in November. Both have pledged significant green reforms.
- According to the World Green Building Council, the lighting, heating and cooling of buildings is responsible for around 28% of global CO2. Apparently, this new type of white paint can reduce indoor temperatures by 1.7 degrees celsius.

Further reading

If you’re still reading, here’s even more reading:

- Read about the environmental significance of Chile's decision to change its Pinochet-era constitution, [via Nicolas Jaar on Instagram](#).
 - Amy Coney Barrett's climate denialism, [via *Climate Conscious on Medium*](#).
 - An investigation showing GM and Ford knew about climate change 50 years ago, [via *E&E News*](#).
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