

# Climate Action News **this week**

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May 15, 2008 Edition

## Stories of the Week

### **Polar Bear listed as “Threatened” by Climate Change, Oil and Gas Companies Prepare for Court**

U.S. Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne announced Wednesday, May 14, that his country’s endangered species legislation gave him no choice but to add polar bears as a species threatened by global warming. Kempthorne reassured oil and gas companies that rarely used special stipulations have been invoked to make it relatively easy for exploration and development to continue. Environmental organizations say the stipulations are illegal and won’t stand up in court.

Meanwhile, Canada’s Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada issued a report yesterday recommending listing Canada’s bears as being a species “of special concern.” Its final report will be issued in August. If accepted by Environment Minister Baird, the government will have five years to develop a protection plan.

“We don’t have to wait to prove that the arctic ice is melting everywhere before we start acting,” said Mr. Peter Ewins, director of species conservation for the World Wildlife Fund – Canada. “We have to take actions now, especially in the areas where polar bears are most highly threatened.”

Read the story:

[www.nytimes.com/2008/05/15/us/15polar.html?\\_r=2&oref=slogin&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/15/us/15polar.html?_r=2&oref=slogin&oref=slogin)  
[http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5iS4G7PTLqbUC0MQ1y4Fr\\_xh-pZCwD90LSM400](http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5iS4G7PTLqbUC0MQ1y4Fr_xh-pZCwD90LSM400)  
[www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/news/story.html?id=ab8446bf-27ad-452e-8f84-46e5df954f33](http://www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/news/story.html?id=ab8446bf-27ad-452e-8f84-46e5df954f33)  
[http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601124&sid=ao\\_2X.hb\\_Oiw&refer=home](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601124&sid=ao_2X.hb_Oiw&refer=home)

NGO Reaction:

[www.sierraclub.org/pressroom/releases/pr2008-05-14.asp](http://www.sierraclub.org/pressroom/releases/pr2008-05-14.asp)  
[www.worldwildlife.org/who/media/press/2008/WWFPresitem9010.html](http://www.worldwildlife.org/who/media/press/2008/WWFPresitem9010.html)  
[www.nrdc.org/media/2008/080514.asp](http://www.nrdc.org/media/2008/080514.asp)

## **UN to Investigate Canada for Failing to Register Emissions**

The enforcement branch under the Kyoto Protocol has notified the Government of Canada that it is under investigation on suspicion of failing to establish a system for registering its GHG emissions as required under the Treaty. Kyoto depends on accurate national registries to account for carbon credits bought and sold between the parties. If Canada is found to be breaking the rules it could have its carbon trading rights suspended. The enforcement branch will hold a meeting either May 28-30 or June 14-16 to decide either to proceed with the investigation or make a preliminary finding.

Read the story:

[www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2008/05/07/carbon-trading.html](http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2008/05/07/carbon-trading.html)

Kyoto: l'ONU veut savoir si Ottawa a rempli ses obligations

[www.cyberpresse.ca/article/20080507/CPENVIRONNEMENT/80507231/6109/CPENVIRONNEMENT](http://www.cyberpresse.ca/article/20080507/CPENVIRONNEMENT/80507231/6109/CPENVIRONNEMENT)

Climate Action Network Press Release:

[www.climateactionnetwork.ca/e/news/2008/un-cc-canada-2008-05-07.html](http://www.climateactionnetwork.ca/e/news/2008/un-cc-canada-2008-05-07.html)

[www.reseauactionclimat.ca/f/nouvelles/2008/nu-cc-canada-2008-05-07.html](http://www.reseauactionclimat.ca/f/nouvelles/2008/nu-cc-canada-2008-05-07.html)

## **National News**

### **Canadians Welcome Carbon Tax – Poll**

A new Harris-Decima poll conducted May 1-4 shows broad support among Canadians in all age groups and provinces for a federal carbon tax. Asked if they support a “carbon tax on businesses and people based on the carbon emissions they generate.” 61% said yes and 32% said no. Support increased up to 80% for a tax “tailored into broader environmental causes.”

Read the story:

[www.thestar.com/News/Canada/article/422643](http://www.thestar.com/News/Canada/article/422643)

Les Canadiens en faveur d'une taxe sur les émissions carboniques:

[www.cyberpresse.ca/article/20080507/CPENVIRONNEMENT/80507189/7127/CPENVIRONNEMENT](http://www.cyberpresse.ca/article/20080507/CPENVIRONNEMENT/80507189/7127/CPENVIRONNEMENT)

## **Across Canada**

### **New Brunswick to do Broad Risk Assessment, Introduce New Flooding Rules**

New Brunswick has learned from this year’s record flooding that wreaked havoc for thousands of people and drew millions from the public coffers. Plans are now underway to introduce new rules this fall to restrict building on flood plains. The government will

also conduct a comprehensive climate change risk assessment on the province's infrastructure and economy to identify and address vulnerabilities.

Read the story:

<http://timestranscript.canadaeast.com/news/article/293359>

## **U.S. News**

### **John McCain's Climate Policy Not Good Enough - Environmental Groups**

U.S. environmental groups are criticizing Republican presidential candidate John McCain's proposal for a national cap and trade system. McCain presented the model in a major campaign speech on Monday, May 12. Under the model companies will be able to offset all of their early emissions reductions, the government can auction emission permits to support "advanced technologies" including nuclear, and the longstanding UN Convention principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" is rejected in favour of "the principle of equal treatment." The policy package contains targets to reduce U.S. GHG emissions to 2005 levels by 2012 (18% above 1990), to 1990 levels by 2020, and to 60% below 1990 levels by 2050.

News coverage:

[www.ft.com/cms/s/0/29ff7c1c-2062-11dd-80b4-000077b07658.html](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/29ff7c1c-2062-11dd-80b4-000077b07658.html)

Read McCain's full speech:

<http://usclimatenetwork.org/federal/2008-presidential-election/sen-john-mccain/may-12-speech-resources/5.12.08%20Climate%20Change%20Speech.pdf>

McCain campaign fact sheet:

<http://usclimatenetwork.org/federal/2008-presidential-election/sen-john-mccain/may-12-speech-resources/5.12.08FACTSHEET.pdf>

Republican reaction:

<http://www6.lexisnexis.com/publisher/EndUser?Action=UserDisplayFullDocument&orgId=574&topicId=100007428&docId=l:791378923&start=15>

NGO Reaction:

League of conservation Voters:

[www.lcv.org/newsroom/press-releases/lcv-reaction-to-senator-mccain-s-speech-on-global-warming.html](http://www.lcv.org/newsroom/press-releases/lcv-reaction-to-senator-mccain-s-speech-on-global-warming.html)

Sierra Club:

[www.sierraclub.org/pressroom/releases/pr2008-05-12.asp](http://www.sierraclub.org/pressroom/releases/pr2008-05-12.asp)

## **California Car Rules 41% Better than U.S. Federal Standard**

A new report by the California Air Resources Board, the state body responsible for setting and enforcing vehicle emission standards, contains hard data proving California tailpipe rules would prevent 41% more tailpipe emissions by 2020 than the U.S. federal standard. The report concludes: "In short, the benefits of the Pavley (California) rules, whether implemented in California, the United States, or Canada, are clearly greater than those provided by the proposed federal fuel economy rules, both in terms of GHG emissions reductions and fuel savings."

Get the ARB report:

[www.arb.ca.gov/cc/ccms/reports/final\\_pavleyaddendum.pdf](http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/ccms/reports/final_pavleyaddendum.pdf)

## **U.S. Scientists Learning To Run Political Campaigns**

Determined to replace political interference with greater "evidence-based decision-making" in government, more than 70 scientists gathered at Georgetown University last weekend to get the low-down on how to run their own political campaigns for public office.

Read the story:

[www.philly.com/philly/wires/ap/features/science/20080509\\_ap\\_acrashcourseintruropoliticianscience.html](http://www.philly.com/philly/wires/ap/features/science/20080509_ap_acrashcourseintruropoliticianscience.html)

## **World News**

### **CO2 Concentration Hits Record High**

Scientists at the Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii have confirmed that CO2 levels in the atmosphere stand at 387 parts per million (ppm), up almost 40% since the industrial revolution and the highest for at least the last 650,000 years. Of particular concern is the jump in the average annual growth rate of GHG concentrations since 2000, a finding which suggests Earth might be losing its capacity to re-absorb excess carbon.

Read the story:

[www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/may/12/climatechange.carbonemissions](http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/may/12/climatechange.carbonemissions)

### **World Solar Rises 51% in 2007**

Global production of photovoltaic (PV) cells was up by over half in 2007, to 3,733 megawatts. Germany passed Japan on PV manufacture and also leads the world on installations. Solar employs approximately 40,000 Germans.

Read all about it:

[www.worldwatch.org/node/5449](http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5449)

L'énergie de l'avenir: de l'eau, du vent et beaucoup de soleil

<http://lapresseaffaires.cyberpresse.ca/article/20080112/LAINFORMER/801120878/5891/LAINFORMER01>

## Was Burma Cyclone Part of Larger Global Warming Trend?

As meteorologists debate whether tropical cyclone Naris is a consequence of climate change, India's Centre for Science and Environment is saying it is definitely "a sign of things to come."

News coverage:

[http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5hmntRFM\\_YGeh\\_Ar7T2AK2uQF7FIQ](http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5hmntRFM_YGeh_Ar7T2AK2uQF7FIQ)

<http://world.merineews.com/catFull.jsp?articleID=133678>

Pas plus de cyclones, mais sans doute plus violents

[www.cyberpresse.ca/article/20080506/CPENVIRONNEMENT/80506101/6109/CPENVIRONNEMENT](http://www.cyberpresse.ca/article/20080506/CPENVIRONNEMENT/80506101/6109/CPENVIRONNEMENT)

## Get Involved

**STOP NEW OIL SANDS PROJECTS! Sign the petition at [www.nonewapprovals.ca](http://www.nonewapprovals.ca)**

**Would you like to see a \$120 billion/year U.N. Green Global Fund to save species from extinction due to global warming?** Go here to sign the Care2 petition: [www.thepetitionsite.com/1/to-un-secretary-general-for-creating-the-120-byr-global-green-fund-for-combatting-global-warming-and](http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/to-un-secretary-general-for-creating-the-120-byr-global-green-fund-for-combatting-global-warming-and)

**Green Cars** – Do you want cars that are truly fuel-efficient? Tell it to the federal government today at [www.cleancarscanada.ca](http://www.cleancarscanada.ca).

## Looking Ahead

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|-----------|---|
| May 21    | Western Climate Initiative Face-to-face Stakeholder Meeting on Subcommittee Recommendations, Salt Lake City   |
| May 24-26 | G8 Environment Meeting, Kobe, Japan<br><a href="http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/summit/2008/info/map.html">www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/summit/2008/info/map.html</a> |
| May 30    | Montreal Climate Exchange Begins Trading Carbon Futures   |
| June 1-8  | Environment Week  |
| June 3-5  | High-Level Conference on Food Security, Climate Change and Bioenergy, Rome, Italy   |
| June 2-13 | 2nd session of Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention & SBSTA & SBI, Bonn, Germany   |
| June 9-12 | Montreal Conference (Int'l Economic Forum of the Americas)  |

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