



International Fund for China’s Environment Newsletter

2421 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20037-1718 USA
Tel 202-822-2141, Email: ifce-adm@ifce.org www.ifce.org

IFCE Weekly News (Jan. 9 – Jan. 15)

CHINA

CHINESE AIRLINES REFUSE TO PAY EU CARBON TAX.....	3
END CHINESE BEAR-BILE FARMING, SAYS UK ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVIST	3
CHINA TO RELEASE SIX GIANT PANDAS INTO WILD	4

EUROPE

WITH WORK SCARCE IN ATHENS, GREEKS GO BACK TO THE LAND	5
ENVIRONMENT JEOPARDIZED BY ECONOMIC BAIL-OUT PLANS, WARNS WWF.....	5
EUROPE'S MOUNTAINS SHOW CLEAR AND RAPID CHANGE TO A WARMING CLIMATE	6
WILL EUROPE’S AIRLINE CARBON FEE ACTUALLY WORK?	6
WEIRD WEATHER AROUND THE WORLD SEES IN 2012.....	7

US

US TIGHTENS FISHING POLICY, SETTING 2012 CATCH LIMITS FOR ALL MANAGED SPECIES	8
NEW 20-YEAR BAN ON MINING NEAR GRAND CANYON IS FINAL.....	8
U.S. SOLAR COMPANY LOOKS TO MEXICO AND BEYOND.....	8
EPA WEB TOOL TRACKS MAJOR GREENHOUSE GAS SOURCES.....	9
WYOMING TO GET NORTH AMERICA’S BIGGEST WIND FARM (3000 MW)	9
FLORIDA COUNTIES BAND TOGETHER TO READY FOR WARMING’S EFFECTS	9

OTHER COUNTRIES

MEXICO CITY’S MOVE: TAKE THIS DUMP AND CLOSE IT!.....	10
AS AMAZON DEFORESTATION FALLS, FOOD PRODUCTION RISES.....	10
HAPPY RHINO NEWS: NO RHINOS POACHED IN NEPAL LAST YEAR.....	10
BIRDS FLYING FASTER DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE	11
SCIENTISTS SEE SHORTCUTS TO SLOW GLOBAL WARMING WORLD	11
MANDATORY ROOF GARDENS URGED AS SOLUTION TO SINGAPORE FLOODING	11

You can find more information about IFCE on our website: www.ifce.org

Also, follow us on twitter (and for more environmental news): @IFCE_DC

Or, for original content on our blog at: www.ifcedc.blogspot.com

Thank you!

Edited by: HY Zhang (China, Europe), and J. Gottesman (US, World)

CHINA

Chinese airlines refuse to pay EU carbon tax

January 4, 2012

Abstract: China's four leading airlines have thrown down the gauntlet to the European Union by saying they will refuse to pay carbon charges levied under Europe's emissions trading scheme. The defiant message — which could lead to a ban from European airports — marks an escalation of resistance to the scheme, which came into effect this week and is also fiercely opposed by the United States. But other Asian airlines were more amenable to the system. Cathay Pacific — which is based in Hong Kong — and Singapore Airlines have said they would either offset the costs by improving efficiency or pass on the charge to customers. The EU says the scheme would cost passengers between €2 and €12 per flight, depending on the distance and other factors. Airline operators fears this will hurt demand in a market that is already depressed by the economic crisis.

See the news article at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/jan/04/china-airlines-eu-carbon-tax>

End Chinese bear-bile farming, says UK animal rights activist

January 9, 2012

Abstract: A British animal rights activist joined hands with practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine on Monday to call for an end to bear-bile farming, which they say is cruel and unsafe. The new campaign against the ancient practice targets pharmaceutical companies, such as Kaibao, that make fever suppressants from bile extracted drip by drip from holes punched into the bodies of thousands of caged bears. Chinese scientists have been studying synthetic replacements for more than 30 years and carried out extensive field trials, but the health ministry has yet to grant approval for commercial use.

See the news article at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/jan/09/china-bear-bile-farming-animal-rights?newsfeed=true>

China to release six giant pandas into wild

January 10, 2012

Abstract: China will introduce six giant pandas into a "semi-wild" environment on Wednesday in one of the most ambitious attempts yet to replenish the endangered population with captive-bred animals. Many conservationists have mixed feelings about the value of the project due to the cost and uncertain outcome. There have been previous cases where endangered animals have been successfully reintroduced into wild habitats from which they went extinct, such as wolves in Yellowstone Park in the United States. But in that case, the animals were raised in the wild in other areas and only relocated. "We don't yet know what it will take to ensure a successful reintroduction to the wild," said Matt Durnin, who has been studying pandas for more than a decade. "It might add to the diversity of the population. But the downside is that it is a lot of money, a lot of time and a lot of effort that might otherwise be spent on protecting the animals already in the wild."

See news articles at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/jan/10/china-giant-pandas>

EUROPE

With Work Scarce in Athens, Greeks Go Back to the Land

Greece

January 8, 2012

Abstract: As Greece's blighted economy plunges further into the abyss, the couple are joining with an exodus of Greeks who are fleeing to the countryside and looking to the nation's rich rural past as a guide to the future. They acknowledge that it is a peculiar undertaking, with more manual labor than they, as college graduates, ever imagined doing. But in a country starved by austerity even as it teeters on the brink of default, it seemed as good a gamble as any. Beyond the numbers, the impulse to return to Greece's rural roots itself represents a telling new tendency since the onset of the crisis — a turning inward, a quiet kind of national pride in response to the overall gloom.

See the news article at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/09/world/europe/amid-economic-strife-greeks-look-to-farming-past.html>

Environment jeopardized by economic bail-out plans, warns WWF

Europe

January 10, 2012

Abstract: Gland, Switzerland/ Brussels, Belgium/Athens, Greece – WWF has stressed the urgent need for sustainable solutions to the ongoing global financial crisis, to preserve the natural capital that underpins successful economic activity, in letters addressed to International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde and European Commission President José Manuel Barroso.

See the news article at: http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?203071/Environment-jeopardised-by-economic-bail-out-plans-warns-WWF

Europe's mountains show clear and rapid change to a warming climate

Europe

January 10, 2012

Abstract: The decade from 2000 to 2009 was the warmest since global climate has been measured, and while localized studies have shown evidence of changes in mountain plant communities that reflect this warming trend, no study has yet taken a continental-scale view of the situation — until now.

See the news article at: <http://www.enn.com/climate/article/43827>

Will Europe's airline carbon fee actually work?

Europe

January 10, 2012

Abstract: It's odd to think that a spat over carbon fees for airlines could lead to a global trade war. But that's looking quite possible. On Jan.1, a new E.U. law went into effect requiring all flights in and out of Europe to pay for their global-warming emissions. That's sat poorly with the rest of the world. China's four largest airlines have threatened not to pay — risking an outright ban from European airports — and China has reportedly blocked an Airbus order in retaliation. Russia, Brazil, India and Japan are all stridently opposed. And then there's the United States.

See the news article at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/post/will-europes-airline-carbon-tax-actually-work/2012/01/10/gIQAHaT4nP_blog.html

Weird weather around the world sees in 2012

Britain

January 12, 2012

Abstract: Thousands of people in Austria, France and Germany were on Thursday still digging themselves out of some of the heaviest snowfalls seen in 30–50 years. After Europe's driest and warmest autumn for nearly 150 years, a massive storm dumped nearly 18ft of snow in two days this week, cutting off ski resorts and villages and leaving people and animals stranded. The summit of the 9,718ft Zugspitze Mountain in Germany which had only 7.5 inches of snow a few weeks ago, now has 150 inches. According to the Climate Prediction Centre, new sea-temperature data suggests La Niña "will be of weak-to-moderate strength this winter, and will continue thereafter as a weak event until it likely dissipates sometime between March and May."

See news article at:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/blog/2012/jan/12/weird-weather-2012>

UNITED STATES

US tightens fishing policy, setting 2012 catch limits for all managed species

January 9, 2012

Abstract: For the first time in its history, and perhaps the first such extensive legislation in the World, the United States has placed restrictions upon fishing for all of the species it tracks. The guidelines have already been established, and the official limits will be in place for the 2012 fishing season. The bipartisan legislation, was signed by President Obama after being drafted by GW Bush, and has drawn accolades from notable environmental groups such as the Pew Environmental Trust.

See the news article at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/us-tightens-fishing-policy-setting-2012-catch-limits-for-all-managed-species/2011/12/30/gIQALLObjP_story.html?hpid=z5

New 20-year ban on mining near Grand Canyon is final

January 9, 2012

Abstract: Conservation groups and interior minister Ken Salazar overcame the efforts of mining groups to enact a 20-year ban on drilling public land near the Grand Canyon. Despite holding large reserves of highly-valuable Uranium among other minerals, the potential risk to the Colorado River basin, and the impact it might have upon drinking water outweighed potential economic gains and minimal job creation.

See the news article at: <http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/environment/story/2012-01-09/grand-canyon-mining-ban/52466224/1>

U.S. Solar Company Looks to Mexico and Beyond

January 9, 2012

Abstract: California-based Skyline Solar has expanded its business into Durango, Mexico, embarking on one of the largest concentrated photovoltaics (CPV) solar farms projects in the world.

See the news article at: <http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/rea/news/article/2012/01/latin-america-report-u-s-solar-company-looks-to-mexico-and-beyond>

EPA Web tool tracks major greenhouse gas sources

January 11, 2012

Abstract: The EPA has released a new interactive website that allows users to track the major polluters by industry and geographical region, giving individuals a readily understandable approach to who pollutes, and how much.

See the news article at: <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/environment/la-me-gs-epa-web-tool-tracks-major-greenhouse-gas-sources-20120111,0,370183.story>

Wyoming to Get North America's Biggest Wind Farm (3000 MW)

January 11, 2012

Abstract: Plans for what will become the largest wind farm in North America have been fast-tracked by the Obama administration. With over 1000 turbines, the farm would bring a great deal of jobs and energy to rural Wyoming.

See the news article at: <http://www.treehugger.com/renewable-energy/3000-mw-wind-farm-wyoming-fast-tracked-obama.html>

Florida Counties Band Together to Ready for Warming's Effects

January 12, 2012

Abstract: The recent debacle that was Durban, has left many smaller local governments without a broad overarching set of guidelines with which they can tackle environmental adversity on a micro level. Despite the failings of political partisanship the world over, some local leaders are refusing to sit idly by. In Florida, several counties have quickly and effectively reached a pact to share data and resources.

See the news article at:
http://e360.yale.edu/feature/florida_counties_band_together_to_prepare_for_effects_of_global_warming/2483/

OTHER COUNTRIES

Mexico City's move: Take this dump and close it!

Mexico

January 9, 2012

Abstract: C40, along with Mexico City's municipal government have successfully closed their Poniente Landfill, with 70m tons of trash it is one of the world's largest. Estimates are that the shuttering of the gates could cut the city's CO2 emissions by 25%.

See the news article at: <http://www.grist.org/cities/2012-01-06-mexico-citys-move-take-this-dump-and-close-it>

As Amazon deforestation falls, food production rises

Brazil

January 9, 2012

Abstract: The Brazilian Nat'l Academy of Science has just published a report in which they studied the agricultural output of Mato Grosso, an area highly familiar with Amazonian deforestation. From 2001-10 soy production accounted for 26% of deforestation, but in 2006-10, that number dropped to a mere 2%.

See the news article at: http://news.mongabay.com/2012/0110-amazon_soy_pnas.html

Happy Rhino News: no rhinos poached in Nepal last year

Nepal

January 10, 2012

Abstract: News surrounding the world's dwindling population of rhinoceroses is with near-certainty grim. A record number were felled at the intent of humans last year, but in a slight bit of promising news, none of this occurred in Nepal.

See the news article at: http://news.mongabay.com/2012/0110-hance_rhinos_nepal.html

Birds Flying Faster Due to Climate Change

World

January 12, 2012

Abstract: In a surprisingly positive externality of climate change, birds are seeing their migrations shortened, and their fertility increase. Higher wind speeds have allowed them to cruise more quickly, though there is some debate as to whether or not these trends will remain ongoing.

See the news article at: <http://news.discovery.com/animals/birds-flying-faster-wind-speeds-120112.html>

Scientists See Shortcuts to Slow Global Warming

World

January 12, 2012

Abstract: An international team of scientists has prescribed two uncommon measures to cut back on common pollutants. By focusing on methane and soot emissions as opposed to CO₂, proven methods could produce near-certain results.

See the news article at: <http://www.earth.columbia.edu/articles/view/2936>

Mandatory Roof Gardens Urged As Solution to Singapore Flooding

Singapore

Jan 15, 2012

A panel studying the flooding in Singapore has produced an intriguing solution to their problem: green roofing. They would include gardens, storage, and runoff / irrigation solutions that would help the region cope with its ongoing overabundance of water.

See the news article at:

http://e360.yale.edu/digest/mandatory_roof_gardens_urged_as_solution_to_singapore_flooding/3288/

Renewable energy can tackle poverty – UN

World

January 15, 2012

Abstract: At meetings held in Abu Dhabi this past week, UN officials declared 2012 the ‘International Year of Sustainable Energy for All’. Cheap energy commitments by the US, UAE, European Union, and 57 other nations are all exploring national and international plans for 2015 energy production levels.

See the news article at: <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/environment/renewable-energy-can-tackle-poverty-un-1.965779>