

<https://www.edie.net/news/6/First-funding-phase-approved-for-Humber-net-zero-industrial-cluster/>

Saturday May 30th

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) has pushed back the ban on plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds set to come into force later this month to October 2020, to the dismay of campaigners. In May 2019, the UK Government formally confirmed the phase-out date for plastic straws and drink stirrers, and cotton buds with plastic stems, banning the items from being sold in England from April 2020. However, Defra has moved the ban date back to October 2020 in response to challenges imposed by the coronavirus outbreak. City to Sea's chief executive Rebecca Burgess said: "We're now looking to government to provide reassurance that this isn't the start of slippery slope of watering down and delaying legislation to tackle the plastics crisis".

<https://www.edie.net/news/5/Ban-on-plastic-straws-in-England-pushed-back-to-October-2020/>

Sunday May 31st

Father, you know that listening is hard for us. We are so action-oriented, so product-driven, that doing is easier for us than being. Help us to be still and to listen. We want to learn how to sink into the light of your presence until we can be comfortable in that light. Help us, dear Father, to try now.
(Richard Foster)

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by email (free), please email:

prayer-guide@greenchristian.org.uk

Website: www.greenchristian.org.uk

Picture on front cover: View from part way up Mount Snowdon, taken by Emma King.

Websites accessed 26/4/20

Green Christian is a Trading name of Christian Ecology Link Ltd.
Correspondence Office: 10 Kiln Gardens, Hartley Wintney, Hampshire, RG27 8RG, UK. Company Registration No. 2445198 Registered Charity No. 328744.

Tel: +44 (0) 345 4598460
info@greenchristian.org.uk

Prayer guide for the care of creation

May 2020

“The Earth will not continue to offer its harvest, except with faithful stewardship. We cannot say we love the land and then take steps to destroy it for use by future generations.”

Pope John Paul II



Friday May 1st

It's with sadness that we have learnt that Sir John Houghton has died on April 15, 2020, at the age of 88, from complications from Covid-19. Sir John was a climate scientist – an atmospheric physicist – and a lifelong Christian. He was born in Dyserth, North Wales, and after attending Rhyl Grammar School was awarded a place at Jesus College, Oxford, to read physics. After gaining his doctorate he had a distinguished academic career, including becoming Professor of Atmospheric Physics at Oxford University; Chairman of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution; chairing the Scientific Assessment Working Group at the IPCC; Chief Executive of the Met Office; Principal Investigator for Space Experiments on NASA Spacecraft, among many other achievements. He won many awards for his scientific work.

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/in-memory-of-sir-john-houghton/>

Saturday May 2nd

Tomorrow is International Dawn Chorus day. Although there will be no events and walks this year, the dawn chorus is something we can all

enjoy out of the window. Pray for protection of landscapes and habitats both near and far. The State of Nature report from 2019 showed that 15% of all UK species (birds and animals) are under threat of extinction.

<https://nbn.org.uk/stateofnature2019/>

Sunday May 3rd

Entrusted with an earthly home Our minds did not create or build We live as visitors and guests Until our years have been fulfilled. Through centuries, without concern For all the grandeur and the grace, We've taken beauty from the earth And left it poor – a barren place. O God, we've been ungrateful guests Upon this earth, which you designed. Within our time, help us restore Our blighted world for all mankind. (Jean Carriott)

Monday May 4th

There have not been many bright spots in the coronavirus pandemic, but one has been the apparent return of nature as the frantic pace of modern life has slowed. In Britain, wildlife seems set for a bountiful spring and summer. Fewer cars on the road means less roadkill, and

The WMO expects a 6% drop in carbon emissions this year, an estimate on the high end of a range given by scientists, but the U.N. agency warned that it could be followed by even higher emissions growth than before the crisis. In fact, the drop is not even enough to get the world back on track to meet the target of the 2015 Paris Agreement, which aims for global temperature rise of no more than 1.5 degree above pre-industrial levels. That would require at least a 7% annual drop in emissions.

<https://news.trust.org/item/20200422094646-h27g6/>

Thursday May 28th

Oxford City Council adds electric vehicles to fleet as part of net-zero journey Oxford Direct Services (ODS), which is owned by the city council, has added six EVs to its fleet, with an additional 27 low-emission vehicles set to be delivered and integrated over the next four months. ODS is aiming to electrify 25% of its 330-strong fleet by 2023 and future EVs will include passenger vehicles, street sweepers, vans and an excavator. The vehicles will be funded by a £41m ESO

project that has been backed by £10m in Government funding from the Prospering from the Energy Revolution Challenge.

<https://www.edie.net/news/8/Oxford-City-Council-adds-electric-vehicles-to-fleet-as-part-of-net-zero-journey/>

Friday May 29th

Plans to develop the world's first zero-carbon industrial cluster in the Humber region have been boosted after leading energy companies joined an existing consortium of project partners in the same week that Government funding was secured for the project. Last year, Drax, Equinor and National Grid published a roadmap fleshing out their plans to create the world's first zero-carbon industrial hub in the Humber region by 2040. The roadmap sets out proposals to build a demonstration hydrogen production facility in the region by 2025 and install carbon capture equipment on one of the four biomass units at Drax's power station in Selby two years later. The project now consists of a consortium of 11 businesses that have signed a formal agreement to support the zero-carbon cluster.

Sunday May 24th

God of truth and love, give us the wisdom to know what is right, the strength to do it and the courage to declare it, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Monday May 25th

As Russia encourages fossil fuel drilling in the Arctic, and climate change brings worsening threats, an old way of life is struggling. Indigenous Nenets reindeer herders say oil and gas operations in the Yamal region - exploration activity that includes hundreds of wells and dozens of trains and tankers - are polluting the environment and harming their animals' health. But avoiding the gas fields in Yamal, 2,000 km (1,250 miles) northeast of Moscow, is becoming harder as fossil fuel infrastructure creeps across the region, spurred on by tax breaks passed in March as part of Russia's new Arctic development strategy.

<https://news.trust.org/item/20200424094740-jzza0/>

Tuesday May 26th

The European Commission's Green Deal chief, Frans Timmermans,

assured EU lawmakers that "every euro" spent on economic recovery measures after the COVID-19 crisis would be linked to the green and digital transitions. "Every euro we invest must flow into a new economy rather than old structures. We must avoid that at all costs," he told the European Parliament's environment committee during a video conference. "The European Green Deal is a growth strategy and a winning strategy," the Dutchman said on Twitter after the meeting. The exchange with Parliament took place two days before EU heads of state and government hold a video summit to agree a recovery plan after the coronavirus crisis.

<https://www.edie.net/news/11/European-Commission-promises-green-recovery-to-EU-lawmakers/>

Wednesday May 27th

The COVID-19 pandemic is expected to cause the biggest fall in carbon dioxide emissions since World War Two but it will likely be short-lived and will not stop climate change, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said on Wednesday.

many birds and voles will be spared as owners decide to keep their cats indoors. In towns and cities, wildflowers will surely flourish as councils realise that mowing their parks and verges is somewhat less than essential. Nature, it seems, is making a comeback.

<https://theconversation.com/natures-comeback-no-the-coronavirus-pandemic-threatens-the-worlds-wildlife-136209>

Tuesday May 5th

While nature is making a comeback in some parts of the world, this is but a partial picture, and one that is limited to the minority world of industrialised nations. Most of the world's biodiversity is found in the low-income countries and emerging economies of the Global South, and in such places the economic impacts of the pandemic are likely to be devastating for the natural world. In places where there is no social safety net, exploiting natural resources is often the only option for the destitute. At the same time, the surveillance and management of our precious wild places is considerably weakened. Governments are understandably preoccupied with

public health, so there is less law enforcement in rural areas. Meanwhile, the shutdown of global tourism has pulled the financial rug out from thousands of protected areas, leaving them without an operational budget for anti-poaching surveillance and other activities.

<https://theconversation.com/natures-comeback-no-the-coronavirus-pandemic-threatens-the-worlds-wildlife-136209>

Wednesday May 6th

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Alok Sharma had stated that the UK remains focused on preparations for the delayed COP26 climate summit, claiming that nations can't treat the coronavirus pandemic and climate action as an "either-or" scenario. Sharma, who was appointed Energy Secretary and COP26 President in February, reiterated the UK's commitment to climate action and its net-zero target during a virtual BEIS committee meeting in April. During the session, he claimed that the UK was continuing "to have a dialogue" with the UN and relevant parties on setting a new date for the global

climate conference, which has been delayed until 2021 as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. However, Sharma was adamant that climate change hadn't fallen down the political agenda.

<https://www.edie.net/news/11/Alok-Sharma---Focus-has-not-stopped--on-global-climate-action/>

Thursday May 7th

White-tailed eagles — one of the largest birds of prey with a 2.5-metre wingspan — have been spotted for the first time in 240 years soaring above the North York Moors. The incredible creatures, also known as Sea Eagles, went extinct in England in the early 20th century due to illegal killing. But thanks to a pioneering project by Forestry England and the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation, there is new hope for the majestic birds. Last August, six eaglets were released in the Isle of Wight as part of a five-year plan to eventually introduce 60 birds to the coasts, cliffs, woodlands and estuaries around the Solent. The project tracks the young birds as they make their first big trips around the UK.

<http://www.roydennis.org/2020/04/06/eagle-wanderings/>

Friday May 8th

Satellites can be used to successfully identify plastics floating on the surface of the sea, a study has found, with the potential to help ocean clean-ups. Data from the European Space Agency's Sentinel-2 satellites was used to develop the method, which allows aggregations of plastic pieces and items such as bottles and carrier bags to be spotted and identified from space. The study led by scientists at Plymouth Marine Laboratory used high-resolution data of coastal waters from the satellites, which "see" across the visible light spectrum and into infrared light waves.

<https://theecologist.org/2020/apr/24/satellites-can-identify-ocean-plastic-pollution>

Saturday May 9th

Today it is World Fairtrade Day, and the theme this year is Planet Fair Trade, Enterprises for the new economy. Fair Trade Enterprises are business models built on a social and environmental mission. They are proof of concept of a new economy.

locusts will create a second wave that will be far worse than the first one.

<https://theconversation.com/the-age-of-stability-is-over-and-coronavirus-is-just-the-beginning-136380>

Thursday May 21st

For the last five years, Platio Solar in Budapest has been developing new ways of implementing solar technology into urban spaces—and one of their latest developments is a residential solar panelled driveway made out of recycled plastic bottles. Each "Platio Solar Paver" is made from 400 polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles. The system can either be used to generate electricity for a residential household or power an electric car.

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/solar-driveways-made-from-pet-can-power-average-household/>

Friday May 22nd

Solar use in the UK broke an all-time peak generation record on Monday 20th April, accounting for almost 30% of UK electricity demand, with the UK also operating for more than 11 consecutive days without coal. At the time of the peak, solar was meeting

almost 30% of UK electricity demand. Generating conditions are currently favourable, in part due to lower than usual levels of pollution as a result of the coronavirus lockdown. However, solar PV accounted for just 1.4% of renewable generation from July to September 2019 and accounted for 3.9% of total 2019 electricity generation.

<https://www.edie.net/news/10/UK-smashes-solar-generation-record/>

Saturday May 23rd

Banking giants Barclays and HSBC have been accused of financing a combined £158bn into the fossil fuel sector since the signing of the Paris Agreement in 2015, despite both organisations pledging to ramp up sustainable investment portfolios. A new report from NGO 350.org and partners, names the two UK organisations as the top two fossil fuel financiers in Europe. According to the report, Barclays has funnelled £91bn between 2015 and 2019 into fossil fuel firms and projects, while HSBC has contributed £67bn over the same period.

<https://www.edie.net/news/7/Barclays-and-HSBC-blasted-over--158bn-fossil-fuel-funding/>

Twenty one research institutes from across the globe collaborated on the study, which was published in the journal *Geophysical Research Letters*. One of the institutes, McGill University, explained in a news release that the Arctic is currently covered in sea ice year-round, the amount of which fluctuates seasonally. However, if humans carry on treating the planet as we do now, there will be ice-free summers in the Arctic in the next 30 years — which will have devastating effects on animals in the region, namely polar bears.

<https://www.greenmatters.com/p/arctic-ice-free-summer>

Tuesday May 19th

A new study has offered the clearest indication yet of how insects all over the world are faring. The researchers studied data on the numbers and total weight of insects and arachnids (spiders and mites) sampled in 166 long-term surveys. Each of these lasted more than ten years and recorded insects at 1,676 sites in 41 countries on five continents. They estimate that land-based insects, which make up the majority of species, have been declining at

nearly 1% per year, or almost 9% per decade. But during the same period, the small proportion of insects which live in freshwater experienced a 1% annual increase, or just over 11% per decade.

<https://theconversation.com/insects-worldwide-study-reveals-widespread-decline-since-1925-137089>

Wednesday May 20th

The IPCC predicts crop yields will decrease by around 10% or more, but to date it has ignored the possibility of large-scale pest outbreaks, which can wipe out entire harvests. At the end of 2019 and beginning of 2020, the Arabian peninsula experienced much wetter weather than normal, likely owed to ocean warming. This created conditions that enabled numbers of desert locusts to explode. This unusual event was followed by another, a storm that shifted most of this locust army, now several hundred billion strong, to East Africa. In Kenya, it became the worst such outbreak for more than 70 years. With the rainy season just arrived and seeds sown for the next cropping season, it is now feared that continued breeding of the

This economy is populated by businesses and trade prioritising human and planetary well-being. Their business models are diverse, and include: circular economy, recycling and upcycling, women-leadership, regenerative agriculture, preserve indigenous skills, traditional carbon-neutral production methods, and use of profit to benefit people and their environment.

<https://wfto.com/events/world-fair-trade-day-2020>

Sunday May 10th

Father, help us to understand that we and all your creation depend on you and one another. Teach us how to be good stewards of all that you have given us to care for, and help us to banish from our actions all greed, selfishness and short-term thinking.

Monday May 11th

It's Christian Aid Week, starting today. Normal door-to-door activities are suspended, but Christian Aid week is going online. The need has never been greater: Christian Aid and their partners already have experience of limiting the spread of infection during the Ebola crisis, and

they will build on this experience to continue to stand together with communities living in poverty during this period. If infection rates start to develop as they are in Europe, then people in poorer countries will be hit even harder.

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

Tuesday May 12th

This week is also Water Saving Week in the UK. The UK has less available water per person than most other European countries. London is drier than Istanbul, and the South East of England has less water available per person than some African countries. Surprised? Climate change, population increases and changes in lifestyle have led to increasing pressure being put on our water supplies. As a result, it is more important than ever that we take care with how we use water. This week will look at how saving water will save carbon, cash and wildlife, amongst others.

<https://waterwise.org.uk/wsw/>

Wednesday May 13th

Number of UK sustainability professionals climbs by 12%,

according to LinkedIn. To mark Earth Day, LinkedIn analysed data from its 675 million members to identify job markets trends as more businesses align practices to mitigate climate change impacts and improve sustainability. LinkedIn named the UK as a hotspot for sustainability jobs, with London ranking 6th out of cities for its concentration of sustainability professionals. The UK recorded a growth in 12% of sustainability professionals using the platform last year, higher than the global average of 7.5%. According to the data, green job postings rose by 32% in the UK last year.

<https://www.edie.net/news/7/Number-of-UK-sustainability-professionals-climbs-by-10---according-to-LinkedIn/>

Thursday May 14th

Utilizing an enzyme found within composted leaves, scientists are now breaking down plastic all the way into a recyclable form in a matter of hours. Carbios, the French company responsible for the breakthrough, is already collaborating with Pepsi and L'Oréal to unleash industrial market-scale production of the new substance

within five years. "We are the first company to bring this technology on the market," the deputy chief executive at Carbios, Martin Stephan, told *The Guardian*. "Our goal is to be up and running by 2024–2025, at large industrial scale."

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/newly-developed-enzyme-breaks-down-plastic-bottles-in-hours/>

Friday May 15th

Nine children aged between seven and 14 who live in the contaminated lands of Sucumbios in the Ecuadorian Amazon have taken their government to court in a landmark case which is awaiting resolution after the lockdown. The state owned Petro Amazonas and the Ministry of the Environment are on the receiving end of the action with the children demanding the cessation of all gas flares in their villages which contaminate the Amazon air they breathe. They are being supported by UK environmentalist Nicola Peel, who is in the vicinity researching the effects of the oil industry on indigenous people and the environment.

<https://theecologist.org/2020/apr/09/ecuadorian-children-bring-case-against-government>

Saturday May 16th

The introduction of pollution-busting clean air zones in cities has been postponed by the coronavirus crisis, as authorities combat the outbreak. Clean air zones (CAZs), in which the dirtiest vehicles are deterred from urban centres by charges, were due to be implemented in Birmingham, Leeds and Bath this year, but have now been delayed at least to January 2021. A zero-emissions zone planned for Oxford in December has also been postponed until summer 2021, while a consultation in Manchester on a clean air zone due this summer has been halted. In London, the congestion charge, low emission zone and ultra low emission zones have all been suspended until further notice and a tightening of standards for the LEZ, due in October, has been pushed back by four months. <https://www.edie.net/news/6/UK-cities-postpone-clean-air-zone-plans-due-to-Covid-19-crisis/>

Sunday May 17th

Rogation Sunday is the 5th Sunday after Easter, and is the day when the Church has traditionally offered prayer for God's blessings on the fruits of the earth and the labours of those who produce our food.

A prayer for Rogationtide:

Remember, Lord, your mercy and loving-kindness towards us.

Bless this good earth, and make it fruitful.

Bless our labour, and give us all things needed for our daily lives.

Bless the homes of our parish and all who live within them.

Bless our common life and our care for our neighbour.

Hear us, good Lord. Amen.

<https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/news/2018/04/04/rogation-sunday/>

Monday May 18th

According to a new study, global heating in the Arctic is on track to cause some seriously deadly consequences in the near future — the North Pole may experience summers free of sea ice (frozen ocean water) by the year 2050.