

pre-owned and refurbished products due to lockdown. Searches for 'eco furniture' and 'sustainable furniture' were, respectively, up 123% and 171% in 2020 compared to 2019. One of the UK's major eBay sellers in this category is Wigan-based ClearCycle, which sells refurbished homewares through its ClearDeals Outlet. The business has seen a 205% year-on-year growth in sales. Drivers of this trend are likely to be numerous. With extra time at home, many households are taking the chance to redecorate....But there will also be environmental drivers.

<https://www.edie.net/news/12/eBay--Shoppers-increasingly-looking-for--eco--and--sustainable--homewares--during-lockdown/>

### Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March

Worldwide, oceanic shark and ray abundance has declined by 71% since 1970. More than half of the 31 species examined are now considered to be endangered, or even critically endangered. Compare this with 1980 when only one species, the plankton-feeding basking shark, was thought to be endangered. These are stark statistics, and they indicate that the future for the ocean's top predators is fast deteriorating. For millennia, their

remoteness has allowed these species to largely avoid humans. But since the early 1950s, industrial-scale fishing fleets have been able to reach distant waters and gradually spread to exploit the entire global ocean. Rising demand over the same period for shark and ray meat, as well as fins, gill plates and liver oil, has caused catches of the 30 or so oceanic species to soar.

<https://theconversation.com/oceanic-sharks-and-rays-have-declined-by-71-since-1970-a-global-solution-is-needed-154102>

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Picture on front cover: Emma King

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## Prayer guide for the care of creation

# March 2021

"They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the king of Israel!" John 12:13

"What's the use of a fine house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on." Henry David Thoreau



### **Monday 1st March**

Restoration work done by Natural Resources Wales aimed at protecting Wales's rarest habitat, lowland raised bogs, is seeing positive results. In the UK a staggering 94% of lowland raised bogs have been lost, the LIFE Welsh raised Bogs Project aims to restore seven of the very best examples in Wales. The sites are internationally important and are classed as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). These are environmentally sensitive sites legally protected on a European level for their environmental interest. Work has been ongoing since September 2020 to restore two raised bog sites in Ceredigion by creating over 11 miles of peat bunds. A few months after starting the work, there is already encouraging signs that a more natural water level is starting to form.

<https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/news-and-events/news/life-welsh-raised-bog-bunding-restoration-work/?lang=en>

### **Tuesday 2nd March**

CPRE, the countryside charity, has joined forces with nine other campaign groups – including the Ramblers and Open Spaces Society – to urge the government not to make trespass a

criminal offence. Lockdown is once again showing us how important getting out in the countryside and local green spaces is to so many of us. CPRE believes that the countryside should be there for everyone, so we are concerned by government proposals to make trespass a criminal offence. This would affect how people can access and enjoy the countryside and green spaces, which is ever more important in light of the coronavirus pandemic. The debate on the petition asking for trespass not to be made a criminal matter has been postponed due to covid.

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/news/changes-to-trespass-rules-would-create-more-hurdles-to-countryside-access/>

### **Wednesday 3rd March**

Industrial decarbonisation is probably the biggest challenge of the European Green Deal, which aims to reduce Europe's emissions down to net-zero by 2050. In a study published [in February], the independent capital-owner-led TPI assessed mining companies and manufacturers of paper, steel, cement and aluminium from around the world to find out whether they are aligned with the climate goals of the Paris Agreement. The result: 95 out of the 111 large

### **Saturday 27th March**

In a nutshell, the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill calls for:

- the UK to make and enact a serious plan. This means dealing with our real fair share of emissions so that we don't go over critical global rises in temperature
- our entire carbon footprint be taken into account (in the UK and overseas)
- the protection and conservation of nature here and overseas along supply chains, recognising the damage we cause through the goods we consume
- those in power not to depend on technology to save the day, which is used as an excuse to carry on polluting as usual
- ordinary people to have a real say on the way forward in a citizens' assembly with bite

<https://www.ceebill.uk/>

### **Sunday 28th March**

Palm Sunday. Lord Jesus, as we think of you at the start of Holy Week, and ponder what is to come, help us to pray for your world. Help us to make sure this planet is looked after, help us to make good decisions, and help us

to be the positive difference in the world.

### **Monday 29th March**

Beavers in Scotland are establishing a strong presence in Perth, according to researchers conducting the most comprehensive ever survey of the animal ... The NatureScot survey, being conducted by Exeter University, will gather detailed, up-to-date information on the location and number of active beaver territories, as well as assess the health and spread of the overall population, after beavers became extinct several hundred years ago. The survey has already found plenty of evidence of beaver activity on the River Tay, including right in the centre of the City of Perth, providing a wonderful wildlife watching experience for Perth residents. Perth is the first city in UK to have resident urban beavers.

<https://www.nature.scot/survey-finds-beavers-establishing-strong-presence-city-perth>

### **Tuesday 30th March**

eBay has revealed that searches for 'eco furniture' and 'sustainable furniture' have more than doubled year-on-year, suggesting that shoppers are increasingly looking for



[releases/wildlife-charities-call-for-new-vision-afterforestry-  
englandreplantconiferonprecious-  
heathland/](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/06/wildlife-charities-call-for-new-vision-after-forestry-uk-plant-precious-heathland/)

### **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March**

After several early cases of COVID-19 were linked to a wet market in China, wildlife trade became central to discussions about links between public health and nature. Some groups called for a complete ban on the consumption and trade of wildlife, with governments such as China and Vietnam acting decisively to introduce large-scale prohibitions. The pandemic has brought humanity's strained relationship with nature into sharp focus. But the more pervasive environmental and health risks from animal agriculture – which would probably replace wild meat – have received little attention. [Researchers from the University of Oxford] conducted a study to investigate the risks of removing wild meat from global food systems. [Their] results indicate large-scale prohibitions on wildlife use could have negative consequences for nature and human health.

<https://theconversation.com/we-need-a-green-recovery-after-covid-19-but->

[banning-wildlife-trade-could-do-more-harm-than-good-155407](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/07/banning-wildlife-trade-could-do-more-harm-than-good-155407)

### **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March**

Lord, we have not been good stewards of the world you have given us to look after. We confess and repent of all the ways in which we have misused your creation. Teach us how to care for it with wisdom, compassion and dignity, and to pass on to our children a world that is in some degree better for our having lived in it.

### **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March**

Communities in southern Madagascar impacted by water pollution are still waiting for basic public health information from mining giant Rio Tinto. Mining giant Rio Tinto's destruction of the sacred site at Juukan Gorge in Australia brought global attention to failures in the company's operational culture. Rio Tinto must now demonstrate its social commitments are not just hollow talk. For southern Madagascar, and four years into a dialogue with Rio Tinto about the breach of an environmental buffer zone and contamination of local waterways by its subsidiary Qit Minerals Madagascar (QMM), the lack of answers, a deficit of trust, and

swarms are getting stronger and more frequent. The Bug Picture is working with communities around the area of Laikipia, Isiolo and Samburu in central Kenya to harvest the insects and mill them, turning them into protein-rich animal feed and organic fertilizer for farms. "We are trying to create hope in a hopeless situation, and help these communities alter their perspective to see these insects as a seasonal crop that can be harvested and sold for money," said Laura Stanford, founder of The Bug Picture.

<https://news.trust.org/item/20210222085801-ivq8v/>

### **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March**

Lord, many people in developing countries are suffering the effects of climate change through our habits of consumption. We pray for all who are working to relieve malnutrition, disease and human suffering. Be close to them when they face obstacles of bureaucratic obstruction, corporate greed and the tyranny of prejudice. Support them in every circumstance and crisis and make your presence known to them in every time of need.

### **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March**

The World Bank is working with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on ways to factor climate change into the negotiations about reducing the debt burdens of some poor countries, World Bank President David Malpass told Reuters in an...interview. Three countries - Ethiopia, Chad and Zambia - have already initiated negotiations with creditors under a new Common Framework supported by the Group of 20 major economies, a process that may lead to debt reductions in some cases.

<https://news.trust.org/item/20210219234546-7e4mu/>

### **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March**

In a new business statement released in mid February, Ford committed to ensure that all passenger vehicles produced and sold in Europe will be either all-electric or plug-in-hybrid with zero-emissions capabilities. Hybrid production will then be phased out through to 2030, after which point only pure electric models will be made. Ford has committed to invest at least \$22bn globally by the end of 2025 to support the transition to electric vehicles (EVs). This sum is around double its EV-specific allocation for the past five years.

environmental concerns facing Ireland

- 3 in 5 adults used less fuel for transport during the Covid-19 pandemic.

<https://www.epa.ie/newsandevents/news/name,70502.en.html>

#### **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March**

The beloved New York City landmark Empire State Building is now run entirely by wind energy—making it a green new year for the 15,000 people working inside. Empire State Realty Trust, Inc. which owns the 102-story skyscraper along with 13 other office buildings, signed a three-year contract with Green Mountain Energy to power its entire real estate portfolio throughout New York and Connecticut with renewable wind electricity.

According to the federal Environmental Protection Agency, it made the company the [US's] largest 100% user of green power in real estate.

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/empire-state-building-is-now-100-powered-by-wind/>

#### **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March**

Roads, railways, mines, dams and tourist activities, such as snowmobile and husky trails, have disrupted the

well-worn routes that reindeer follow each year, particularly across northern Europe. In one study, researchers found that reindeer in Norway lost 70% of undisturbed habitat during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In Finland and Sweden, the figure is thought to be similar. Even developments that might seem environmentally benign, or even beneficial, are now contributing to the problem. The number of wind turbines in Norway has quadrupled over the last decade, and reindeer herders recently filed a lawsuit against developers hoping to build what would be one of the country's largest onshore wind farms.

<https://theconversation.com/reindeer-ancient-migration-routes-disrupted-by-roads-dams-and-now-wind-farms-153941>

#### **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March**

Kenya is battling some of the worst locust plagues in decades, but start-up The Bug Picture hopes to transform the pests into profits and bring "hope to the hopeless" .... Unusual weather patterns exacerbated by climate change have created ideal conditions for surging locust numbers, ... Scientists say warmer seas are creating more rain, waking dormant eggs, and cyclones that disperse the

urgent need for action begs the question: can change come soon enough?

<https://theecologist.org/2021/feb/18/can-río-tinto-be-trusted>

#### **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March**

High street fashion retailer H&M has issued a €500 million sustainability-linked bond tied to the company achieving its 2025 sustainability targets to ramp up the use of recycled materials and drive down greenhouse gas emissions across its business and supply chain. The funds for H&M bonds are linked to the company increasing the share of recycled materials in garments to 30% by 2025, and reducing operation emissions by 20%, and Scope 3 emissions by 10% from a 2017 baseline. Scope 3 emissions cover those in H&M's value chain, such as emissions generated from fabric production, garment manufacturing, raw materials and upstream transport. Green bonds are increasingly being used by corporates to accelerate transition strategies, with Tesco recently becoming one of the first major UK firms to issue a sustainability-linked bond.

<https://ccbriefing.corporate-citizenship.com/2021/02/22/daily-media-briefing-1725/#04>

#### **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March**

Tonight at 7pm: is the next in Green Christian's series of workshops - *Green and ethical investment* with Bokani Tshidsu. This workshop will look at the rationale for ethical investment and how we can make a difference through investing responsibly for the environment. Bokani is Operation Noah's Bright Now Campaign Officer. She coordinates communication about the campaign with partners and liaises with religious organisations divesting from fossil fuels. Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6vmoad-baD>

#### **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March**

Cranes made a natural return to the UK in the late 1970s with the first fledged chick for 400 years being produced in the Norfolk Broads in 1982. [As part of the Great Crane project], between 2010 and 2014, 93 common cranes were hand-reared to release onto the Somerset Levels and Moors - doubling the UK population, and helping to secure the future of the crane in the UK. 2020 was a record year, with a total of 64 pairs present;

of which, up to 56 attempted to breed and fledged 23 young.

<http://www.thegreatcraneproject.org.uk/>

### Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March

The organisers of citizens' climate juries in London and North East have revealed their key calls to actions for Mayors, councils and the central government, including job creation in low-carbon sectors and a longer-term alternative to the Green Homes Grant. The London project, coordinated by Citizens UK, released its conclusions through a new Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) report this week after ten months of discussions. Entitled 'London: A Just Transition City', the report names air pollution, fuel poverty, home energy efficiency and green jobs and apprenticeships as priority areas of action. As well as London, IPPR also supports a citizens' 'climate jury' in the North East, comprising people from Tees Valley and County Durham. The citizens' jury's key asks include:

- More support for regions to deliver just transition plans that are specific to their most prominent industries
- Better education on climate and nature issues in schools

- Lifelong learning opportunities regarding environmental issues <https://www.edie.net/news/11/London-Tees-Valley-and-County-Durham-residents-call-for-better-support-for-green-jobs-and-home-upgrades/>

### Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March

Facebook announced that it will now debunk common myths about climate change, further leaning into the arbiter of truth role that the company once renounced. The company said it plans to rely on experts from George Mason University, the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication and the University of Cambridge to identify and debunk climate change myths. [It] said it is adding a section to its climate change information hub that will feature facts with accurate information about misconceptions and falsehoods.

<https://www.cnbc.com/2021/02/18/facebook-will-debunk-myths-about-climate-change.html>

### Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March

Show us, dear Lord, how to protect your creation, not just the plants and animals, but the soil, air and water by which we live, so that nobody may exploit or pollute them for private profit or convenience. Help us to cherish

these necessities for our survival, and guide those in authority to ensure that the human spirit may not be starved in pursuit of material comfort and wealth.

### Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March

Nature projects which tackle climate change, create and restore habitats, or improve water quality could soon benefit from a new £10 million fund to help them both benefit the environment and attract private sector investment, the [UK] Government has announced on 10th February. The Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund will provide grants of up to £100,000 to environmental groups, local authorities, businesses and other organisations to help them develop nature projects in England to a point where they can attract private investment. This will create a pipeline of projects for the private sector to invest in, and develop new funding models that can be replicated elsewhere, demonstrating the UK's leadership in nature finance in the run-up to COP26 in November. Applicants will need to be quick – closing date is 26<sup>th</sup> March.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-10-million-fund-to-drive-private-sector-investment-in-nature--2>

### Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March

Campaigners have criticised new delays to flagship environmental legislation on pollution, wildlife protection and cutting waste. The Environment Bill seeks to write environmental principles in UK law for the first time, following Brexit, but the UK Government has delayed the passage of the Bill, so it is not expected to become law until the autumn. The legislation includes setting targets for air quality, water, biodiversity and waste reduction, and outlining what standard must be achieved and by what date.

<https://theecologist.org/2021/jan/26/environmental-legislation-delay-deeply-troubling>

### Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March

A survey from Ireland's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) shows 84 per cent of people say access to nature was important for mental health in 2020

- 89 per cent of adults agree that the environment is a valuable asset to the people of Ireland
- 84 per cent of people felt access to nature was important for their mental health in 2020
- 54 per cent placed climate change as one of the top three