

<https://www.dw.com/en/could-rubber-from-dandelions-make-tires-more-sustainable/a-56766389>

Friday 30th April

Governments, companies and sometimes entire sectors are increasingly proposing to use carbon offsets in response to the deepening climate crisis. In theory, offsetting allows organisations to compensate for their own emissions by paying towards low-carbon projects elsewhere, but the practice has been mired in scientific problems and scandals, and it has been widely critiqued in the social sciences. With the UK government now seeking to turn London into a global hub for the carbon offset trade, it's worth asking why it is still so prominent. [A researcher from the University of Manchester] has looked into it and explains the situation in terms of the 'fantasy of carbon offsetting'.

<https://theconversation.com/carbon-offsets-offer-a-fantasy-of-capitalism-without-crises-155730>

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

prayer-guide@greenchristian.org.uk

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Picture on front cover: Saxifrage, pic by Philip Clarkson Webb

Green Christian is a Trading name of Christian Ecology Link Ltd.
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Prayer guide for the care of creation



April 2021

The Israelite prophet Micah said:
"What does the Lord require of you?
Only to act justly, love mercy and to
walk humbly with your God."

"The environment is where we all
meet; where we all have a mutual
interest; it is the one thing all of us
share."

-Lady Bird Johnson

Thursday 1st April

Join with many other Christians from around the world with the monthly Pray and Fast for the Climate Movement. Prayer points for April are on their website.

“We commit to continue praying for those in positions of power to take action to avert the destruction of this planet. And may we do all we can to live simply, that others may simply live. Let us leave this time of sanctuary and go out to live as a blessing to the Lord, to the earth and to your children.”

<https://prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk/resources/>

Good Friday 2nd April

Lord, you've guided us through the difficult days of Lent, encouraging us along the way. We pray as we move towards the darkest day, that you'll not forsake us but remind us of our Saviour's ultimate gift and promise of new, abundant, eternal life for all who believe and trust in him, your precious son, Jesus. Amen

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/lent-and-easter/prayers-for-lent-and-easter/>

Saturday 3rd April

Tidal-powered cars are now a reality in Shetland, a Scottish marine energy firm

said [in March]. Edinburgh-headquartered Nova Innovation has unveiled an electric vehicle charging point which lets motorists “fill up” directly from a tidal energy source. The charge point is located on the scenic shores of Bluemull Sound, at Cullivoe harbour on the island of Yell. Nova’s turbines have been providing electricity for homes and businesses in Shetland for more than five years. Chief executive Simon Forrest said: “Our technology generates electricity from the immense power of the seas, and it is changing the way we power our lives – from how we make a cup of tea to how we travel.”

<https://www.energyvoice.com/renewables-energy-transition/wave-tidal/uk-wave-tidal/308815/electric-vehicles-tidal-energy-shetland/>

Easter Sunday 4th April

When everything was dark and it seemed that the sun would never shine again, your love broke through.

Your love was too strong, too wide, too deep for death to hold.

The sparks cast by your love dance and spread

new road projects and £1.8bn (\$2.5bn) went to airlines with no green strings attached.

- Australia successfully contained the coronavirus through stringent lockdowns and has tried to sustain its economy through generous recovery spending of around a tenth of its GDP. Unfortunately, hardly any of this was green.
- Given it's the world's third biggest economy and had several rounds of stimulus, Japan's green recovery spending was relatively small.

<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2021/03/10/hall-shame-9-countries-missing-chance-green-recovery/>

Wednesday 28th April

An analysis of the anti-deforestation work of 553 of the world's largest businesses has found that just 1% are taking 'best practice' action. This is despite the multi-billion-dollar risks associated with inaction. Conducted by CDP, the analysis covers the corporates currently disclosing information on forestry through its environmental disclosure platform. Those disclosing operate in the timber products, palm oil, soy, cattle products, rubber, cocoa and/or coffee sectors. While 93% of the 553 firms are taking at least one of the 15 industry-accepted measure to

protect forests, one action is where it stopped for most businesses. Just 1% of the firms analysed were taking all, or almost all, actions relevant to their operations and supply chains – namely Essity, Tetra Pak, L’Oreal and Mars. <https://www.edie.net/news/7/Report--Just-1--of-businesses-taking-strong-action-on-deforestation--despite-risks-totalling--53bn/>

Thursday 29th April

Could rubber from dandelions make tires [sic] more sustainable? The Russian dandelion helped supply the Allied forces with rubber through the Second World War. ... But now, with demand for rubber continuing to grow, there is renewed interest in the Russian dandelion, particularly from the tire industry, which consumes 70% of the world's rubber supply. Overall, 65% of rubber consumed worldwide is derived from fossil fuels. This synthetic rubber is cheaper and more hardwearing than its natural counterpart. But natural rubber disperses heat better and has better grip, which is why tires are made with a mix of both. Today, 90% of natural rubber comes from Hevea plantations in Southeast Asia, which have been linked to deforestation. And there are commercial as well as environmental reasons the tire industry would like to find an alternative.

skyrocketed. Those who cannot afford to pay for water are forced to use unsafe water sources, thereby putting children at risk of deadly diseases such as cholera.”

<https://news.trust.org/item/20210322130314-wtfmr/>

Sunday 25th April

Christ has no body now on earth but ours,
No hands but ours, no feet but ours.
Ours are the eyes through which looks out Christ's compassion to the world;
Ours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good;
Ours are the hands with which he blesses his people daily.
Amen.
Theresa of Avila, adapted

Monday 26th April

The world's governments are failing to “build back better” from the Covid-19 economic slump, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) warned in a report published [in March]. Its analysts classified just 18% (\$341 billion) of national recovery spending pledges as green. Including European Commission spending brings the figure up to \$697bn. Oxford University environmental economics professor Cameron Hepburn said the report “made sure that countries can be

compared and frankly shamed if necessary... we need to call out countries which aren't doing what they need to be doing in their own best interests”...The report authors accepted that “some dirty rescue-type expenditure may have been necessary to ensure that lives and livelihoods were saved” – but said these bailouts should have had green strings attached.

<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2021/03/10/hall-shame-9-countries-missing-chance-green-recovery/>

Tuesday 27th April

[The UNEP's environmental analysis on building back better] gave each government spending promise a rating for its effect on greenhouse gas emissions... It classified six countries as the ‘current leaders’: Finland, Norway, Denmark, Germany, France and Poland... Here's a rundown of [three of] the countries that scored poorly, despite sizeable stimulus packages.

- United Kingdom - ...the third biggest spenders as a proportion of GDP but only around one pound in ten was green. Much of the money went on measures to support peoples' jobs, like a furlough scheme through which the government paid 80% of peoples' wages. But £27bn (\$37bn) went on

and burst forth with resurrection light.

Gracious God,
We praise you for the light of new life made possible through Jesus.
We praise you for the light of new life that shone on the first witnesses of resurrection.
We praise you for the light of new life that continues to shine in our hearts today.

We pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy, will live in us each day; and that we will be bearers of that light into the lives of others.
Amen.

Written by Revd Michaela Youngson

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/lent-and-easter/prayers-for-lent-and-easter/>

Monday 5th April

The bottom trawling fishing technique is more harmful to the environment than previously thought, according to a new study. While it has long been known that this method captures fish indiscriminately, there was no available data on its carbon footprint. A recent study now shows that this method of fishing releases carbon emissions from

ocean beds. The study, published in *Nature*, becomes the first to give a clear estimate of the carbon emissions caused by bottom trawling. In this technique, nets are dragged along the ocean floor, scraping for fish and other ocean creatures. This damages a significant part of fish habitats and releases CO₂ that had been captured in the sea bed. Researchers estimate that bottom trawling releases about one gigaton of carbon emissions into the atmosphere every year, meaning this method of fishing alone contributes more carbon to the atmosphere than the aviation industry at pre-pandemic levels.

<https://inhabitat.com/bottom-trawling-contributes-more-carbon-emissions-than-air-travel/>

Tuesday 6th April

Three leading climate and human rights nonprofits have asked the prosecutor at the International Criminal Court in the Hague to pursue rampant “land grabbing” by the government of Cambodia and its commerce partners as a crime against humanity under the court's jurisdiction. In an open letter to Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda on Tuesday [the three non-profits] said that, since 2002, at least 830,000 Cambodians have been affected, many illegally forced off their land, by the government and various corporations

involved in timber and other resource extraction activities... Fatou promised a decision last month in a speech before the Institute of International and European Affairs. If she takes the case, it would be the first time that the court investigates alleged crimes against humanity that are so directly linked to environmental destruction.

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/23032021/land-grab-deforestation-international-criminal-court-cambodia-ecocide/>

Wednesday 7th April

The next Green Christian webinar, 7pm, is *What you can do about COP26* with Rachel Mander. The UK is due to host the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow later this year. COP26 will bring parties together in order to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Tonight, this very practical one-hour workshop will focus on what COP26 is about, and how we can each contribute in influencing politicians and world leaders regarding their approach to Climate change. Rachel is a passionate advocate for climate action, who has been embedded in politics, faith, and climate since graduating from the University of Cambridge with a BA

in Philosophy. To register for the free seminar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZl0cuGtqT4uHtcklkr4wlnyE-zDGz5r1SL>

Thursday 8th April

[A] beautiful spot in the Aleutian islands has become a new example of how ecosystems can fully recover to their natural state in little more than a decade. Along the western edge of the Alaskan archipelago, the land had inadvertently become populated with rodents, leading to the ignominious name Rat Islands. The non-native invaders were accidentally introduced to these islands following shipwrecks... Known to be among the most damaging invasive animals, the resilient rodents adapted and thrived in the new setting, overwhelming the island ecosystems, disrupting the natural ecological order and driving out native species. But a coordinated conservation effort removed the rats on the renamed Hawadax Island and a new study led by a University of California San Diego researcher has documented the remarkable recovery. *"We were surprised that the level of recovery unfolded so quickly—we thought it could be longer,"* said Carolyn Kurle, an associate professor in the UC San Diego Division of Biological Sciences

Wednesday 21st April

Tonight's Green Christian webinar is a *Bible Discussion: What does scripture say to believers about Creation Care?*, with Deborah Tomkins. Many of us feel frustrated at the task of engaging with fellow Christians about the green agenda, because they don't seem to get it! In this talk and discussion group, Deborah Tomkins will give us an introduction to what the Bible says about the care of God's Creation, and our role in this God-given task. Deborah Tomkins is Co-Chair of Green Christian, and has been a member for over 25 years. She lives in Bristol with her husband. She enjoys growing organic vegetables in her city garden, music, and books.

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUkdequpzw0H9SOx_8WtSqmQhfoxDUW-0x

Thursday 22nd April

On February 3rd 2021 in Paris, a landmark ruling found the French at fault for failing to take enough action to tackle the climate crisis. Two years after the launch of the "Case of the Century" by four NGOs including Oxfam France, this decision should serve as a warning to other governments to keep in line with their public commitments and do more to tackle climate change. A

second ruling is expected by the summer in which the court could compel the French Government to take further steps to reduce emissions.

<https://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/a-historic-legal-victory-for-climate-justice-in-france/>

Friday 23rd April

Today is St George's day. As well as patron saint of England, and many other countries, he is the patron saint of farmers and field workers, amongst others. Pray for our farmers and staff, for wisdom and for abundance for their crops and produce. Pray that they will steward our land well, making sure they look after it for today and tomorrow.

Saturday 24th April

Nearly three-quarters of Somali families lack safe drinking water as drought looms across the country and depletes wells, raising the risk of hunger as crops fail and livestock dies, UK-based charity Save the Children said [in mid March]. Climate change is taking a heavy toll across eastern Africa, and increasingly erratic weather - from recurring droughts to floods - is becoming commonplace in countries such as Somalia, Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. Mohamud Mohamed Hassan, the organisation's country director, said *"In some locations, the price of water has*

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/19032021/solid-state-batteries-electric-vehicles-automakers/>

Sunday 18th April

Lord, we thank you for stirring the hearts of many to devise solutions to the complex problems posed by climate change and the seemingly relentless pollution of the environment. Turn us away from our pursuit of money and self-gratification. Help us to remember what your Son endured on the Cross for our redemption and strengthen our weak wills to take up our own crosses and to follow him throughout our lives. Amen.

Monday 19th April

In October this year, world leaders are due to meet at a United Nations biodiversity conference in Kunming, China, to agree on a global plan to protect and restore nature. It's organised by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity and fair use of natural resources. The focus is to agree and adopt a global ten year plan to protect and restore nature, with targets for countries to achieve by 2030. Ultimately, this plan will provide the countries that sign it with a roadmap of what they need to do over the next decade to move us towards the ultimate

goal of achieving a world where we live in harmony with nature by 2050.

<https://updates.panda.org/why-should-you-care-about-the-united-nations-biodiversity-talks?>

Tuesday 20th April

There are over 20,000 bee species and together they help pollinate more than 75% of the world's leading food crops. Honeybees tend to hog the limelight, but few realise how important diversity is to this process. For food systems to maintain a stable output each year, farms need pollinator numbers to remain stable too. But the abundance of these insects can fluctuate from one year to the next, so what's needed to keep them relatively constant? With so much of the world's food production dependent on the pollinating work of insects, this question is very important. [Researchers from the University of Reading] found that more diverse communities of crop pollinating insects – comprised of a greater number of different species – had more stable numbers from one year to the next.

<https://theconversation.com/boosting-bee-diversity-can-help-stabilise-crop-production-new-research-157328>

Section of Ecology, Behavior and Evolution.

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/rat-island-totally-recovered-after-us-eradication-effort/>

Friday 9th April

Lebanon has increased its climate ambition for 2030, in the middle of a political, economic and humanitarian crisis. The small Middle Eastern country is battling its worst economic crisis for decades, which has pushed over half its population into poverty. [In March], Lebanon announced in a submission to the UN that it aims to cut carbon emissions by 20%, up from 15%, by 2030, compared to business-as-usual projections. The country raised its conditional emissions reduction target, which is dependent on foreign financing, by just one percentage point, to 31%. *"Despite its hardships, Lebanon remains committed to fighting the climate crisis,"* Lebanon's submission says.

<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2021/03/17/lebanon-increases-climate-goal-despite-political-economic-turmoil/>

Saturday 10th April

A new study [in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*] suggests the ocean will begin emitting CFC-11 by

about 2075, and that there will be detectable amounts of the chemical in the atmosphere in the first part of the 22nd century. Climate change will likely exacerbate the process, turning the ocean into a source of CFC-11 earlier than expected. Since the Montreal Protocol was signed in 1987, CFC-11 emissions have sharply dropped, but some studies have found that there is still a small amount of CFC-11 being released into the atmosphere each year. While the ozone layer is currently not threatened on a global level, experts say that more research is needed to understand future threats.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2021/03/oceans-helped-absorb-our-cfcs-theyre-now-going-to-emit-them-back-out/>

Sunday 11th April

Loving God, we do not understand why nature sometimes seems so cruel and harsh, and why people suffer from floods, earthquakes and man-made disasters. Help us to trust in your promises and to rest in the certainty that not even the smallest sparrow lies outside your loving care. Help us to do all in our power to relieve suffering and make us willing and eager to share the good things you have given us, for the benefit of all.

Monday 12th April

A year after the COVID-19 pandemic has radically altered peoples' lives, societies and economies, post-COVID economic stimulus packages and policies - analyzed [sic] in a special edition of *PARKS* (the journal of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas) - continue to undermine rather than support nature, one of our strongest and best hopes against future pandemics as well as current planetary crises such as climate change. More than half of Africa's and a quarter of Asia's protected areas have been forced to halt or reduce conservation actions such as anti-poaching patrols, with one in five park rangers losing their jobs.

<https://updates.panda.org/world-leaders-continue-to-undermine-nature-despite-learnings-from-covid-19>

Tuesday 13th April

Certified companies, including with the widely-known FSC label, are reportedly linked to forest destruction, land disputes and human rights abuses warns a new report from Greenpeace International. *Destruction: Certified*, released [in March], shows that many certification schemes used for products such as palm oil and soya for animal feed are, in fact, effectively greenwashing destruction of ecosystems and violations of

Indigenous and labour rights. Certification fails to tackle the core issues they claim to address.

<https://www.greenpeace.org/international/press-release/46802/certification-schemes-such-as-fsc-are-greenwashing-forest-destruction/>

Wednesday 14th April

The UK government is reported to be seriously considering making "nature studies" a compulsory subject for all pupils. It's a move that was recommended in the recent government-commissioned Dasgupta review, a detailed analysis of the "economics of biodiversity". The review is long and technical, but in among the tables and statistics, ... right at the end is a brief focus on education: "Every child in every country is owed the teaching of natural history, to be introduced to the awe and wonder of the natural world, to appreciate how it contributes to our lives." The review calls for environmental education programmes from primary school all the way through to university.

<https://theconversation.com/time-to-make-nature-studies-a-compulsory-school-subject-before-its-too-late-157491>

Thursday 15th April

What might be Asia's longest-missing bird just came out of hiding. For the first time in 170 years, researchers reported last week that a black-browed babbler has been found in Indonesia. The discovery of the muted black, gray and chestnut-brown bird solves what an authoritative birding guide describes as "one of the great enigmas of Indonesian ornithology." "When we actually got confirmation of the identification, I did a little prayer and bowed down to celebrate," said Panji Gusti Akbar, an ornithologist and lead author of the paper describing the new species. "I felt excitement, disbelief and a lot of happiness."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/01/science/bird-indonesia-babbler.html?>

Friday 16th April

At the Login5 organic farm in Serbia - one of the world's largest - half of the [100] employees are developers, data analysts and engineers. Is this data-driven approach the key to tackling climate change? Iza and Samo Login have moved from gaming to growing, using money from the sale of their software development company to start a 4,000-hectare organic farm which they see as a testing ground to bring innovation to what is a slow-changing sector. The couple apply their

background in computer science to farming, bankrolling research to make organic agriculture more profitable and attractive to big producers. Staff collect data on anything from soil to irrigation using drones, machines, weather stations and other equipment. The goal: use the data to develop free software that other farmers could deploy to improve their yields, said Samo.

<https://news.trust.org/item/20210305092412-5hvb8/>

Saturday 17th April

Automakers are pairing off with battery companies to try to win the race to develop an electric vehicle battery that costs less and has a much longer range. The quest is for a "solid-state" battery, a technology that uses a solid substance to transfer lithium ions in a form that weighs less and takes up less space than current batteries that use liquids and gels. General Motors said [mid March] that it has a development agreement with SolidEnergy Systems, or SES, of Singapore, a maker of solid-state batteries, that aims to produce a battery for electric cars by 2023 and have a version to sell to consumers by some later date. Volkswagen, Daimler and others also are betting on solid-state batteries.