

# INSIGHTS

## For the Mainstream Investor

WEEK ENDING AUGUST 24, 2018 EDITION 258



### CORPORATES GO CLEAN

*Rising energy purchases*

Many corporations have pledged to reduce their emissions and increase their use of clean energy sources. A [study](#) by Bloomberg New Energy Finance shows that they are delivering. In the first half of 2018, corporations purchased 7.2GW of clean energy, surpassing the 5.2GW total for the whole of 2017. As the costs of renewable energy have fallen, long-term power contracts have become more acceptable.

This is particularly true of the US and the Nordic countries which account for 80% of these power purchase agreements, although Australia and Mexico are also showing signs of uptake. By industry, the technology companies are the leaders – Facebook is the single largest buyer – but so are aluminum companies (Norsk Hydro & Alcoa), who are both in the top 5.

### ANTIBIOTIC RESEARCH

*GARDP reports*

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is estimated to result in **700,000** deaths per year. The Global Antibiotic Research & Development Partnership ([GARDP](#)), which was established in May 2016 as a not-for-profit R&D organization, aims to develop and deliver new treatments for bacterial infections where drug resistance is present or emerging, or for which inadequate treatment exists.

It has just released a [report](#) following its first full year of operation. It has established a seven-year business plan and additional funding of Euro 56 million (US\$65m). It has prioritized its R&D efforts on neonatal sepsis and STIs.

### THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

41,000

people in Europe have been infected with measles in the first half of 2018, compared to 23,927 cases for all of 2017

99.1

out of 100 was scored by Vienna, Austria, making it the world's most liveable city

89

percent of companies reported an emission reduction last year, according to CDP's second annual analysis

57

% of US adults believe it is appropriate to genetically engineer animals for human organs/tissues needed for a transplant

43

percent of the agricultural workforce globally is women

40

times smoother are the latest films developed for desalination which could make it substantially cheaper process for making freshwater

7

percent increase in global tree cover has been recorded between 1982 and 2016 based on satellite data

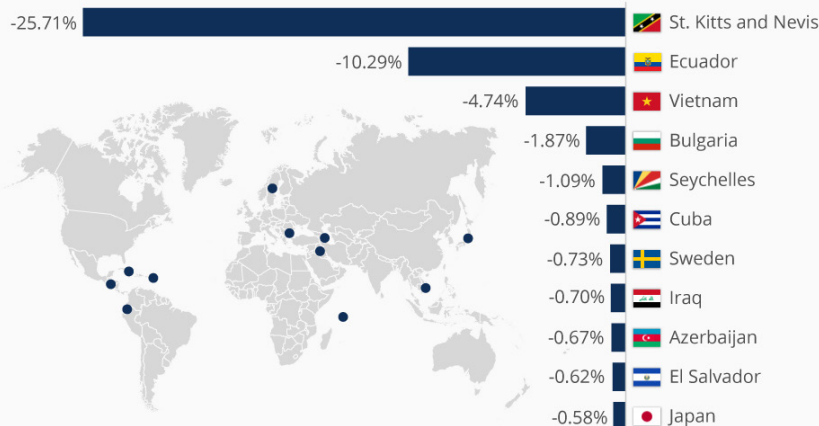
4

million people, mainly Muslim Bengalis in Assam, have been threatened with being made stateless in India. The final register is published in December

### INFOGRAPHIC OF THE WEEK

#### St. Kitts and Nevis Has Shrunk by a Quarter Since 1961

Countries with the greatest percentage of land loss since 1961\*



\* 1961–2014. Countries ranked by percentage change of land area from most to least shrinkage. Excluding countries without a coastline.  
Source: Travel Stats Man



Source: [Statista](#)

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### WHEAT GENOME REVEALED

#### *The implications*

The International Wheat Genome Sequencing Consortium (IWGSC) was founded in 2005 with the aim of making a high quality reference sequence of the wheat genome, anchored to the genetic/phenotypic maps. This has now been achieved with the [results](#) published this month in [Science](#).

Wheat is the most widely cultivated crop, contributing about one-fifth of total calories consumed by humans. By unveiling the sequence of the wheat genome – which is five times larger than the human genome – the IWGSC believes this work ‘will pave the way for the production of wheat varieties better adapted to climate challenges, with higher yields, enhanced nutritional quality and improved sustainability’.

### TAKE A LOOK

As wildfires spread across North America, satellite images have revealed how much smoke is in the atmosphere above the continent. Smoke from the Canadian fires was visible from 1.5 million km (932m miles) away, as captured by NASA’s EPIC satellite. See the [images here](#).

### DID YOU SEE?

Six countries – Canada, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK – are working on plans to [trade carbon](#). These governments are assessing projects to cut greenhouse emissions in exchange for emission credits. These emission credits will apply under the Paris Agreement. The World Bank is overseeing the project.

### SEA LEVEL RISE

#### *Why ignore the range?*

The global average [rise](#) in sea level in the 20th Century has been around 14cm (5.5 inches). But why are some areas more affected than others? An article in [ScienceNews](#) provides five answers. Firstly, seawater expands as water heats up. If local weather patterns result in higher ocean temperatures, the sea level rise is more dramatic.

Sometimes it is the land that is moving rather than the sea level. Where heavy ice sheets covered the land, it can still be rising slowly, making sea levels rises appear more gradual. Glaciers can also cause a gravitational pull on nearby coastal waters. When the glaciers melt, the reverse happens. Furthermore, landmasses may be sinking, caused by tectonic activity. Even groundwater extraction can have the same effect. Finally, the earth’s rotation means that oceans move counter clockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise in the South. As the oceans reach the coasts, so a bulging occurs.

### WORTH NOTING

Australia’s Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, has scrapped carbon emission [targets](#), which were formerly set at a 26% reduction from 2005 levels by 2030. It appears that he could not convince the Coalition Government to accept this target. The opposition Labor Party prefers larger emission cuts.

### WE'RE WATCHING

The price of some [soft commodities](#) continues to decline. Soft commodities include coffee, cotton, sugar and cocoa and the price reached a peak in the March 2011.

### READING LIST

*ESG's Evolving Performance:*

*First, Do No Harm*

[Axioma](#)

*Six Ways for Leaders and Organizations to Foster Inclusion and Diversity*

[Spencer Stuart](#)

*As the climate changes, how will humans?*

[FT](#)

*Activity Report 2017*

[GARDP](#)



### LISTENING LIST



*Putting Your Money Where Your Mouth Is In the Balance*

*Could Human Live in Underwater Cities?*

[Crowd Science](#)

### BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Why are some people bitten by mosquitos and other left unscathed? Apparently, it’s the micro-organisms on the skin and nothing to do with blood type, foods consumed, skin color etc. [READ MORE](#)

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