

# SUSTAINABLE INSIGHTS

Week ending July 17, 2015



Edition 101

## UN DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE CALLS FOR REFORM

### Meeting in Ethiopia spurs agreement to combat global poverty

Ahead of December's U.N. climate talks in Paris, a U.N. conference convened this week in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and financing global poverty was on the agenda. The outcome is the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which will likely be adopted in September. It will form the basis of a financing framework with policy commitments in six areas.

"This agreement is a critical step forward in building a sustainable future for all. It provides a global framework for financing sustainable development," said U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. "The results here in Addis Ababa give us the foundation of a revitalized global partnership for sustainable development that will leave no one behind."

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## BOARD DIVERSITY AND STRANDED ASSETS

A new study released this week by Stanford University and Oxford University entitled "Cognitive Biases and Stranded Assets: Detecting psychological vulnerabilities within International Oil Companies" found that lack of diversity on boards may have contributed to denial about stranded assets at major oil firms. The study found that homogenous boards contributed to cognitive biases related to "groupthink".

The main conclusion the authors draw: "Given that significant results in psychological research find significantly different attitudes toward risk (e.g. stranded assets) across nationality and age profiles, the homogeneity of American boards in these respects is worrying and could serve to increase the propensity for groupthink."

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### WHERE ARE THE SUSTAINABLY MANAGED ASSETS?

Europe: 63.5%

US: 31%

Canada: 4.5%

Australia / New Zealand: 0.8%

*Source:* NKI, a German sustainable investment consultancy

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### THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

**9,400**

deaths in London were associated with air pollution in 2010.

**440**

The number of pages in the National Climate Assessment that are dedicated to the links between health and climate change.

**105**

millimeters will be the new minimum landing size of scallops for the Scottish coast. This is expected to help protect the breeding stock of scallops and lead to greater yield and egg production.

**20**

Percent increase in "fire weather" seasons — times of year when it's especially dry across the globe.

**13**

The number of climate change protesters who stormed onto the runway at London's Heathrow Airport and chained themselves together to demonstrate opposition to the airport's expansion plans.

**8**

percent of New York City adults have health vulnerabilities and either don't own or rarely use air-conditioning when it's very hot, most often because of cost concerns.

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CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

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## US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE CLINTON ADDRESSES CLIMATE CHANGE

U.S. Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton said this week that she would “seek to phase out [fossil fuel extraction](#) and increase fees on companies operating on public lands in a way that does not disrupt the economy” if elected to the White House in the fall of 2016, upsetting some environmental activists who want more stringent environmental policies.

“We still have to run our economy, we still have to turn on the lights,” Clinton told a town hall meeting. Some environmental activists criticized her for being too lenient on issues such as oil and gas extraction fees, saying that she is holding on to a notion that the government needs to decide between economy and environment.

### 20 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK...

A heat wave in Chicago killed 750 people. On July 13, 1995 the heat index (how hot it feels with humidity) reached 125 degrees Fahrenheit. Heat waves are expected to increase, though weather forecasting models are getting more sophisticated, allowing forecasters to warn people well before they hit.

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## JAPAN SETS GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS TARGET AHEAD OF PARIS MEETING

Japan – the world’s fifth largest emitter of greenhouse gases – announced this week that it would cut greenhouse gas emissions by 26 percent by 2030 from 2013 levels. The government plans to submit its target to the UN ahead of the global summit on climate change being held in Paris in December. Using 2013 as a

baseline, Japan’s 26 percent cut would be “higher than an 18 to 21 percent cut by the United States by 2025 and a 24 percent cut by the European Union by 2030.” The government will set a renewable energy target at 22 to 24 percent of the mix.

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### BELIEVE IT OR NOT

The snow pile that accumulated in Boston this winter finally melted THIS week!

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