



Week ending Friday, April 16, 2021

In Hot Water

Oceans have become so warm under global heating that temperatures are now too high near the equator for some marine species to live, new research finds. Scientists from New Zealand and Australia write in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* that location analysis of nearly 50,000 marine species between 1955 and 2015 found that many were moving away from the equator, “on a global scale.” While the number of species living on the equatorial ocean floor remained unchanged, there are now fewer free-swimming creatures near the surface, such as fish. “These species haven’t disappeared, they’ve just gone from the tropics,” coauthor David Schoeman said.

Earthquakes

Eight people were killed and three others were seriously injured in East Java when a magnitude 6.0 temblor struck offshore.

- Earth movements were also felt in far southern Japan, Greek islands of the southern Aegean, Wyoming and Los Angeles.

Climate Elite

British researchers say the world's wealthiest are "at the heart" of the climate emergency and that they must make major changes in lifestyle to curb global heating. The Cambridge Sustainability Commission on Scaling Behavior Change says that the wealthiest five percent caused 37 percent of carbon emission growth from 1990 to 2015. Peter Newell of Sussex University told the BBC: "We have got to cut overconsumption and the best place to start is overconsumption among the polluting elites who contribute, by far, more than their share of carbon emissions." He adds that those who drive SUVs and fly frequently are misguided in thinking that planting trees and improvements in technology will offset their behavior.

Space Dust

The Earth gains quite a bit of weight each year as dust from comets and asteroids rains down on the planet. Writing in the journal *Earth & Planetary Science Letters*, researchers say their 20-year study collected samples of the space debris, ranging from 30 to 200 micrometers in size, near the Franco-Italian Concordia research station in Antarctica. The scientists from France's National Center for Scientific Research then calculated that Earth receives about 14 tons of the micrometeorites each day. They believe 80 percent comes from comets and the remainder from asteroids.

Volcanoes

Violent explosions from La Soufrière volcano on St. Vincent prompted a massive evacuation and coated most of the island in ash. The eruptions also knocked out power and water, creating a humanitarian crisis for the southern Caribbean country.

- The world's largest volcano was rocked by a swarm of tremors that scientists say could mean Mauna Loa is approaching an eruption on the Big Island of Hawaii. Its last eruption was in 1984.

Plastic Winds

The scattering of plastic pollution in the world's waterways and atmosphere is now resulting in the "plastification" of the planet, with the debris "spiraling around the globe" in the wind. A new study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* says that smaller microplastics can remain in the atmosphere for nearly a week, which is long enough for them to be carried across an ocean or a continent. A lot of the airborne particles are from decades-old, broken-down items such as plastic bags, wrappers and bottles. But the biggest sources are roadways, where the tires of large trucks and other vehicles degrade into tiny bits as they rumble along and are picked up by the wind.

Tropical Cyclones

Category-1 Cyclone Seroja caused widespread damage to several towns when it roared ashore in western Australia.

- Typhoon Surigae, the season's first, formed near the island of Yap.

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