

an important source of firm, always-on electricity prized by large users like data centers and industry. Most of their efforts have been directed at keeping existing coal plants operating longer, but last month, the administration announced it would give more than \$100 million in federal funding to two proposed plants in West Virginia and Alaska. These projects are in the planning stage, and the federal money will be used for early-stage feasibility studies. If they are built, it would be a momentous turn of events for coal-fired power in the US. However, that's a big "if" because the cost could be astronomical to build coal plants with proposed carbon capture — a technology that would stop most of their plant-warming pollution from escaping into the atmosphere, storing it instead.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2026/07/13/climate/tump-new-coal-plants-could-cost-billions>

Picture on front cover: Image by Ian Lindsay from Pixabay

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Prayer guide for the care of creation



August 2026

“Trees and plants were raised from the earth, you formed man out of the dust of the ground. The soil and mud participate in your creative act. And you declared it to be good. And we declare it to be good. For our lives are inexplicably linked with the life of the soil.”

From the Sunday prayers, Jon Swales

 **Green Christian**
Ordinary Christians, extraordinary times

Saturday 1st August

Join with many other Christians from around the world with the monthly Pray and Fast for the Climate Movement on the first of each month. Prayer points for this month will be on their website.

Merciful God, we believe that you uphold and sustain all that you have made, while also lovingly giving us the freedom to live in relationship with the rest of creation. We ask your forgiveness for the ways we have abused that freedom, through what we have done and what we have left undone. We bring our lament and our longing for a renewed earth to you now: (prayer from Christian Climate Action's prayer for climate grief).

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

Sunday 2nd August

Father of creation, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you created a world of wonder, and declared it to be good.

Father of creation, God of compassion, the earth was formless and void, and you spoke, and life came into being. Trees and plants were raised from the earth, you formed man out of the dust of the ground. The soil and mud participate in your creative act. And you declared it to be good. And we declare it to be good. For our lives are inexplicably linked with the life of the soil.

From prayer 22, The soil, by Jon Swales, [https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-](https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/)

[40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/](https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/)

Monday 3rd August

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) has announced a new £30m fund designed to help farmers cut costs, optimise production and adopt more sustainable practices, writes Joshua Neil. The new programme, the Farmer Collaboration Fund, exists to help farmers across the country tackle shared challenges by facilitating farmer-led collaboration and peer learning. It is set to open for applications in September 2026. A number of organisations, including charities, NGOs and local authorities, will deliver the fund, providing local expertise and support to farmers. According to Defra, the programme also aims to help reduce the paperwork burden on farmers so that they can focus on learning and implementation... The Fund is expected to bring down costs for farmers, manage shared risks and improve soil health. According to a study organised by the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit (ECIU) and Grounded Research, four-fifths of UK farmers have concerns about their ability to make a living as climate change progresses.

<https://www.edie.net/defra-announces-30m-fund-to-accelerate-resilient-farming/>

Tuesday 4th August

The UK has abandoned projects worth tens of millions of pounds that were meant to help protect Congo rainforests and support local people, writes Josh Gabbatiss. Together, these initiatives would have made

<https://www.unccd.int/cop17/programme>

Friday 28th August

Last month, COP31 president-designate Murat Kurum launched a target for 35% of the world's final energy to come from electricity by 2035, writes Simon Evans. In an interview with Carbon Brief, Kurum says that the target was not a political choice, but instead reflects the latest evidence on "*what is needed to keep 1.5C within reach*". The ongoing Hormuz crisis means there is an "urgent" need for renewables and electrification, which are the "surest and cleanest way to protect citizens" from high energy prices. Kurum says that the Brazilian and Ethiopian presidencies of COP30 and COP32, as well as the EU, UK and Canada, have welcomed the target. He adds that "*all have confirmed it will be central to discussions at COP31*".

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/interview-cop31-president-says-electrification-is-surest-way-to-protect-citizens/>

Saturday 29th August

Türkiye's last planned coal project was cancelled due to public pressure – but a new one has been announced, writes Angela Symons. Environmental activists in Türkiye have declared a "victory for the people" after the expansion of the country's largest coal-fired power plant was struck down by a court ruling. Local residents joined Greenpeace Türkiye in fighting the construction of two additional units at the Afşin-Elbistan A Thermal Power Plant in the southeastern Kahramanmaraş Province. The 688 MW Afşin-Elbistan expansion was

one of just two active coal plant proposals in Türkiye, down from 95 proposed units representing 57.5 GW in 2015. The decision brings the cancellation rate for proposed coal projects in the country to 97 per cent – a global record. Yet the country still lacks a national coal phaseout plan. The other project still in the pipeline – a 1,050 MW expansion of the 1,320 MW Cenal Coal Power Plant – was just announced in June, despite Türkiye's upcoming role as co-host of the UN's COP31 climate summit in November.

<https://www.euronews.com/2026/07/14/victory-as-turkiye-ends-major-coal-plant-expansion-but-still-lacks-phaseout-plan>

Sunday 30th August

Father of creation, God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the earth was formless and void, and you spoke, and life came into being. Trees and plants were raised from the earth, you formed man out of the dust from the ground. To you be all praise, honour and glory, Amen

From prayer 22, The soil, by Jon Swales, <https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/>

Monday 31st August

It's been 13 years since the last large coal-fired power plant was built in the US, writes Ella Nilson. Now, the Trump administration wants to build another two, but experts say even federal support likely won't make that feasible. President Donald Trump and his administration have made no secret of their preference for coal-fired power, arguing it is

we be kingdom people who dream and act, who tend and keep, guard and protect, plant and harvest, sustain and develop this world that you have made.

May our hearts, as fertile soil, be the place from which the fruits of the spirit grow. May we, like Jesus, feed the hungry. And care about the soil from which it comes. In all areas of life may we point both to the King and the coming kingdom.

From prayer 22, The soil, by Jon Swales, <https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/>

Monday 24th August

Each of the remaining days of the COP 17 Desertification in Ulaan Baatar have a theme. The first thematic day today is Finance: Restoring land at scale requires around one billion US dollars per day, but current funding falls far short. Finance Day will bring together ministers of finance, development banks, financial institutions and the private sector to help close this gap and unlock large-scale investment. Discussions will focus on healthy land as an asset class, blended finance and de-risking capital, fiscal policy reform, greener global value chains and the links between land, security and migration.

<https://www.unccd.int/cop17/programme>

Tuesday 25th August

The next thematic day at COP17 today will be Water: By 2050, three out of four people worldwide are projected to face drought. Water Day will advance proactive drought

risk management and strengthen cooperation on the land-water nexus and the integrated management of water resources. It will also highlight nature-based solutions, ecosystem-based adaptation, climate-resilient water and land systems and financing for drought-resilient landscapes.

<https://www.unccd.int/cop17/programme>

Wednesday 26th August

Today's thematic day is Land and People: Rangelands support the livelihoods of some 500 million people, but remain among the most undervalued ecosystems globally. Land and People Day will focus on land and rangeland restoration, sustainable land management and inclusive land governance, placing the voices of land stewards at the heart of discussions and highlighting the perspectives of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, pastoralists, youth, women and civil society organizations.

<https://www.unccd.int/cop17/programme>

Thursday 27th August

The last thematic day at COP17 Desertification is Food Systems and Soil Health: By 2050, the world will need to produce at least 50 per cent more food, even as food systems remain the leading driver of land degradation globally. Food Systems and Soil Health Day will connect soil restoration to food security, agricultural productivity and the livelihoods of farming communities, while highlighting soil health as a foundation of resilient and productive food systems.

up around half of the £200m that the UK pledged to support conservation in the Congo basin – the world's second-largest rainforest. When it hosted COP26 in Glasgow, the UK led a new initiative to end forest loss, which included a collective pledge by 12 donors of "at least" \$1.5bn (£1.1bn) for Congo rainforest nations by 2025. Development minister Jenny Chapman revealed last [month] at, as of 2024, the UK had only provided £39.8m towards this goal. Alongside the US and much of Europe, the UK has significantly cut its aid budget in recent years, leading to much of its Congo rainforest spending being cancelled or reappraised. The government says it still plans to "prioritise" rainforest regions, including the Congo basin, but civil society groups and MPs are concerned about the lack of "ring-fenced" forest funding in the UK's new aid strategy. <https://www.carbonbrief.org/uk-withdraws-millions-in-funding-from-worlds-second-largest-rainforest-in-congo/>

Wednesday 5th August

New York Governor Kathy Hochul, a Democrat, issued an executive order [mid July] that puts a moratorium on the construction of large-scale data centers, writes Alex Brown for Stateline. The pause, which will last up to a year, is the nation's first statewide ban on data centers, which have drawn increasing concern from lawmakers and citizens based on their impact on electricity prices and the energy grid. *"As data center development threatens to hike up utility bills, deplete our natural resources, and create uncertainty for New*

Yorkers, it's my responsibility to take action and lead," Hochul said in a statement. Technology companies have invested billions of dollars to build data centers all across the country, driven in part by the computing demands from artificial intelligence.

<https://grist.org/politics/new-york-governor-orders-first-statewide-data-center-moratorium/>

Thursday 6th August

Half of the world's corals are dead, writes Cyrene Oraya Reyes. Over 90% are on track to die within decades. These numbers drove Yale graduates Sam Teicher and Gator Halpern to found Coral Vita in 2015, creating the world's first commercial coral farming for reef restoration operation and proving that saving reefs can work as a business, not just a cause. Coral reefs support 25% of marine life and one billion livelihoods while generating \$2.7 trillion annually in goods and services. Yet rising ocean temperatures, acidification, pollution, and coastal development destroy reef systems faster than nature can rebuild them. Traditional restoration involved growing corals underwater at natural rates ranging from less than one centimeter to ten centimeters per year. Coral Vita reimaged this approach entirely. Rather than growing corals in the ocean, the company built land-based aquaculture facilities where controlled tank environments enable far greater precision over water temperature, chemistry, and light conditions. This control enables commercial coral farming for reef restoration at scales

and speeds that are unattainable in open-ocean nurseries.

<https://happyeconews.com/commercial-coral-farming-for-reef-restoration/>

Friday 7th August

A growing number of Trump-linked individuals and companies are set to profit from Greenland's mineral deposits in the wake of the President's calls to take control of the territory, a new Global Witness investigation has revealed. Using Danish corporate records, mining data and media reports, we have mapped a significant increase in investment and interest in Greenland's minerals from figures with connections to Trump. The findings reveal an emerging pattern of well-connected US figures set to profit off the back of geopolitical manoeuvres, as critical minerals become a key battleground in the fight to capture supply chains for defence, consumer technology and green energy...Critical Metals Corp is leading the charge of Trump-linked companies positioning to cash in on the administration's renewed fixation on Greenland. In October 2025, Critical Metals Corp became the majority stakeholder in Tanbreez Mining Greenland, a company that owns one of the world's largest rare earths deposits, amid reports that the US government was considering investing in the company.

<https://globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/transition-minerals/trump-linked-figures-set-to-profit-from-greenlands-untapped-mineral-resources/>

Saturday 8th August

Critical Metals Corp is far from the only company making the most of Greenland's potential and further muddying the lines between Washington's minerals policy and the interests of individuals connected to the [US] government. The network mapped by Global Witness includes companies like GreenMet, which was part of a US delegation to Greenland in 2025 alongside Critical Metals Corp. Two beneficial owners of the company are former Trump employees or staffers, while a former Trump administration aide is its CEO...Leading tech executives – and contributors to Trump's inauguration – Jeff Bezos, Sam Altman and Bill Gates invest via a fund founded by Gates in Kobold Metals, an AI mining company that retains royalties in eventual production from a nickel-copper-cobalt project in West Greenland...Other Trump allies becoming prominent investors in Greenland include billionaire Ronald Lauder, who is credited for inspiring Trump to acquire Greenland. Lauder is reported to hold investments in the island via his participation in US consortium Greenland Development Partners.

<https://globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/transition-minerals/trump-linked-figures-set-to-profit-from-greenlands-untapped-mineral-resources/>

Sunday 9th August

Father of Creation, God of compassion, we have moved east of Eden, we are homesick exiles, creation groans, the soil is dying. We

intermingling of cultures, the journey shines a light on rangelands — vast landscapes that sustain livelihoods, biodiversity and food systems yet remain largely overlooked.

<https://www.silkroadcaravan.org/>

Friday 21st August

On 6 May, the Silk Road Caravan officially departed from Erzurum, Türkiye, launching a transcontinental journey through countries from the steppes of Anatolia to the grasslands of Mongolia. The rangelands of Eurasia sustain two billion people. Stretching more than 8,000 kilometres from the Black Sea to the Mongolian Plateau, the Eurasian steppes form the world's largest contiguous grazing landscape and comprise roughly a quarter of global rangelands. They are carbon sinks, water regulators, the living skin of entire continents. They are also, by most measures, among the least visible landscapes in global policy conversations. They don't photograph as dramatically as forests burning or glaciers calving. Their degradation is slow, quiet, cumulative, often described as a "silent demise."

<https://www.silkroadcaravan.org/stories/across-highlands-eastern-anatolia-silk-road-caravan-begins>

Saturday 22nd August

Scientists warn that rising temperatures and increasing drought intensity are contributing to soil erosion, water stress and biodiversity loss across the region. Recent studies also found Eurasian grasslands experienced a 43 per cent reduction in annual productivity under extreme drought conditions,

compared to 25 per cent in North American grasslands. In South America, some of the world's most productive grasslands and savannas are being transformed by agricultural expansion, deforestation and intensive livestock production. The Gran Chaco, Cerrado and Pampas are increasingly under pressure from monoculture farming and land conversion, while prolonged droughts and heatwaves are reducing the resilience of native vegetation and pastoral systems. Meanwhile, in Southern Africa, where around 70 per cent of land is used for livestock grazing, communities are reviving traditional grazing systems and local land management approaches to strengthen drought resilience, restore degraded land and improve soil and water retention. In countries such as Zimbabwe and Angola, locally led initiatives based on rotational grazing and traditional pastoral systems are helping restore ecosystems, improve water availability and reduce conflict over natural resources.

<https://www.unccd.int/news-stories/press-releases/kenya-hosts-desertification-and-drought-day-pressure-worlds-rangelands>

Sunday 23rd August

Father of creation, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, your son walked this land of soil and dust and dreamed a dream of a different world, a kingdom in which the hungry are fed and the humble are lifted high.

May we too, who walk this earth, tread lightly upon the soil, and, like your Son, may

to bring together delegates from UNCCD's 197 Parties, alongside leaders from government, business and civil society, as well as scientists, youth, Indigenous Peoples, pastoralists and smallholder farmers. They will convene to forge solutions to the interconnected challenges of desertification, land degradation and drought, recognizing that restoring land is also essential to reducing instability, preventing displacement and strengthening human and national security in vulnerable regions.

<https://www.unccd.int/cop17>

Tuesday 18th August

COP17 Desertification is taking place during the *United Nations International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists* (IYRP 2026), declared by the United Nations General Assembly and championed by Mongolia. This presents a major opportunity to accelerate action on the sustainable management, restoration and conservation of rangelands, while spotlighting the needs of pastoralist communities who depend directly on these ecosystems for their livelihoods. Rangelands cover more than half of the Earth's land surface, support the direct livelihoods of around 500 million people and provide one-sixth of the world's nutrition needs, yet remain among the planet's most overlooked and increasingly degraded ecosystems.

<https://www.unccd.int/cop17>

Wednesday 19th August

Land degradation is already affecting up to 40 per cent of the world's land, with far-

reaching impacts on food production, water availability, livelihoods and economic stability. COP17 offers a pivotal moment for countries and partners to strengthen implementation and mobilize greater investment in drought resilience and sustainable land management. With a vast territory of 1.56 million square kilometers, Mongolia is among the countries most affected by desertification and land degradation, with nearly 77 per cent of its land already degraded. Hosting UNCCD COP17 in Ulaanbaatar will place international focus on land restoration priorities, including approaches that safeguard livelihoods, food security and ecosystems in dryland regions.

<https://www.unccd.int/cop17>

Thursday 20th August

For centuries, the Silk Road was more than a trade route. It was a pathway of exchange, carrying knowledge, culture, technologies and ideas across Eurasia. Caravans connected distant regions, stopping at cities and landscapes shaped by movement, dialogue and adaptation. Today, these same regions face shared challenges linked to land degradation, climate change and livelihoods. The Silk Road Caravan is a landmark journey across one of the world's historic corridors of exchange, symbolically connecting nations from Riyadh (host of UNCCD COP16 in 2024) to Ulaanbaatar in the year of UNCCD COP17 and the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists. Moving through countries connected for centuries by long-distance trade, flow of ideas and

have betrayed our friend, and may well reap what we have sown. We have opened the door of ecological violence, and it has overwhelmed us. Through the greed of exploitation. The fertile earth is being degraded, polluted and acidified.

From prayer 22, The soil, by Jon Swales, <https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/>

Monday 10th August

The U.S. government has taken another definitive step toward launching a deep-sea mining industry, starting in the waters of American Samoa, despite public opposition, writes Elizabeth Claire Alberts. On July 17, the Marine Minerals Administration (MMA), a new U.S. agency formed by merging the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, announced intentions to hold a lease sale for seabed mining on Nov. 19 in Camarillo, California. The MMA also stated that the proposed lease “does not guarantee that a lease sale will be held” or that “exploration or collection activities will occur should MMA move forward with a sale.” Still, opponents see the proposal as a major step toward commercial deep-sea mining — an industry that has drawn widespread criticism over its potential impacts on marine ecosystems. If the lease sale moves forward, the proposal indicates that companies will be able to secure 20-year leases across nearly 127,500 square kilometers (approximately 49,000 square miles) of seabed in the ocean surrounding American Samoa, a U.S. territory in the

Pacific... The proposed mining area is adjacent to the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument, a marine protected area that serves as a nesting ground and refuge for many threatened and endangered species. Critics accuse the U.S. government of disregarding the concerns of many American Samoans, as well as members of the broader public, who have voiced opposition to the proposal.

<https://news.mongabay.com/short-article/2026/07/us-government-announces-plans-to-lease-deep-sea-mining-rights-in-american-samoa/>

Tuesday 11th August

Commenting on the publication of Defra's Agriculture in the UK statistical release, which shows a drop in UK self sufficiency by value from 65% to 60%, Tom Lancaster, land, food and farming analyst at the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit (ECIU) said: “*The decline in UK self sufficiency shows a clear signal of climate change. With production and imports of key commodities largely flat, the reduction in self sufficiency between 2024 and 2025 has been driven by a change in the value of key commodities. The value of exports fell, mainly because whisky exports were worth less. At the same time, imports increased, driven partly by a nearly 20% rise in the value of tea and coffee imports, with imported tea and coffee costing over a billion pounds more in 2025 than in 2024.*”

<https://eciui.net/media/press-releases/drop-in-uk-self-sufficiency-shows-clear-signal-of-climate-impacts-comment>

Wednesday 12th August

[In mid July] the National Trust, Oxford Archaeology and Knepp Castle Estate officially launch the 'Knepp Accord' – a bold new framework that urges experts in archaeology, historic landscape knowledge and nature conservation to unite to tackle the nature and climate crisis. The Knepp Accord has been agreed by 50 specialists from across archaeology, farming, heritage and nature recovery at a workshop at the Knepp Castle Estate in West Sussex. This was convened to create a shared framework for using deep-time evidence – from buried plant remains to historic land-use patterns – to guide decisions that will shape our landscape for hundreds of years to come.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/services/media/2026/july/knepp-accord-launched>

Thursday 13th August

Coastal city climate resilience in India is advancing through a city of 7-million people in Eastern Gujarat - Surat's landmark Dumas Sea Wall project, which pairs hard engineering with mangrove-based natural defenses from rising seas and worsening floods, writes Elena Kryvoshei. Surat has been flood-prone throughout its history. Climate change is making that worse. Last year, heavy rains submerged its markets, damaged hundreds of shops, and forced schools to close. Residents waded through chest-deep water in scenes that made front pages across the country. Beyond floods, the city also faces rising sea levels and coastal erosion. Dumas Beach, a well-known tourist destination, has been visibly

losing its shoreline... Rather than waiting for each disaster and rebuilding after the fact, Surat has shifted to long-term planning. The city's central project is the Dumas Sea Wall, a major component of the Sustainable Cities Integrated Programme... The Dumas project is not purely concrete and steel. It pairs hard engineering with nature-based solutions (NbS), which use natural processes to address environmental problems. Mangrove forests along the coast serve as a living buffer. They absorb storm energy, reduce erosion, and support local biodiversity.

<https://happyeconews.com/surat-india-coastal-city-climate-resilience/>

Friday 14th August

A special investigation reveals the strategic and structural failings in the British Government's attempts to decarbonise our homes, writes Simon Pirani. Insulating the relatively old housing stock and switching from gas boilers to electrified heating is a vital decarbonisation priority in the UK. It could make people's lives better, now, with warmer homes and lower energy bills, while helping to tackle global heating – potentially. But the British Government's Warm Homes Plan may squander that potential. On one hand, it lags far behind what climate scientists say is needed. On the other, it is set to exacerbate inequalities, by focusing on heat pumps for individual households, and away from improving housing. Previous retrofit schemes, cursed by 30 years of neoliberal assaults on training and local government, failed disastrously. The continuing absence of

effective regulation and workforce training, together with corporate-dominated energy markets and inequitable housing policy, may destroy the Warm Homes Plan's promise. This cannot be left to the government: social movements and labour must unify climate action with struggles for social justice. The government's plan to shift to electrified, low-carbon heating of homes could be heading for ruinous failure without public sector provision and community engagement.

<https://theecologist.org/2026/jul/20/decarbonising-our-homes>

Saturday 15th August

While some progress on climate action has been made, hard-to-abate sectors, from steel and cement to aviation and shipping, still account for around 40% of global emissions, writes Mohamed Bousseta. This means that, as an industry, it remains one of the toughest barriers to net-zero. Technologies such as green hydrogen and carbon capture are widely seen as part of the solution, but there is an increasing gap between ambition and delivery. The issue is less about what needs to be done and more about how these solutions are delivered in practice. Several factors are holding progress back. Costs remain high, infrastructure is not always in place, policy frameworks are still evolving and many technologies are only just moving beyond early-stage deployment. For hard-to-abate sectors, this creates uncertainty about when and how to act. Continued delay, however, carries its own significant risks. Without quicker progress, emissions from these

sectors could put global climate targets out of reach, particularly as the critical 2030 climate milestone approaches. The next few years will be decisive. Progress relies on a shift in focus across a variety of areas. The questions are now practical: Where should these solutions be deployed? And how can they scale? The answers lie in how the transition is localised, delivered and funded in the years ahead.

<https://www.edie.net/from-ambition-to-action-delivering-net-zero-in-hard-to-abate-sectors/>

Sunday 16th August

We lament that 12 million hectares of once fertile land is lost every year to desertification and drought. We lament that an increase in degraded soil will likely affect food production. We lament for when we have chosen quick profits instead of sustainable agriculture. We lament the use of certain types of pesticides which bring increased yields for the moment but, in the long term makes the soil incapable of sustaining life.

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Monday 17th August

The 17th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) will be hosted by Mongolia in its capital city, Ulaanbaatar, from today until the 28 August under the theme *Restoring Land. Restoring Hope*. COP17 is expected