



TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law & Policy

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Climate Ch-Ch-Changes, and So Do We

But is it a million dead end streets? Or are we turning to face the strange?

The list of effects of human-induced climate change is virtually endless. Just this month, there are stories, studies, and reports from around the globe. In Delhi, [a brutal heat wave has people crowding around tanker trucks](#) delivering water. It's life on a razor's edge and a familiar scene in other cities like [Karachi](#) or [Mexico City](#). In Canada, wildfires burn bigger, hotter, and longer, even [smoldering all winter long under the snow in dried-out peat](#) to re-ignite in the spring. On a not-unrelated note, a new [study](#) finds summer droughts in the Northern Hemisphere are increasingly likely as the North gets less snowfall and [seasonal streamflow shifts in unpredictable ways](#). Even groundwater isn't immune to climate change; another new [study](#) predicts that groundwater, which is [pretty important](#), is projected to increase in temperature around the globe. Increases in groundwater temperature can lead to increases in microbial activity and chemical leaching, meaning [a decrease in water quality and the ability to use groundwater](#) for not-so-niche activities like agriculture, drinking, and energy production. In May, extreme rain caused flooding in southern Brazil that has killed at least 172 people. [Researchers lay the blame](#) on a variety of factors, from El Niño to lack of enforcement of land use regulations, but [climate change also played a role](#) in intensifying the storms. And, as is often the case, one disaster leaves a region more vulnerable to the next, and now [severe drought is on the horizon](#) for those same areas still cleaning up from the floods. And the World Meteorological Organization says [2024's going to be even hotter than 2023](#).

So, given the bleak parade ([black parade?](#)) of climate news, [what'cha gonna do about it?](#)

Well, the UN's secretary general, [Antonio Guterres, says](#) not only do countries need to end taxpayer subsidies to oil and gas companies but even treat them like tobacco and ban their advertising (BTW, if you're below a certain age, you probably can't even conceive how [tobacco ads](#) once blanketed the landscape). So while Secretary Guterres is looking for countries to stop giving away money to oil companies, many cities and states are suing major oil companies to try to get funding for the [plethora](#) of problems they have to deal with as a result of the carbon-driven climate change. And it seems to be a move [supported by a majority of voters](#). But most recently, those companies are now [seeking refuge in the Supreme Court](#) after Hawai'i's Supreme Court ruled that Honolulu's suit can go forward. And the industry is not without supporters – 20 attorneys general have written on the side of the oil companies in this suit, and [Republican governors recently got together to blame](#) the Biden administration's fight against climate change for almost everything ever. On the other hand, Vermont is using innovative legislation to fight the climate fight; the legislature there passed a "[climate superfund](#)" law to charge greenhouse gas emitters in a manner similar to the polluters who leave behind hazardous waste sites in need of cleanup. Officials will spend the next several months studying the total costs to the state from emissions over the past thirty years to determine the emitters' liability. Expect more lawsuits if and when Vermont tries to implement the law. So, there's certainly no unified front in the battle against climate change at a national scale in the US.

South of the border, [Mexico has elected a climate scientist as president](#), but she herself seems to embody this conflict – she’s been an author on Intergovernmental Panels on Climate Change reports that seem to be intended to turn around the world’s fossil fuel dependency, but she’s also a supporter of Mexico’s oil company, Pemex.

Where it all leads next is unclear, but getting to clear, decisive reality altering decisions around climate and global emissions might be no more than a [daydream](#) without making it through an especially harrowing [labyrinth](#).

Coming Up:

[Lower Mississippi River Comprehensive Management Study Update Meeting](#); online; June 20, 2024

LDENR Natural Resources Steering Committee Public Hearing; Baton Rouge, LA; June 18, 2024

[CRCLecture](#) - Analysis of Drought Events in the Lower Mississippi River; New Orleans, LA; June 26, 2024

[Public Comments on Texas State Flood Plan](#); Online; until June 17, 2024

Water jobs:

[Hazard Mitigation Specialist, Senior](#); City of New Orleans; New Orleans, LA

[Staff Attorney](#); Atchafalaya Basinkeeper; Remote w/in LA

[Staff Scientist](#); Healthy Gulf; Houston, Southeast Texas, or Southwest Louisiana (Remote)

[Chief Development Officer](#); Healthy Gulf; Gulf South (Remote)

[Coastal Organizer](#); Healthy Gulf; Southeast Louisiana (Hybrid)



The [Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy](#) is a program of the Tulane University Law School. The Institute is dedicated to fostering a greater appreciation and understanding of the vital role that water plays in our society and of the importance of the legal and policy framework that shapes the uses and legal stewardship of water.

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