

CREATION CARE GREEN TIPS - DECEMBER

1. Nelson Mandela said this: "*There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children....Our actions and policies, and the institutions we create, should be eloquent with care, respect, and love.*" Yet, according to the nonpartisan Union of Concerned Scientists (ucsusa.org), **protections for children against environmental threats have been undermined, rolled back, canceled and ignored, putting the health of millions of children at risk.** While the EPA's own scientists warned about the agricultural pesticide **chlorpyrifos, derived from nerve agents used in World War II that can inhibit brain development in children,** the chemical's use is permitted even though it was banned for use in homes 20 years ago. The agency is also ignoring its scientists' advice to **ban the import of asbestos, while neglecting to enforce regulations around existing asbestos insulation in buildings like schools.** Exposure to asbestos greatly **increases the risk of mesothelioma (cancer of the lining of the lungs), to which children are particularly susceptible.** Because these are just two of many examples, URGE OUR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES to **prioritize children's health.**
2. Ocean heat content in the upper ocean layers **has reached record levels, potentially speeding up how fast the planet will warm in the coming decades,** according to new findings in a study published in the journal *Nature Climate Change*. The study reports that reduction in the mixing of ocean layers, due to added heat from global warming, is **increasing warm water in the upper 6,500 feet of water, while cutting back on the circulation of cold, deep water.** This is projected to **increase energy available to hurricanes and other storms, reduce essential nutrients for fish in upper ocean layers and diminish the oceans' ability to store carbon.** Since the world's oceans have absorbed the **vast majority of added heat from global warming,** WE MUST ACT to influence our policy makers to move rapidly toward clean, renewable energy and regenerative agriculture (which increases the amount of carbon that can be stored in the soil).
3. Governments and international organizations are grappling with the fact that **the COVID-19 pandemic exemplifies the direct link between human health and ecological health, giving us an opportunity to self-correct in how we treat animals and the planet.** Recognizing that the virus originated in an animal, the Chinese government **enacted a temporary nationwide ban on the consumption of terrestrial wildlife,** taking a lead globally on policy to prevent future outbreaks, according to award-winning science journalist Rachel Nuwer (New York Times, National Geographic, BBC Future, Scientific American). This requires **addressing the root cause of zoonotic epidemics by protecting habitats and biodiversity.** She urges the U.S. and the international community to **preserve rather than destroy biodiversity, lessening the risk of unleashing the next, perhaps more deadly, pandemic.** Quoting a wildlife disease ecologist at George Mason University, Nuwer writes, "Once a disease jumps into humans, all the responses are reactive, and the focus is on human health. **We never go back to the source of why things happen in the first place.**" Doing exactly that will perhaps protect us from the next pandemic.

4. Our federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), tasked with safeguarding our air and water, is moving forward to **set aside thousands of critical scientific studies when developing public protections**, according to scores of scientific groups (including the Union of Concerned Scientists), public health organizations, the National Academy of Sciences, and the EPA's own sidelined Science Advisory Board. If the proposal is allowed to move forward, **the main target is the Clean Air Act's current pollution standards, which are required to be based solely on science**. The elimination of science from policymaking appears to **benefit polluters at the expense of ordinary people**, especially marginalized communities that experience higher levels of health impacts from pollution. MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD by getting involved at <http://act.ucsusa.org/epa-science>.