

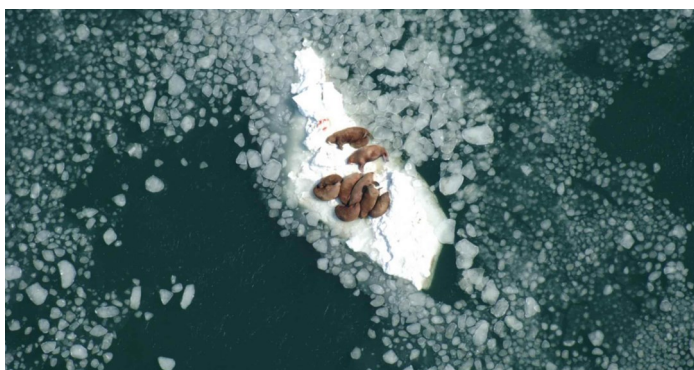


EESI UPDATE

A periodic update to EESI's friends on our work in policymaker education, coalition building, technical assistance, and policy development.

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12 Years to Avoid Catastrophic Climate Change, Warns New U.N. Scientific Report



The loss of sea ice is a grave threat to walrus in the Arctic.

Courtesy: PIXNIO

ON OCTOBER 8, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a special report on limiting global warming and avoiding the worst effects of climate change. The report provides what is perhaps the **IPCC's most sobering evaluation of the challenges we face: it gives the world just 12 years to dramatically reduce carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions to avoid irreversible changes.** These cuts to emissions must occur across all sectors, and include phasing out coal and rapidly transitioning to renewable sources of energy. The IPCC is a 195-country United Nations body established 30 years ago to synthesize and assess research related to climate change; it released this latest report after a week-long conference of member countries. It represents a collaborative effort among 91 authors and editors from 40 countries.

The new report warns that the effects of climate change are materializing faster than expected. The planet has already warmed 1 degree Celsius (1.8 degrees F). That doesn't sound like much, but we're already feeling the consequences: rising sea levels, more destructive storms, and melting sea ice. While a half-degree Celsius difference may sound negligible, the report's scientists say that limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (rather than the prevailing 2C target) is the planet's best hope for protecting vulnerable regions and avoiding potentially irreversible changes. To hit that target, **the world needs to cut CO2 emissions nearly in half by 2030, and must achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.** If current warming trends continue, then a 1.5 degree Celsius increase will be reached by 2040. Changes to prevent this warming must be implemented by 2030. EESI is working with policymakers and the public with the goal of putting us on this path!

The report outlines two scenarios, one in which warming is kept below 1.5 degrees Celsius, and a second in which this target is temporarily exceeded. This second scenario, sometimes called the "overshoot" pathway, would require the removal of existing CO2 from the atmosphere at a massive scale to bring the temperature back down to 1.5 degrees by the end of the century.

Many promising technologies are being developed to remove CO2 from the atmosphere, and they will almost certainly become a valuable tool—but they are costly, and their potential for wide-scale implementation is unknown. The authors warn that, while it may appear to grant policymakers more flexibility now, the overshoot pathway involves greater uncertainty and may tie our hands when exploring mitigation options in the future. In addition, implementing newly developed carbon-capturing technologies could consume land, water, and other valuable resources.

The high-level report will guide policymakers at this December's U.N. climate conference in Katowice, Poland, at which countries are expected to agree on final rules for implementing the **2015 Paris Climate Agreement.** EESI's Executive Director, Carol Werner, remarked, **"This important report reaffirms the importance of implementing solutions that mitigate climate change and help our country respond to the impacts we are already feeling."**



Courtesy: PIXNIO

While people, organizations, and governments around the world are taking action to prevent climate change, the scale and pace of these efforts must escalate rapidly to minimize harm to humans and the natural world. **With your help, EESI is playing its part in this critical mobilization by informing—and inspiring—U.S. policymakers.** □

New Global Commission on Adaptation Created EESI Board Member Dr. Rosina Bierbaum Appointed as Scientific Advisor

ON OCTOBER 16, just one week after the release of the IPCC report (see article on page 1), philanthropist Bill Gates, former UN Secretary Ban Ki-moon, and World Bank CEO Kristalina Georgieva announced the creation of the **Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA)**. They founded the Commission amid the news that, if global warming is left unchecked, catastrophic climate change disasters such as torrential flooding and prolonged drought could worsen, and this trend could become irreversible in as little as 12 years.

The GCA's mission is to promote growth and prosperity in a warming world using **innovative adaptation solutions**. Seventeen countries, among them China, India and the United Kingdom, back the commission. The GCA is comprised of 28 commissioners who will be assisted by senior advisors, leading research partners, and two managing partner organizations. **Adaptation efforts need to happen much faster to increase resilience in the face of climate uncertainties** and to continue reducing global poverty. Global leadership on adaptation efforts is lacking; the GCA is seeking to fill this gap.

EESI is excited to announce that our long-time board member, Dr. Rosina Bierbaum, was named a Senior Scientific Advisor to the Global Commission on Adaptation! Rosina has served on

our board for over 15 years and will be a wonderful asset to the GCA, having devoted 13 years to the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment and eight to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (including a year as Acting Director). She has also served as Dean of the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources and Environment, where she is currently a professor.



Rosina will support the commission with information on technical issues, and provide advice on research, engagement, and communications. The GCA will release a flagship report by September 2019 after synthesizing all of the comprehensive data collected by commission advisors. After the report is complete, a "Year of Action" will commence, during which climate leaders and citizens will be asked to focus on climate action and adaptation outreach that targets the most vulnerable.

At EESI, we understand the most effective policies are those informed by sound, evidence-based research—including the work of the GCA. **We will use the work of the Global Commission on Adaptation—and the guidance of our board member Rosina—to continue to address climate change and help secure a resilient future.** □

EESI Features Co-op Programs that Reduce Rural Energy Burden

RURAL U.S. HOUSEHOLDS spend 40 percent more of their income on energy bills than metropolitan ones, according to a July report from the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE). EESI acted as an expert reviewer on the report.

EESI organized a panel of rural energy leaders at the Co-op IMPACT Conference to highlight how rural electric co-ops are trying to meet this challenge. The panel featured Mark Cayce, General Manager of Ouachita Electric Cooperative in Arkansas and Rob Ardis, CEO of Santee Electric Cooperative in South Carolina. Both discussed their co-ops' **on-bill financing programs, a strategy championed by EESI** in which the utility pays the upfront costs of home energy upgrades that the customer then repays over time as part of their monthly utility bill.

Ouachita Electric developed its program **"as a way to give our members a solution to problems they had.** Before, we were just giving advice, and **now we actually have solutions,**" said Cayce. Ardis added, "Our goal is to be there for the membership. Any time we can offer them something to improve their quality of life and help them with their pocketbook as well, that's a **win-win for everybody.**"

As part of the panel, Chris McLean, the Acting Administrator of the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utilities Service, announced **\$20 million in zero-interest loans** made to three co-ops through the USDA's Rural Energy Savings Program (RESP). **EESI helped to create RESP as part of the 2014 Farm Bill,** following our work on pilot projects using this approach in South Carolina.



The Ouachita Mountains in Arkansas

The new zero-interest loans included \$8 million to Ouachita Electric to expand its on-bill program. "RESP is an incredible tool to bring capital especially into areas where there is not a lot of capital available for people to invest," said Cayce. **"Our goal is to try to touch every house in our service territory. We've only just started!"**

USDA has now awarded more than \$40 million in RESP loans to 15 co-ops, and is currently accepting applications for an additional **\$100 million.** With your continued support, **EESI is working to help co-ops and other rural utilities** apply to the program and spread the benefits far and wide! □

Giving Now – And Later!

EESI'S BOARD CHAIR, JARED BLUM, spent his career in the insulation industry, working to make buildings more efficient. He gives to EESI every month *and* has included EESI in his legacy giving.

Why did you choose to give to EESI as a way to channel your concern about climate and clean energy policy?

Mitigating climate change and preparing our society to withstand its physical, social, national security, and economic challenges have been the focus of my career. These problems can only be addressed successfully if we address them at multiple levels. **Giving to EESI is the perfect way to make progress on these issues! With a track record of more than 30 years serving the public interest, EESI has an outsized impact by working on both policymaker education and on-the-ground technical assistance to municipal utilities and co-ops to help families lower their utility bills!**

How difficult or easy was it for you to include EESI in your legacy giving?

Simple! Language in a person's will can direct funds to EESI; it's not complicated. You can also name EESI as a beneficiary in your 401(k) or IRA—no lawyers needed!

EESI Applauds Congress for Disaster Recovery Reform Act

IT'S NOT MAKING THE HEADLINES, but your generosity to EESI is making a difference: Congress is actually embracing more resilient solutions! Most recently, the *Disaster Recovery Reform Act* (DRRA) passed both houses of Congress and was signed into law by the president. Thanks to your commitment, EESI and a wide variety of advocates worked to advance DRRA. **The new law makes major improvements to U.S. disaster policy:**

- As part of a **greater focus on mitigation**, it contains reforms to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to increase the availability of "pre-disaster mitigation" (PDM) grants to help communities better withstand future disasters. It establishes a set-aside of disaster-relief funds into a National Public Infrastructure PDM Fund.
- It also **creates incentives for communities to adopt and enforce modern building codes** that incorporate hazard-resilient design standards and it removes financial barriers for rebuilding in areas less vulnerable to the impact of natural disasters.

"In passing this bill, Congress has taken a major step forward in disaster preparedness. EESI applauds this bicameral, bipartisan effort that recognizes the value of investing in mitigation and smart rebuilding as a common-sense alternative to spending billions for post-disaster rebuilding only to have it destroyed by the next storm," said EESI Executive Director Carol Werner.

Learn about our internship program (and apply!) at: www.eesi.org/internships.



If you don't have a will yet, I recommend having one. You can decide to give a percentage or a set amount, and you can always amend it later. **Legacy decisions are your last statement about what mattered to you.** It reflects who you are as a person. Hence, **my modest personal participation is an important way of expressing my values—as it can be for you!**

Why monthly online giving?

With the increasingly complex technological and policy questions being posed, EESI's work is so valuable! **Monthly donations ensure that the knowledge base necessary for continued support for robust climate policies is funded.** Also, I don't have to remember whether I've given or not, and **it fits into my monthly spending.**

Thank you for your commitment, Jared! It enables us to continue our work long into the future.

Show your support for clean energy and climate policy by giving in the way that works for you! □

Investing in mitigation is very important now that climate change is increasing the intensity and impact of extreme weather events, as Hurricanes Florence and Michael have shown just this fall.



Hurricane Florence caused major flooding in N. Carolina.

There is so much more to do as we head toward the new Congress, to be seated in January—Congressional offices are already asking for ideas and input for bills. With your support, EESI will be there to offer advice and information and will continue to promote policy solutions that are economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable.

Federal action plays a critical role in shaping resilience efforts at all levels of government. We need to continue engaging on various aspects of resilience—flood insurance reform, stronger building codes, built and natural infrastructure, grid modernization and smart grid development—to advance resilience policy that makes a real difference to communities! **Help us continue our work by donating today—YOU make climate progress possible with your continued engagement!** □

We moved in March!

Please update your records.



EESI

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EESI UPDATE

Only a Few Weeks Left to Give in 2018: Advance Clean Energy and Climate Solutions Today!

There's not much time left this year to help us defend clean energy and climate policies! Your donation provides the necessary tools we need to succeed together in engaging the new Congress on resilience and climate—and spreading our approach to reducing the high energy costs that so many families face.

For example, your year-end tax-deductible gift of \$200 can provide every Congressional office with an intro packet on EESI services to help them make informed decisions.

Every gift helps continue to accelerate progress on sensible climate solutions!

Thank YOU for making a difference and for your commitment to sustainable solutions!



Give online
at www.eesi.org/donate

or by mail to our **new**
address:

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Washington, D.C. 20036**



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