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By [Marcy Franck](#)

May is a great time for al fresco dining, climate action, and sneezing. This month we take a look at how, collectively, we're blazing ahead with research and policy that will make the planet—and ourselves—healthier.

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DISPATCH FROM THE #POLLENOCALYPSE

Every morning my 11-year old sips his grape-flavored allergy medication like a dapper little man, swirling it around his dosing cup as if it were a fine port.



If you don't have a tiny human who considers himself a connoisseur of allergy meds, it may be hard to find any upside to the stinging eyes and runny noses. Our Director Dr. Aaron Bernstein explains [why pollen seems to be getting worse](#) (27:47), and what it means for allergies now and in the future.

And check out our guide to understand [why climate change matters to children with allergies](#) and learn steps to keep kids healthy in a changing climate.

PREVENTING THE NEXT PANDEMIC

And the one that doesn't happen after that.



Two viruses per year jump from animals to humans—and to stop the next pandemic before it starts we need to invest in solutions that prevent these “spillover” events. That’s why we’ve joined Harvard Global Health Institute to launch the [Preventing Pandemics at the Source Scientific Task Force](#).

Solutions like preventing deforestation and regulating wildlife are effective and [only 2% of the cost](#) of what we’re paying to manage COVID-19. As world leaders convene this year to address pandemic risk, the task force’s findings can help inform how to advance investment and drive action to avert the next pandemic.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MAKING MOVES

A rapid-fire rundown for your coffee-sipping pleasure.

Conservation



Energy: The Administration announced a new push to [cut emissions](#) from federal buildings and homes. The initiative will develop performance standards for federal facilities and new Energy Star standards for [heat pumps](#), which suck the heat from cold air to warm your home. It’s not sorcery, it’s science!

Land & water: The Administration released its [blueprint for conserving](#) 30% of America’s land and waters by 2030, which will protect biodiversity, health, and our prospects for continued life on Earth. [62% of voters](#) support the plan because duh.

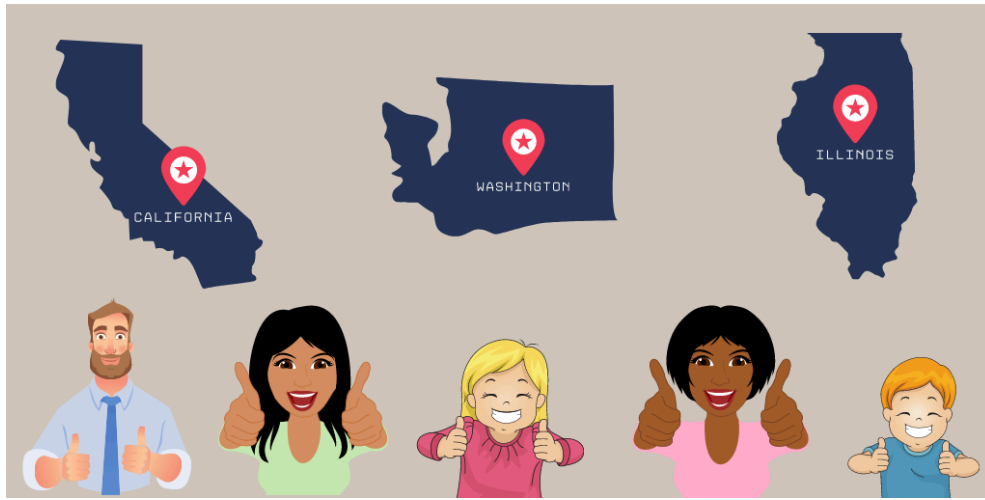
Assessment & Strategy

An [executive order](#) set wheels in motion for all government agencies to identify and lessen the financial risks stemming from climate change.

EPA is helping us identify [how climate change is impacting our own lives](#) through its comprehensive report on climate indicators, which it updated for the first time since 2016.

Don't forget to head on over to the [rollback tracker \(\\$\)](#), which tallies the government's environmental actions.

STATES TAKING ACTION



California issued a public health rule for [people who live near warehouses](#) and who also like to breathe. New regulations will require warehouses to cut emissions or fund air quality improvements to reduce truck pollution and protect the communities that surround them.

Washington State signed a [new law to regulate carbon](#) with a comprehensive cap and trade system. Refineries, manufacturers, and power companies will buy and sell carbon credits, which will become more expensive over time—a powerful incentive to emit less of it. Learn more about [carbon pricing](#) from Yale's Pricing Nature podcast.

Illinois interstate highways will install [signs directing drivers to charging stations](#), which is part of the state's goal of putting 750k EVs on the road by 2030.

WHAT SCIENCE TOLD US THIS MONTH

Kinda hard to hear over the [Brood X cicadas](#), so I'll type loudly.



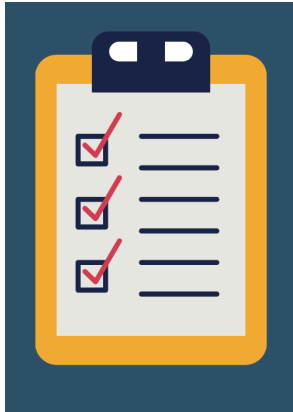
The energy sector can [achieve net-zero](#) emissions by 2050, and can do it cost-effectively via a "narrow but achievable" pathway.

If we cut [methane emissions](#) in half by 2030, we can prevent a half-degree of warming by 2050, 260k premature deaths, 775k asthma hospitalizations, and 25m tons of crop losses annually.

"Wind, solar, and other non-fuel combusting renewable energy are the healthiest energy sources available for generating electricity, powering our factories, and heating our homes," according to our researcher Jonathan Buonocore's [new study](#).

[Tree farts](#) increase emissions in ghost forests, [zombie fires](#) are a thing, and we can [sail around the world](#) on solar power. What a time to be alive!

CLIMATE ACTION TO-DO LIST



[Take some 5-minute mini-classes](#) (aw, they're so cute!) in the technologies helping us meet our sustainability goals: renewable energy, transportation, carbon capture, and hydrogen, from Axios.

[Visualize the impact of different climate solutions in real-time](#) using the En-ROADS Climate Solutions Simulator—a user-friendly climate model developed by Climate Interactive and MIT Sloan Sustainability Initiative. Next free online training session is June 24.

[Envision sustainable cities of the future](#): Browse Grist's special series that reimagines what green, equitable, and resilient communities could look like.

STORIES TO HELP YOU SLEEP AT NIGHT



[Scientists find way to remove polluting microplastics with bacteria](#)

[Enhanced geothermal could provide gigawatts of low-cost power](#)

[Forest the size of France regrown worldwide over 20 years](#)

[Electric cars 'will be cheaper to produce than fossil fuel vehicles by 2027](#)

[Satellites may hold countries to their Paris pledges](#)

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