

Can we save the world? Your Wednesday climate briefing

Every week, Maddyness looks at the good, the bad and the ugly in climate change news. Today, we document the typhoons decimating parts of Southeast Asia, as well as green tech and innovation coming out of Mato Grosso (Brazil), Silicon Valley, and Arsenal football club.

The Red Cross has released its World Disasters Report for 2020, entitled 'Come Heat or High Water'. The central gist is that climate change is a bigger threat than the COVID-19 pandemic, given that – for example – more than 100 climate-related disasters have occurred since a pandemic was declared.

Here's an [executive summary](#), which includes stats that will surely shake even the hardiest of climate change deniers into action. The number of climate and weather related disasters has risen almost 35% since the '90s, apparently, with 1.7B people affected and over 400,000 people killed by these disasters over the past decade. The report, which focuses heavily on the humanitarian implications of the climate crisis, concludes with prospective solutions e.g. 'smart financing' and 'climate-smart disaster risk government'.

As a case in point, let's look at what's happening in Southeast Asia right now. Typhoon Vamco was the 21st typhoon seen by the Philippines this year, and has triggered some of the worst flooding Manila has ever endured – further

devastating a country already reeling from the exceptionally strong Typhoon Goni earlier this month. At least 80 people are dead or missing as of Monday, and following Vamco's impact on Vietnam a few days ago, hundreds more cannot be accounted for.

The big ideas

Last Thursday, we saw another instalment of *Maddyness x Ours to Save*, with *Maddyness* publishing Jack Isaacs' 'Impact Investing: why private sector capital is vital in the climate fight'. We also looked into Facebook's axing of Shell advertising.

Beyond this, have a look at the ideas and innovations from across the spectrum of politics, social justice and big business that caught my eye this week:

The Professional Urban Planners Association of East Africa is planning on installing a million ecological toilets in rural Uganda by the end of the decade. The toilets can work without water – and users can 'valorise the faecal matter by fertilising the soil.'

The Oxford Net Zero initiative launched this week, and will see leading academics from across the university's disciplines come together to work on climate solutions. "Aggressive emission reductions must be complemented by equally aggressive scale-up of safe and permanent greenhouse gas removal and disposal", said Professor Myles Allen.

Arsenal has become the first Premier League club to sign the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework. "We will continue to use the power and reach of Arsenal to inspire our global communities and push each other towards a more sustainable future," said Operations Director Hywel Sloman.

Decentralised insurance provider Etherisc is working on a blockchain platform for smallholder farmers in Kenya. Weather events will trigger insurance payouts automatically.

In Brazil, CONSERV has launched to reduce deforestation by financially rewarding farmers for keeping forests they could legally cut down alive.

The world's 450 public development banks held their first summit last week, and have been urged to channel their resources into adaptation – eg. by supporting climate-affected farmers – as well as emissions reduction.

Tibber, the Norwegian digital energy company that empowers people to consume electricity smarter, has just raised a ~£50M Series B. "Our app has

quickly become popular, and it has contributed to smart and green energy at lower prices.”, commented CEO Edgeir Vårdal Aksnes.

A UK government-led group is working on resolving issues raised in [Bringing Shareholder Voting into the 21st Century](#). The report on the obstacles to trustee voting and how to overcome them highlights “an increased focus on corporate governance, particularly in relation to decisions companies take on environmental, social and governance (“ESG”) issues,” and has been welcomed by [sustainable pension proponents Tumelo](#).

Developers in Malaysia are [issuing](#) green bonds, including Shariah-compliant Islamic bonds (*sukuk*), to fund sustainable construction.

Apparently, in Silicon Valley, [the second clean tech boom is here](#) – and it’s learnt from the mistakes of its predecessor.

Further reading

If you’re still reading, here’s even more reading:

[Humidity, the second pillar of climate change, via the Met Office](#)

[The secret club for billionaires who care about climate change, via *the Japan Times*](#)

[The bitter aftertaste of China’s hunger for South American food, via *The Diplomat*](#)