



EnviSAG

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Environmental Society for Sustainable And Greener Earth

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Raven Newsletter #12

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. "-**Margaret Mead**

Exotic elitism turned toxic

[Let's Chat!](#)



All that which we don't find indigenously has always been the preferred pick by the Indian pop. Ornamental and exotic plants are a recent addition to the trend. But unlike articles imported from across the world, we need to understand that it is different for living plants. Every plant species has a unique native ecosystem, where they have the perfect climatic condition, soil, prey-predator balance, and demand-supply to grow. Taking them to a diverse topographic structure can not only hamper their propagation but can potentially invade the life cycle of native plants. One such typical example is Water Hyacinth (*Eichhornia Crassipes*). Water Hyacinth was imported for the beautification of lakes as it produces a beautiful purple flower. Later, because of the lack of its natural predator, it over grew and turned invasive. Further resulting in the death of aquatic animals, as Bengal celebrates a culture of fish consumption it is aka 'Terror of Bengal.'

And it is not just Water Hyacinth that turned invasive, Congress Grass, and West Indian Lantana are a few others. The recent hike in the nascent exotic taste of Indians for flowering/Ornamental plants can potentially catalyze the process of invasion of alien species, deteriorating the quality of endemic and native organisms.

Team EnviSAGE promotes fancying indigenous flowers as it is affordable, sustainable, and supports local florists.

The Pacific Northwest Heatwave knows no limit!



An unprecedented and unrelenting heatwave has affected the states of Western North America and Canada. This sudden heat wave had somehow shaken the fundamentals of Climate Change. It raises serious questions about our very understanding of Climate Change. But who is the culprit? HUMANS!

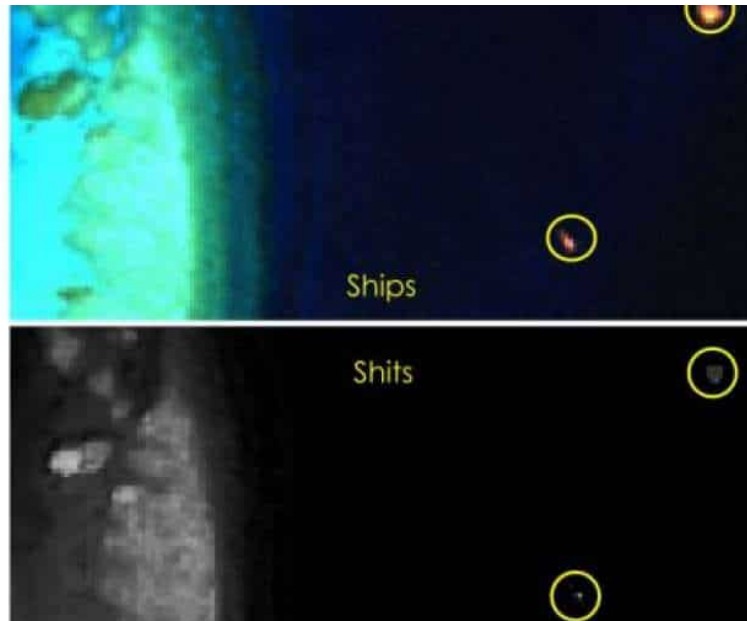
This heatwave has inflicted too much damage. So many lives are lost. The exact number of deaths due to heatwaves is not known but the statistics released by the British Columbia Coroner Service indicated 800 plus sudden deaths.

Not only humans but aquatic life are the most impacted ones. Over 1 billion sea creatures have died and the count hasn't stopped and the number may be an under count.

The heatwave has sparked wildfires that even reached hundreds of square kilometres. The most dangerous one was in Lytton, British Columbia.

It is high time now!! If greenhouse gas emissions are not significantly curtailed, the heatwaves and other extreme conditions with dire consequences shall be common. Building resilience and drafting harsh laws is the need of the hour.

Reefs at Risk



“This is a catastrophe of epic proportions and we are close to the point of no return.” Chinese ships have dropped human waste and wastewater for years in a disputed area of the South China Sea. The dropping of waste has caused algae to grow. The underwater plants have damaged coral reefs and threatened the fish population in the area.

Satellite images over the last five years show how human waste, sewage and wastewater have accumulated and caused algae in a cluster of reefs in the Spratlys region where hundreds of Chinese fishing ships have anchored in batches, said Liz Derr head of Similarity Inc satellite imagery analysis company.

At least 236 ships were spotted in the atoll, internationally known as Union Banks, on June 17 alone, which Beijing has claimed virtually in its entirety.

“When the ships don’t move, the poop piles up,” Derr said. “The hundreds of ships that are anchored in the Spratlys are dumping raw sewage onto the reefs they are occupying.” A few hundred protesters held a noisy rally in front of the Chinese Consulate which China ignored and continues to defy.

Reefs are an important breeding ground for marine species and are responsible for protecting the coasts. They are the focal point of marine life and their death causes the entire ecosystem to unravel. This should be taken seriously!

Tokyo Olympics - A sustainable event?



Japan is all set to organise the opening of the Tokyo Olympics on July 23. As the countdown begins, much of the world, especially the Japanese public is worried about the fact that this can become the corona super spreader event, but the organisers have not only pledged the games to be safe from the virus but also the most eco-friendly games ever. It is an attempt to demonstrate how a country like Japan, a top carbon emitter, can work towards a greener future. From something as small as medals to something as big as the electricity supply, everything will be recycled minimising the waste at the event. The initiatives include, the beds made up of cardboard, medals made up of mobile metals also the podiums will be made up of recycled plastics. Moreover, the torchbearers' uniforms will be made from plastic bottles. The Olympic torch has been produced using aluminium waste. While much of the world is applauding this initiative, others just call it a greenwash. Despite using renewable energy resources, the Tokyo Olympics isn't eco-friendly enough. It will still produce the harmful carbon emission from Flying in thousands of athletes from around the world leaving a hefty carbon footprint. The plywood for the construction of the stadium was sourced from the Indonesian forests, where deforestation has been a problem. All this for zero or a few spectators? But whether it will reach its goal or not depends upon the strategy. With thoughtful planning, the Tokyo Olympics can be a major drive towards sustainability in global events and can become a role model for more games to come.

World's first Gene-Altered sugarcane – CRISPR



Sugarcane, an essential cash crop also used as livestock fodder, requires a hefty amount of energy to not only extract sugar but also to produce bioethanol for greener fuels and plastics. Alteration of genes can take up to several years to breed new varieties, sugarcane is frustratingly difficult to crossbreed due to its complex genome. Sugarcane plantation takes vast areas of agricultural land in many countries, it also requires a large quantity of water to grow, and after harvest, the land is left with debris and pollution. CRISPR - is an innovative and powerful tool that helps in treating conditions for improving the commercial crop and preventing it from diseases, through CRISPR a couple of new varieties of sugarcane has been developed. This marks the first time the technology has been successfully used on sugarcane. To make useful edits, scientists need to target multiple regions involved in a particular trait. Studies have shown that altered cash crops have a clear change in appearance, making them more resilient and promoting sugarcane as the ideal crop for the emerging bioeconomy.

Nature-Positive Production



Agriculture and its related activities are major concerns for the environment. The demand for food has increased due to the continuous rise in population which has created a burden on the agriculture sector. Due to this, land under agriculture has increased by nearly 10%-15% since 1960 which is far more than other human activities, urban land use and other infrastructure. Increased land under agriculture has resulted in large-scale loss of forests, which in turn increases the greenhouse gas emissions, threats to biodiversity, and loss of soil carbon. Water Consumption has also increased due to high demand which is alone responsible for 70% of freshwater which resulted in water scarcity in some regions. Use of nitrogen and phosphorus-based fertilizers, for efficient production, is now a major cause of water pollution.

We required better policies and projects to tackle the problem that arises from food production. And here comes to light '*Nature-Positive Production*'.

What do we mean by Nature-Positive Production?

The main aim of Nature-Positive Production is to meet the fundamental Human Right, demand for Healthy food within planetary boundaries that limit the natural resources available for a sustainable exploitation. Generally, it means the use of available resources without depleting, degrading or depredation – which farmers exploit to increase production by external outputs. And how we can transform the food production system from these negative effects to positive ones for the environment.

Why Boosting Nature-Positive Food Production Makes Economic sense?

The current pandemic has stifled the economic growth of many prominent countries,

especially India. Boosts in Nature-Positive Production ensure equitable livelihood opportunities, advance human health, and regenerate environmental integrity. Efficient measurement and management will help to bring down pollution levels, reduce biodiversity loss and greenhouse emission, which in turn promote indigenous people, resulting in an increase in human resources and capital. Transportation's increase will lead to the formation of roads and other related infrastructure which will ease connectivity. Nature-Positive Production helps in the growth of small enterprises and small farmers in the production chain.

Recommendations:

Fin



Fin is a 2021 American documentary film directed by Eli Roth. It follows Roth and a group of scientists, activists, and researchers who travel around the world exposing the extinction of sharks. **Fin** exposes the dark side of the shark industry, how they are tortured to death for their fin. **Fin** is a must-watch documentary.

[Fin is available on discovery+.](#)

Okja



Okja is a South Korean masterpiece directed by oscar winner Bong Joon-ho. The movie revolves around a young girl Mija who raises a genetically modified "super pig" Okja. Her life turns upside down when a CEO of a big company came to get Okja for industrial benefits. Will Mija be able to save his Okja?

Okja is a must-watch movie that doubles as social commentary on the brutal industrialization of the world.

[Okja is available on Netflix.](#)

What did you like about this fortnightly's The Raven? What did we miss? Let us know what you think:

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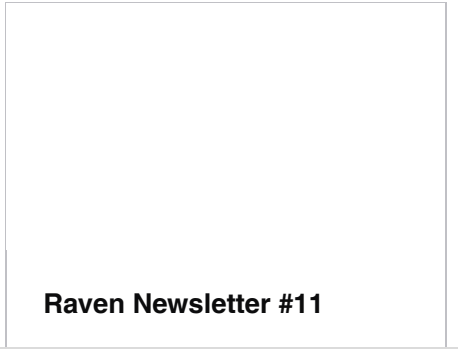
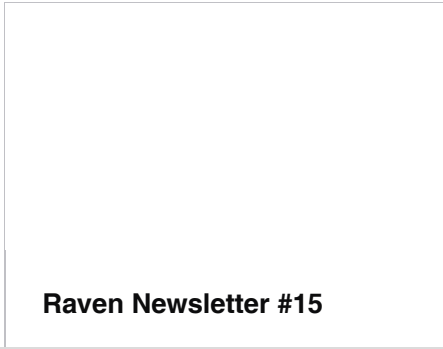
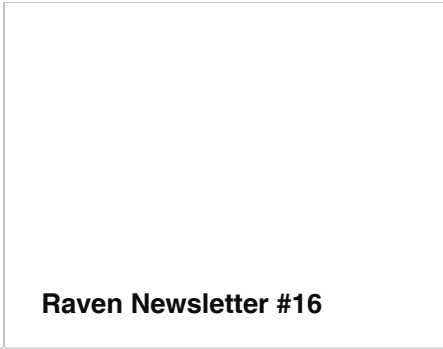
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