



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

ENVIRONMENT - Environmentalists are alarmed: fires have destroyed close to 100,000 hectares of forest in Portugal this summer, releasing one million tonnes of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Worst of all, the forests are losing their ability to absorb carbon

HEALTH - Researchers say a new molecular test that can confirm a diagnosis of tuberculosis within two hours, and identify some drug-resistant strains, will help medical professionals better treat patients, according to a study published. Some health advocates worry that the cost of the machine and computers needed to analyze test results will prevent broad application in poor countries until less-expensive means is developed.

■AFRICA

MALI - Nomadic communities in northern Mali's desert regions are facing one of the most serious droughts of the last twenty years.

SOUTH AFRICA - Striking health workers have continued their work stoppage despite accusations that it endangers patients' lives. They are part of a nationwide strike by public sector workers that has some observers concerned that rising wage demands could harm South Africa's economy.

■ASIA

CHINA - Researchers warned on Thursday that rising temperatures due to greenhouse gas emissions may cause yields in China to drop by 13 per cent by 2050. A warmer climate would inevitably reduce the amount of freshwater available for agriculture across the country, according to the researchers. Their findings indicate that China has already seen a temperature increase of 1.2 degrees Celsius since 1960. The study claimed that temperatures could continue to rise in China by another one to five degrees Celsius by the end of this century. The researchers said that this could cause rice yields to drop by 4 to 14 per cent and wheat by 2 to 20 per cent by 2050.

INDONESIA - The eruption of Mount Sinabung for the first time in 400 years has highlighted the urgent need for Indonesian authorities to boost disaster preparedness, experts warn.

INDIA - Green activists have various ways of pushing their causes, from enlisting movie stars to launching protests, but India's campaigners have also been quietly using legal weapons to try to get the projects they oppose, such as thermal plants, stopped or reversed.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

BOLIVIA - In the northeastern Bolivian department (province) of Beni, a region of wetlands, savannah and jungle where three-quarters of the population lives in poverty, indigenous women are building a new kind of leadership to help develop their communities.

BRAZIL - It might seem a bit strange to adopt, in the Amazon rainforest, a solution developed for drought-stricken northeastern Brazil. But rainwater collected on rooftops and stored in tanks is helping to improve the health, hygiene and overall living conditions of rural communities in the jungle.

CHILE - The poverty rate in the districts of southern Chile where the logging industry is the main economic activity is nearly twice the national average, a new study shows.

MEXICO - Peasant activists Rodolfo Montiel and Teodoro Cabrera hope to find, at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the justice that eluded them in their home country of Mexico, to which they hope to return to rejoin their families.

WFWO's Communications Team