

Newsletter October 2026

Southeast Asia Haze Crisis Highlights Need for Stronger Environmental Accountability

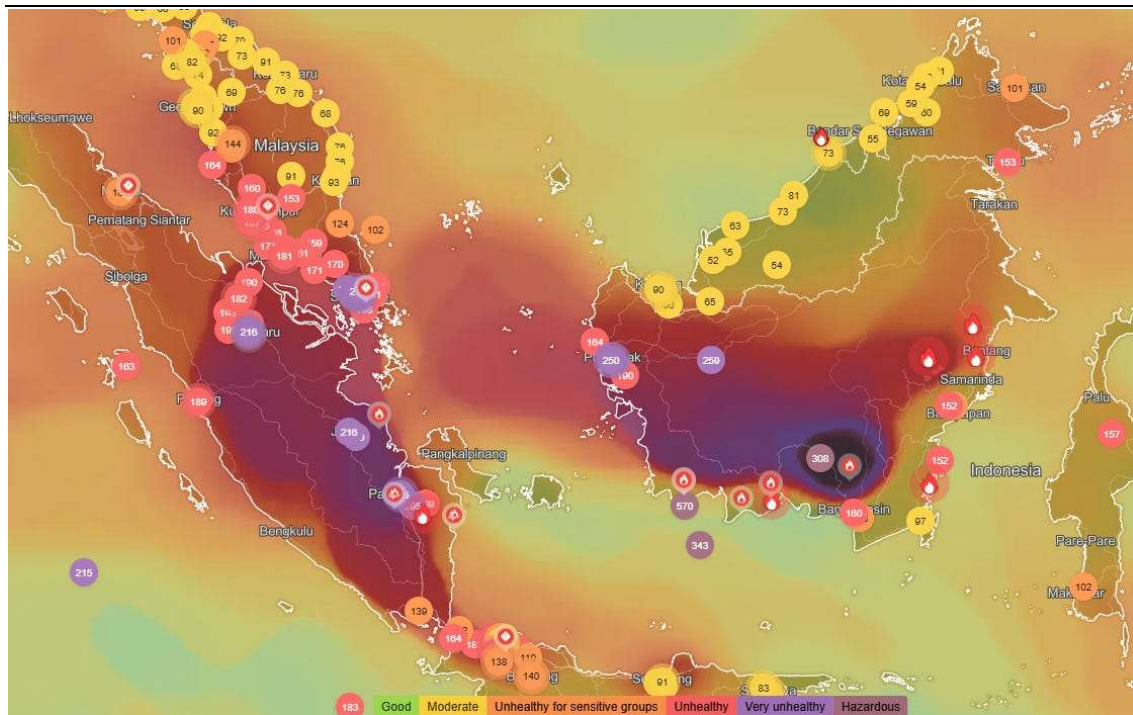


Millions of people across Southeast Asia are experiencing hazardous air quality as large-scale forest and peatland fires in Indonesia continue to fuel a regional haze crisis. The fires have burned nearly 1.5 million hectares of land and contributed to widespread respiratory health issues across affected areas.

Environmental organizations and civil society groups argue that many of the fires are linked to illegal land-clearing practices associated with palm oil, pulp, and paper production. Recent reports have also raised concerns about the role of regional companies operating in fire-affected areas.

The haze has significantly impacted neighboring countries, including Singapore and Malaysia, where air pollution levels have surged and demand for protective equipment has increased. Governments across the region are exploring legal and regulatory measures to hold responsible companies accountable.

Experts emphasize that long-term solutions will require stronger enforcement against illegal burning, greater supply chain transparency, and more sustainable land management practices to reduce the risk of future environmental and public health crises.



Full article can be accessed at: https://earthorg.substack.com/p/southeast-asia-is-chocking-on-corporate?utm_source=email&redirect=app-store-no-desktop&inbox=true&utm_campaign=email-read-in-app&triedRedirect=true

Climate Finance Delays and a Promising Coral Reef Breakthrough

"We scrutinize the consequences of approving finance. We should scrutinize the consequences of delaying it just as seriously."

Mark Brown - Prime Minister of the Cook Islands



At recent pre-COP meetings in Fiji and Tuvalu, Pacific leaders called for greater urgency in delivering climate finance, highlighting that billions of dollars pledged since the Paris Agreement have yet to reach vulnerable communities. Cook Islands Prime Minister Mark Brown emphasized that delays in funding can leave communities exposed to increasing climate risks, urging governments and institutions to treat inaction as seriously as investment decisions.

Meanwhile, researchers in California have uncovered a potentially promising approach to coral reef restoration. During a laboratory study, scientists observed that a bleached coral fragment regained its color after being placed in direct contact with a healthy coral. The finding offers hope for reef conservation efforts as coral ecosystems continue to face mounting pressure from warming oceans.

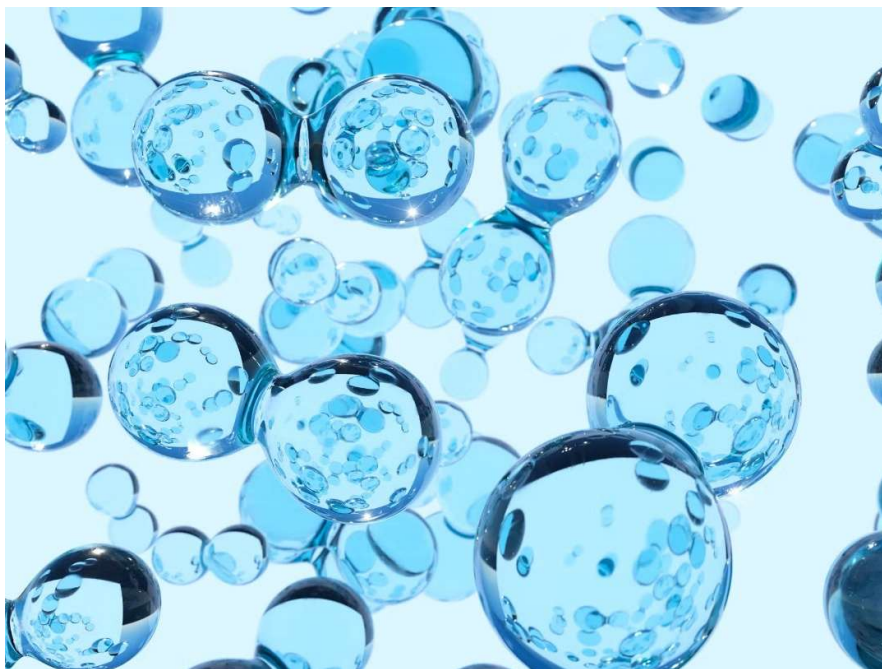
Coral reefs support roughly a quarter of all marine species, provide critical biodiversity benefits, and contribute trillions of dollars in ecosystem value globally. Yet reef coverage has declined dramatically over recent decades, underscoring the need for both effective climate action and innovative conservation solutions.

What this means: As climate impacts intensify, faster access to funding and emerging scientific breakthroughs will both play important roles in helping vulnerable regions protect ecosystems, strengthen resilience, and adapt to a changing climate.

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A Massive Jackpot of Green Fuel Is Locked Underground - and Scientists May Have Just Found the Key

A new study replicated the heat and pressure conditions of Western Australia's vast iron-ore deposits to produce natural hydrogen gas.



New Research Points to Major Breakthrough in Natural Green Hydrogen

Exciting developments in clean energy research suggest that naturally occurring hydrogen could play a much larger role in the global energy transition than previously thought.

Researchers in Western Australia have identified a process that may unlock vast underground hydrogen resources contained within iron-rich rock formations. Laboratory studies showed that naturally occurring magnetite can generate hydrogen when it interacts with water under specific geological conditions, potentially creating

a significant source of low-carbon fuel without relying on traditional energy-intensive production methods.

The findings build on growing global interest in geologic, or "natural," hydrogen following recent discoveries and mapping efforts in North America, Europe, and Africa. If commercially viable, these resources could help accelerate the availability of clean hydrogen for hard-to-decarbonize industries such as aviation, shipping, and heavy manufacturing.

While further research is needed to confirm production at scale, the study highlights the potential for natural hydrogen to complement renewable energy and support the expansion of affordable, sustainable fuel sources worldwide.

Full article can be accessed: <https://www.popularmechanics.com/science/green-tech/a73796013/australia-green-hydrogen/>