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From: Bloomberg BNA
Sent: Wed 8/16/2017 11:12:45 PM
Subject: Aug. 17 -- Daily Environment Report



Daily Environment Report

August 17, 2017 - Number 158

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Leading the News

Coal-Fired Power Plants

China Coal Capacity Cuts Parallel Nudge Toward Gas Production

China is more than halfway to its goal of cutting 800 million metric tons of coal production capacity by the end of 2020, signaling to investors the government isn't projecting coal production to grow much more.

Fossil Fuels

Court Provides Blueprint for Challenging Fossil Fuel Projects

A district court decision stopping the expansion of a Montana coal mine provides a blueprint for environmental advocates to block other coal, oil, and gas projects across the country.

Toxic Substances

Mercury Treaty Now in Force; Brings New Focus on Alternatives

The entry into force of the Minamata Convention on Mercury Aug. 16 will spur companies worldwide to restrict their use of mercury and pursue alternatives to mercury added products.

News

Bonds

Climate Bonds Pioneered by Goldman Lure Storm-Plagued Cities

As climate change pushes U.S. cities to build protections against stronger storms and more frequent floods, the Rockefeller Foundation is helping cities with a novel kind of financing, one that transfers some of the risk of innovative projects from cities to investors.

Energy

Mishap Triggers Taiwan Blackout as Power Policies Questioned

A blackout caused by a blunder at Taiwan's biggest gas-fired plant is the latest challenge to an electricity grid recently pushed to its limit and to President Tsai Ing-wen's efforts to reshape the island's power mix.

Energy

Scana Needs 'Willing Partner' to Resume Nuclear Construction

Scana Corp. executives said the company would need to sign new contracts to revive construction on a South Carolina nuclear power plant—and that federal tax credits would be “an important factor.”

Liabile Parties

Feds Liable for Navajo Reservation Superfund Cleanup

El Paso Natural Gas can pursue the federal government for the cost of cleaning up uranium contamination from mines on the Navajo Reservation, the District of Arizona ruled (*El Paso Nat. Gas Co. v. United States*, 2017 BL 285617, D. Ariz., No. 14-cv-8165, 8/15/17).

Mining

Brazil Refuses to Waive Fines on Samarco for Mine Spill

The enforcement arm of Brazil's Environment Ministry (IBAMA) has refused to waive 150 million reais (\$47.5 million) in fines it slapped on Samarco Mineracao for the 2015 rupture of a mining waste reservoir that the ministry has called the “country's worst environmental catastrophe.”

Motor Vehicles

EU Automakers May Be Required to Produce Electric Vehicles

Making electric cars may become a regulatory requirement rather than a strategic choice for vehicle makers in the European Union as the bloc seeks to underpin a shift away from polluting combustion engines.

Oil & Gas

Offshore Drillers Shrug as U.S. Offers More Acreage, Lower Fees

Oil drillers are shrugging at President Donald Trump's pitch to invest in federal waters.

Renewable Energy

Arizona Utility to Replace Rooftop Solar Payments After Protests

Pinnacle West Capital Corp.'s Arizona Public Service will replace a program that required the state's largest utility to buy excess rooftop solar power at the same price that customers pay the utility.

Renewable Energy

Bird Charity Asked to Abandon Challenge to Scottish Wind Farm

Companies in the offshore wind energy supply chain asked a U.K. bird charity to abandon its legal battle against four giant projects planned off the coast of Scotland, which the environmentalists say could harm wildlife in the area if they were built.

Renewable Energy

State Nixes \$2.5 Billion Line to Bring Wind Power to Midwest

A proposed \$2.5 billion transmission line to bring cheap Kansas wind power to the Midwest was rejected by Missouri, which said the project failed to get all needed county approvals.

Solid Waste

Product Disposal Plan or Jail for India's Electronics Makers

India's electronics producers risk fines and possible imprisonment if they sell their goods without having an approved plan for their end-of-life disposal with authorized dismantlers or recyclers. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) sent a notice reminding electronics producers of the potential for enforcement action in line with the Oct. 1, 2016, rules on managing electronic waste issued under the Environment Protection Act of 1986.

Sustainability

Tesla Skipping Green Bond Label Keeps Fledgling Market Limited

Investors are hungrier than ever for green bonds, yet companies known for their sustainable prowess—including Tesla Inc.—are choosing to sit out, raising questions about just how valuable the green bond label is.

Trump Push for Natural Gas Exports Opposed by Manufacturers

President Donald Trump's effort to boost U.S. energy is facing push back from manufacturers who say exporting more natural gas may undercut his "America First" jobs focus.

Practitioner Insights

Enforcement

Practitioner Insights: Environmental Fraud—New or Not?

"Fraud" is a term typically associated with Bernie Madoff, Ponzi schemes, and other situations where perpetrators have achieved financial gain. But fraud in the environmental area hasn't captured recent headlines until Volkswagen was found to have installed emissions cheating software in their diesel models, a decision that has cost VW more than \$20 billion to date. One positive aspect of the VW scandal may be raised awareness of environmental fraud, and for environmental ...

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