



# FINPUBLICA

## ESG NEWS YOU CAN USE

August 13, 2023



### *Environmental*

**India's greenhouse gas emissions intensity dropped by 33% over 14 years, exceeding expectations, due to increased renewable energy generation and forest growth.** This progress (reflecting a drop in the amount of GHG emissions per unit of increase in GDP) aligns with India's commitment to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which aims to reduce emissions intensity by 45% from 2005 levels by 2030. Notably, India achieved a 3% annual reduction in emissions during 2016-2019 (compared to 1.5% in the prior three years), primarily attributed to government-led efforts in renewable energy adoption despite continued fossil fuel use. This reduction reflects India's ability to decouple economic growth from greenhouse gas emissions.

**The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has allocated \$46 million to fund 29 projects across 15 states, as part of the Buildings Energy Efficiency Frontiers and Innovation Technologies (BENEFIT) initiative.** These projects aim to reduce emissions associated with residential and commercial buildings by developing advanced building technologies and retrofit practices to eliminate energy waste, cut utility costs, and promote healthier communities. The funding supports solutions for electrifying buildings nationwide, while enhancing energy efficiency and demand flexibility. You can learn more about the selected projects [here](#).

**California Governor Gavin Newsom has unveiled plans to establish the state as a clean hydrogen hub.** The planned Hydrogen Market Development Strategy aims to support California's clean energy deployment by leveraging hydrogen to reduce emissions in sectors like transportation and industrials. The strategy, developed in collaboration with state agencies, seeks to tap into federal funding opportunities and create jobs while advancing the state's climate goals.

## *Social*

**Agricultural sciences company FMC Corporation has pledged \$30.5 million to the UN-backed Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge, focused on training, technology, and development for farmers in vulnerable regions.** FMC's efforts will include supporting small farmers' productivity, offering training to rural women and youths, implementing precision agriculture technologies across Latin America, Africa, and Asia, and helping farmers invest in crop protection technologies.

## *Investing*

**Global green bond issuance soared to a new high of \$314 billion in the first half of the year, with the finance sector leading the way and governments playing a larger role.** According to a report issued by ICE, the Asia-Pacific region experienced record issuance of \$140 billion impact bonds, driven by Japan and Hong Kong. North America issued \$42 billion in such bonds -- a 20% decline due to drops in social and sustainability-linked bonds. Middle East issuance nearly quadrupled to \$7 billion – ahead of COP28 in Dubai. Europe remained the largest issuing region, issuing \$244 billion in impact bonds. We believe this record green bond issuance (\$314 billion in the first half of 2023) reflects a growing global trend toward sustainable investment and financing for climate-related projects.

**[S&P Global has stopped assigning numerical ESG scores to corporate borrowers, opting instead for textual analysis in its credit rating reports.](#)**

This decision diverges from rival Moody's, which still employs a one to five scale for ESG criteria. According to S&P, “[w]e have determined that the dedicated analytical narrative paragraphs in our credit rating reports are most effective at providing detail and transparency on ESG credit factors material to our rating analysis,” and “[t]his update does not affect our ESG principles criteria or our research and commentary on ESG-related topics, including the influence that ESG factors can have on creditworthiness.”

**[Blackstone successfully concluded the final close of its energy transition credit fund, Blackstone Green Private Credit Fund III \(BGREEN III\), raising a record-breaking \\$7.1 billion.](#)**

This fund will focus on investing in the renewable energy, infrastructure, and energy transition spaces.

**[The Government of New Zealand and investment firm BlackRock will be launching a NZ\\$2 billion climate infrastructure fund aimed at supporting the country's goal of being one of the first countries to achieve 100% renewable energy.](#)**

The fund will attract private sector funds, crown companies, and superannuation funds to invest in clean technology and infrastructure projects such as battery storage, wind and solar generation, green hydrogen, and electric vehicle charging. The fund aims to be a model for public-private cooperation in supporting, scaling, and implementing the energy transition.

## ***Resources & Membership***

**[You can watch \(or rewatch\) Finpublica and The ESG Exchange's panel on Fulfilling Fiduciary Experts While Embracing ESG by clicking here.](#)**

Our global panel of experts, including Delaware State Treasurer Colleen Davis, Columbia Business School Professor Shiva Rajgopal, Paul Lee (Head of Stewardship at Redington), and Fiona Darroch (Director of Law at Protimos), explored fiduciary duties across jurisdictions and how ESG investing is consistent with (and in some cases even required by) those duties.

Thanks to the efforts of Finpublica's fabulous interns, we invite you to follow Finpublica on your favorite social medial platforms, including **[LinkedIn](#)**, **[Instagram](#)**, **[Threads](#)**, and **[TikTok](#)**.

Finpublica's **[membership portal](#)** is live. If you are interested in joining a community more than 200 finance leaders focused on sustainable finance and ways to implement initiatives inside their organizations and across the industry, we invite you to apply.

\*\*\*

You are receiving this email because you have been identified as being interested in the Finpublica community, followed Finpublica on LinkedIn, or registered for a Finpublica event. If you would like us to use a different email address, or if you would prefer not to receive this newsletter, please email [awasserman@finpublica.org](mailto:awasserman@finpublica.org). Finpublica is a 501(c)(3) organization located in Hastings on Hudson, NY, 10706.