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France plans to end oil and gas production by 2040

by Reuters
Wednesday, 6 September 2017 15:10 GMT



France would become the first country to phase out all oils and gas exploration and production

PARIS, Sept 6 (Reuters) - France plans to pass legislation this year to phase out all oil and gas exploration and production on its mainland and overseas territories by 2040, becoming the first country to do so, according to a draft bill presented on Wednesday.

President Emmanuel Macron wants to make France carbon neutral by 2050 and plans to curb greenhouse gas emissions by leaving fossil fuels, blamed for contributing to global warming, in the ground.

Under the draft presented to cabinet, France will no longer issue exploration permits. The extension of current concessions will be gradually limited until they are phased out by 2040 - when France plans to end the sale of gasoline and diesel vehicles.

The decision is, however, largely symbolic because France produces only about 6 million barrels of hydrocarbons a year, representing about 1 percent of its consumption.

France will continue to import and refine oil.

Ecology Minister Nicolas Hulot said after the cabinet meeting that the decision shows France's commitment to climate change goals and will enable it to convince others to follow.

"The law will halt the exploitation of hydrocarbons in our territory; existing concessions cannot be renewed beyond 2040," the draft bill states.

No shale gas permit has been issued in France and it will be impossible to do so after the law is passed.

The law could affect companies such as France's Total , which although it has discontinued oil exploration in mainland France, has permits to explore in overseas territories such as offshore Guyane Maritime in French Guiana.

Total declined to comment immediately.

Hydrocarbon production in mainland France takes place mostly in the Paris Basin and Aquitaine Basin, where Vermilion Energy operates several permits.

Lundin Petroleum, through its Canada-based spin-off International Petroleum Corp, and privately owned Geopetrol are the other producers in France.

The companies were not immediately available to comment.

Macron is pressing ahead with implementing the landmark accord reached by nearly 200 nations in the French capital in 2015 to fight climate change after U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out of the deal.

As part of the measures, France plans to stop generating electricity from coal by 2022 and reduce to 50 percent from more than 75 percent the share of nuclear in its power generation, while favouring increased renewable energy.

(Reporting by Bate Felix and Benjamin Mallet; Editing by Richard Lough and Dale Hudson)

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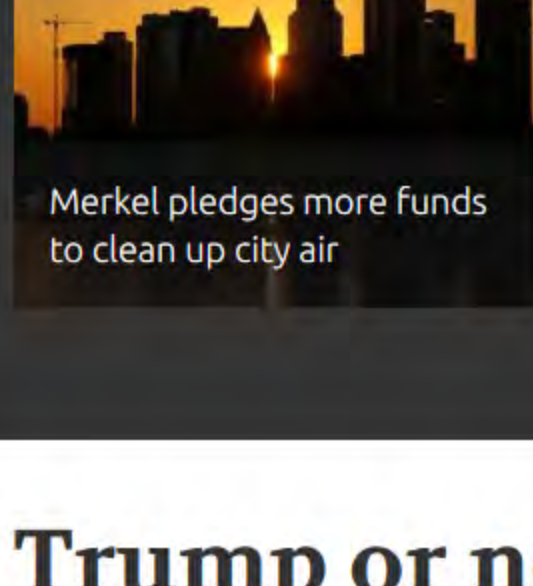
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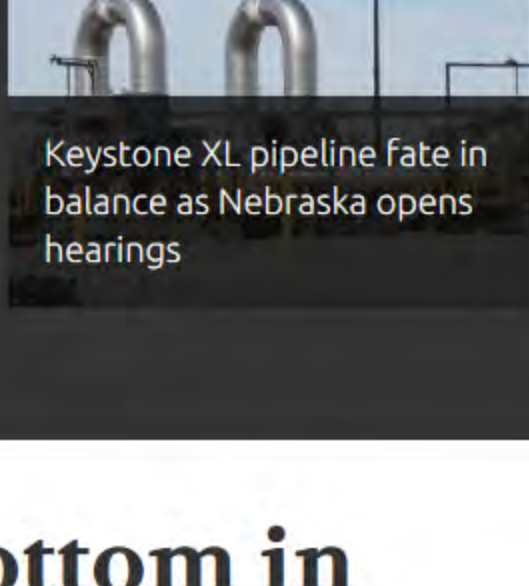
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by [Sebastien Malo](#) | [@SebastienMalo](#) | Thomson Reuters Foundation
Wednesday, 6 September 2017 20:47 GMT



The country has consistently scored low marks over the last five years "despite some promising movements"

By Sebastien Malo

NEW YORK, Sept 6 (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - The United States placed near last among the world's wealthiest nations in an index ranking how their policies help improve the lives of people in poorer nations, a report showed on Wednesday.

The superpower ranked 23rd out of 27 countries in the yearly [Commitment to Development Index](#) but would have fared worse with data recent enough to capture U.S. President Donald Trump's policymaking, its authors said.

The Center for Global Development (CGD) compiled thousands of data points dating up to 2016, when Trump's predecessor Barack Obama was still in office.

The CGD said it looks at each nation's performance in areas of aid, trade, finance, migration, environment, technology and security to measure how policies of wealthy countries help or hurt the world's poorest people.

Denmark ranked at the top, in part due to effectiveness of its aid and its significant contribution to international peacekeeping efforts, the CGD said. It was followed by Sweden and Finland.

Dropping three places from the last ranking, the United States lags poorer Central European nations Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary. It scored poorly on policies impacting aid, finance and the environment, the CGD said.

The country has consistently scored low marks over the last five years "despite some promising movements" in the Obama administration on the environment, said Ian Mitchell, a spokesman for the CGD, a Washington think-tank.

But a number of new policies under the Trump administration could further erode the country's ability to bring prosperity and security to poorer countries and sink its ranking in the index, he said.

These include Trump's push for cuts in the U.S. foreign aid budget, policies hostile toward migrants and refugees and the president's decision to withdraw the nation from a 2015 landmark deal agreed upon in Paris to curb global warming.

"If President Trump follows through on his plans on ... migration and withdrawing from the Paris Climate Agreement, that will further diminish the U.S.'s performance in international development," said Mitchell.

The U.S. withdrawal from the Paris deal [is expected](#) to take at least three years.

Ranking at the bottom of the report was South Korea, below Japan, Greece and Switzerland.

South Korea scored poorly for its policies on the environment and security in the index, which began in 2003.

(Reporting by Sebastien Malo @sebastienmalo, Editing by Ellen Wulforst. Please credit the Thomson Reuters Foundation, the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, that covers humanitarian news, women's rights, trafficking, property rights, climate change and resilience. Visit <http://news.trust.org>)

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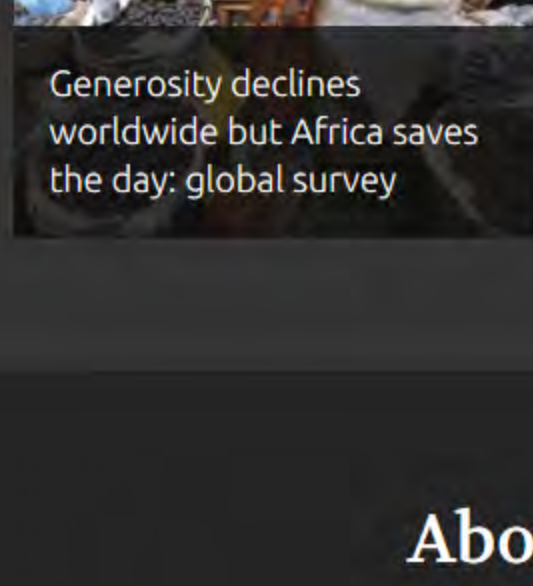
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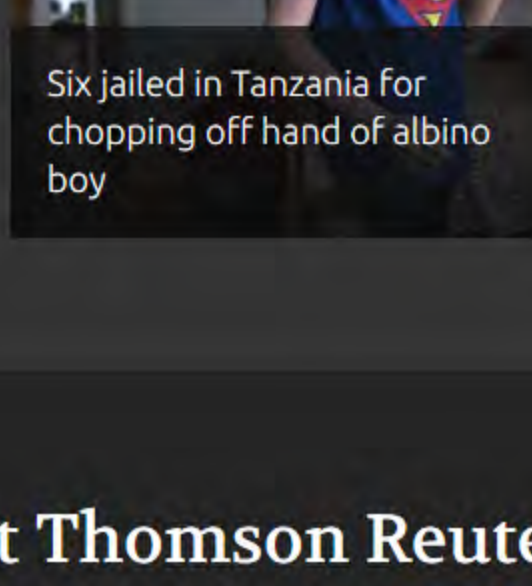
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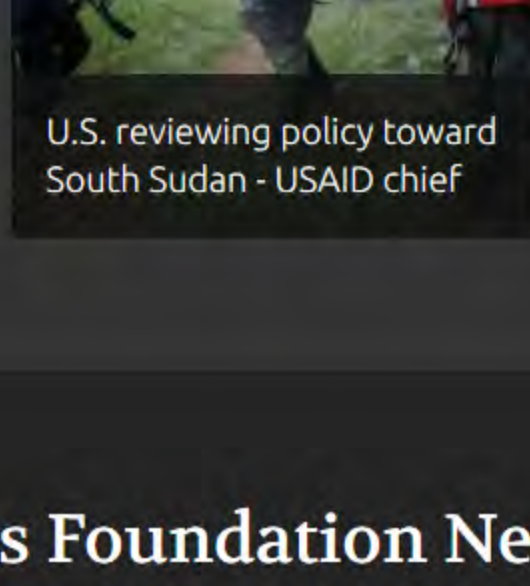
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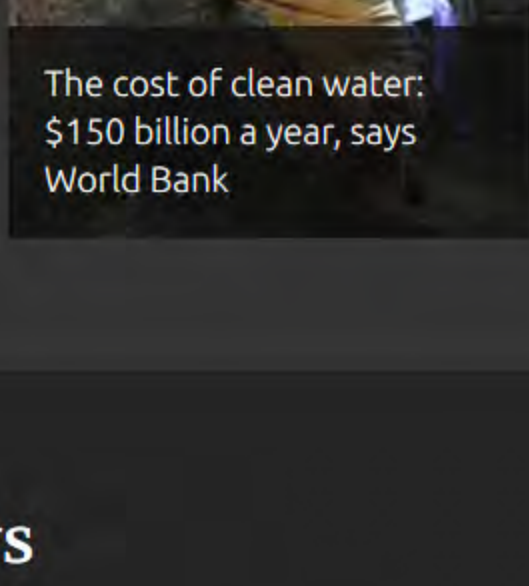
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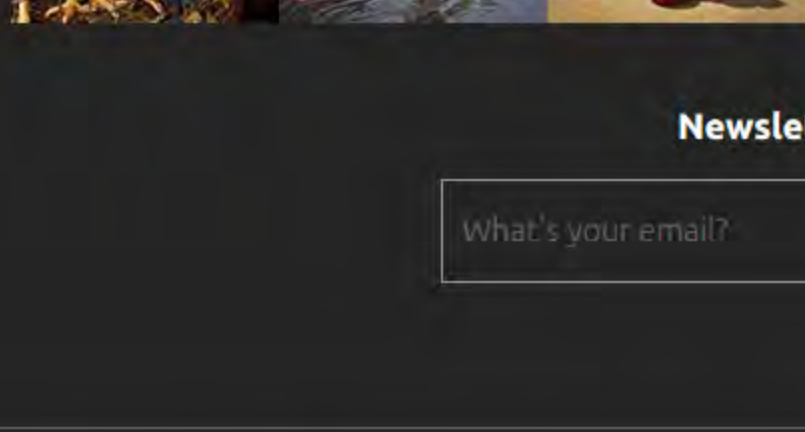
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