

HEADLINE – FAKE MEDICINE

An investigation published in the newspaper Le Monde focuses on drug trafficking in France. While 4.2 million illegal drugs were seized in France in 2016, this traffic does not seem to be running out of steam. Indeed, €1,000 invested in heroin trafficking could yield up to €20,000 while the same amount invested in drug trafficking could bring from €200,000 to €400,000. The most counterfeit medicines are also intended for growth because they are treatments against dysfunction of erection. Not found in pharmacy because their supply is locked, fake drugs are bought on the internet. Zolpidem is widely used: it is the active ingredient stilnox, a sleeping pill. Many doping products are also circulating in gyms or methandienone, a steroid popular with bodybuilders, is regularly seized. More than 400,000 doping products have been seized in Nice, a small seaside village where the physical appearance is more important than elsewhere. The various delivery locations of these products from Bulgaria have been unsealed thanks to the numerous surveillance cameras whose mayor, Christian Estrosi, does not stop extolling the merits. The damage to health can be caused by the product itself or the lack of effect it was supposed to produce. For example, 100,000 children under the age of five die from pneumonia each year worldwide because of falsified antibiotics.

JUSTICE – NEW YORK PUT FIVE OIL GROUPS ON TRIAL

On Wednesday January 10, New York Mayor Bill de Blasio has sued BP, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil and Shell. Those groups who knew the harmful effects of their products on climate change would have knowingly deceived their customers, says the mayor. This action, which is more a marketing ploy to make New York a strong protector of the environment, is not new to these oil groups who have already been attacked for the same reason, in California for example. An Alaskan village had attacked the same groups for the same reason but had failed.

In addition to this lawsuit, the city has announced that it will withdraw more than \$5 billion of investment in fossil fuels. In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy left a \$42 billion bill in the New York State. Therefore, the fight against climate change is first and foremost an economic imperative.

Shell responded by saying that the fight against climate change must be done through government policy, not through the courts. The US government is the first protector of the environment, its current policy being congratulated by all. How to give them wrong? (Sarcastic applause)

HEALTH – THE COMPANY LACTALIS NUTRITION SANTE (LNS)

Last December, Lactalis, the world's largest dairy group, was accused of selling infant milk produced in its Salmonella-contaminated plant of Craon in Mayenne. And according to the Public Health Surveillance Authority of France, it has been proven that 31 children became ill after consuming milk from this plant.

The case of contaminated milk began on December 2, 2017 with the discovery of twenty children aged less than six months contaminated with salmonella present in some batches of baby milk. These salmonella are affecting young children more seriously, with food poisoning, gastroenteritis, and various other serious infections.

A few days later, ten new cases have led to the intervention of the Directorate General of Health, which, for the sake of prevention and to stop the spread of contamination, then called for the recall of the infant milk in question. Some internal investigations tend to show that the Lactalis company had been aware since August 2017 of the contamination of its production chain located in Mayenne. However, this alarming information obviously did not lead the world's largest dairy group to stop selling its product. To date, the production line is still at a standstill and as a result, more than 350 employees are in a situation of technical unemployment. To this must be added the recall of more than 620 batches of infant milk from previous purchasers (major retailers, establishments for young children, nurseries etc ...).



HEALTH – CHINA FULFILLED ITS ENGAGEMENTS : THE AIR QUALITY IS IMPROVING

In a report from the Environmental Protection Bureau, Beijing, the Chinese capital, said it has achieved its annual goals through « improved air quality in the region and generally favorable weather conditions ».

In fact, the number of fine particles was reduced by 80% in November according to the Ministry of the Environment. For good reasons, the government is trying to limit the emission of fine particles. Coal boilers are being phased out. Beijing also replaces coal with clean energies such as electricity or gas. The environment agency acknowledged that, together with the government's activity, Beijing has benefited this year from a particularly favorable weather for the improvement of the quality of the air.

Despite this good news, the concentration of PM 2.5 in Beijing remains at 35 micrograms while the WHO recommends a rate of less than 10 micrograms. The way ahead is still long before the Chinese air quality is definitely healthy.

GREENPEACE DISMISSED IN THE TRIAL OF THE « ARCTIC OIL »

The climate justice case, launched by three NGOs including Greenpeace against Norway for several concessions granted in May 2016 to 13 oil companies in an untapped area of the Barents Sea, failed on 4 January. The Oslo court ruled that the granting of new oil licenses in the Barents Sea in the Arctic Ocean did not violate the Constitution.

The NGOs invoked on the one hand, the non-compliance with the Paris Agreement signed by Norway, which aims to limit to below 2°C the global warming, and on the other hand a recent constitutional provision guaranteeing the right to all to a healthy environment.

The Oslo court found that everyone's right to a healthy environment, guaranteed by Article 122 of the Norwegian Constitution, did not cover oil and gas exports. NGOs did not indicate whether they would appeal this judgment.

Since the 1950s, the consumption of plastic has been increasingly important and has caused disturbing environmental pollution. Today, it is estimated that every minute more than 80 tons of waste end up at sea, much of which is plastic.

For its various uses the plastic has been designed to be rot and to last. What is a quality for the use of plastic became a disadvantage for the environment since the life of plastic can be several centuries. Therefore, if we fail to properly dispose of these wastes, plastic may float around us for decades, and breaking down into our food chain.

To limit this pollution, a new plastic has emerged: the oxo-biodegradable plastic. Unlike « traditional » plastic, it biodegrades anywhere in the environment and can be recycled if it is collected during its useful life. This plastic is indeed designed to fragment by oxidation under the action of the environment, or degradation catalysts.

Thus, its decomposition does not mean the decomposition into plastic fragments, the material will change entirely by naturally transforming the hydrocarbon molecules into oxygen molecules that will be reabsorbed by the environment.

ENVIRONMENT – WILL ASIA BE A DESERT FOR HUMANKIND ON THE HORIZON 2100 ?

According to the review Science Advances led by a group of internationally renowned researchers, Asia, a continent with more than 1.5 billion people, would become uninhabitable by the end of the 21st century. This territorial change is attributable to global warming and irreversible damage to the environment.

As the Asian continent is a vast, highly industrialized, fossil-fueled and polluting region, the increasing of greenhouse gases would have the end result of a significant rise in temperature and humidity. This double impact resulting from greenhouse gases would destroy all human life.

The countries most affected, in a limited time, would be Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. As early as the summer of 2015, they have already seen the beginning of this temperature rise, generating 3,500 deaths during several heat waves.

It is clear that Asia but also the rest of the world must react to global warming to preserve the living environment of the human species. Without any change the outcome will be fatal to all human life.

ENVIRONMENT – THE LACK OF OXYGEN IN SOME PARTS OF THE OCEAN PUT GRADUALLY MARINE LIFE IN DANGER

The Global Ocean Oxygen, a working group created in 2016 by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, published on Friday January 5, a study showing the increase of « dead zones » without oxygen in the oceans. Specifically, scientists



claim that « low-oxygen sites located near the coast including estuaries and seas have been multiplied by ten since 1950 » and that, more alarmingly, the number of « dead zones » has quadrupled over the last fifty years. This situation is seriously endangering certain species of marine fauna and flora. Human activity and global warming with the warming of the water surface are at the root of this phenomenon. Scientists say that to reduce this phenomenon « local actions can help reduce the oxygen carried by nutrients ».

Scientists also advocate the creation of marine protected areas or no-take areas specifically in areas where wildlife fled to escape the decline in oxygen in its original habitat.