

6-3-2014

Coal Pollution and Climate Change

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Recommended Citation

Ramo, Alan, "Coal Pollution and Climate Change" (2014). *Publications*. Paper 638.
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The New York Times<http://nyti.ms/1pDKMiG>

THE OPINION PAGES | LETTERS

Coal Pollution and Climate Change

JUNE 3, 2014

To the Editor:

Re “A Price Tag on Carbon as a Climate Rescue Plan” (“The Big Fix” series, front page, May 30):

For every offset awarded under California’s cap-and-trade system to a rural dairy in Wisconsin, there is pollution allowed that would have been required to be reduced by the ultimate offset purchaser. And that purchaser is often a California refinery in an urban area near thousands of people disproportionately low-income and of color.

California seems to assume in the case of dairies that they would have never installed methane capture even though there is money to be made from generating electricity and ample supportive federal programs.

At best, cap-and-trade as practiced in California can lead to

environmental injustice; at worst, emission reductions are a mirage, as they would have happened anyway.

ALAN RAMO

San Francisco, May 30, 2014

The writer is a professor at Golden Gate University School of Law and co-director of its Center on Urban Environmental Law.