

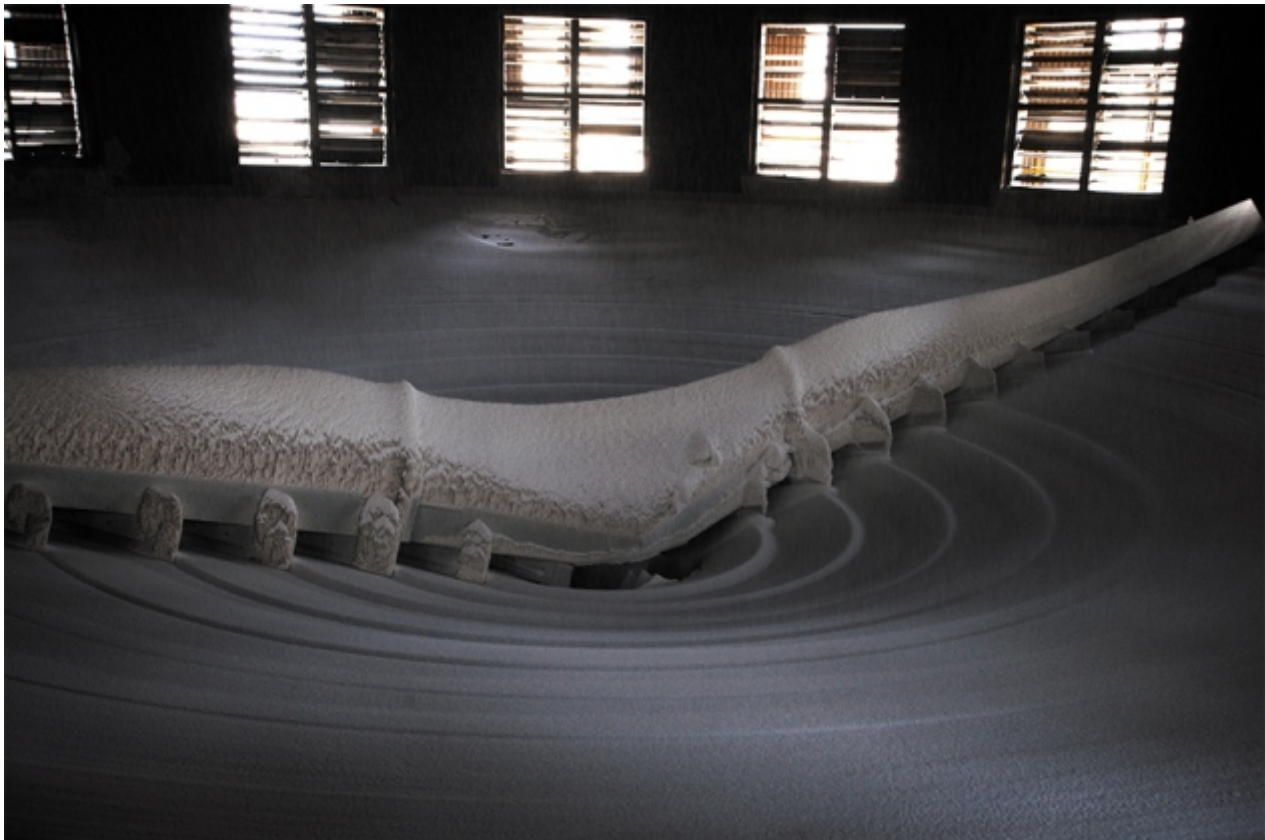
NATURE | NEWS FEATURE

How to make the most of carbon dioxide

Researchers hope to show that using the gas as a raw material could make an impact on climate change.

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28 October 2015



Asim Hafeez/Bloomberg/Getty

Pellets of urea fertilizer are made from carbon dioxide in a plant in Daharki, Pakistan.

On 29 September, the XPRIZE Foundation based in Culver City, California, announced a 4½-year competition that will award US\$20 million to the research team that can come up with the best way to turn carbon dioxide from a liability into an asset.

With gigatonnes of the gas pouring into the atmosphere each year, and with the consequences for global climate becoming increasingly obvious, the Carbon XPRIZE would reward technologies that can convert CO₂ emissions from coal and natural-gas power plants into useful products such as alternative building materials, fuels and raw material for the manufacture of plastics and other chemicals.