

UN SECRETARY GENERAL RALLIES SUPPORT FOR UPCOMING CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

Despite Ban Ki-moon's stern warning about threat of climate change, India's and China's leaders are not planning to attend

The UN Secretary General gave a preview this week of the upcoming [UN Climate Change Conference](#) which will be held in New York City later this month. Hoping to revive the global effort to agree on a deal to address climate change, Ban Ki-moon warned that 'climate change poses sweeping risks for economic stability and the security of nations'. The final deal is set to be signed in Paris in 2015. Selwin Hart, the Barbadian diplomat helping to

spearhead the conference noted: "What we are looking for is countries to signal a commitment to a universal and meaningful global deal, and signal their ambition."

Barack Obama is expected to attend the summit along with 100 other heads of state. Notably missing will be several Chinese and Indian leaders who are not planning to attend. Xi Jinping, the President of China, and Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, have indicated that they will not be at the September 23rd meeting, signaling weak support from their respective countries on the global effort.

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STAT OF THE WEEK

Figure of the week: USD 600 worth of benefits for every metric ton of CO₂ reduced. In a recent study, Imperial College found that business impact through offsetting extends beyond simple CO₂ reductions to poverty alleviation and nature conservation in communities.

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ISLAMIC FINANCE SECTOR DEMONSTRATES INTEREST IN GREEN INVESTMENT VEHICLES

Green bonds, renewable energy, and sustainable agriculture emerging as key interests of Islamic finance sector

Several Islamic financial bodies have issued guidelines for investing in socially responsible Islamic bonds (sukuk) to raise money for projects ranging from sustainable agriculture to renewable energy. The World Bank, for instance, hopes to raise USD 500 million in [Islamic](#)

[bonds](#) to help fund immunization programs. Although Islamic finance follows investment guidelines based on religious principles, such as forbidding involvement in tobacco and alcohol, the mandate is now extending more broadly to socially responsible investing. In April the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy and the World Bank agreed to develop funding for the emirate's green investment programme, including "green" Islamic bonds.

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AMERICA'S PRIVATE SECTOR OFFERING BIG DATA SOLUTIONS FOR FOOD RESILIENCE

Obama Administration urging agriculture sector to focus on food resilience as part of Climate Data Initiative

America is faced with food scarcity and systemic food waste challenges. Encouraged by the Obama Administration's Climate Data Initiative, dozens of [private sector companies](#) are developing powerful applications and information resources "enabled by the convergence of sensors, sophisticated imagery and powerful analytics" or *big data*.

The Obama Administration [issued a challenge](#) to America's agriculture sector and its private-sector innovators. The Administration is renewing the President's call to "leverage open government data and other resources to build tools that will make the U.S. and global food systems more resilient against the impacts of climate change."

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ENVIRONMENTAL DATA TOOLS CONTINUE TO EXPAND

MSCI announced earlier this week the launch of MSCI ESG CarbonMetrics, a set of metrics and [screening tools](#) designed to help institutional investors understand, measure, and manage portfolio exposure to carbon-related risks.

Thomson Reuters also launched a new set of indices that measure ESG practices of European Companies this week.

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A NEW BENEFICIAL USE FOR TOBACCO PLANTS

Ebola drug obtained from genetically modified tobacco plant

Following the largest Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa, there has been a heightened interest in experimental drugs used to treat the disease. ZMapp, which is "a mixture of three varieties of humanized monoclonal antibodies—which bind, in vivo, to proteins on

the surface of the Ebola virus" is derived from a genetically modified tobacco plant. An early study of ZMapp in monkeys was reported last week in the journal Nature. The findings are encouraging. All 18 monkeys treated with the drug recovered.

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BELIEVE IT OR NOT

It may not be long before we can say goodbye to those pesky fruit and veggie stickers. Laser "tattoos" could remove the need for the sticky labels. The technology removes pigment from the fruit's surface to show information such as the item's sell-by date and price.

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