

AHEAD OF VISIT, US EMPHASIZES COOPERATION WITH INDIA ON CLIMATE CHANGE

President Obama will discuss poverty alleviation, climate change and nuclear power plants

US Secretary of State, John Kerry, emphasized cooperation between U.S. and India in areas of economic development, reduction of poverty and climate change ahead of President Obama's visit to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in two weeks.

U.S. officials are working on [agreements](#) that could include a "solar energy deal, a plan to improve rural electrification and potentially a carbon reduction pact that they hoped could be signed when Obama visits India."

US officials have long said that Indian policies including its tariff and customs practices are often a barrier to investment and trade between the nations. For example, the US has concerns about the liability from participating in [nuclear power plant](#) projects in India. Under a 2010 nuclear liability law, equipment suppliers are liable for damages from accidents. This deviates from international norms that put the responsibility on the operator to maintain safety.

President Obama's trip to India comes on the heels of a [historic agreement](#) between China and the U.S. on climate change in November.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE BY THE NUMBERS

266-153

Last week's House of Representatives vote in favor of passing the Keystone XL pipeline legislation

63-32

Last week's Senate vote in favor of passing the Keystone XL pipeline legislation

67

Number of Senate votes needed to overturn a presidential veto.

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CHINA'S GROWING WATER PROBLEM

Water transfer projects not enough to alleviate water stress

China may be facing serious water shortages, despite government funding of several major water infrastructure projects. A study published this week in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences studied the full inventory of [water transfers and redistribution](#) of water amongst Chinese provinces.

The study found that the existing water transfer projects, as well as those planned, will not do

enough to eliminate the extreme water stress that the country is experiencing.

"China needs to shift its focus to water-demand management instead of a supply-oriented approach if it's going to seriously address the overwhelming pressures on its water supplies," Dabo Guan, professor of climate-change economics at the university's School of International Development said in a statement.

FINAL TALLY: Green bond market hits record USD 36.6B in 2014.

GENDER (IN)EQUALITY IN THE BOARDROOM

Women make up one-fifth of boards of S&P 500 but trends promising

A study released this week by Catalyst Inc., a New York-based organization that advocates for more women in the workplace, finds that women make up less than one-fifth of board members of the S&P 500 and that Japan lags other countries in terms of percentage of [women on the board](#). Norway led the pack, with 36 percent representation, with Finland and France following with 30 percent.

The trends are promising. Companies with no women on their boards dropped to 18 from 25 a year earlier, a sign that more companies may be seeking female board members. Additionally, the 30 Percent Coalition, which advocates for about one-third female representation across U.S. public company boards by the end of this year has some prominent supporters.

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WATCH THIS SPACE

Eco packaging gets an upgrade

A new study in the journal *Postharvest Biology and Technology* found that [Chitosan](#), a bioplastic made by isolating organic matter from shrimp shells, helped preserve vegetables, reduced oil consumption, and lengthened shelf life.

Also, this week [Tetra Pak](#) released its first fully renewable carton. The bio-based cartons use polythene derived from sugar cane rather than oil for the laminate film, cap, and neck opening.

BAD WEEK FOR: METHANE

President Obama unveils plan to reduce methane; EPA will update oil and gas production standards

President Obama's plan to reduce methane, a potent greenhouse gas, will focus on oil and gas production. The plan, which he unveiled last week, [relies on voluntary steps](#) and new rules to reduce leaks from oil and gas production by 40 percent to 45 percent over the next decade.

To meet that goal, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is expected to issue a proposal affecting [oil and gas production](#), while the Interior Department will also update its standards for drilling to reduce leakage from wells on public lands.

Meanwhile, the Maasai, semi-nomadic group inhabiting Kenya, is taking a different approach to [methane](#). They are trapping biogas generated from the local slaughterhouse to generate electricity.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

How do scientists explain the link between marriage and health? Marriage seems to encourage healthier behavior. For example, married people are 6% more likely to have preventative check ups.

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