

MOST COUNTRIES MISS UN DEADLINE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE PLEDGES

US does meet the end of March deadline to submit commitments

In [Insights Edition 72](#) we reported that countries were expected to publish detailed information about climate action plans by the end of March 2015 – the so-called [intended nationally determined contributions \(INDCs\)](#). Japan, Canada and Australia all missed the end-March [deadline](#). China did as well, although they made a verbal [commitment](#) in November 2014 (*subscription required*).

This week, the Obama administration submitted its pledge to the UN formally committing to its most ambitious global warming reduction target to date. The plans hopes to slash U.S. greenhouse gases by more than a quarter over the next decade, as outlined by the president in a verbal commitment made in China in November 2014. Although the U.S. is the largest emitter, it joins Switzerland, Mexico and Norway in fulfilling its pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

FACT OR FICTION?

“Climatic conditions are rapidly reaching an optimum for breeding dragons, and it is only a matter of time before the neurotransfer spell loses its efficacy completely.” – [Nature Magazine](#), published on *April 1*

MEASURING POTENTIAL EMISSIONS – HOW SHOULD THIS BE DONE?

Logical next step in ‘stranded assets’ discussion

We [reported last week](#) that leading pension funds and asset managers, including CalPERS, support of the [‘Aiming for A’ shareholder resolution](#) on climate resilience, which will be filed at the upcoming annual general meeting of an oil major. It appears that the oil majors support the

resolution, a victory for climate action. But what exactly will these companies disclose? The [World Resources Institute](#) published a [draft methodology](#) to answer this very question. The research hopes to offer guidance on how companies can calculate their potential greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel reserves.

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THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

71,271

the number of women enrolled in a study to determine whether there is a relationship between air pollution and anxiety.

400

billions of Euros needed by 2020 to modernize EU transmission and distribution grids according to the EU climate and energy commissioner.

270

billions of USD was spent on global green investment in 2014

91

percent is the proportion of algae fuel producers who forecast that biofuels will cost less than \$5 per gallon by 2020. (48% forecast the cost will be under \$3 per gallon by this date.)

75

percent is the fall in the price of solar photovoltaics in the last five years (since the end of 2009). (*Subscription required*)

41

millions of tonnes comprised the drop in German CO2 emissions last year (4.3%) amounting to a 27% decline from 1990 levels

SHAREHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MODEL POLICY FROM ASSET OWNERS

Two European pension plans, [PGGM](#) and [RPMI Railpen](#), have announced that they would publish a 'model policy' to encourage the boards of directors of US companies to demonstrate commitment to engagement with shareholders. The policy would emphasize certain protocols. These include: "clarity about the purpose of

engagement meetings and desired outcomes, confidentiality, sufficient preparation (by both sides) and the fact that directors prefer to deal with legitimate shareholder concerns in private 'rather than through public platforms such as the media'"

[READ MORE HERE](#) (*subscription required*)

DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FUND FOSSIL FUEL EXPORT TECHNOLOGY RATHER THAN RENEWABLE SPENDING

In January we [predicted](#) that countries would achieve economic growth and meet national emission targets by exporting fossil fuels. It appears that this issue will be front and center at the UN climate talks in Paris in December.

According to OECD data, rich nations provided around five times as much in [export subsidies](#) for fossil-fuel technology as for renewable energy over a decade.

HOLIDAY EXTRA

We don't need a study to tell us that food consumption around the holidays is generally higher. Fortunately for the U.S., kids' fast food consumption is recently [lower](#). According to data from the National Health and Nutrition

Examination Surveys, in 2003, almost 39 percent of U.S. kids ate fast food on a given day, which dropped to less than 33 percent by the 2009-2010 survey. Have a plentiful and happy holiday weekend from SICM!

APPLICATIONS: BIG DATA

A group of [researchers](#) from the Center for Pattern Recognition and Data Analytics at Deakin University in Geelong, Australia have been using Google Trends to identify search terms for a one-year period and compared them to U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) data on state-based prevalences of risk factors that can predict non-communicable disease, like exercise frequency, tobacco use, diagnosed high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease or diabetes.

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BELIEVE IT OR NOT... NO APRIL FOOLS!

Poor air quality may have spurred the next big fashion trend: couture smog masks hit the runway in China.

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