

CHINA COMBATS POLLUTION; INDIA TO USE MORE CLEAN ENERGY BUT WON'T MAKE EMISSIONS COMMITMENT

China's president commits to tightening environmental protection laws; India's Prime Minister refuses to "bow to foreign pressure"

China's president, Xi Jinping, pledged recently to punish violators of China's environmental protection laws. An amendment went into effect on January 1, 2015 that allows the government to [fine polluters](#) daily until they improve.

In addition, Beijing is planning on closing the last of its four major coal-fired power plants in 2016. "We are going to punish, with an iron hand, any violators who destroy ecology or the environment, with no exceptions," Xi said at this year's annual legislative meeting.

Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India, on the other hand, has recently said that India will "not bow to foreign pressure to commit to cuts in carbon emissions" and instead will commit to [using more clean energy](#).

India has pledged to increase renewable energy generation but is also expanding the mining of coal, a major contributor to its growing emissions (also see Editions [82](#), [80](#), [77](#)). Currently India is third in the world for greenhouse gas emissions.

"The world guides us on climate change and we follow them? The world sets the parameters and we follow them? It is not like that," Modi said at an event in Delhi. "We can lead the world."

WHITE HOUSE TAPS TECH FIRMS TO HELP WITH CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH

Climate change contributes to public health problems and the Obama Administration hopes big data can help

The Obama Administration released a series of initiatives this week to help moderate the effects that [global warming](#) is expected to have on increasing smog, lengthening allergy seasons and increasing risks of extreme weather-related

injuries. And he's bringing in top tech firms to help. Over ten technology companies are using data made available by the administration to help scientists fight diseases and infectious outbreaks.

"The challenges we face are real, and they are clear and present in people's daily lives," said senior presidential adviser Brian Deese in a telephone conference call with the media this week.

THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

600 million

The number of Indians at risk of water supply disruption as surface and groundwater levels decline

630,000

An estimate of the number of newborn babies who die each year but could be saved by giving oral antibiotics rather than injectable ones

470,000

The estimated number of wild African elephants located in 37 countries

204,542

The number of Australians used in the study showing that moderate exercise is inadequate while hot, sweaty exercise is the key to living longer

1,000

the approximate number of NATO soldiers who will deploy wind turbines, solar panels and self-contained power grids in Hungary

50

The levy in US Dollars per metric ton that Malaysian palm oil exporters will have to pay to fund biodiesel subsidies as well as replanting and R&D

COORDINATED EFFORT TO LOBBY COMPANIES ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The UK campaign group [ShareAction](#) that promotes the movement for responsible investment will coordinate letters from institutional investors to companies whose “public position on climate change contradicts their membership of trade associations that are

lobbying against EU climate policy.” Researchers from the UK think tank [Policy Studies Institute](#) (PSI) found that some investors have concerns about the misalignment between companies and their trade associations on climate policy.

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‘FEEL GOOD’ NEWS OF THE WEEK

Climate conditions have been great for vineyards in parts of Australia. Winemakers in the Canberra district in Southeastern Australia are celebrating one the best seasons in living memory thanks to a combination of favorable conditions.

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NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN ANTIBIOTICS AND MEAT AND RICE PRODUCTION

A startup has been harnessing algae additive as an antibiotic. The hope is that [algae](#) can be used as a substitute to antibiotics in factory farms—a problem that’s led to the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria (also known as ‘superbugs’) that are a threat to global public health.

Meanwhile, there is a problem plaguing rice farming: global warming is drying up water

supplies for [irrigated paddies](#). A network of scientists is working toward a solution which is based on perennial rice that yields grain for many years without replanting. “By crossing domesticated rice with its wild predecessors, they hope to create deep-rooted varieties that hold soils in place, require less labor and survive extremes of temperature and water supply.”

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Some jetliners are testing renewable fuels sources, including tobacco-based fuel. Looks like the only legal way to use tobacco on a plane.

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