

Asia-Pacific leaders to cut taxes on green goods

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Asia-Pacific leaders representing more than half of the global economy committed Sunday to cutting tariffs on environmental goods to no more than five percent and reducing energy intensity.

In a joint statement after a summit in Hawaii, leaders of the APEC bloc -- which includes the United States and China -- said they would also eliminate non-tariff barriers that impede trade in green products.

"Taking these concrete actions will help our businesses and citizens access important environmental technologies at lower costs, which in turn will facilitate their use, contributing significantly to APEC's sustainable development goals," the statement said.

APEC economies will make a list of environmental goods next year and reduce tariffs to no more than five percent by the end of 2015, the statement said.

The statement also set an aspirational goal of reducing the bloc's energy intensity -- the amount of energy used compared with the economy -- by 45 percent by 2035.

The United States made the trade in green goods such as solar and wind [energy](#) a priority for its chairmanship of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, seeking a way to boost both job growth and environmental action.

But a senior Chinese official last week said that the goals set out by the US side were "too ambitious and beyond the reach of developing economies."

In an apparent nod to Chinese concerns, the statement said that APEC would cut tariffs while "taking into account economies' economic circumstances."

Action on the environment has come slowly in a number of countries, with China's [carbon dioxide emissions](#) on the rise and proposals to mandate action against climate change have died in the [US Congress](#).

Despite indications that [climate change](#) is already taking a toll on the planet, [carbon emissions](#) around the world posted their biggest annual jump last year, according to US government data.

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