Kerry urges nations to match China's green shift

LEVEL C1


Photo: Luo Lei / Unsplash

I. WARM-UP

1. Which countries do you think lead in clean energy? Why?
2. How can trade policy affect climate action?
3. What events can push a country to change its energy plan?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

pledge
to make a serious promise to do something

governance
the way a country or organisation is directed and controlled

export
a product that a country sells to another country

consumption
the act of buying or using goods and services

tariff
a tax placed on imported goods

renewable
energy from sources that can be replaced naturally, like wind or sun

supply chain
all the steps to make and deliver a product to users

fossil fuel
coal, oil, or gas used for energy

III. READING

John Kerry, the former US secretary of state, said countries should match China's rapid shift to green energy. He argued that China has accelerated away from fossil fuels faster than others, and warned that nations which delay will lose both economically and on climate.

Cop31 opened in Turkey, where observers are watching to see whether Beijing will take a clearer leadership role. In March 2026, China pledged in its latest five-year plan to take an active, leading role in global climate governance.

Its clean-tech exports reached more than $220bn in 2025 and are still growing, even as domestic consumption remains weak. China now accounts for about 85% of solar and 80% of lithium-ion battery supply chain capacity, and nearly 75% of electric cars were built there in 2025.

China also wants Cop31 to address the free flow of green technology, as tensions rise over US and EU tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles and solar products. Kerry said the market is moving towards electricity and that renewables with storage can be cheaper than fossil fuels.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **The Guardian***: "US and rest of world must follow China's...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What did John Kerry urge countries to do regarding China and green energy?

2. Where did Cop31 open?

3. What role did China pledge to take in March 2026?

4. How large were China's clean-tech exports in 2025?

5. Which technologies does China dominate in the supply chain, according to the text?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Should China take a clearer leadership role at Cop31? Why or why not?

2. Do tariffs on green tech speed or slow climate action? Explain your view.

3. Is relying on exports risky if home consumption is weak? Why?

4. What would help your country move away from fossil fuels faster?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Three-word phrasal-prepositional verbs

Verb + particle + preposition (run out of, keep up with). These verbs are inseparable: the object comes after the preposition, and the exact particle–preposition pair must match the meaning.

> *"Trade partners* **came up against** *EV tariffs at talks."*
> *"Some importers* **put up with** *delays to ship panels."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Circle the correct option in each sentence.

1. Some governments want to do (away from / away with) coal. _____
2. Factories can cut (down on / down with) fossil fuels. _____
3. Nations must live (up for / up to) their climate pledges. _____
4. Countries that delay may miss (out on / out of) cheap energy. _____
5. Subsidies can't make (up to / up for) weak demand. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


Photo: Luo Lei / Unsplash

I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 10 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading and comprehension, 10 minutes grammar, 12–15 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach or check: pledge, governance, tariff, supply chain. Highlight figures (85%, 80%, 75%, $220bn) so students can scan for data.
- Run the reading in two passes: gist, then detail for numbers and causes. The topic is politically sensitive (US–China trade and leadership), so start discussion in pairs and keep the focus on policy choices, not national pride.
- Differentiation: stronger students summarise Kerry's argument in 2–3 sentences; others list three facts that show China's scale in clean tech.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Ask for one reason to support each side before open debate; note concrete benefits and risks.
2. Board two columns (speed/slow). After a quick vote, pair students to argue the side they disagree with.
3. Elicit examples of export-led vs consumption-led growth from the text first, then ask for pros/cons.
4. Have students name two fossil fuels used at home, then brainstorm one policy to replace each.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Debate: In teams, prepare 3 arguments for and 3 against green-tech tariffs; hold a 6-minute debate.

Writing: Write a 120-word briefing for a minister on why China's clean-tech exports matter for Cop31.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Three-word phrasal-prepositional verbs

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

TEACHERS ONLY

These answers are for teachers only. Please do not share this page with students.


Photo: Luo Lei / Unsplash

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What did John Kerry urge countries to do regarding China and green energy?
   Match China's rapid shift to green energy.
2. Where did Cop31 open?
   In Turkey.
3. What role did China pledge to take in March 2026?
   An active, leading role in global climate governance.
4. How large were China's clean-tech exports in 2025?
   More than $220bn.
5. Which technologies does China dominate in the supply chain, according to the text?
   Solar and lithium-ion batteries, and many electric cars were built there.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Circle the correct option in each sentence.

1. Some governments want to do (away from / away with) coal. **away with**
2. Factories can cut (down on / down with) fossil fuels. **down on**
3. Nations must live (up for / up to) their climate pledges. **up to**
4. Countries that delay may miss (out on / out of) cheap energy. **out on**
5. Subsidies can't make (up to / up for) weak demand. **up for**

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Verb + particle + preposition (run out of, keep up with). These verbs are inseparable: the object comes after the preposition, and the exact particle–preposition pair must match the meaning. (Examples constructed.)

> *"Trade partners* **came up against** *EV tariffs at talks."*
> *"Some importers* **put up with** *delays to ship panels."*