

## For What It's Earth

Global ESG Headlines from Step toe

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### Litigation

A US district court in Washington state affirmed its prior dismissal of a lawsuit challenging Starbucks' DEI policy and initiatives. In a sharply worded opinion, the federal court judge found that the complaint "has no business being before this Court," and stated that "[i]f Plaintiff remains so concerned with Starbucks' DEI and ESG initiatives and programs, the American version of capitalism allows them to freely allocate capital elsewhere."

*National Center for Public Policy Research v. Schultz*, No. 2:22-cv-00267



### Companies & Investors

HSBC announced plans to make \$1 billion of financing available to early-stage climate tech companies as it seeks to deepen its support for climate tech innovation. Corporate investment in climate tech plays a critical role in energy innovation and the transition to a net-zero economy.



### Supply Chain

On September 26, the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) placed three additional Chinese companies on the list of sanctioned companies for using forced Uyghur labor in China's northwest province, Xinjiang. This brings the total number of entities designated on the UFLPA Entity List to 27 companies. The additions come amidst increased scrutiny and focus on forced labor issues in supply chains.



### Companies & Investors

During testimony before a house oversight committee on September 27, 2023, US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Chair Gary Gensler suggested that a pending California law that would require certain companies to disclose their carbon footprints may "change the baseline" for companies who would also be subject to the SEC's proposed climate-risk disclosure rule. In mid-September, Chair Gensler declined to give a timeline for when the proposed rule might move forward.



### Statement

**"We can't do this alone. We hope Europe will take similar measures to encourage a race to the top."**

Speaking at a press briefing before economic talks with German counterparts in Berlin last month, United States official Jose Fernandez expressed the hope that Europe would adopt similar measures to the United States' Inflation Reduction Act, thereby fostering a "race to the top" in support of green technologies.

Undersecretary for economic growth, energy and the environment at the US State Department, Jose Fernandez quoted by Reuters, September 26, 2023