

# **Subnational Global Climate Leadership Memorandum of Understanding “Under 2 MOU” Background and Frequently Asked Questions**

## Executive Summary

California and Baden-Württemberg are working in partnership to advance a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Subnational Global Climate Leadership that will bring together ambitious states and regions willing to make a number of key commitments to help galvanize action at the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Paris this December. Central to the agreement is that all signatories agree to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions 80 to 95%, or limit to 2 metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent per capita, by 2050. California and Baden-Württemberg are in the process of actively identifying partners to become Founding Signatories of the initiative.

## Background and Purpose

According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 50 to 80% of the mitigation and adaptation actions necessary to tackle climate change will be implemented at the subnational or local levels of governance. Subnational governments are particularly well placed to address climate change for a number of reasons, including:

- They are often responsible for the development and implementation of policies that have the most impact on climate change, including in the areas of air quality; transportation; energy and energy efficiency; the built environment; natural lands; technology innovation, development, and transfer; and others that have direct implications for greenhouse gas emissions levels;
- Subnational governments often serve as the laboratories for policy innovations which are then adopted at the national and even international level; and
- Subnational governments provide the critical link in the vertical integration of climate policies between national and local governments.

## What does the MOU entail?

The Subnational Global Climate Leadership MOU will bring together ambitious subnational governments willing to make a number of key commitments, including reducing emissions 80 to 95%, or to 2 metric tons or less per capita, by 2050. Signatories will also commit to establishing midterm targets; increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy; coordinating on a number of issues from transportation to short-lived climate pollutants; and working towards consistent monitoring, reporting, and verification of their emissions. All signatories will submit an appendix to the MOU that will outline their unique set of actions and plans to reach their goals.

## FAQs

### **Why is it sometimes called the “Under 2 MOU”?**

The MOU nickname refers to the 2050 per capita goal and to the goal of limiting warming to below 2 degrees Celsius, which Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change.

### **How is this different from other initiatives, such as the Climate Group’s Compact of States and Regions?**

The Climate Group and its partners are leading an important initiative in the Compact of States and Regions. We are working closely with the Climate Group and others to ensure complementarity between this MOU and the Compact of States and Regions, as well as R20’s Paris Declaration. We see

that the Under 2 MOU builds on the important foundation established by the Compact, creating a mechanism for those that are interested in and able to move further to make a collective commitment that will help drive ambition in Paris and beyond. We are coordinating closely with R20, C40, ICLEI and others to ensure this effort is complementary to existing ones, and have mentioned a number of other related agreements and initiatives in the body of the language of the MOU.

**Where did the idea come from?**

This effort stemmed from an initial partnership between California and Baden-Württemberg and has developed with support from the Climate Group, R20, ICLEI and others. It was socialized with many governments at the New York Climate Summit in September 2014 and is already gaining significant momentum.

**How do interested jurisdictions sign up?**

Interested jurisdictions should submit a letter expressing their intent to sign on to the MOU. Jurisdictions interested in being Founding Signatories should provide this letter by Friday, May 1, in advance of the official launch of the MOU in mid-May. We are aiming for an official launch date for the MOU of May 18, following the initial March 31 deadline for Parties to submit their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat. Following the launch of the MOU, a signing ceremony for Founding Signatories is being planned for May 19. We plan to continue recruitment throughout the year with a milestone announcement at the Paris COP in December.

**If a jurisdiction wants to be a Founding Member but won't be able to compile an appendix by May 1 what should it do?**

Submission of the appendix alongside the letter of intent to sign is strongly preferred. However, consideration will be given to jurisdictions that want to participate but need more time to complete their appendix. In particular, consideration will be given to jurisdictions with capacity building needs that may require support to develop their appendices. Each case will be considered on an individual basis. Jurisdictions that want to participate but that face real impediments to the development and submission of an appendix on or before May 1 should indicate the date by which their appendix will be completed in their letter of intent to sign. All appendices should be completed no later than November 1, 2015. Jurisdictions that do not submit their appendices in a timely fashion may be removed from the agreement.

For more information about the Subnational Global Climate Leadership MOU, please contact Laura Carr at [laura.carr@opr.ca.gov](mailto:laura.carr@opr.ca.gov).