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Governors and Mayors Commit to Deep Emission Reductions in Drive to Forge a Global Agreement on Climate

*States, Provinces and Cities Helped Show the Way to COP21, and are
Ready to Lead Global Economy's Transformation*

PARIS – In a high-profile drive to get national leaders to come together on a meaningful agreement addressing climate change this week, nine of the world's carbon-reduction champion states, provinces and cities joined together today, redoubling their commitments to limit greenhouse gas emissions to 2 tons per capita, or 80-95% below a 1990 benchmark by 2050.

Governors and mayors from North America's West Coast and the forested reaches of Latin America and Africa called on the national leaders meeting this week to help them advance their efforts and expand them to a global scale.

At an official side event of the 21st Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21) Monday, the leaders pledged to continue their own greenhouse gas reduction efforts and to do their parts to ensure that a global agreement arising from this week's conference is successful.

In marked contrast to previous rounds of climate talks, states, provinces and cities at the forefront of climate action have played a visible role galvanizing momentum for a global agreement in the run-up to COP21, leap-frogging national leaders with their own commitments to deep emission reductions.

The first of two panels included North American Governors Edmund G. Brown Jr. of California, Jay Inslee of Washington and British Columbia Minister of Environment, Mary Polak—whose governments are joined together through the [Pacific Coast Collaborative](#)—as well as Mayor Gregor Robertson of Vancouver, a founding member of the [Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance](#), and Mayor Libby Schaaf of Oakland.

A second panel featured Governors José Melo de Oliveira of Amazonas, Brazil, Aristóteles Sandoval of Jalisco, Mexico, Ben Ayade of Cross River State, Nigeria, and Manuel Gambini of Ucayali, Peru—who work together through the [Governors Climate and Forests Task Force](#).

All of the governments represented in the panels are signatories to the [Under 2 MOU](#), a commitment by states, provinces, cities—and even some countries—to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions 80 to 95 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 or achieve a two tons per capita emissions limit. To date, 80 jurisdictions from 22 countries and five continents have signed or endorsed the agreement, collectively representing more than \$18.6 trillion in GDP and 614 million people.

On demand video of the 90-minute dialog with the governors and mayors, “Subnationals Leading the Way,” will be made available from the UNFCCC at <http://unfccc6.metafusion.com/cop21/events>.

A number of the participants issued statements heading into the event:

Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr., California, USA

“In the face of virulent denial, governors, mayors and premiers from throughout the world have joined together to take concrete steps to combat climate change.”

Governor Jay Inslee, Washington, USA

“From Internet technology and advanced agriculture to aerospace and biotechnology, the world knows North America's West Coast is where innovation and leadership thrive. Our efforts through the PCC and the results already appearing in the forms of jobs, investments and emerging businesses show that we're providing that same leadership in the transition to a clean energy and low carbon economy.”

Environment Minister Mary Polak, British Columbia, Canada

“With our west coast partners we are providing tangible evidence of our collective effectiveness in combatting climate change. In B.C. our revenue-neutral carbon tax has allowed us to reduce emissions while growing the economy, ensuring a competitive business environment. It is a proven model we strongly encourage others to adopt.”

Mayor Libby Schaaf, Oakland, USA

“We are excited to pursue our ambitious climate action goals, and support the Under 2 MOU in aligning subnational governments around these commitments. Oakland proudly supports fellow governments in making and achieving tangible commitments, and to prove that success in meeting these goals is possible.”

Mayor Gregor Robertson, Vancouver, Canada

“Cities and sub-national governments on the West Coast have been at the forefront of global efforts to confront climate change, demonstrating consistent economic growth while successfully cutting carbon pollution. It’s time, however, for national leaders to rise to this challenge with a bold and comprehensive agreement here in Paris to dramatically reduce emissions and fight climate change with every resource available to the global community.”

Governor José Mello, Amazonas, Brazil

“The state of Amazonas is one of the most preserved and forested regions of the world. But in Amazonas we also have people, including 294,000 indigenous people and 73 different ethnic groups. We must join preservation with development by generating low emissions jobs in our region, and the Under 2 MOU provides a framework and a network for doing this.”

Governor Aristóteles Sandoval, Jalisco, Mexico

“Thanks to our collaborative efforts, including the Under 2 MOU and the GCF Task Force, local governments have been able to improve our efforts to protect forests, which is one of the primary ways we can mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and build the resiliency of

our communities. This cross-jurisdictional cooperation also helps us avoid common mistakes and deliver stronger results. As the 2016 Chair of the GCF, Jalisco looks forward to building on the momentum of COP-21 and the Under 2 MOU to start implementation of these important.”

Governor Ben Ayade, Cross River State, Nigeria

“Cross River State is a jurisdiction with a rich history of working to preserve Nigeria’s tropical forests. We view the Under 2 MOU as an important opportunity to join forces with other states to lead on climate change, not just in Africa, but across the globe. One thing that is central to me as Governor and an Under 2 MOU signatory is implementation. This means action that reduces deforestation, increases reforestation, adds green jobs, promotes sustainable housing, and develops green energy solutions.”

Governor Manuel Gambini, Ucayali, Peru

“Climate change is the greatest challenge humankind has ever faced, and its impacts can be devastating to the planet. Therefore, we welcome the opportunity to sign the Under 2 MOU to join forces with other subnational governments to address this monumental challenge.”

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