

Jerry Brown signs non-binding climate pact with other leaders

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Gov. Jerry Brown has long argued that by joining together, states and other sub-national governments could press world leaders to more aggressively address global warming when they meet for climate talks in Paris in December.

So Brown, a longtime champion of environmental causes, has signed any number of pacts with other states and provinces, and on Tuesday came another MOU.

In a non-binding, largely symbolic agreement, California and 11 other governments committed to efforts to limit the increase in global temperature to below 2 degrees Celsius, a threshold beyond which many scientists predict major environmental disruption.

The policy commitment for California – reducing greenhouse emissions to at least 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 – is one Brown previously announced.

The agreement was signed by leaders of Oregon, Vermont and Washington, as well as parts of Brazil, Canada, Germany, Mexico, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Brown, speaking to reporters, said each of the governments would strive to get other governments involved, “in effect creating the pressure from below” on national leaders ahead of Paris.

In an interview, he said, “With respect to climate change, it’s such an overriding challenge that I don’t believe we can wait for these nation states to take action ... We have to force action by grassroots efforts.”

Editor’s note: This post was updated at 3:25 p.m. Tuesday to include remarks from Brown.

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