

California-Mexico MOU to Enhance Cooperation on Climate Change and the Environment

In July 2014, California and Mexico signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to Enhance Cooperation on Climate Change and the Environment. The joint effort aims to improve and protect the environment while ensuring sustainable use of natural resources to optimize quality of life and expand trade and investment opportunities. Both governments recognize the global nature of climate change as well as its impact on natural resources, public health, and safety.



The MOU is a four-year effort with four priority action areas: climate change, air quality, wildfires and clean vehicles. California and Mexico will set goals in each action area based on principles of equality, reciprocity, information exchange and mutual benefit. In addition to the four priority action areas, California and Mexico will strengthen cooperation on other issues, including urban and solid waste management.

The MOU between California and Mexico calls for the development of a Joint Action Plan to identify topics of common interest and activities needed to address the four priority action areas and overarching goals.

Joint Action Plan Summary:

Working Group	Joint Action Plan Overarching Goals
Climate Change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work toward development of rigorous monitoring, reporting and verification to support carbon pricing or regulatory mechanisms, including potential linkage of carbon markets. 2. Share knowledge, development, and technology experience that enables economic growth while addressing climate change, including reductions in short-lived climate pollutants. 3. Share information and experience on interaction between forestry and the climate, including the potential for sector-based offset credits from reduced deforestation.
Air Quality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinate air quality planning efforts for airsheds along the border. 2. Share technical knowledge and information needed to support development of robust air quality planning and mitigation efforts. 3. Improve the comparability of data collected in Mexico and California.
Clean Vehicles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update and design the Mexican vehicle emission standards for GHG and smog pollution based on California’s standards. 2. Advance Mexico’s efforts on compliance and enforcement of environmental standards for vehicles. 3. Contribute to Mexico’s progress on the use of new technologies and strategies for the reduction of vehicular emissions (such as strategy for freight transportation, emissions inventories for mobile sources, vehicular emissions diagnosis and maintenance, on-board diagnostics (OBD) for vehicle inspections, clean and low-carbon fuels and strategy for the import of used vehicles into Mexico).
Wildfires	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Foster cooperation for wildfire assistance through the strengthening of technical and institutional capacities on fire management.

Both Mexico and California have placed a strong emphasis on achieving tangible results from the MOU, and on establishing conditions and opportunities for cooperative action. The goal is to strengthen the capacity of both governments to cope with climate change challenges and to protect and preserve their natural resources.

Next Steps

Each Working Group will report internally on its progress on a quarterly basis for each of the items presented in the Joint Action Plan. A public report will be released annually to describe the progress and accomplishments of the Joint Action Plan.

Progress to date includes:

1. Review of Mexico's GHG emissions reporting regulation and comparison with the California program.
2. Air monitoring training and performance audits.
3. Lab analysis support for air monitoring sites in Baja California.
4. Workshops and meetings on California standards for criteria and GHG emissions under the Low Emission Vehicle program, the California OBD program, and smog check standards for light-duty vehicles and motorcycles
5. A San Diego workshop to determine wildfire training opportunities.

This MOU is one of several international agreements that California and Mexico have pursued to address the impacts of global climate change and challenges to the environment. This agreement is the first of its kind to establish tangible actions to improve air quality, protect forests and reduce the impacts of climate change on both sides of the California-Mexico border.

