

California increases climate change measures

California has taken a substantial step forward on its climate change measures by unveiling an ambitious plan for clean cars, renewable energy and stringent caps on emissions intensive industries. The plan, which aims to reduce emissions by 10 per cent from current levels by 2020 while driving investment in energy technologies regulators say will benefit the state's economy, is the most comprehensive yet by any US state. It could serve as a blueprint not only for the rest of the United States, but also for other emissions intensive developing nations like China and India, planners and environmental groups say. "This is of tremendous importance, not only for California," says California Air Resources Board chair Mary Nichols. "By taking action here ... we will be able to help motivate other states in our nation," she adds. Others, however, say the plan will be costly to implement and only inflate energy prices further. "California has always paid more for power and gasoline because they've wanted cleaner fuels. It's certainly something they are used to," says energy company advocate Bracewell and Giuliani spokesman Frank Maisano. "But the larger question is, 'Does the rest of the country want to take its cues from California's energy policy?' The simple answer in these days of higher energy costs is pretty much 'no'," he says. At a meeting in Sacramento, CARB staff presented a series of proposals that would become law in 2012, with some measures going into effect two years earlier.

[Source: esaa news]