The governing boards of the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach today unanimously approved the 2017 Clean Air Action Plan (CAAP) Update, ushering in a new era of aggressive clean air strategies for moving cargo through the nation’s busiest container port complex. The document provides high-level guidance for accelerating progress toward a zero-emission future while protecting and strengthening the ports' competitive position in the global economy.

“The San Pedro Bay ports are the driving forces of our region’s economy — and they should also be global models for sustainability and clean air,” said Mayor Eric Garcetti. “This update to the Clean Air Action Plan is an important step toward our ambitious goal of zero emissions landside goods movement by 2035, and I look forward to making even more progress with our partners in the months and years to come.”

“These new policies and strategies are some of the most progressive air quality rules in the nation,” said Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia. “We are serious about fighting climate change, protecting local residents, and promoting economic success at our ports.”

Today’s action sets in motion the process for developing and refining specific programs. The strategies include:

- Identifying clean engine milestones for new trucks entering the port drayage registries and creating a rate structure and incentives that encourage faster turnover to near-zero and zero-emission trucks, with the goal of transitioning to a zero-emission on-road drayage fleet by 2035.

- Developing a universal truck reservation system, staging yards, intelligent transportation systems and other efficiency programs to reduce emissions while improving the flow of cargo.

- Beginning in 2020, requiring terminal operators to deploy zero-emission equipment, if feasible, or the cleanest equipment available when procuring new
cargo-handling equipment, with the goal of transitioning all terminal equipment to zero emissions by 2030.

- Developing infrastructure plans to support terminal equipment electrification, alternative fuels and other energy resource goals.

- Expanding use of on-dock rail, with the long-term goal of moving 50 percent of all cargo leaving the ports by rail.

As the detailed implementation programs are developed, they will be brought to each port’s harbor commission for approval.

Targets for reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs) from port-related sources to combat global warming and climate change are a new element of the 2017 CAAP. The document calls for the ports to reduce GHGs 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

The GHG targets add to the ports’ existing goals for reducing diesel particulate matter (DPM), nitrogen oxides (NOx) and sulfur oxides (SOx). By 2023, the ports aim to cut emissions of DPM 77 percent, NOx 59 percent, and SOx 93 percent below 2005 levels. Intensifying efforts to reduce GHGs is expected to further lower DPM, NOx and SOx emissions.

Building on the dramatic clean air gains achieved since the ports adopted the CAAP in 2006, the 2017 CAAP is a comprehensive plan for pursuing the ultimate goal of eliminating all harmful air emissions from port-related sources: ships, trucks, cargo handling equipment, locomotives and harbor craft. The document identifies four categories of coordinated strategies: 1) clean vehicles, equipment technology and fuels; 2) infrastructure investment and planning; 3) operational efficiency throughout the supply chain; and 4) energy resource planning.

In addition to incorporating regional, state and federal standards and regulations, the 2017 CAAP integrates aggressive joint zero-emission initiatives the two mayors announced in June. The initiatives include new investments in clean technology, expanded use of alternatives for reducing at-berth ship emissions, and a demonstration of up to 100 zero-emission trucks in the next few years.

The estimated cost of implementing the 2017 CAAP ranges from $7 billion to $14 billion. Given the pioneering nature of the ports’ objectives, the update relies on a framework to assess the feasibility of new technologies — to determine workability and affordability, and to demonstrate the adequacy of supporting infrastructure. The document also reaffirms the ports’ commitment to nurturing a vibrant workforce as we transition to zero-emission technologies for the goods movement industry.

The new strategies were developed with more than two years of dialogue with industry, environmental groups, regulatory agencies, local residents, equipment and fuel vendors, technology developers and others. Because stakeholder input will be crucial going forward, the document creates a CAAP Implementation Stakeholder Advisory Group of public and private experts to provide input on implementing new strategies. The group’s meetings will be open to all who wish to attend.
“Collaboration will be critical to our success,” said Long Beach Harbor Commission President Lou Anne Bynum. “Moving the needle to zero requires all of us — the ports, industry, regulatory agencies, environmental groups and our communities — to pool our energy, expertise and resources.”

“Intensifying our advocacy efforts is also a priority,” said Ambassador Vilma Martinez, President of the Port of Los Angeles Board of Harbor Commissioners. “The new plan reflects our commitment to doing everything in our power to push for funding, support research and demonstration projects, and expand our involvement in the regulatory process to advance our shared environmental and economic objectives.”

Recent air emissions inventories show the ports have surpassed the 2023 pollution reduction goals for DPM (87 percent) and SOx (97 percent) and are close to reaching their goal for reducing NOx (56 percent). They also show emissions are declining while cargo volumes are rising, confirming the ports are growing green. The combined port complex is on pace in 2017 for the busiest year ever.

The ports plan to expand their Technology Advancement Program (TAP) to include technologies and approaches that help meet their new goals for reducing GHGs. TAP has been highly successful in demonstrating cutting-edge emissions reduction technology, with many projects resulting in commercial deployment throughout the complex today.

The Port of Los Angeles and Port of Long Beach are the two largest ports in the nation, first and second respectively, and combined are the ninth-largest port complex in the world. The two ports handle approximately 40 percent of the nation’s total containerized import traffic and 25 percent of its total exports. Trade that flows through the San Pedro Bay ports complex generates more than 3 million jobs nationwide.

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