Gov. Jerry Brown called Tuesday on President Barack Obama to permanently ban new offshore oil and gas drilling off California’s coast, and renewed his promise to confront the threat of climate change regardless of what direction Republican Donald Trump takes as incoming president.

Joining a meeting of the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification in Coronado, Brown also signed a memorandum of understanding with the U.S. Department of the Interior to set in motion a pathway for renewable energy in the oceans, using the wind, waves and other technologies.

Brown, who has made protecting the planet the centerpiece of his second stint as governor, called the action “part of a much larger drama that California, the U.S. and the world is facing.” Obama last month moved to institute a five-year freeze on drilling rights off the West Coast and Arctic Ocean, leading several California officials to push for an indefinite prohibition.

Speaking with reporters after Trump on Tuesday confirmed that Rex Tillerson, chief executive of Exxon Mobil, was his pick for secretary of state, Brown said he took some comfort in what has traditionally been part of the GOP’s worldview: bedrock support for states acting in their own interests on issues such as environmental protection.

“One of the things that does influence the Republican Party is respect for states’ rights,” he said. And Brown offered that while the Trump administration may be at odds with California on policy, the challenges ahead are so immense he doesn’t want to overstate “this temporary next four years.” “This is about survival within the lifetime of people in this room,” Brown said.

“This is going to be such an adverse effect – militarily, humanly, politically,” he added. “Whatever problems we are looking at today they will pale in comparison to the stresses that we are going to have by rising sea levels, the spread of tropical diseases and all manner of extreme weather events. Whatever conflicts we have today, they are a piece of cake (compared with) ... the next 50 to 75 years – if we don’t act now.”