



Submission for the Climate Change Consultation to Tim Groser, Minister for Climate Change Issues

From the Alpine Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

Summary of submission:

The Alpine Presbytery¹ of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand (PCANZ) supports an ambitious Intended Nationally Determined Contribution. We strongly urge the Government to set an INDC that:

1. commits to a **global and NZ low carbon world by 2050** or sooner, with annual steps outlining how to get there as quickly as possible
2. places an immediate **moratorium on fossil fuel exploration**, and pledges to phase out existing extraction within the decade. All subsidies, funding and tax breaks to the fossil fuel industry are also phased out within the decade
3. includes **credible, transparent, cross-party plans**, with a legislated, independent Climate Commission to ensure NZ meets its targets and stays within the global carbon budget.
4. Abides by the **articles laid out in Te Tiriti o Waitangi**
5. includes **health, fairness, and the true costs of inaction on climate change** in the assessment of costs and benefits
6. follows a **transparent decision-making process** after the consultation process ends.

We support an ambitious INDC for reasons of social equity, justice for those most affected, and care for our environment. We appreciate the opportunity to make this submission and have our voices heard.

Basis for Alpine Presbytery's support of an ambitious INDC:

Caring for God's creation is one of the PCANZ's five focuses in their mission statement. In 2008, the General Assembly of the PCANZ declared that climate change, with its life-threatening consequences, raises theological, economic, political and ethical issues. It reflects the distortion of relationships between God, human kind, and creation. In 2014, the General Assembly requested that the Church's Property Trustees divest from fossil fuel investments.

We recognise that the climate change crisis is not only about caring for our environment, but is also a major social justice issue. The Presbyterian Church seeks to be a voice for those most affected by climate change both locally and globally. Climate change is badly affecting millions of people now, including many of our Pacific brothers and sisters. The effects of climate change will continue to worsen the longer we hold off radical and costly change. This will lead to other major issues such as climate refugees.

¹ The Alpine Presbytery is a regional governing body of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand with oversight in the South Island north of the Waitaki River.



In the discussion paper released by the Government, the question was raised as to what is a fair contribution. However, as a developed nation with larger than average contribution to the climate change problem, we believe we have an ethical responsibility to “tighten our belts” and look after those most affected. We should not be asking, *what is fair?* But rather, *what must we sacrifice in order to bring lasting change and keep below the two degree threshold?* Instead of looking around us to see what other countries are doing, we believe New Zealand needs to be a global leader in fighting climate change.

We realise that this will mean a *costly* target and acknowledge that a smooth, low-cost transition to a low-carbon economy is impossible if we are to keep below two degrees warming. However the cost of not taking ambitious action is too great.

We strongly urge the Government to be ambitious and world leading in their efforts to tackle climate change and hope the INDC will reflect this.