

# Consultation on setting New Zealand's post-2020 climate change target



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## Contact information

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## Objectives for the contribution

Do you agree with these objectives for our contribution? Yes

1b. What is most important to you?

That we actually take action to reduce our emissions as far as we can reasonably do, and that we take that action nowish.

What would be a fair contribution for New Zealand?

2. What do you think the nature of New Zealand's emissions and economy means for the level of target that we set?

Our economy is, yes, somewhat agricultural, but we also have an awful lot of very good agricultural scientists who have a lot of suggestions for how we could reduce emissions from that. And if need be, we could simply try and be less pastoral, since the emissions from that are so high. I feel that as a relatively wealthy country with a fairly good economy, we have a moral duty to adopt a stringent emissions policy; the 40% from 1990 by 2030 target seems at the lower end of that. If we don't do it, who exactly are we expecting to pick up the bill?

How will our contribution affect New Zealanders?

3. What level of cost is appropriate for New Zealand to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions? For example, what would be a reasonable reduction in annual household consumption?

\*its - come on, guys, spellcheck.

It would be unreasonable to expect a reduction in household consumption lower than the overall reduction, so that seems as good a target as any. Obviously the cost does need to be taken into account, and we should reduce emissions in the cheapest way possible - a dramatically more aggressive cap-and-trade system seems like the obvious solution. So, let's say 40%, with the proviso that an expenditure of several thousand dollars per person annually would be a legitimate cost - although, of course, it would be preferable to fund this through taxes to avoid the problem of free-riders.

4. Of the opportunities for New Zealand to reduce its emissions (as outlined on page 15 of the discussion document), which do you think are the most likely to occur, or be most important for New Zealand?

I do not feel that I am sufficiently expert in this issue to judge what the most efficient means of reducing emissions is; as a citizen, I can legitimately say what degree of reduction I'd like, and how much I'm prepared to pay for that, but not really how we go about it. That said, the obvious benefits would seem to be eliminating our remaining fossil fuel energy production - we've pretty much used all the hydropower we can, but there's really no reason to keep around the coal station given our situation with other renewable resources, and given that hydropower can

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generally be used when we want it to, dealing with the key problem with solar and wind.

## Summary

5. How should New Zealand take into account the future uncertainties of technologies and costs when setting its target?

...it should? Obviously we need to take that into account in constructing our forward plan, but equally I don't feel that I have the expertise to do that. As a citizen, I can say what I would like achieved and how much I am prepared to pay for it, but the specifics of the plans should be constructed by professionals. I should stress, of course, that what really matters now is that we act, instead of waiting for a few years until we have all the information; delaying ten years to see how efficient solar power gets before committing to it, to take one example, will be vastly more costly to the environment than any purported savings due to more complete information.

## Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.

This is presumably never actually going to be read by anyone, but on the off chance... It's always really frustrated me that climate change is constructed as a political issue, where the left wing wants to do something about it and the right wing doesn't care. I basically feel that I have to make a decision on those grounds, because climate change seems to be the single biggest issue facing our country; if we could try and make it more bipartisan - and at this point nobody disputes the scientific consensus, so I really don't see why this is such a problem - then I think we could not only actually maybe make some progress on the climate change issue, but also have a much healthier democracy because we could move on to debating the issues that actually matter.

As is, if people want to do something on climate change, they also have to sign up to a whole lot of other things; climate change isn't really debatable anymore, so if we can just eliminate it from the political discourse, like we've eliminated the question of if we should have police, we'd be in a much healthier position. Our current government has the opportunity to do that, and I'd absolutely love them to do it. Please?