Setting New Zealand’s post-2020 climate change target

Submission form

The Government is seeking views on New Zealand’s post-2020 climate change contribution under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

You can have your say by making a submission using this form or using the online tool available at www.mfe.govt.nz/more/consultations.

For more information about this consultation:

• Read our Consultation on New Zealand’s post-2020 international climate change contribution web page

• Read our discussion document: New Zealand’s Climate Change Target: Our contribution to the new international climate change agreement

Submissions close at 5.00pm on Wednesday 3 June 2015.

Publishing and releasing submissions

All or part of any written submission (including names of submitters), may be published on the Ministry for the Environment’s website www.mfe.govt.nz. Unless you clearly specify otherwise in your submission, we will consider that you have consented to website posting of both your submission and your name.

Contents of submissions may be released to the public under the Official Information Act 1982 following requests to the Ministry for the Environment (including via email). Please advise if you have any objection to the release of any information contained in a submission and, in particular, which part(s) you consider should be withheld, together with the reason(s) for withholding the information. We will take into account all such objections when responding to requests for copies of, and information on, submissions to this consultation under the Official Information Act.

The Privacy Act 1993 applies certain principles about the collection, use and disclosure of information about individuals by various agencies, including the Ministry for the Environment. It governs access by individuals to information about themselves held by agencies. Any personal information you supply to the Ministry in the course of making a submission will be used by the Ministry only in relation to the matters covered by this consultation. Please clearly indicate in your submission if you do not wish your name to be included in any summary of submissions that the Ministry may publish.
Questions to guide your feedback

Your submission may address any aspect of the discussion document, but we would appreciate you paying particular attention to the questions posed throughout and listed in this form. You may answer some or all of the questions. To ensure your point of view is clearly understood, you should explain your rationale and provide supporting evidence where appropriate.

Contact information

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<th>Name</th>
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Objectives for the contribution

1a. We have set the following three objectives for our contribution:

- it is seen as a fair and ambitious contribution – both by international and domestic audiences
- costs and impacts on society are managed appropriately
- it must guide New Zealand over the long term in the global transition to a low emissions world.

Do you agree with these objectives for our contribution?

☐ Yes
☐ No

1b. What is most important to you?

Our contribution to the long term transition to a low emissions world. New Zealand has benefited from carbon-based economic growth to date. Our early use of clean energy such as hydro and geothermal are accidents of our geography. We should not rely on these to justify a lower contribution to the global transition that must be undertaken. While our contribution on the global scale is small, we need to demonstrate our willingness as a developed nation to compensate for our past carbon emissions.
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?

Even without considering the moral imperative to reduce emissions, we need to be up with the leaders in the transition to a zero carbon world:

- We are likely to become economically exposed to challenges by our international market competitors on our emissions
- With our limited resources we will not be able to catch up – we have to keep up
- Our high percentage of methane emissions, where solutions do not yet exist, means that we need to take immediate and substantial action on our carbon dioxide emissions.

We need to continue research on reducing methane emissions but act urgently on reducing carbon dioxide emissions, in particular where effective longterm investments can be made, eg

- Incentivise investment in renewable energy and electric vehicles
- Establish a national accord on investment in renewable energy to minimise future investment in electrical distribution and reduce risk in areas supplied by single feeder lines
- Ensure forestry planting, biofuel development etc to avoid dependence on the problematic international carbon trading market.

How will our contribution affect New Zealanders?

3. What level of cost is appropriate for New Zealand to reduce it greenhouse gas emissions? For example, what do you think would be a reasonable impact on annual household consumption?

Up to $2000 per annum, provided that:

- Investments in energy conservation and renewables are designed to reduce energy costs to households where practical
- Carbon taxes or other mechanisms are used to allow income distribution to support low income households, especially families
- There is good communication to the public of the potential future costs of not taking action.

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?

The biggest contribution is likely to be a move to electric vehicles (both public transport and private cars), with consequent stimulation of renewable energy investment. Enhanced public transport mechanisms will also become increasingly practicable and attractive.
Summary

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

Taking aggressive action on carbon dioxide emissions could enable us to achieve at least 30% reduction in emissions by 2030. To achieve at least 80% reduction by 2050 will require breakthroughs in agricultural methane emissions, which could be New Zealand’s most significant technological contribution if we can become leaders in the field.

Other comments

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

The emissions trading scheme, both in New Zealand and internationally, does not appear to be effective in modifying carbon emissions to any significant extent. An effective internationally agreed scheme is highly desirable but New Zealand might need to take a leading position prior to such agreement.

While it does not appear to be part of the Paris negotiations, there is the question of reparations for past carbon emissions by the developed world. For New Zealand, the plight of small island nations in the Pacific can be our focus, including:

- Assistance (economic and technical) with renewable energy development
- Engagement with people and technical assistance to atoll islands where the locations and identity of indigenous people is at risk, for example sand trapping to build up atolls, water runoff control and planting to replenish the water lens under the islands, rubbish management etc.

When your submission is complete

Email your completed submission to climate.contribution@mfe.govt.nz or post to Climate Change Contribution Consultation, Ministry for the Environment, PO Box 10362, Wellington 6143.

Submissions close at 5.00pm on Wednesday 3 June 2015.