

Climate Change Contribution Consultation  
Individual Submission

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Question 1.

a)

-I hold that the current objectives for New Zealand's contribution to climate change emissions is inadequate, and appears to ignore significant aspects of the discussion surrounding climate change, specifically health and fairness.

-Beyond the appearance of 'fairness' and 'ambitiousness', New Zealand's contribution must actually *be* fair and ambitious. This fairness must reflect the reality that climate change will impact the global population in an unfair way. This fairness must be reflected not only in our mitigation actions, but also our approach to adaptation, to ensure the more vulnerable members of our world and country do not unfairly bear the brunt of the impacts of climate change. It must be ambitious in that it must be the best contribution we can achieve.

-Beyond managing the 'costs and impacts' of climate change action on appropriately, it is important that these costs are managed fairly, as mentioned above, to ensure it is not the most vulnerable who experience the costs the most. The management of costs and impacts must also acknowledge the costs and impacts of a lack of action on climate change.

-Beyond the long term transition to a low emission world, New Zealand's emission targets should guide New Zealand to a timely transition to a zero emission economy and society.

-The discussion document severely lacks any evidence of consideration of the health impacts of climate change, which suggests that public health impacts have played no part in informing any cost analyses of this topic to date. This is contradiction of the Bangkok Charter, which New Zealand is a party, which dictates that all government policies must include public health impact assessments. The impact on health needs to play some role in setting objectives for New Zealand's contribution to climate change.

b)

-What is most important to me is that New Zealand sets a target that is significantly ambitious, is fair both in a global and a domestic sense (in terms of contribution and in terms of sharing of costs amongst the population), and that this target is evidence-based with health impacts of action and inaction forming vital roles in this analysis.

Question 2.

-The discussion document appears to focus on creating excuses for minimal action relating to decreasing New Zealand's agricultural emissions. Many of these excuses are significantly poor, and some are contradictory. For example, claiming that New Zealand's meat and dairy production plays an important role in tackling food insecurity globally ignores the fact that climate change is a major contributing factor to current and future food insecurity, as well as ignoring the global impact on non-communicable diseases as a result of increased animal product intake in nations experiencing food insecurity.

-Approximately half of New Zealand's climate emissions relate to transport, and energy production. The technology and policy solutions to these emissions already exist, and New Zealand must commit to a zero carbon target by 2050.

-Further to this, New Zealand must also acknowledge that although methane emissions have shorter-term impacts on climate, ultimately reductions in methane emissions must also form a role

in tackling climate change. New Zealand must reduce reliance on dairy and meat production, and expand areas with decreased climate impacts.

-New Zealand must also acknowledge its global contribution to carbon emissions through the mining and exporting of coal and lignite. A fair contribution to reducing emissions must include committing to phasing out coal and lignite mining.

-Overall, New Zealand must follow suit with other wealthy nations and commit to reducing gross domestic climate change emissions to at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2035, and aiming for a 95% reduction by 2050.

### Question 3.

-It is entirely and absolutely unacceptable that the discussion document shows no evidence that the government has taken the inevitable negative health impacts of climate change into consideration in its discussion of climate change action costs and risks. New Zealand is party to the Bangkok Charter, which dictates that public health impacts of policy and legislation must form part of decision making processes.

-There is significant research that suggests that New Zealand will experience various negative health impacts as a result of climate change, as a result of adverse weather events, change in the profile of infectious disease, both vector- and water/food-borne, disruptions to food production through drought and flooding affecting both nutrition and income, and the negative impacts of migration due to raising sea-levels.

-These health impacts of climate change will not be shared equally amongst the population, but will unfairly impact Māori and low-income households. This inequity in the impact of climate change means that inaction now, and failure to prepare infrastructure to ensure equitable approaches to adaptation will be a breach in the Crown's obligations under The Treaty.

-While the discussion document makes a show of house-hold income reductions as a result of emission reduction, it fails to acknowledge the house-hold costs of climate change itself, let alone the overall costs.

-A cost analysis must also acknowledge the reality that mitigation actions carry with them various co-benefits, especially on health. Investment and promotion of active transportation results in reduced carbon emissions as well as improving health through increased physical activity. Reducing energy consumption through improved housing insulation and low-energy heating options not only decreases carbon emissions, but also improves housing related health issues, such as asthma, eczema, and rheumatic fever. Reducing dietary reliance on meat and dairy consumption not only reducing methane emissions through reduced agricultural production, but also reduces the incidence of non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer. Acknowledgement of these co-benefits must also be a part of a rigorous cost analysis on climate change emission targets.

-Therefore, New Zealand needs to set an ambitious climate change emission target, aiming for reductions of 40% below 1990 levels of gross domestic climate change emissions by 2030, and aim to be part of a global carbon zero target by 2050.

### Question 4.

-New Zealand needs to actively reduce carbon emissions associated with transport and energy production, through promotion of and investment in active and public transportation options.

-New Zealand must also reduce its economic reliance on dairy and meat production in order to reduce the agricultural aspects of its climate change emissions.

-Both of these are entirely within New Zealand's abilities to achieve, and will require cross-party commitment to put these measures in place.

### Question 5.

-As a healthcare professional, this particular question appears to be the most problematic, and emblematic of a failure to realise the depth and reality of this problem.

- As a healthcare professional I am more than familiar with the allure that future scientific discoveries, and current scientific investigations hold for the treatment of current problems.
- It would be wholly unethical of a healthcare provider to forego currently available healthcare interventions in the hope that newly discovered potential treatments may become available.
- Using potential future technological advances as an excuse to limit climate change action today is akin to limiting insulin treatment of a diabetes patient today by claiming that new discoveries will exist in the future.
- This approach ignores the multitude of climate change complications that will occur while we wait for technological advancements, and which will have wide-reaching impacts, including significant health impacts.
- New Zealand's climate change emission targets should be based **ONLY** on existing technology, and future technology should only form part of future adjustments to our targets today.

#### Other Comments:

- The failure of this government to include the significant health impacts of climate change is evidence of extremely narrow vision. New Zealand must act immediately to rectify this by instigating a Parliamentary climate change and health summit.
- Further to this, Health Impact Assessments, focusing also on health equity, must form part of the development of all future climate-relevant policies.
- The health sector must be involved in mitigation discussions, and hold vital leadership roles in the discussion of adaptation to lock-in climate change impacts on health.

#### Conclusion:

- In direct terms relating to climate change emissions targets, I support the call for New Zealand setting a target of below 40% of our 1990 gross domestic climate change emissions by 2030, and 95% by 2050.
- I support the call of New Zealand committing to global and New Zealand zero 2050 carbon target.
- I support the call that New Zealand places an immediate moratorium on fossil fuel exploration, and pledges to phase out all existing fossil fuel extraction over the next decade.
- I **DEMAND** that the health and fairness issues are included in all assessments of benefit and costs of climate actions.