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

Copy of your submission

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?
To keep global temperature rise under 2°C. To do this we have to half global emissions by 2050. New Zealand should focus mainly on increasing the Carbon tax we already have in place - this would help persuade people to change their habits. The Government could also put forward a new law that means new houses must have a water tank and a renewable energy source.

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?
As we have a strong economy, and are predicted to go into surplus next year, New Zealand can afford a more ambitious target and set an example for countries around the world. New Zealand citizens have one of the highest greenhouse gas emissions per capita in the developed world - nearly half of this comes from Agriculture but if we were to improve public transport systems in major cities, less people would have to drive to work, lowering our emissions.

How will our contribution affect New Zealanders?

3. What level of cost is appropriate for New Zealand to reduce it’s greenhouse gas emissions? For example, what would be a reasonable reduction in annual household consumption?
New Zealand should aim for improving areas that we are already good at. This includes increasing our use of renewable energy as a power source more, and increasing our carbon tax. This way we already know that these work and we can implement them in a suitable way, as we have done. This will limit possible costs to the economy and New Zealand public.

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?
Increasing our carbon tax is the number one priority. If people have to pay more for carbon, they will not buy as many carbon-related products. A secondary option is to adapt and grow our public transport system in major cities to decrease our reliance on cars to get around. This would also significantly reduce our greenhouse emissions per capita, which is one of the highest in the developed world.

Summary
5. How should New Zealand take into account the future uncertainties of technologies and costs when setting its target?
We cannot assume that technologies will be invented that stop climate change. Because of this, we have to continue as if they will never exist, so that we can be prepared if they are not ready in time. New Zealand's economy will only get stronger with time, and so we can set more ambitious targets. A reachable target would be a 30% reduction in today's emissions by 2030.

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.
I believe a suitable greenhouse target for New Zealand is a 30% reduction in today's emissions by 2030. This would be a challenge, and as our agriculture industry will grow with our economy, we will need to cut emissions majorly in other areas to compensate.
The main ways to do this would be:
- Implement a higher carbon tax.
- Increase our use of sustainable energy even further.
- Grow our public transport system in major cities.
- Propose a new law that would require all new buildings to have a source of renewable energy, as well as a water tank.

I hope that New Zealand contributes well to the summit in Paris, and wish to see a change in our habits and ways.
D'arcy Brown, 14.