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

Objectives for the contribution

Do you agree with these objectives for our contribution? Yes

1b. What is most important to you?
Committing to a fair and ambitious target is the most important. Although we only account for a small total (0.15%) we should be looking at our contribution in terms of total emission per head of population. Only by setting ambitious targets can developed countries who have benefited most by polluting the worlds atmosphere show leadership. For too long our government has sidestepped doing anything about this global problem.

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?
I think the government wants everyone else in the world to take leadership on this issue. Sure a large part of our emissions come from agriculture but that's just something we will have to deal with. Saying it's "Too Hard" to reduce agricultural emissions will not lead to innovation in this area. Agriculture needs to pull its weight along with everyone else.

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?
This is a daft question and assumes that doing something about climate change has to result in a negative impact on household and that by spending less we're going to be worse off! It also assumes that we have a choice about doing something about climate change. In just the last couple of weeks Wellington was hit by two significant downpours. One was described as a 1 in 50 year event and the next as a 1 in 30 year. More frequent storms that are more intense will continue to occur as a result of our changing climate. How much are New Zealander's willing to pay each year to have their homes and businesses repaired?

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?
What needs to occur is a focus on our two biggest contributor, agriculture, transport and power generation. Government policy should be encouraging carbon free power generation. Financial incentives for micro solar and wind generation on residential and commercial properties would not only make our power network more resilient it would also reduce the required spend on large power generation. Instead, the power companies have just slashed the price they pay residential generators of the excess power that they generate. It seems the government would rather get the dividend that solve the problem. Moving to electrified transport should be a key priority and the
government should be investing in efficient train systems to move large goods up and down the country. Continued investment in R&D around reducing agricultural emission will be needed to help address this issue. Once cracked this will be a new technology we can export to the world.

Summary

5. How should New Zealand take into account the future uncertainties of technologies and costs when setting its target?
We will never know everything we'd like to know before having to make a decision. New Zealand should do what's right, not what it thinks it can afford. We're in a better position than most to afford the changes the world needs to make RAPIDLY. Simply saying that the future is uncertain and we don't want to be disadvantaged against other nations is a cop-out!

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.
Yes, show leadership, true leadership that looks beyond your 3 year term, beyond your life time. As a species we've know about the our impact on the climate for over 50 years and we've all happily kicked the can down the road for the next generation. If we kick the can again the next generation won't be able to stop run-away climate change even if they had more enlighten leaders than yourselves. The decisions you make now will impact the world for years to come, don't do the easiest thing, do the right thing for humanity and ask yourself - in 2050 will my children or grandchildren remember you as someone who tried to make the world a better place or someone more interesting in make their own place better?