

# 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](http://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](http://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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### 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?

- The NZ contribution must be ambitious, but the discussion paper seriously underestimates the seriousness of the situation, and hence the level of 'ambition' actually required is greatly understated.
- The concept of 'fairness' does not apply to the current situation. Human civilisation as we know it, will not survive the current trajectory of global warming (4 degrees and higher) and the climate change that this will cause. The actions taken must be those that have the greatest probability of averting this catastrophe, whether or not this is fair.
- New Zealand should join and collaborate with those countries that are prepared to lead the processes of transition, whether or not this is fair.

## 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?
  - This is not a relevant question. In view of the catastrophic situation to be averted, pleading special cases is irresponsible.
  - New Zealand should do its utmost to encourage *all countries to join a programme of massive reduction of use of fossil fuels* – such as being phased out entirely by 2050. New Zealand should lead this move by example.

## 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 do you think would be a reasonable impact on annual household consumption?
  - On the basis of the numbers provided in Table 1, the effects of '40% below 1990' is trifling compared to the costs and degradation of human wellbeing that would be caused by 4 degrees warming.
  - The justified level of cost is 'whatever it takes'.
  - The analysis provided appears to overlook the near-fact that the effects of 2 degrees warming are already locked into the systems of climate change. Clearly, the targets to be set will be implemented in the context of rapid progression to 2 degrees.
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?
  - These opportunities are all based on the assumption that 'Business as Usual' and 'Living as Usual' can and will continue indefinitely, with only moderate adjustments being required to meet climate change targets.
  - This assumption is demonstrably false, and policies based on it are irresponsible.
  - Instead, the transition requires careful analysis, and transition planning to radically-different ways of human living and working in a world that consumes substantially less energy – a 40 % reduction would be a plausible place to start. This scale of reduction, due largely to rising average costs of energy, will transform the structure and output of the global economy.

New Zealand should be planning for this rather than contemplating 'opportunities' that are actually trivial in their effects.

## Summary

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

- Technological developments will help but cannot be expected to solve the core problem that the global economy is too large for the atmosphere to support, and therefore must be contracted substantially. A smaller global economy is inevitable and will result from either a planned and reasonably orderly process, or through the chaotic processes of global and local ecosystem collapses triggered by climate change. New Zealand should choose right now which process it prefers.
- The costs to all New Zealand citizens of *not* choosing to become prepared will be catastrophically huge.

## Other comments

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

The Government should abandon the falsely-optimistic analysis presented in the discussion paper, get real, and start again by facing up squarely to the issues that must actually be addressed. This is not a matter of international politics because the ecosystems of the planet (climate, in this case – but there are many others) will continue to degrade from damaging human interventions, whether or not people are ready to face the consequences.

## When your submission is complete

Email your completed submission to [climate.contribution@mfe.govt.nz](mailto: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.**