

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? The third bullet point.

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?

What a weasle question. What do you think the integrity of our own reductions has for our voice and ability to sway others?

What is fair for our pacific island neighbours?

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? Isn't that the point?

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? Transport, Forestry, renewable electricity

Summary

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

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.
Acting on climate change is an investment in our future.

The Government's narrow fixation on the short-term costs of taking action is flawed and damaging. This is about investing in a safe and prosperous future where we're all better off. Failing to act will cost us and the World Bank warns that the longer action is delayed, the more costs will rise for the next generation. Taking action to cut carbon pollution in New Zealand creates benefits like cleaner air, less dependence on foreign oil, better human health and more liveable cities. Our existing renewable electricity portfolio is an opportunity, not an excuse for inaction. By building on this we can be a positive example to other countries, pioneer solutions the rest of the world needs, and

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capture new economic opportunities.

I want the Government to act on climate change as an investment in our future.?

New Zealand needs a target of zero carbon dioxide emissions.

Carbon dioxide is the main driver of long-term climate change. The discussion document highlights that for a good chance of limiting warming to less than 2°C, the world can emit less than one trillion tonnes of CO₂ from now on. At current rates of emissions, the world will blow this carbon budget by 2035. Regardless of what we do about other emissions from agriculture, every country ultimately needs to reduce CO₂ emissions to zero to stop climate change and avoid blowing the global carbon budget. That means shifting from fossil fuels to clean energy and planting forests to absorb carbon. ?

I want New Zealand to call for a global zero carbon target, and walk the talk by committing to a pathway towards zero CO₂ emissions by 2050 or earlier (alongside reductions in other greenhouse gases).

Targets need to be backed up with a credible plan.

In order to meet our targets we need a credible national strategy for how we can achieve them. Without a clear pathway, targets are just empty numbers. Despite existing targets for 2020 and 2050, New Zealand's emissions have continued to rise. Official projections say they will continue rising under current policies. Our international reputation can't survive that much longer - we need real results.

I want to see a real action plan that adds up.

We need a climate change law to keep government on track.

The UK Climate Change Act provides a model for government commitment and accountability that New Zealand should adopt. This Act puts national emissions targets in domestic law (which is not the case in New Zealand) and requires every government to produce credible plans to meet these. This will show other countries we are serious. The Act also sets up an independent Climate Commission to advise government on its policies and hold whoever is in power accountable. This makes the issue of climate change less politicised by having an authoritative independent voice in the debate.

I want a New Zealand climate law that holds the government accountable for reducing emissions, and an independent Climate Commission.

We need political parties to work together.

This issue needs cooperation across the political spectrum and efforts to engage all New Zealanders in the solutions. Climate policy can't go on being a political football with major policy flip-flops every time there's a change in government. We need stable climate policy that steers us clearly towards a zero carbon society. This will allow businesses to make good long-term decisions and New Zealand will benefit by attracting investment in low carbon industries and innovation.

I want the Government to establish a cross-party climate working group and an ongoing programme to engage meaningfully with New Zealanders on climate change solutions.?

We can't wait.

An exciting zero carbon future is waiting for us if we choose it. We need to start building it today. Previous generations didn't understand the gravity of the problem and didn't have the technologies to solve it, but the current generation in charge has neither excuse. Delaying action makes it harder to meet our targets and lumps more costs onto young people to deal with in the future. There are many beneficial actions the Government could take now together with businesses and communities to kick-start the transition.

I want to see meaningful policy changes that will start cutting New Zealand's emissions, during this term of government.

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To complement all this:

The Government can also utilise its role on the UN Security Council and the fact that we have a US President that wants to use the rest of his term to focus on legacy and climate change to talk about the risks to the global economy from the carbon bubble. The discussion document outlines that the existing carbon budget will be exhausted by 2035 at current consumption rates.

We can't do it alone, but if we are committed to the world staying within two degree warming which we say that we are, then there is a financial risk for the fossil fuel assets that are held well in excess of the carbon budget (3-5 times according to the IEA and IPCC), that would be stranded to stay within this two degree goal.

Part of this is highlighting the importance of portfolio transparency which the government has done through the Kiwisaver Reporting Act and also the Financial Markets Conduct Act, but also highlighting the wider systemic risk.