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

Copy of your submission

Contact information

Name   Deryn Cooper

Organisation (if applicable)   Mental Health Research & Development

Address

Telephone

Email

Objectives for the contribution

Do you agree with these objectives for our contribution?   Yes

1b. What is most important to you?
Each objective needs to be much more clearly and strongly expressed. Our contribution must be to get our emissions down by 40%. In that case, I agree with Objective one - a 40% reduction is certainly fair given that we have not met our previous goals. And it is also suitably ambitious. Objective two names costs and impacts of not bringing emissions down to a figure which can start to redress our failure to effectively reduce emissions so far. Objective three needs the addition that NZ must be seen as joining with the world's leading countries making a major reduction in its emissions now, not just in the long term. To do this we must move to a 40% reduction in emissions. A strong and resolute focus needs to be on supporting research, industry and environmental design that will assist in meeting this goal - addressing our transport systems (not putting money into further road-building but supporting transport alternatives to petrol-driven vehicles), encouraging solar energy with financial incentives, reducing our reliance on dairy/cattle farming and creating carbon sinks.

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?
If NZ doesn't commit to a 40% reduction, given that we have not managed to bring our emissions down previously, we will not be being “fair”. How fair is it that on the global Climate Change Performance Index 2015 we are scoring “very poor”? Given also that the general population has been offered no education or guidance from the government in the matter of the effects on NZ’s economy as well as in If NZ doesn't commit to a 40% reduction, given that we have not managed to bring our emissions down previously, we will not be being “fair”. How fair is it that on the global Climate Change Performance Index 2015 we are scoring “very poor”? Given also that the general population has been offered no education or guidance from the government in the matter of the effects on NZ’s economy as well as in relation to the global economy, there is no general sense of understanding of nor motivation for what an appropriate target would be. NZ's economy can be tailored to produce a low emission target that will result in beneficial change for us as NZers and for the world. Instead of lagging behind the world effort to address climate change, NZ needs to be a leader in creative approaches to the problem. Consideration of ‘green' technologies and the involvement of creative, innovative people and industries in a co-operative, not competitive, process, will allow better opportunity for NZ to make the changes needed to achieve the target. The government must be the spearhead for this process so as to address changes in both our emissions and our economy.relation to the global economy, there is no general sense of understanding of nor motivation for what an appropriate target would be. NZ's economy can be tailored to produce a low emission target that will result in beneficial change for us as NZers and for the world. Instead of lagging behind the world effort to address climate change, NZ needs to be a leader in creative approaches to the problem. Consideration of ‘green' technologies,
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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 would be a reasonable reduction in annual household consumption?

On page 14 of the Discussion Document, it shows a difference of only $530 annual household cost between the lowest (5%) and highest (40%) target. It is a matter of simple logic that we must opt for the highest target. The problem with how the word "cost" is being used in this process is that it is all one-way i.e. the "cost" to our way of life, our aims, our desire for what is considered 'bigger & better'. The word "cost" works both ways - so, alternatively the Government must address what the cost will be of not reducing our emissions to meet and/or better other countries outputs, what the cost will be of not changing how we live in this world-at-risk. Such a cost is so enormous it is almost impossible to imagine choosing anything other than the 40%. Having encouragement for alternative energy sources, such as solar power, will allow households to reduce emissions without unduly reducing their consumption. Moreover, if there is a concomitant understanding of the reality of the unmanaged effects of continuing our way of life, based on a new, government-supported, government-promoted philosophy of really trying to make NZ "clean & green", a highly worthy aim, households in NZ will want to assist NZ to do its part in helping to mitigate the effects of climate change. At the moment, 'households' generally, remain in a terrifying ignorance of how they can help.

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?

All of them need to be promoted. There seems little point in asking which of these anyone might "think" most likely to occur - we need leadership to forward all initiatives. Helping make cities more accessible by bicycle, increasing public transport usage, developing cheaper solar options and investing in forest sinks are not only all ways to reduce emissions but also give the opportunity to make NZ a more attractive lived environment, creates 'green' jobs and allows us to claw back some of the mana lost in the hypocrisy of the "100% clean green" image so recently lauded (but now abandoned) in tourist advertising. With attention to this aspect of our economy, green tourism is likely to be one of NZ's most lucrative industries with enormous possibilities.

Summary

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

Future uncertainties can only be guessed at - we have considerable certainty about what will occur in the future if we do not take strong action. Cutting emissions through predictable and controllable strategies such as efficiency and reduction targets in government enterprises and industry is the way to go. Looking to reduce the number of ruminants, increase the farming of chickens; solar energy rising to 20%; supporting green investments etc - changing how we see NZ operating in the world. Making this change gradual yet unavoidable through good governmental guidance, because it is only through good governance, in that particular sense, that we can play our responsible part in this world-wide challenge.

Other comments

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

One matter that has not been named is the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement that will obliterate NZ’s autonomy to create policies suited to our specific needs and aims. It is more than a major concern that the Government is continuing to try to sign up for this.

Furthermore, leaving the private sector to take responsibility for making the changes to bring our emissions down sufficiently is a laissez-faire response. So far the Government has not provided strong, clear targets - it must be seen to be taking responsibility to provide leadership in creating radical responses to this crisis. Educating the
public about the effects of not changing how we live is a way to draw NZers together to create options and find appropriate solutions. We are a creative people, we have expertise in science, computer technologies and innovative industries and we need opportunities to get together to offer useful approaches to this problem – the Government must foster these and help to focus on change to provide solutions. We need co-operative, cross-party discussions and agreements, not only for the NZ situation, but also to address the plight of our Pacific neighbours who are currently experiencing destructive climate change effects.