

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



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## 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?

Ambition. New Zealand needs to set an emissions reduction target that demonstrates our ability to lead internationally, especially in the Pacific. As a member state on the UN Security Council, we have a responsibility to show we are serious and provide an example for other countries, otherwise we lose our moral authority to lead.

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?

Our position as a world leader in renewable resource needs to be leveraged. We should focus on transitioning some of our dependence on agriculture to the export of renewable energy technologies, as well as focusing on investment in sustainable transport and housing options, especially given our high immigration and population growth rates. We also desperately need to stop oil exploration and begin intensive reforestation efforts.

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?

The least appropriate level of cost is the one that fails to avoid the 2 degree rise scenario. Failure to reach this target will mean huge loss of life and productivity, so any level of reduction that avoids this scenario is appropriate. However there is a continuum of severity of outcome here rather than a binary, so proportionate effort will produce proportionate results. Implementation of environmental improvements and sustainable technologies will increase tourism and investment in the country, so there efforts are not without positive economic benefits.

Another factor to consider is that New Zealand does not necessarily need an increase in GDP to produce increases in quality of life, which should be the goal of any economy. We are one of the most unequal and inequitable societies in the world, and there are significant gains to be made by rectifying the imbalance between the very wealthy and the fifth of our children that live in poverty. A slowing in the rate of economic growth would actually help this, as gains in GDP are unequally distributed, with the majority of benefits going to those who already have more than they need. The question of annual household consumption then is more complex than providing an average value, we must look at targeting those who produce the most emissions (generally the rich, households in Glen Innes and Porirua contribute very little comparatively) with a proportionate system.

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?

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We are in a position to transition to 100% renewable energy. We are small enough and have the natural and technological resources to make this work. We will not make a large impact directly on global greenhouse gas levels in our reduction efforts, but we can act as a model of things done well for larger players (who have already made more sensible commitments than us).

A sinking lid on fossil fuel-driven cars should be implemented - when older cars age out of the market, government subsidies for new electric cars should be used to stimulate demand, and restrictions of imports of petrol/diesel vehicles should be imposed.

## Summary

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

We are in an age of exponential growth in technology and knowledge. This uncertainty is a worldwide concern, and New Zealand can, by investing in R&D for the technologies that will be required to transition to the new climate economy, can position itself as a major hub of innovation and science.

Any cost uncertainty is surely balanced by the cost eventuality of climate change. We are already seeing health and economic effects in developing countries with less resilience, and New Zealand will not be immune to this, especially given our high pre-existing rates of poverty. Investment in prevention now will avert future economic disaster.

## Other comments

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