

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.

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. 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**

Agree in principle to this objective- but we believe the manner in which the ‘facts’ of New Zealand’s climate profile have been framed in the discussion document point towards the assumption of a government position that is unlikely to be ambitious.

We therefore urge the New Zealand Government to re-frame the way this discussion paper and related media communications collateral are presented. We believe that a less biased, more balanced discussion document is necessary to effectively communicate the actual ‘costs’ of climate change to New Zealanders. Explicitly this would include the impacts (i.e. the social, environmental and economic costs) associated with doing nothing. Similarly the impacts of acting to mitigate the impacts of climate change. We believe that framing the discussions in a more transparent way would lead to the adoption of a genuinely ambitious position, so that when New Zealand is represented in international discussions in Paris later in the year we would be proactive and genuinely signing up to solve the climate change threat.

In summary, we are concerned that:

- 1) the discussion paper is misleading to domestic audiences (for the reasons described above);
- 2) the climate change contribution offered up by NZ in Paris will inevitably miss the necessarily ambitious target and will instead be insufficient and underwhelming (because of the way the discussion paper has been framed);

3) by not striving for an ambitious contribution NZ is failing in its responsibilities to our island neighbours in the south pacific region. Similarly we are not putting our money where our mouth is as far as capitalising on New Zealands international branding of being clean and green.

- **costs and impacts on society are managed appropriately**

Agree in principle to this objective - but feel that the the discussion paper has been framed with a bias that doesn't satisfactorily canvass the full suite of societal costs. As a result it is difficult to provide meaningful feedback about this objective.

We believe that the appropriate mangement of the costs and impacts of climate change on NZ society requires the NZ government to stop subsidising things like fossil fuels and instead redirect monies into environmental initiatives. In such a scenario we strongly believe that the administration and allocation of such a funding stream would render multiple benefits to the growing sustainability of New Zealand, only when in administered in a fully transparent, prudent and ethical manner. We see the potential for the large scale funding of environmental initiatives playing out on a domestic and international platform in the form of enhanced tourism branding (we REALLY ARE as green as we say we are) and increased awareness and incentives for all New Zealanders to do everything they can to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

- **it must guide New Zealand over the long term in the global transition to a low emissions world.**

Agree in principle to this objective- but feel that the the discussion paper has been framed with a bias that renders this objective particulatrly disengenous.

We strongly believe that there are degrees at which individuals and governments can actively contribute to a sucessful trasion to a low emissions world, and that dialogue around this objective is therefore one of scale. In our opinion there are a number of levers (not included in the discussion paper) that the NZ government can and should be drawing upon to support our country in this transition. Some specific examples that we think are important include:

- 1) a recycling system that is far more superior than the current vague and scattered approach to achieving zero-waste status (when compared to other developed countries).
- 2) Incentivise cradle-to-grave product stewardship. This includes responsible packaging, and the phasing out of petroleum based plastics;
- 3) Phasing out of plastic bags;
- 4) divest 80% of fossil fuel by 2050.

Do you agree with these objectives for our contribution?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes – agree in principle with these objectives but are concerned that they can be so easily manipulated by a government economic agenda.
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

1b. what is most important to you?

Living in a safe and sustainable world. We are of the opinion that achieving a full cycle of sustainability is completely in reach.

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 question is another example of the biased framing of this discussion that we are seriously concerned will result in a skewed prioritisation. Our misgivings about the governments intention to strive to meet ANY target are based on the fact that we have not only failed to meet the current target of 5% below 1990 levels by 2020 – we have instead grown the greenhouse emissions by 21% since adopting that target.

We suggest that developing a coherent and balanced overview (and therefore broader community understanding) of the costs of doing nothing AND the benefits of acting proactively to stop and lower our emissions would be more conducive to developing a fair contribution target than the current document.

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?

We feel that the discussion paper doesn't satisfactorily canvass the full suite of "costs". As a result it is difficult to provide meaningful response to this question. We do however offer our view that decreasing consumption as a country would undoubtedly be beneficial. We suggest that a 15% financial cost across the board would be appropriate.

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?

We strongly believe that there are degrees at which individuals and governments can actively contribute to a successful transition to a low emissions world, and that the discussion paper coverage of emerging technologies – and the emphasis on doing nothing until those technologies have been developed is short sighted.

In our opinion there are a number of other opportunities for NZ to reduce its emissions in the short to medium term. We reiterate the examples from our response to Question 1.a below:

- 1) a recycling system that is far more superior than the current vague and scattered approach to achieving zero-waste status (when compared to other developed countries).
- 2) Incentivise cradle-to-grave product stewardship. This includes responsible packaging, and the phasing out of petroleum based plastics;
- 3) Phasing out of plastic bags;
- 4) divest 80% of fossil fuel by 2050.

Summary

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

We don't think these are the relevant questions to be asking. We are concerned that framing "solutions" around the uncertainty of technologies will become an enduring reason to do nothing. We urge the NZ government to implement as many emission reducing and environmentally responsible initiatives as possible in the immediate term with the view that in the future technologies may assist by enabling even greater efficiencies.

Other comments

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

We would like to see the NZ government adopt its own target of 100% renewable energy. In doing so we think the standard of living in New Zealand will increase.

We are of the opinion that everybody has a vested interest in mitigating the impacts of climate change and to this end suggest that opponents to taking a proactive approach must surely have vested interests that they believe provide a short term gain significant enough to disregard the immense benefits of a global long term gain. We implore the NZ government to carefully consider the legacy they are leaving to our generation.

When your submission is complete

Email your completed submission to 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.