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

Copy of your submission

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Objectives for the contribution

Do you agree with these objectives for our contribution?   No

1b. What is most important to you?
(1a. explanation: The outline statements sound good however the detail descriptions lack ambition and make it clear that it is too concerned with not upsetting the status quo of our current economy.)

Survival of Earth as a living planet. Within the context of your 3 points, point 3: guiding NZ to the low emission world, fast.

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?
It is ‘fair’ that all nations make the maximum contribution and look to their world neighbours to cooperatively help achieve them. The economics of this is a blind alley as there will be no survival without it. It has been suggested that a 7% ANNUAL reduction would be needed in NZ, a target of 40% by 2030 is a bare minimum. I would hope the NZ government would take this 40% offer as its initial target, perhaps being open to a higher more ambitious figure yet.
Carbon trading is selfish not fair: this is not a problem we can buy our way out of or put onto other nations to salve. Indeed with our relatively small population for land area we might be seen as offering space to plant up with carbon sinks for more densely populated areas. Instead we should be providing our skills and training to other nations to enable them to also develop at the same time as reducing their output not by making the same mistakes as ‘developed’ nations have by overpopulation, ‘live now forget the future’ attitudes and overproduction of atmospheric carbon alongside destruction of natural carbon sinks.
We in NZ need to work with what the implications are of aiming for this target, eg:
• immediately stop subsidising fossil fuel exploration and use, moving the subsidies instead to carbon reducing opportunities such as electric car charging facilities, electric vehicle use, reinstatement of rail transportation, re-training miners for modern industries etc.
• furthering & exporting technological developments that will reduce atmospheric carbon;
• changing agriculture to a more nationally sustainable methodology and mix reducing food imports, which includes more edible tree plantings on farms not less, and less intensive meat & milk based agriculture changing to added value exports.
• changing forestry to mixed species and growth rate trees to increase the carbon sink value (much current forestry encourages atmospheric carbon through being used with oil based glues) and again refocusing to added value exports.
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? People value living in NZ. The costs of the potential to have a future is relatively low. The difference between the 5% & the 40% target by the estimations provided here is $530 pa, representing less than half of what everyone will have to pay. The payback in better health, a sustainable nation and a future for our children is overwhelming. The reduction of $2k pa for households is totally acceptable and reasonable especially when the returns are highlighted.

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 those outlined are very likely to occur and should be supported alongside others. Of those listed, the most likely to occur is that of improved health and well being for both humans and the environment, however the most recognised and important for NZ, is likely to be the reduced vulnerability to international fossil fuel price changes; we need to be self sustainable. The West Coast miners do not need a dead end future underground helping the world drown in the seas of its own making. They want a worthwhile future for themselves and their children and already demonstrate they are prepared to work hard for that future: provide the industry for them to move to. They would see this as a very welcome and notable change. The whole of NZs housing (and other buildings!) with very few justifiably award winning exceptions, are in need of radical insulation upgrades benefitting both their occupants and the environment. This will create employment across the whole country in the immediate short term as the improvements are carried out. In the medium term, further employment is created as new materials, methods and building designs are developed. Every household in NZ would notice this change.

Summary

5. How should New Zealand take into account the future uncertainties of technologies and costs when setting its target? Do not be risk averse and see this as an opportunity for NZ to showcase its pioneer spirit leading the way on technology development and production. Build on the existing strengths and examples and do not allow size in any way limit ambition or potential. The world has to follow as there is no way out of addressing the issue of climate change: it this we are all in it together. We have the creative nation, the universities & scientists and an ideal location. We can offer further opportunities worldwide to attract more scientists and developers to work collaboratively and imaginatively producing future technologies.

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain. NZ has led the world in being nuclear free. It can lead the world in taking on ambitious targets for carbon reduction and showing how it can be achieved.