

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? Yes

1b. What is most important to you?

The third statement: "it must guide New Zealand over the long term in the global transition to a low emissions world."

That is we need an agreed plan that results in us taking effective action in reducing the main sources of our controllable emissions.

This should also include investment into R&D and existing green technologies, to help with reducing our carbon footprint further.

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?

I think a single target is very difficult to define considering the wide range of contributing emission sources.

However if we should use a single number then the target needs to be based upon a rational understanding of the sources of our emissions and our potential to modify them.

And we should consider that the level of target may not be a linear annual reduction, as there may be a lead time towards implementation of our emission reduction strategies.

There are also factors (such as our high levels of hydroelectric power useage) that make it harder for us to make the easy gains of other industrial countries - so we should not worry overly if we do not have an initially comparable target level.

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?

7-10% below 1990.

Caveats:

Level of cost should be scale-able against the living wage. Those at higher incomes can afford a higher cost than those at the lowest wages. Putting a single figure for everyone is not fair for those who struggle already.

The risk/cost of not taking action needs to be looked at as well. E.g. the cost of future climate change related natural weather events vs. putting that money into reducing emissions.

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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?

Priority as outlined:

1. Greater investment into renewable electricity generation sources.
2. Transition to a low carbon economy - for independence from carbon fossil fuels.

Summary

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

Considering the increasing cost of oil/fossil fuels over the long term we would be better off getting off that cost curve and into renewable energy sources as quickly as possible. Also we need to reduce our dependence on our national electricity grid by adding local independent energy generation methods. e.g. solar panels on houses, local windfarms, etc. We should be looking into investing into new potential sources of clean energy and developing them further. E.g. new technology companies such as Powerhousewind.

Other comments

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

We need to seriously consider reducing agriculture production. Yes it affects our economy and reduction needs to be undertaken carefully.

However none of the reduction strategies given directly reduce our main source of emissions (Agriculture). Increased levels of dairy farming negatively affect water resources and has reduced the efficiency of land use (area per kg of food raised) - in addition to raising emissions levels. Smaller animals and a greater percentage of crop farming need to be part of emissions reduction in the Agriculture sector - in addition to the agriculture mitigation biotechnologies being investigated.

Also biofuels are not the best technology for investment. They take land use away from food crops & aren't the best energy density. Electric vehicles are more energy efficient. Solar & wind power investment would be a better use for the money.

Lastly we should introduce an emission target for vehicles as part of their WoF. It can be reasonably generous to begin with considering the average age of our vehicle fleet. At least it would cut down the number of problem vehicles that have been neglected/have exhaust problems. It would help visibly signal NZ's commitment to emissions reduction.