To whom it may concern,

It is hard to think of a more serious issue for us, and our grandchildren, than climate change. A serious issue calls for a serious response and it is becoming very clear what a serious response would look like.

First, it is a commitment to reduce fossil fuel use and limit global warming to below 2 degrees. This involves paying for the burning of carbon and keeping most fossil fuel reserves in the ground.

Secondly, it means a serious commitment to developing and using alternative energy sources. This is the sort of growth that is honestly compatible with a healthy and productive future, one that will provide economic benefits and jobs, and protect us from the severe weather events and environmental pollution evident already from climate change.

Thirdly, a serious issue calls for urgent action. Prevention of destructive consequences is becoming harder and harder the more we delay.
And as the IEA says 'delaying action is a false economy.'

I would like our government to take the above commitments seriously because on all three counts there seems to be little progress.

I'd like to see the government commit to zero carbon emissions by 2050 and to firmly strengthen the emissions trading scheme.
I'd like to see no more coal mining and a fast transition out of oil and gas. I'd like to see greater encouragement for wind, solar and wave power development. I'd like to see a true value placed on public transport and money transferred from roads to rail. I'd like to see continued research into the mitigation of emissions from agriculture. And I'd like to see a clear step by step plan towards all the points above.

In Paris, I'd like to see New Zealand support any moves that would help transfer new technologies to developing countries, perhaps, in practice, with a particular emphasis on the Pacific countries most affected already by climate change.

In a serious situation most of us expect leaders to lead. Slow following is far from admirable and I'd like to be able to think that the New Zealand government - as it has often been in the past - is one that has a responsible, global view with our well-being at the centre of it.
It is hard to have faith that the present government has a serious and genuine commitment to confronting global warming, just as it is hard to have faith in this short, fast consultation process. However this is a serious and genuine submission, or should I say a plea, because so much, for all of us, depends on it.

Yours sincerely,
Dinah Hawken