

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

Name	Lesley Hawkins
Organisation (if applicable)	
Address	████████████████████
Telephone	████████
Email	████████████████████

Objectives for the contribution

I am endorsing in my answers below the submission presented by Ora Taio, the climate change and health council and have added in some of my own thoughts throughout this submission.

I work as a GP in Gisborne.

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
- costs and impacts on society are managed appropriately
- it must guide New Zealand over the long term in the global transition to a low emissions world.
- Do you agree with these objectives for our contribution?

I agree we need a fair and ambitious contribution. It needs to be ambitious in order to have any hope of limiting the global temperature rise to 2 degrees.

I therefore urge the government to re-word and prioritise the proposed objectives for the INDC as follows:

- **1. It must guide New Zealand's timely transition to a zero emission economy and society**

The top priority is for carbon emissions to peak within this government's term followed by annual reductions. INDC targets must include all-sector actions that centralise health and fairness, future-proof our economy, build on our clean energy strengths, improve housing and transform transport, resulting in a resilient, fair and healthy zero carbon economy and society by 2050. The need for urgent transition is real but must not compromise fairness across our society. Agricultural greenhouse pollutants must also reduce through agricultural diversification technology. As these pollutants make up 48% of our carbon emissions this could impact hugely on the farming sector. It will be essential for any government to find ways to spread the load across our society in order to avoid conflict between town and country sectors.

2. It is a fair and ambitious contribution that meets our globally assessed responsibilities

Secondly, NZ's contribution must be fair, ambitious, credible and sufficient – most importantly as an international citizen helping stay within the safe global carbon dioxide emissions budget. NZ's economy relies on world climate cooperation. We are also influential. Our contributions must therefore be convincing and not discourage stronger commitments by other nations.

NZ needs to lead the way in setting this target in much the same way that we have led the world in granting women the vote and more recently banning nuclear weapons in our country. Transitioning the world to become low in carbon emissions is the biggest challenge facing humanity in the next 100 years.

• 3. Costs and benefits need to be distributed fairly within New Zealand and between countries

Healthy people depend on a healthy climate – we can't afford not to take real climate action. Ambitious climate action is the best investment in our future. The costs of climate change are much greater than the costs of responsible action – and climate change will affect our most vulnerable households the most. The important health gains ('mitigation co-benefits') from climate action must be included in the calculations. We need to share the costs and benefits of action fairly, both between countries and within New Zealand.

In my work as a GP I encourage people to incorporate exercise into their daily lives and to eat more healthily. Gearing up for climate change can help to bring about both.

The need to change to a low carbon economy will necessitate more walking and cycling as primary transport. There will also be increased opportunity \necessity for sharing private transport or using public transport. An accompanying benefit of reducing carbon emissions is the fostering of community spirit as we depend on each other more for our day to day needs. This can only be good for general health and reduction in loneliness – one of our biggest health issues.

Transitioning to a more localised food production encourages a reduced carbon footprint and strengthens community networking. Community gardens similarly increase local co-operation and raises community resilience in the face of climate change and can have the health benefit of exercise and healthier eating.

1b. What is most important to you?

Most important to me is preserving a healthy environment for future generations. Without this there is no future. The costs of doing very little are far greater than the costs of doing a lot. We need to focus kiwi ingenuity on finding ways to a low carbon economy by smart tech solutions. An advantage of our small size and isolation is that our sense of self-reliance and mutual co-operation can be encouraged. Co-operation on a global scale is at the moment much more important than competition. The biggest barrier to transition is the political will to make change. Our leaders need to educate and lead by example. This issue is more important than the need for economic growth.

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?

Current and future human wellbeing depends upon not exceeding our global carbon budget. We

need to call for a global zero carbon target before 2050 – and NZ needs to demonstrate the annual, credible steps needed from 2015 to reach this target well before 2050. Further, we need to keep up with other wealthy nations in pledging at least 40% cuts in our gross domestic greenhouse gas emissions compared with 1990 emissions, by 2030, towards at least 95% by 2050.

Importantly, the world has five times the amount of fossil fuels in reserve as we can afford to burn. We need to immediately commit to zero new fossil fuel exploration and phase out existing extraction in the next decade.

Our INDC needs to also commit to the cross-party agreement and national policies needed to achieve these targets. A national carbon target needs to be beyond politics as the longterm view is what is needed and climate change policy can not be based on the 3 year election cycle.

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?

Costs and benefits need to be distributed fairly within New Zealand and between countries

Healthy people depend on a healthy climate – we can't afford not to take real climate action. Ambitious climate action is the best investment in our future. The costs of climate change are much greater than the costs of responsible action – and climate change will affect our most

vulnerable households the most. The important health gains ('mitigation co-benefits') from climate action must be included in the calculations. We need to share the costs and benefits of action fairly, both between countries and within New Zealand.

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?

The costs of climate inaction far exceed the costs of taking action and we need to account for this in climate calculations. The sooner we act, the more likely we will see overall gains not costs. Encouragingly, we can significantly improve short- and medium-term health and equity ('mitigation co-benefits') – especially by shifting from cars to active and public transport; better housing energy efficiency; climate-friendly home heating; reducing red meat and dairy intake; phasing out coal and lignite mining. NZ must include these co-benefits when calculating costs and benefits of action. A fair transition means policy designed to especially support changes by vulnerable households.

The transition to low carbon needs to occur more urgently at a personal and business\place of work level. There needs to be, community, business and school level education for change in a more practical, incentivised and if necessary proscriptive way. Unfortunately loss of much of our public broadcasting makes this communication more difficult. Local councils need strong guidelines for this urgent problem – it is not an optional extra but needs to be central to all policy development. It is not until concern for climate change and enthusiasm for meeting the challenge becomes the norm – ie a change in the public psyche - that real change will be effected. Changing what each individual does in their daily living (eg what they eat, how they travel and how far, how much energy they consume, how much they buy) is what will make the biggest difference. Opportunities for this are endless but there is a critical mass of change that needs to occur before snowballing positive change will follow.

The document focuses heavily on agriculture, but half of our emissions are long-lived carbon dioxide from transport, housing and other energy use which have to rapidly reduce to zero. We already have the technology and policy ideas to reduce these emissions – we need the cross-party political will to put them in place. We will also need ultimately to reduce our economic reliance on ruminant livestock farming. Diversifying is also much healthier for sustaining our ecosystems.

Summary

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

The precautionary principle compels us to act now. Risks of further delay are very high, while we have good certainty about potential short to medium term gains of well-designed emissions reductions policies. If we leave our run on lowering carbon emissions too late it will be too late to prevent the global temperature rise beyond 2 degrees and the subsequent climatic catastrophe with eventual inadequate food and water supply and global international conflict.

Other comments

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

Health and wellbeing needs to be at the heart of the government's climate action. I urge:

- **a Parliamentary climate change and health summit ;**

- **health sector leadership on mitigation and adapting to locked-in climate impacts on health with community wide education for resilience and self sufficiency development.**

- **involvement of public health expertise;**

- **Health (including equity) Impact Assessment (HIA) routinely used to inform key climate-relevant policies; and**

- **climate commitments that protect and promote health in the climate-vulnerable Pacific regions.**

- **Positive fostering of transitional change at a community level. Funding available for community gardens, timebanks, safe city cycleways, cycle sharing, incentives for recycling, continued funding for warming houses, better rates of payment from the power companies for surplus solar power back to the individuals who generate it.**

Please note that action to reduce the impact on climate change protects and can improve our health.

Please make sure that the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC):

- **(i) includes health and fairness in the assessment of costs and benefits**

- **(ii) commits to a global and NZ zero 2050 carbon target with annual steps to get there**

- **(iii) pledges at least 40% cuts by 2030 in our gross domestic greenhouse gas emissions compared with 1990, towards at least 95% by 2050**

- **(iv) places an immediate moratorium on fossil fuel exploration, and pledges to phase out existing extraction in the next decade**

- **(v) includes credible cross-party plans in the INDC, with a legislated independent Climate Commission to ensure NZ meets its targets and stays within the global carbon budget. The top priority is for carbon emissions to peak within this government's term followed by annual**

reductions. INDC targets must include all-sector actions that centralise health and fairness, future-proof our economy, build on our clean energy strengths, improve housing and transform transport, resulting in a resilient, fair and healthy zero carbon economy and society by 2050. Agricultural greenhouse pollutants must also reduce through agricultural diversification then technology.