

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



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## Contact information

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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?

I have following reservations /qualifications to my answer to 1a: I feel that the questions on this submission form are framed in a way that is biased towards a 'business as usual approach' for NZ and avoids facing up to the huge implications of taking the issue of climate change seriously. I believe NZ needs to take a leadership approach to developing alternative renewable sources of energy and developing the infrastructure to enable NZers to reduce their emissions as part of our responsibility of being global citizens in a time of climate crisis.

International climate scientists advise that there is a budget of fossil fuel carbon that can be emitted while still keeping global temperatures below a 2 degC rise. NZs per capita share or budget is 620 million tons of fossil fuel carbon. To stay within that budget, we need to have a straight line reduction to zero by 2050. This is a fair and equitable target for NZ, and it is the right thing for us to do to meet our global obligations. Any contribution over and above that to help our less wealthy neighbours would be also be fair as we have benefited from our past emissions. This is the target that Denmark has allocated, and if Denmark, with less available renewable resources, can do it, NZ can do it.

Regarding the issues of managing the costs and impacts on society - given the irreversible consequences of climate change, I think it is better for us all as global citizens to make the required changes in our lifestyles and energy sources now, rather than pay the price later and impose the costs of this on our future generations. Already huge damage is being done to animal species and the natural environment, and natural/human-driven climate change disasters are becoming commonplace.

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?

NZ needs to contribute to a global zero carbon emissions target and commit to a pathway towards zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 or earlier (alongside reductions in other greenhouse gases). Each sector of the economy needs to have targets set and a plan to achieve these, so that as a nation we can achieve zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050. Just like in other times in our past there has to be step changes (e.g. as was done during WW2, the 1983 neo-liberal reforms etc). Government needs to take a strong lead in committing to these targets and bringing all sectors of our economy into line to achieve these. The government also needs to strengthen our local and regional economy and reduce our dependence on a global export economy.

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

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would be a reasonable reduction in annual household consumption?

This is a stupid question and an example of the bias inherent in this questionnaire - why not an increase in household consumption as a result of a smarter green economy. There is also a cost in doing nothing, it is not smart to export from our economy \$51 billion dollars as tradable emission units, (as is proposed to be done to avoid real reductions in actual emissions), and still be faced with the need to reduce our own emissions.

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?

Electrical generation should be totally renewable by 2020 and the electrical industry should be generated by solar and wind power.

The transport sector - there should be no new motorways built, and instead a real push on public transport in cities, a real disincentive for urban sprawl throughout the country,

The introduction of electric vehicles should be encouraged.

I think it is critical that all political parties make an agreement to addressing climate change so that we reduce our fossil fuels to zero. In this way the changes can be sustained in a planned systematic way and that business can rapidly and confidently adjust to and seize the new opportunities. An independent Climate Commission needs to be established to provide advice and assist in setting goals /develop a plan for our country to reduce emissions and make the changes necessary to minimise impact on the environment. We need to establish a climate law that holds the government accountable for reducing emissions.

## Summary

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

The target of zero carbon emissions from fossil fuels world wide is achievable with currently available technology. Future technology will only make achieving this target easier . All that is needed is the political will to make this happen. At the same time there needs to be an aggressive carbon sequestration happening, ie. enhancing the carbon storing properties of our pastures and extensive permanent reforestation.

## Other comments

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

Follow the example of countries like Denmark which is comparable to NZ and which has taken a strong stand on reducing their carbon emissions. NZ has demonstrated in the past that it can be a world leader in important global issues (e.g. women getting the vote, nuclear free and independent Pacific) - why cant we also be a world leader in reducing emissions and meeting our global obligations? As a nation we are much better placed than many other countries to meet our obligations and make a global contribution. Indeed it is embarrassing that that this government has NZ special pleading (whining) at international forums to opt out of our obligations.

I call on the government to make meaningful policy changes that will start cutting New Zealand's emissions during this term of government and develop a credible action plan to meet New Zealand's targets.