

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



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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?

I would like to see some redrafting of the objectives. I am disappointed with the framing of the objectives within a context of doing as little as we can to 'appear' to be pulling our weight globally. We have an opportunity, through our reputation in the world as an innovative and principled nation, to take leadership in a principle-based approach to our response to climate change, the world's most pressing problem.

I can agree with objective 1, but I don't agree that we should be offering an excuse of "unique national circumstances" for doing little or nothing (as we are currently).

The second objective comes from a flawed economic argument. If we, and the world as a whole, can't "afford" action now, there will be no economy to look after in the future. However I agree that economic forces could be used to accelerate a move away from carbon polluting activities. Unfortunately our current policy settings have New Zealand going in exactly the wrong direction, through initiatives such as encouraging petrol-chemical exploration. We need a strong nudge in the right direction if we are going to rely on the market to help.

Objective 3 notes the need for our contribution to guide New Zealand over the "long term". This terminology does not carry a sense of urgency for real meaningful action now. A competitive New Zealand is not relevant in a world trying of cope with a 4 degree plus warming.

It is most important that we set some serious goals (e.g. carbon 0 by 2030) and actually get started on a plan to take us there. For the sake of our children and grand children our shameful performance so far must not be allowed to continue.

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 don't think the nature of New Zealand's emissions and economy should influence the setting of our carbon reduction target. The continuing intensification of farming has clearly exacerbated the nitrous oxide and methane emissions, but it has also led to unacceptable levels of pollution of our rivers and lakes. The current industrialisation of dairy production is not compatible with the 'clean and green' image New Zealand likes to claim. The reliance on imported palm kernel (2.2 Million tonnes in 2014) is a further demonstration that this production is not environmentally sustainable.

Other countries will also have "unique circumstances". Let us not be the one to play that card.

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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?

We are all going to have to move to a lower consumption model if the planet is to survive. Rather than ask what is a reasonable reduction in consumption we should be getting on with doing what is necessary to save the planet. By taking a leadership role (just as New Zealand did in the nuclear debate) we can show others, including the major powers (and polluters), the direction to take.

At the very least New Zealand should be aiming for a 40% reduction in GHG by 2030.

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?

With the appropriate incentives we could see a rapid uptake of electric vehicles. This could be done through placing a more realistic price on the use of carbon based fuels. It has been reported that many car owners already replace their vehicles every 2 to 5 years. Give them a push towards replacing with electric vehicles. A more realistic price on carbon would have already put freight back on to railways, thus reducing carbon fuel use. Tax the polluters.

If the dairying industry had been paying a reasonable price for their GHG pollution we would not have seen the growth of unsustainable practices. People have been encouraged into intensification through serious underpricing of resources. This must be reversed.

Forestry is only going to be useful if there are policy settings that ensure not only additional plantings, but guarantee replanting of harvested forests.

Experience has shown that the development of biofuels needs to be carefully managed to ensure a nett gain for the environment.

Summary

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

New Zealand should not use the future uncertainties of technologies as an excuse to put in a low target.

Other comments

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

I am embarrassed and ashamed by New Zealand's disappointing lack of action to address climate change. It is hard to understand why our Government feels it is OK to ignore the world's most pressing catastrophe. What will the Ministers tell their grandchildren about their part in the impending disaster? The Government must lead in promoting a positive direction for climate change action, not following populous sentiment.

The apparently low-key approach to this consultation doesn't bode well. The Government is spending \$26 million on consultation for a flag, while it would seem they are reluctant to consult at all on the world's most serious

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problem. The Government's priorities are hard to fathom.

I can only hope that the very strong messages relayed at the meetings around the country by thousands of deeply concerned citizens are taken notice of, and the appropriate Ministers of the Crown are brave enough to admit their error, and help save the planet, not sink it.