

# 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? No

1b. What is most important to you?

Clean air, fresh water and a long term environmentally sustainable future for me, my family, and friends. The Objectives above are only a starting point and don't go far enough.

Why are significant transport related measures not being promoted more strongly? Transport accounts for 17% of emissions. The emphasis in Box 9 of Emerging technologies does not include other measures needed to incentivise planning. For example, Greater Wellington Regional Council and NZTA are promoting the use of diesel hybrid buses as replacements for 100% electric powered trolley buses. This transfer to a higher emission public transport fleet shouldn't proceed without penalty or compensatory measures.

The suggested exemption of electric vehicles should be stronger and should include more support for electric powered public transport modes (rail and trolley buses).

The NZTA programme of "Roads of National Significance" is geared towards more and faster fossil fuel powered vehicles on the roads. Faster travel means higher emission rates. Prioritising roads, especially highways, over public transport infrastructure, creates bigger long term problems.

Planning rules for transport developments need to include a greater weighting of contributions to GHG emissions. Higher levies should be imposed on fossil fuel powered vehicles including diesels, and the money fund alternative energy research. Electric trolley buses should be encouraged through financial incentives.

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?

We can't instantly stop agricultural emissions. We must however be seen to make much stronger efforts to deal with emissions from transport, energy and industry sectors if we wish to maintain any semblance of credible "100% Pure" branding for agriculture, tourism and film-making. A low target would be an economic risk. Similarly, a high target with no visible action would also be an economic and environmental risk.

We need to be seen to do something more about raising agricultural standards, particularly in relation to "dirty dairying", clean (or dirty) rivers, and environmentally sustainable dairying. Research into, and encouraging, once daily milking, and precision fertiliser use need more support and more communications about the benefits. The work of University of Otago's Sustainability Dashboard for improving financial returns on whole of life tracked agricultural products needs more support.

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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?

If we don't take strong enough action we risk losing our clean green branding advantage for agriculture, tourism and film-making. We also risk irreversible damage to the environment that provides New Zealand's income.

Central and local government should be the first channels for action, and should work with businesses to ensure they either reduce their emissions, pollution and waste products, or pay for their inaction. For example, fast food retailers should ensure minimum waste and pay for disposal if containers aren't biodegradable. Industry audits should be organised and paid for by industry for energy use and waste disposal. Agencies like EECA should advise on standards. As with the Green Building Standards, if businesses don't meet a standard they should pay. Energy conservation measures should save the businesses money so it should be promoted as a responsible win:win for good businesses.

The issue isn't just cost but who pays. Those who have the lowest standard of living, and the lowest emissions rate, should pay the least.

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?

Transport, energy, and industry. Fonterra should phase out of coal powered services, sooner rather than later. No new coal mines should be approved. Government should invest in alternative energy development and network support. This should include making it easier to return excess home generated power to the grid e.g. from home based solar power generation, and support for re-charging stations for electric vehicles. Local authorities should be encouraged to invest in electric bus systems rather than diesel buses.

## Summary

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

If too low a target is set industry won't be motivated to invest in technology development. Current research funds such as the Marden Fund and organisations like Callaghan Innovation should prioritise alternative energy. Bureaucratic barriers should be removed such as those that prevented a tidal wave generation company from succeeding in New Zealand. Education for all New Zealanders, particularly businesses including agriculture should be amped up. Find good cases and share the information. Buy the rights if necessary.

## Other comments

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

Investment in coastal projects e.g. extending Wellington's airport runway, should be slowed down while better research and modelling on impacts of sea level rises and extreme weather events is completed. NASA has stated that the Antarctic Larsen B ice shelf will melt within five years. This is now unavoidable. While this may only have a small impact on sea levels directly, the temperature that are causing its demise show the likely increasingly climatic factors resulting in damage coastal infrastructure. More temperature variability is resulting in more floods and hurricanes and coastal erosion. There is no point in investing in infrastructure that doesn't last and can't be used.

Any re-visiting of the Resource Management Act, or other legislative instruments, should emphasise the need to plan for foreseeable destructive events. Developers and central and local authorities should have a duty to plan for, and take necessary steps, to ensure their actions don't impact negatively on others in business and communities.

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Similarly to the idea of "polluter pays", developers should be responsible for the consequences of their actions. Emitters should either emit less or pay more. To make this fair, people should have alternative choices, for example using public transport instead of a private car is a fair choice if the public transport is available and is accessible.