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

Copy of your submission

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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?
The 3rd bullet point is most important: we must aim for an ambitious target that will guide New Zealand over the long term. The approach of reducing emissions has to be taken over a long term but if we set too low a target now then we will end up with too much to make up for in the long run. I think a target of 40% is fair and ambitious and setting this target now will give us more time to get there than suddenly realising beyond 2020 that we have done too little. If we set a target of 5% and reach that target then I am sure we will stop trying, sit back admiring our achievement rather than striving to do more.

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 think that we are all aware of how important climate change is. If we are not careful about how we handle climate change then in the very long term the economy of a country will pale into insignificance as our biggest challenge will be just survival. The future economy of New Zealand should be more aligned with industries and income generation which result in lower greenhouse gas emissions. I believe the New Zealand government should be more focused on ensuring we have a safe world to live in with an abundance of food, clean water and a thriving natural environment and it is responsible to steer the economy in a direction that allows us to get there.

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?
The table on page 14 suggests that with the 5% target a household will be $1270 worse off than if there were no target and $1800 worse off if there was a 40% target. I’d happily pay $530 a year more to achieve a 40% below 1990 targets. $530 for 8 x lower emissions? Seems like a no brainer to me.
I don’t think the government has a good understanding of the costs here. I believe the question you should be asking yourself is how much will it cost us in the long run if we DO NOTHING. Telling the general public that setting ambitious targets for climate control will hurt their pocket seems quite devious.

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?
There is no public transport in the area I live even though there is a decent population. I hope we will reach 90%
renewable energy but see no incentive from the government for this unless there is money to be made for them or big industry. Why is there still no help/incentive for New Zealanders installing private solar hot water, PV or wind generation? New Zealand's agriculture industry seems to be unbalanced. We have too much methane producing livestock compared to more low emission crops and produce. I'd hate to think the government is encouraging and promoting development of industries which produce considerably more emissions. If agriculture is so important to New Zealand's economy then at least make this agriculture climate friendly, not detrimental. We should be planting more forests - at least as quickly as we are harvesting existing forest.

Summary

5. How should New Zealand take into account the future uncertainties of technologies and costs when setting its target?
Life is uncertain. I think using the uncertainty of technology and costs is an excuse in justifying a lower target. I am an engineer and am quite aware of how technology can be advanced rapidly and successfully if sufficient funding is provided.

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.
New Zealand is a beautiful country and as the world apparently gets smaller and travel becomes easier more people come to visit our country. Tourism is increasing which is great. But if we continue down the path of using our countryside and natural landscapes to make money rather than spending money to look after what we have then our tourism industry and our reputation will disappear. Imagine 20 years from now a winter with no ski field able to operate as global warming has caused snow levels to be so high our mountains are snow free year round. This is the reality if we don't start to take ambitious steps forward with our climate targets.