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

Copy of your submission

Contact information

Name   Pauline Kroef

Organisation (if applicable)

Address

Phone

Email

Objectives for the contribution

Do you agree with these objectives for our contribution?  No

1b. What is most important to you?
The most important objective is to set an ambitious target worthy of our status as a clean green country. An ambitious target that is worthy of our history as a country that leads in environmentally responsible and sustainable policy.

I do not agree with the above objective regarding costs and impact on society as the focus is on the costs of mitigation without reference to the enormous cost and impact on our planet and therefore to society if we fail to act or set ambitious targets.

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?
Our target should be 40%. New Zealand is in a position to set such a target because of our high level of renewable electricity production. A transition to electric motoring would therefore enable significant decreases in CO2 emissions.

We should not excuse ourselves from setting ambitious targets simply because our economy relies on dairying and other ruminant livestock whose methane emissions we can not yet control. Although methane is a potent greenhouse gas, research by Victoria University and others shows that taking action today on emissions of short-lived climate pollutants will have relatively little impact on peak warming, unless carbon dioxide emissions are reduced at the same time.

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 would be a reasonable reduction in annual household consumption?
What is not adequately considered in the discussion document is the cost of not setting a target of 40% or more. This would be far far greater than the costs outlined. Also our governments own Infometrics study found that a 40% emissions target would reduce GDP growth by 2030 by only 0.1% from 2.2% to 2.1%.

The document and estimated costs also fails to adequately consider the economic gains that would ensue from a transition to renewable technologies.. This glaring omission renders the estimated costs erroneous and misleading.
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? As mentioned previously in my submission encouraging the transition to an electric car fleet should be a priority.

Summary

5. How should New Zealand take into account the future uncertainties of technologies and costs when setting its target? If we fail to act decisively and ambitiously the future will surely be one of unparalleled uncertainty and enormous cost. This cost will be measured in economic terms but more importantly in terms of life as our biosphere becomes less inhabitable with consequent accelerating competition for dwindling resources.

The new technologies that will power our sustainable future are already rapidly becoming available. For example the cost of solar panels has declined 80% since 2008 and is predicted to decrease 40% in the next 2 years. The future technology costs are far less uncertain than the costs of not developing them. New Zealand should not get left behind in the global rush to benefit economies from these renewable technologies. The certainty is that we must reach for these new technologies or face a very bleak future.

Other comments

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