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

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Contact information

Name   C Law

Organisation (if applicable)

Address

Telephone

Email

Objectives for the contribution

Do you agree with these objectives for our contribution?   Yes

1b. What is most important to you?
All three are equally important. It should also be clearly stated that any target (and associated actions to achieve it) need to be both verifiable and effective.

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 is a developed first world country that has a unique greenhouse gas footprint that is dominated by agriculture. and is an advantageous position with regard to access to sources of renewable energy. A fair contribution should consider per capita contribution to climate change just as much as the total national contribution. Statements identifying the relatively minor contribution of NZ to total global emissions overlook the fact that our per capita emissions are some of the highest globally . A fair contribution, for a country with the dual advantages of being both developed (and therefore reasonably wealthy), and having access to large sources of renewable energy, would be to reduce per capita emissions at least to average global values, and preferably (in being ambitious) lower than average.

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?
It will cost New Zealanders, as it will all global residents, but the difficulties & challenges associated with this cost will be less than that of future impacts if no action is taken. The NZ public needs to be made more aware of the impacts of emissions overseas as well as nationally. The costs presented in the consultation document appear to be a low proportion of current household consumption and therefore reasonable; furthermore the cost of the increase in target from 5 to10% appears to be so small ($30/year) that it would be remiss not to go for 10%, particularly considering that achieving the additional 5% will cost more in the future and that the target should be as ambitious as possible.

4. Of the opportunities for New Zealand to reduce its emissions (as outlined on page 15 of the discussion
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doctorate), which do you think are the most likely to occur, or be most important for New Zealand? Renewables still represents an an important option; just because NZ currently has 80% of its energy supply from renewables this does not rule out achieving 100%; granted the last 20% may be harder to achieve & more expensive, but there are benefits of generating a portfolio of different renewable energy sources that will also benefit technology development & associated economic development, decentralisation of power supply and associated employment, and reduced reliance on foreign/international fuel supply and the associated costs & hazards. Greater investment in reduction of domestic fuel costs via insulation and upgrading of buildings with improved energy efficiency (& use of renewables), seems a no-brainer due to the additional benefits to health & associated savings in healthcare. Similarly a reduction in transportation fuel costs, achieved by a switch to hybrids & electric vehicles that are supplied by renewables. Investment in public transport also has additional benefits beyond meeting climate change targets. It is important to include the additional (non-climate change) benefits & expenses for any option, so that the real actual national costs are considered.

Summary

5. How should New Zealand take into account the future uncertainties of technologies and costs when setting its target?
NZ needs to build on its investments in agricultural research, forestry and renewables, such as hydropower & geothermal, where it already has a leading edge and can export its technology whilst benefiting from its implementation to reduce emissions.

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.
NZ needs to lead by example, not only in relation to its new role on the UN Security Council (and climate is increasingly a security issue), but as a recognised world leader on environmental issues.