

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



Copy of your submission

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?

The most important thing is to prevent catastrophic warming by quickly transitioning to zero emissions.

I disagree with the objectives, because we should not be thinking about "what is fair", but what is the right thing to do for the future of the planet.

Our emissions have been nothing but unfair so far - our per capita emissions are very high.

The costs of cutting emissions will be tiny compared with the impacts. I do believe the contribution should guide us to a low emissions world - but this is NOT a long term transition. It has to happen quickly.

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 economy and natural resources are outstanding on a world scale. We have low population, high average wealth, a great ability to grow plants and outstanding renewable electricity opportunities. This means that we should be targeting zero emissions sooner than most other countries, because we have a greater ability to do so.

It is just plain wrong to suggest that our high agricultural emissions can't be cut. We can grow things other than grass, and produce other things than dairy, and this is what we have to do. Yes, dairy produces a lot of money for New Zealand. But NO, that doesn't mean the industry gets a free pass to cause climate change.

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 costs of preventing warming will be far lower than the costs of the warming itself. We should not be focussed on dollar amounts. We should do what is necessary to prevent calamity for future generations.

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?

All of those opportunities are good. But there are many more opportunities available to us.

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Summary

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

NZ should invest in clean technologies, and ideally be a leader in these technologies. Of course we would love someone to come up with a scalable immediately useable carbon sequestration technology, but we certainly should not be relying on it. At the moment the best we probably have is trees.

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.
Climate change is the gravest threat to humans, and most other species on this Earth. This country needs to take a leadership role, and be part of the solution. Figure 1 says it all. The goal is needs to be ZERO emissions if we are to have a good chance of preventing the Earth warming above 2 degrees. It is imperative that we do this, otherwise we will cause mass extinction, and will have created a very unpleasant place for future generations.

Some things to start with:

A scheme such as a tax or a fee and dividend system to be used (inside NZ, or with other countries) would be good. The fee or tax on emissions must represent the long-term cost of emissions, and apply to all industries. This will lead to the market causing some positive changes. Imports will also have fees based on the likely emissions of production. The dividend will go to all New Zealanders, or if a tax is used, that tax could be used to grow trees, or invest in clean technology.

Invest heavily in reforestation.

Stop all fossil fuel extraction.

Close down Tiwai point - which will cut direct emissions, and freeing up the electricity will mean than many of the fossil fuel burning power generation can be closed down.

Remove GST on clean technologies such as solar panels, insulation, home batteries, electric cars.

Set up fast charge stations along main highways so electric cars can be taken long distances with ease.

Produce biofuel from algae and radiata pine to fuel heavy vehicle use.

Don't include NZ in the TPPA, as we can't have companies dictate the decisions we make.