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

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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?
Points 1 and 3 are agreeable, but point 2 above is irrelevant. Costs an impacts need to be measured against predicted disastrous and catastrophic consequences of failing to reduce greenhouse gases to well below 1990 levels very quickly. What is the cost of a category 5 cyclone hitting Auckland? What is the cost of a 2m sea level rise on our sea port infrastructure, railways, and roads. A 2m sea level rise will cause the relocation of whole cities, seaports, and railways. And if the oceans are rising that fast they will likely not stop rising until they get to 6m or worse.
We as a nation have to remove limitations from our thinking. Not asking what we can reasonably afford. Instead asking what is feasibly possible - costs be damned.

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?
Irrelevant question. Ultimately we will be replacing our entire transportation sector with new electric (or renewable fueled) machines. We will be replacing all fossil fuel electrical generation with renewable generation. The target is Net Zero. That is Fair. Fair is NZ give back to the world intelligent inventions and basic science that helps the rest of the world to meet these targets too. We have a fair debt to repay the world for the first rate lifestyle we have enjoyed.

Our target will be to be 100% renewable on electrical generation. 50% renewable on transportation. 75% improvement in buildings energy efficiency. 75% reduction of methane and nitrous oxide from agriculture. 100% increase in organic carbon sequestration by trees & soils - all by 2020. This is achievable without much pain or sacrifice. It will even likely be a boost to all effected business sectors.

We will be building energy projects like wind farms, solar farms/ plants, geothermal plants, wave power generation farms, and rubbish burning plants with first world state of the art technology. We will have so much electrical generation capacity, it will be nearly free to heat our homes and drive our electric cars. All of these projects must be wholly owned and operated by the NZ govt. for the profit solely to the NZ citizens. Energy intensive business will enjoy some of the lowest rates in world - but not free.

We will pioneer and engineer sustainable agriculture on a massive scale. We will start a massive investment in basic R&D for agriculture to solve the problem of methane pollution by bovine cattle. NZ is wed to the dairy industry, so we will figure out how to make it the dairy and organic methane industry. We will pioneer the large scale implementation of organic fertilizer methods to build the topsoil and the carbon sequestering capacity of the soil by orders of magnitude, while at the same time making our rivers cleaner, and our timber forests more
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productive.

Our investments in renewable, sustainable technologies will be a boon to our economy coming and going.

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?

How will it affect us? It will make us healthier, happier, smarter, and more conscientious global citizens. We will have improved national self esteem after all the inventions, engineering, and excellent examples we give to the world, and sell to the world. We will walk and cycle a lot more, and so be healthier. We will build more personal relationships as we ride buses & trains together, tend gardens together, share our over abundant produce together, give our young people meaningful and productive work that pays well and is rewarding personally. We will invest so heavily in basic sciences to meet these goals, we'll have to make tertiary education free for any smart kid who can make the grades. And those smart, degreed young people will be vitally needed in every community. Free college with five years of public service in NZ at a discounted salary.

Cost every one should pay what they can afford - 10% additional tax that rises proportionally to one's net wealth. The rich should be happy to pay 50%. Gasoline needs to be taxed to the moon: 300% with all profits to subsidized electrical vehicles, electric public transportation, etc. Big rebates, incentives for buying electric vehicles, or for giving up your car entirely. Invest in a city wide fleet of pool vehicles, all electric, so a person without a car can get their shopping done, or take a little road trip.

There needs to be a massive investment in turning the average heat wasting Kiwi home into a well insulated, house with a ULEB wood stove, solar hot water panels, solar electric panels, efficient appliances the whole kit. All subsidized, Kiwi made on franchises where feasible, and putting an army of skilled and low skilled tradesmen to work nationwide.

Every homeowner should be given the opportunity to have this $40K home improvement package lent to them for free, with interest on the loan paid only if they sell the house at a profit, loan to be repaid with surplus electricity sold back to the grid, and credit given for electricity not consumed that would have been otherwise.

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's an old axiom that goes, you have a good dog and a bad dog, which dog will grow the biggest? Answer, the one that you feed the most. How can we possibly answer the question you pose, "which beneficial result is most likely?", without knowing what the actual policies will be, what the available technologies will be, the costs, lots of variables. I say you empower a bunch of rationally minded engineers and academics given them a mandate to design for efficiency and to meet performance criteria, then see what becomes of that and judge it on a year to year basis. Have many parallel programs/ designs going at once until clear winners emerge. There are no shortage of good workable solutions to our problems, just get started, pick some and move forward, then pick winners.

Summary

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

Did the Americans take uncertainties and costs into account when they decided to send a man to the moon? No,
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and in this case neither should we. The goal is ZERO greenhouse gas emissions as fast as the wits of Man will allow. We need to be going NEGATIVE on greenhouse gasses, that is absorbing/ sequestering as much of those gases as is biologically possible AS FAST AS POSSIBLE.

We need an Apollo Mission type effort to save our Earth from our own carelessness. We have to get a lot smarter about how we do everything and NZ is poised to lead the world in the development of these technologies. We should be pouring everything we have into our universities, bringing in every smart person young to middle aged back to school to learn the new way of solving our problems.

We need to become leaders in the following:
1. Bovine cattle, sequestering the methane being belched by their ruminating stomachs. Methane is 44% of NZ’s greenhouse gas problem, and over half of the worldwide problem. We can help solve this mystery with basic science.
2. Organic fertilizer methods, biology, and practical application to modern farming, to build the top-soils in synergy with plants to quadruple the carbon sequestration capacity of soils. Do this worldwide on all agricultural land and we’ve got half the problem sorted.
3. Timber structure architecture. Using timber for building sequesters carbon. Timber is a major export product for NZ. We should be adding value to that timber before it gets exported. We can engineer 40 story sky scrapping buildings made of timber instead of steel as the primary structural material. We should be shipping engineereed timber structural components with value instead of logs.

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.
All of the solutions to this climate disaster that’s about to happen run counter to the business as usual modes that the National Party is most comfortable with. It is expensive for an electric utility to set a target for net zero carbon and businesses cannot justify to shareholders the lack of profit during a reinvestment. This goes for every industry from agriculture, timber, energy, transportation, construction. So compelling incentives have to be established by real leadership. Legal penalties, taxes, etc. as negatives, but on the positive side rebates, refunds, free conditional loans, and investment in intellectual capital. Wherever we build infrastructure monopolies in utility grids, power plants, communication networks, and the like those networks have to be owned by the Public, the government representatives, so that all profits will come back to Public which is hostage to the monopoly and a beneficiary of the same. A private monopoly has power, and we have fought wars over the issue of “No power without accountability”. A private monopoly is only accountable to rich shareholders, most of them foreign, and the have every incentive in the wrong direction when the vital criteria is sustainability, renew-ability, and low cost with maximum performance for the citizen consumer. National, if it wants to survive long term, needs to decide who it’s real constituents are: the citizens of NZ or foreign corporations. I’m a practical man more so than political, whoever gets the job done is my overriding principle, so the Nat’s need to put serious policies in place that convince me they are on the right track, or they will be replaced. Not inconsequentially, if John Key signs the TPPA, all of this is a moot exercise, because that agreement will empower foreign corporations to literally sue us for the off shore oil that we decide should be left underground. Once the TPPA is signed nothing short of violent revolution will be required to meet these net zero targets.