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?

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?

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?

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?

Summary

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

Other comments

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

Dear Mr Grosser,

I reject in its totality the discussion document put forward on the issue of climate change. The document presented all of the possible factors against meaningful action, and few of the reasons for. It attempts to bracket the discussion within narrow and limiting terms, that will result in a narrow and limited response.

The Paris forum is not to discuss reasons why we should not, can not, or will not change. If you approach the forum with such an attitude it is to tolerate such an attitude in other nations. I ask that the message you deliver in Paris is one listing all the ways and reasons why New Zealand can and will make meaningful change. I ask that you do not tolerate, less support, discussion of factors that might limit any nations response. This is the antithesis of what you are trying to achieve.

To speak of ‘New Zealands unique circumstances and challenges’ in reducing targets without speaking of what unique advantages shows a lack of real commitment to change. Every nation is facing challenges, every nation has unique circumstances, and every nation will need to make sacrifices if meaningful change is to be achieved. To speak in Paris of the why not, only stands to permit others to do the same. To proffer excuses’ simply justifies the same from others.
I fail to fathom why a discussion of how to achieve meaningful action on climate change would even mention reasons why we can’t act. To bracket our response with such talk is the antithesis of the objective and demonstrates an embarrassing duplicity in our governments approach.

In absolute values, New Zealand’s emissions do not make up a large percentage global total, yet as an exposed archipelago we will receive more than the lion’s share of its effects. Reducing our emissions alone with achieve nothing. There is just one mechanism by which New Zealand can prevent the kind of huge global change scenarios put forward by the scientific community. New Zealand has the chance to lower global emissions - we must show the world we can, that they can. We must show all present that, despite our (or any nations) ‘unique circumstances’ that we can and will make meaningful change. To show that we are willing to take a hit now in order to save something for future generations. To demonstrate an economy for the next generation rather than the next financial quarter.

Such ‘moral diplomacy’ has seen us lead the world before, and they have followed. But this time it’s not a question only standing for what is right, it may be our only way of saving our own way of life here at home.

You have read the reports from the World Bank, World Health Organisation, United Nations, and NASA, you understand the science, you know the calls for drastic change come not from lobby groups but from reputable organisations across the globe. You know the economic costs for our industries, particularly agriculture and tourism, our two biggest earners. You know what you must do, and you know you must do it. You know there is no other way.

Let history mark you as a man who did something, amongst the litany who did not. When you speak in Paris, present all the reasons why we can and will act, what we will do, the actions we will take. Do not support, less offer, any talk of reasons why not, for they will help no-one but the status quo. Do not settle for less than meaningful action, for anything below the trajectory required for serious change.

Again - I reject in totality the discussion document put forward and again implore you – do not settle for anything other than meaningful change.

This is our last shot, stand up, make change. We are behind you, rooting for you to root for us all.

Do not let us down.