Dear Sirs,

New Zealand needs to set realistic, but ambitious targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

The cost of NOT reducing emissions and the likely consequential impacts on climate, sea level etc are inadequately considered in the discussion paper and need to be taken fully into account, especially regarding potential impacts on human health. The argument that economic growth will be lessened if New Zealand adopts a reduction target fails to consider the costs to the country and society as a whole if economic growth maintains or increases emissions. These calculations do not appear to have been fully taken into account – however the document uses what some consider to be impressive ‘scare tactics’ suggesting that households will be substantially ‘worse off’ if emissions targets are set.

There are a number of low cost measures that can be readily implemented now, such as improved home insulation, solar water heating in many/most parts of the country that will both contribute to reduced emissions as well as raising public awareness of the topic – to date the government has been remarkably ineffective in promoting such measures.

New Zealand needs to show leadership in tackling climate change and commit to carbon reduction targets (40%) that reflect the global nature of the problem.

Yours faithfully

David Melville