

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?

These objectives are too vague, and do not pay heed to the urgency of action, or the dire consequences of inaction, as witnessed in the use of the words "long term". What does it mean that the "costs and impacts on society must be managed appropriately"? By whose standards should they be appropriate? What is appropriate is the survival of this planet so that we can hand it down to future generations.

Tough action is called for, nothing less. Effective action WILL impact on the competitiveness of NZ businesses, and rightly so. If managed correctly it will open up markets for new businesses dealing in sustainability and create far more agricultural diversity, rather than the wholesale conversion to (currently unprofitable) dairy, which is happening now.

If the TPPA becomes a done deal, we stand to lose our autonomy as to what we export and to whom, and what we import and from whom. This could mean that we find ourselves unable to set proper goals to mitigate climate change.

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?

We need to continue to develop our sources of renewable energy, eliminating all coal, and developing wind and solar generation instead. Damming more rivers is not an option, as the resulting impact on the river ecosystem is too great.

We must judge ourselves not by how much we emit on a global scale, but how much we emit per capita. We have the dubious honour of being third in the world with our per capita emissions, and this must change.

Methane is far more damaging than carbon dioxide, and our methane emissions are much worse, so that we need to diversify agriculturally, rather than put so much into dairying and continuing to convert rural land into dairy farms, reducing our emissions this way, rather than changing the genetic makeup of our livestock which will take too long anyway. Dairy and meat production are inefficient ways to feed an overpopulated world, anyway, and involve too much water usage.

We should not be importing stock feed, such as palm kernel from unsustainable tropical plantations where carbon sink forest is being removed. Not only does this increase our carbon footprint, but it contributes further to animal emissions.

More support for the rapid introduction of electric vehicles is needed.

Large scale planting of areas prone to erosion is needed, in sustainable native forest.

We have not met our targets with forestry as claimed, and our emissions have increased. NZ has been denuded of forests over the years of human habitation, and we have a great deal to contribute through planting.

Public transport must be increased, and the railways boosted. Conversion to electric rail, rather than the removal of it, is the way of the future.

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To better control what happens to our land legislation to prevent foreign ownership should be introduced. Carbon trading is not the answer, and governments have traded away our carbon, thus eliminating any responsibility to reduce emissions.

Any target other than eventual carbon neutrality should not be entertained, and we need to take urgent action to achieve this.

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 cost to New Zealanders can not be measured in monetary terms, as globally the cost of inaction is the death of the existing planetary ecosystem which humans need to survive. How can you measure this in dollars, and where did you get these figures from? We must abandon the assumption that an economy which is not growing is a bad economy, and look at what is fair for all New Zealanders.

We should not be using the international carbon market in order to justify the continuance of our current emissions. This will surely create more debt, and we should not expect other countries to reduce their emissions so that we can continue our dirty habits.

Every one of us has to take a hit on this, as we can not sustain our current lifestyles and consumerism without adding to the emissions problem. We need a whole societal and values shift at every level, with the government taking the lead, if future generations are to survive.

Money must go into emerging technologies. The emphasis on building more roads must cease, and cycling, rail and public transport must take priority.

Biofuels from waste may help supplement emerging electrically fuelled vehicles, but we must not use our land for the monoculture of plants for biofuels.

The use of mycelium must be investigated, and more money put into R and D.

Your claim that it is difficult to predict what effect such take up of new technology will have on our emissions over time could be construed as a cop-out. Of course it will have an effect, and even if it is not yet quantifiable, there must be commitment to it for the sake of our survival.

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?

Every one of the opportunities that I have listed in other sections, and that you must be acted upon, and acted upon now. We could once again become world leaders in social and environmental change, as we used to be, and we must. But in order for these things to happen there must also be personal and societal change, involving housing insulation, growing food locally, consuming and exporting less meat and dairy. We need solid communities and support for community initiatives, both social and environmental from both governmental level and at grass root level.

Summary

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

The cost of inaction is so much greater than the cost of inaction, and so whatever hit we need to take, we must just do it now. The one percent who are sitting on the most capital can be made to contribute at a far greater level. Let's have a complete change of priorities with this Government from flag changing, money design changing, supporting the Iraqi army to what is important - the survival of the planet. Already we are witnessing vast ice melts, unprecedented violent storms, ocean warming, and ocean acidification. Tipping point is near, if it hasn't happened already. To act on this may not be popular without a great deal more education, but governing should not be about popularity but about integrity and a sense of responsibility for human and planetary wellbeing.

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Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mo Te Taiao

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Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain. Act now, and act decisively. Take the lead.