



## **New Zealand Youth Delegation (NZYD) Submission on New Zealand's 2030 emissions target (and other relevant matters)**

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### **About NZYD:**

The New Zealand Youth Delegation is a voice of the NZ youth climate movement at the UN climate change negotiations. We represent demands of a generation working to create a just, safe and liveable world for all.

We believe in:

- effective action on climate change to keep us safe within the 2 degree limit;
- fair and inclusive negotiations, and
- citizens being engaged and informed about actions on climate change.

We are non-partisan, receive no Government funding and are independent from all political parties. NZYD was formed in 2009 and a NZYD delegation has attended every major UN climate change negotiation from Copenhagen in 2009 to Lima last year. We have alumni working for businesses and non-governmental organisations in New Zealand and abroad - as well as alumni working for the Ministry for the Environment and other Government departments.

### **Summary of main submission points:**

- 1) We support the six main calls from Generation Zero (listed below), including a 2030 target that corresponds to achieving net zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2050, and a plan that attempts to exceed that target.
- 2) NZ's 2030 target and engagement in the UN climate negotiations must be fair, ambitious, and equitable and fair in order to help restore the trust and goodwill required to achieve successful political negotiations.
- 3) The outcome from COP20 in Lima called for INDC's that included plans for achieving 2030 targets, adaptation and support for developing countries - which NZ has not done.

### **Submission body:**

This submission accepts as a given the science behind 'why' we need to reduce emissions, it has been thoroughly reported for almost two decades. We also recognise the many reports and urgent calls to action from global institutions such as the OECD, World Bank, United Nations or IPCC



highlighting 'when' we must reduce our emissions to 'what' levels in order to try and avert unnecessary and catastrophic climate change (soon and fast).

The New Zealand Youth Delegation has witnessed six years of delay, inaction and excuses from New Zealand's Government at the climate negotiations. Several of the young New Zealanders we have sent to the climate negotiations have described being embarrassed to be a New Zealander. This is why we believe that the NZ Government can and should take a fresh approach to its participation in the climate negotiations.

Instead of continuing its track record of failing international expectations and trying to spin poor performance in a positive light, the NZ Government should show courage and build on recent international momentum by setting a 2030 target that puts NZ on track to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

It's to stop being the last one on the bus. New Zealand should be the fast follower and use the political capital that follows to help negotiate fair rules for agricultural emissions and land use.

Instead of leading with self-interest, the New Zealand Government should act in the global interest. We think such action would receive widespread and diverse support from across the country - we owe it, at very least, to our Pacific Island citizens who form such an integral part of NZ society, yet their families are among the most vulnerable to sea level rise and intense storms.

### **1) What we are calling for:**

NZYD supports the six main 'asks' from Generation Zero under the 'Fix Our Future' campaign. We agree that these 'asks' provide a solid platform from which NZ could begin to make meaningful reductions in our greenhouse gas emissions.

They are:

- We want the Government to act on climate change as an investment in our future.
- We want New Zealand to call for a global zero carbon target, and walk the talk by committing to a pathway towards zero CO2 emissions by 2050 or earlier (alongside reductions in other greenhouse gases).
- We want to see a real action plan that adds up.
- We want a New Zealand climate law that holds the government accountable for reducing emissions, and an independent Climate Commission.
- We want the Government to establish a cross-party climate working group and an ongoing programme to engage meaningfully with New Zealanders on climate change solutions.
- We want to see meaningful policy changes that will start cutting New Zealand's emissions, during this term of government.



We would support the Government making a commitment to a 2025 or 2030 target to reduce (gross) CO2 emissions, in line with a zero carbon by 2050 goal. We believe that a target of 40% reduction from 1990 levels by 2025 would be fair and ambitious. Additionally, New Zealand should agree to being subject to a formal scientific and equity review process. We support calls both for an *ex ante* review and an *ex post* review. If our target is set as a 2030 target, not a 2025 target, we should accept that the first review period should be no later than 2025, even if no *ex ante* review occurs before 2020.

We note that operative clause 10 of the Lima Call for Climate Action requires all States INDCs to represent a progression beyond current targets. If New Zealand does not submit a target above 20%, it's target will not be a progression beyond our conditional target under the Copenhagen Accord. As we have seen at the climate negotiations, that will hurt our international reputation significantly.

New Zealand should set its target on the expectation that commitments specifically for agricultural and land use emissions would follow once rules around agriculture and land use have been confirmed. The NZ Government has previously used our high agricultural emissions and large forest area as excuses for inaction and an unwillingness to commit to ambitious or even fair reductions in our greenhouse gas emissions. This is despite our significant per capita CO2 emissions which are predicted to continue climbing under the current ineffective policy settings.

## **2) Equity, fairness, trust and goodwill - essential ingredients for a meaningful global agreement**

NZ's 2030 target and engagement in the climate change negotiations must reflect the principles of equity and fairness upon which the success of the negotiations depends. Since 2009, NZYD has observed the erosion of trust and goodwill between countries at each annual conference, and the subsequent lack of progress towards the overarching 2C goal. NZ's actions have undoubtedly contributed to this (in fact we have proved we punched above our weight, but below the belt!), including our refusal to take on a target under the Second Commitment Period of the Kyoto Protocol, accompanied by another poor excuse for the fact that we refuse to reduce carbon emissions at home.

As recognised by the Lima Call for Climate Action, the 2015 Paris agreement will be guided by Parties' common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities in light of different national circumstances. As a developed, Annex I Party, New Zealand has a moral and legal obligation to lead on mitigation action. We recognise that methods of differentiation may develop and evolve, but differentiation must remain.

Developed States like New Zealand should commit and follow through on larger and faster emissions reductions. This remains valid and integral to building global momentum to combat the worst effects of climate change.



NZ must start to rebuild trust and goodwill amongst the international community by committing to action that represents our true fair share and advocating for rules that ensure developing nations are supported (including through financing).

Our negotiating team have consistently shown that NZ has far more international influence than the 0.15% of global emissions that we contribute as a nation, despite our seeming unwillingness to genuinely participate. Let's start using this influence positively.

Finally (here comes the stick) we note that the consultation document references models which have assumed NZ has access to international carbon markets in the future. This becomes a high risk approach should NZ's 2030 target be viewed poorly by the international community, which has previously withdrawn access to carbon markets for countries deemed to not be pulling their weight. NZ must therefore ensure our 2025 or 2030 target is ambitious to reflect the expectations of the international community, and/or develop a zero carbon action plan that removes our future reliance on carbon markets for offsetting our emissions (we would strongly recommend that we do both).

### **3) Requirements from COP20 (Lima)**

New Zealand should be including a national action plan and national adaptation plan alongside its mitigation target.

The Lima Call for Climate Action makes it clear that States' INDCs should include more than just numerical targets. New Zealand should set a target that is consistent with achieving the ultimate objective of the Convention and keeping average warming this century below two degrees. Further, New Zealand should transparently communicate how it sees its target as doing this in a fair and ambitious manner, and what accounting rules it intends to make its target under. Importantly, as set out in operative clause 14 of the Lima Call for Climate Action, New Zealand's INDC should include a plan to achieve it. Targets without plans to get there mean little.

Operative clause 12 of the Lima Call for Climate Action invited Parties to include adaptation plans with their mitigation targets. New Zealand - and especially New Zealand agriculture - is vulnerable to extreme weather. Consequently, we should be preparing for climate change adaptation, not just mitigation.

Finally, at COP20 in Lima, New Zealand negotiators advised us that New Zealand intended to assist its Pacific neighbours in preparing their INDCs. This is particularly important in light of operative clause 15 of the Lima Call for Climate Action, which calls on developed country Parties like New Zealand to provide such support. Our contacts within the Pacific have told us that they have not received any such support.

