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?   Yes

1b. What is most important to you?
We believe climate change is the most important issue facing the planet. It is extremely important that we act now with ambitious greenhouse mitigation policies, targets and actions. The time for weak targets and lowest common denominator policies is well past. We want action for our tamariki and mokopunas.
While what other nations commit to is clearly important we want New Zealand to show some leadership and challenge other nations to match our serious commitment.

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 must set ambitious targets for greenhouse gas mitigation. Agricultural greenhouse gas emissions in New Zealand will be very difficult to reduce (if we want to eat) which makes it all the more important for us to reduce emissions in other areas especially transport.
It will be no use crying in thirty years if we haven’t seriously addressed the problem now.

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?
It is imperative that we accept a reduction in our "standard of living" (travel, consumer goods etc) to meet greenhouse gas mitigation targets. A 5% below 1990 levels in most New Zealand households would not be noticed and could probably be "financed" by a reduction in waste. For these households $1270 less per year in disposable income would not be noticed. Personally I would be happy with a much more ambitious target ie 10-15%.

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?
Clearly the use of electric vehicles needs to be actively encouraged. Public land and sea transport needs to be fostered and probably subsidised.
Air transport needs to be seriously reduced.
Tourists should be seriously levied on entry into the country sufficient to offset their carbon emissions.
Planting of trees while laudable is a sticking plaster approach and cannot be viewed as a long term solution. There are limits to how many trees can be planted and still leave land available for food production.
Summary

5. How should New Zealand take into account the future uncertainties of technologies and costs when setting its target?
The uncertainty surrounding mitigation of agricultural greenhouse emission is currently so high that it should be currently ignored in target setting. That is not to say we should abandon the search for such remedies. The rumen plant animal ecosystem is so complex with so many variables that easy remedies will be extremely difficult for any real differences to be achieved.

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.
Successive governments have paid lip service to climate change remedies. Future generations will have justifiable reasons to condemn current policy makers and administrators if serious and meaningful action is not taken.