

Submission to MFE on Climate Change Contribution Consultation

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Thank you for this opportunity to submit on climate change targets.

General comments

I am disappointed that the consultation period has been so short and poorly advertised (at least in the Manawatu). Many people I have spoken to locally who are concerned about climate change had no idea that this consultation was under way. Part of the issue re public awareness has been the absence of a public meeting in Palmerston North as part of the consultation process (and the media interest that this would have generated.) I request that any further consultation that is carried out with regard to climate change is well advertised, provides a forum for community input in provincial centres across the country and is conducted over a longer period of time.

Climate change is an incredibly important issue. Climate change is already impacting on the world we live in and will have much more far reaching implications in coming decades and coming centuries. We must all face up to it and do what we can, as soon as we possibly can, to reduce its impact on the global environment, including the natural world, and for the sake of ourselves, our fellow human beings (especially those living in areas that will be most severely impacted by droughts, storms and sea level rise) and of future generations. The longer we wait before we act the more severe the impacts will be (especially as more feedback loops are activated) and the higher the costs of both mitigation and adaptation, which are likely to escalate at the same time as becoming less affordable as our economy suffers. This was a point made clearly by Nicholas Stern in his 2006 landmark report *The Economics of Climate Change*, and the US Council of Economic Advisers in their 2014 report on the costs of delay¹.

Therefore I agree with the objectives that our contribution as New Zealanders must be ambitious. I also believe that as part of the developed world, NZ is in a privileged position and has a moral responsibility to take strong action on climate change for the sake of the global good.

I acknowledge there will be significant costs in acting on climate change but these costs need to be considered against the greater costs that society will face if we don't do enough soon enough. There are also real opportunities for development in some areas such as renewable and clean energy and technology (for example re NZ expertise in geothermal technology), with sufficient political will and support.

Many of us as individuals are already committed to reducing our carbon footprint in our daily lives

¹US Council of Economic Advisers.(2014). *The Cost of Delaying Action to Stem Climate Change*. http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/the_cost_of_delaying_action_to_stem_climate_change.pdf

but as individuals we can only do so much. We also need strong, well informed and collaborative leadership from the government (as well as from the international community) on this issue. We are all in this together and need to pull together as a society to make the necessary changes. Party politics has no place in this.

Requested targets and actions

I ask the Government to adopt a minimum target of a 40% reduction in net emissions below 1990 levels by 2030 – the minimum contribution required to keep us under 2 degrees global warming.

I also strongly support the following (from 350.org.nz)

That the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC):

(i) commits to a global and NZ zero carbon target by 2050 or sooner with annual steps to get there as quickly as possible

(ii) places an immediate moratorium on fossil fuel exploration, and pledges to phase out existing extraction in the next decade. All subsidies, tax-breaks and funding to fossil fuels are also phased out within the decade.

(iii) includes credible, transparent, cross-party plans, with a legislated independent Climate Commission to ensure NZ meets its targets and stays within the global carbon budget.

(iv) Abides by the articles laid out in Te Tiriti o Waitangi

(v) includes health and fairness and the true cost of inaction on climate change in the assessment of costs and benefits

(vi) follows transparent decision-making process after the consultation period ends

Yours sincerely

Sally Pearce