

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? No

1b. What is most important to you?

That global warming is kept under 2 degrees Celsius as per scientific advice. This gives us a carbon budget of 2900 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide that we can safely burn by mid century.

Our objective should be to stay within this budget and direct all negotiations with all nations towards this goal. Anything less would be immoral, given the clear warnings the scientific community is giving us.

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?

The nature of New Zealand's emissions and economy means that we have a lot of work to do, but it has no relevance to the target. What matters is that carbon dioxide emissions reduce dramatically by mid century and we simply have to accept that. Economies can change easily with planning and innovation. The green technology sector is where the growth and innovation is, it's where the jobs are and New Zealand is missing out. The number of solar panels installed has tripled in the last 18 months according to the Electricity Network Association. Developing and subsidizing oil drilling and coal mining is not just immoral, given what we know about climate change, it's also impeding New Zealand's ability to develop the clean green technologies of the future that we will need. I refer you to the New Climate Economy Report led by Lord Nicholas Stern that found that economies can grow while cutting emissions.

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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?

According to your own figures it would only cost an estimated \$1,800 reduction in annual

household consumption for a 40% reduction, which is only \$530 more than a 5% reduction. I am

stunned that the question even needs to be asked, the question really is why would we NOT go

for at least a 40% reduction target when it would only cost us \$1800? What is the cost to future

generations if we do nothing?

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?

There are many opportunities and they are all important and they all must occur - we can half

the number of livestock and convert the remaining stock to organic. This will half our agricultural

emissions, enable the soil to act as a carbon sink (which it has the capacity to do under organic

management), without decreasing export earnings due to the higher price of organic milk solids

and organic meat. We still have 22% of our energy coming from non-renewable sources and yet

we have been called the Saudi Arabia of renewable energy because of the huge potential we

have to be 100% renewable.

Summary

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

Future technologies and costs can't be predicted. We should stick to what we know and what

science tells us. Science has given a clear prediction of what will happen if we continue to emit

greenhouse gasses. We can predict the cost to our farmers if there is an increase in drought

and severe storms. We can predict the cost to our Pacific Island neighbours and coastal

communities if sea levels rise. I can safely predict that infinite economic growth on a finite planet

isn't possible.

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.

Please adopt a minimum target of a 40% reduction in carbon emissions below 1990 levels. The

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strategies and technologies already exist to do this and what's lacking is political leadership.