

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? Yes

1b. What is most important to you?

Saving the planet so that my children have somewhere safe to grow old. After 3 decades of delays, it is time for some very ambitious carbon cuts. We need a paradigm shift in the decisions about climate change. We need to realise that continued economic growth and the amounts of reduction in CO2 needed are mutually exclusive.

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?

I think, that at the least, the Government must set the target of 90% reduction in CO2 from 1990 levels by 2050 (the level required by IPCC findings). Since the IPCC findings are now out of date and don't consider the latest climate change data available, if the Government was willing to set a more ambitious goal, I would encourage them to do that.

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?

With the costs of not reducing greenhouse gas emissions being very high, (IE. the collapse of civilisation and even the possibility of the extinction of Humanity) the level of costs to New Zealand households to reduce greenhouse gas emission can be very high. BUT we would need to do it fairly, IE those house on lower incomes, or already on a marginal income would have minimal or no costs, and the households in middle income having a medium cost, and the higher income household having the highest costs. Since the higher income household are also the most likely to have contributed to the greenhouse gas emissions, eg with more consumption, cars, flights comes more greenhouse gas emissions.

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?

Fuel and energy efficiency often lead to more consumption rather than any savings, so switching to a non carbon based source of fuel and energy is preferred.

New Zealand, (mostly due to hydropower) has a high level of renewable electricity generation, but over the years as demand has increased, more coal fired power stations have been built, and our percentage of renewables has dropped. So bringing in an electric car fleet has to be managed to ensure that the carbon emissions are not just removed from the car tail pipe to be emitted through the coal fired power stations smoke stacks.

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A zero carbon economy would be great.

New Zealand used to have a great forestry industry, but with large areas of forest being cut down to be replaced by dairy we have reduced the amount of carbon sinks we had in forest, and increased the amount of Methane bleaching cattle we have in the dairy industry. So reversing this trend and replanting forest is a great idea.

A challenge for New Zealand is that anything we export has to incur carbon costs when it is transported to distant trading partners. So we have to reduce the carbon content of our products even more to compensate.

Summary

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

Balanced against the risk of collapse of civilisation and the of the extinction of Humanity. Even though these have not been proven to be happening the small possibility of them happening means we should be doing risk assessment of these possibilities and take them into account when deciding the cost we are willing to bear.

Other comments

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

I am currently reading "This Changes Everything" by Naomi Klein. I think that this should be a must read for all ministers, and public servants.

Also a video that highlights the exponential nature of climate change, and demonstrates that we are already experiencing the effects of Climate change.

<https://vimeo.com/128141163>