

Consultation on setting New Zealand's post-2020 climate change target



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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?

New Zealand is perceived as a world leader in environmental issues. Not only does that promote our country overseas, it also means that we have the potential to create a much bigger reduction in emissions than our economy or population would suggest. This position of leadership is threatened, however. In the social development index 2015, the criteria for "Environment and Sustainability" was New Zealand's lowest score, ranked 32nd (in the overall social development ranking NZ came 5th). For us to maintain our "clean - green" image and remain an example to the world of caring for our environment, our reduction target needs to be seen as ambitious. Our reductions target needs to be, at least, on par with the most ambitious targets set by other countries.

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?

New Zealand should commit to 40% less emission, compared to 1990 levels, by 2030. This target is reachable if the right changes are made.

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?

This is a loaded question. What is the cost of NOT taking action. The wealth invested here needs to be seen as an investment.

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?

Reducing methane emissions is most important, as it is a much stronger greenhouse gas, and more detrimental to health. Instead of wasting money on creating cows that produce less methane, we should look to reduce the meat and dairy industries. Replacing pastures with crops or forestry will not only stop it from producing methane, but will also suck CO2 from the atmosphere. Forestry in particular also reduces water evaporation (compared to pastures), meaning the soil will maintain more water (water vapour is also a greenhouse gas).

New Zealand can also reduce CO2 emissions by investing in public transport, railways and naval cargo transport. Creating or supporting responsible environmental projects overseas (which might be cheaper) can also contribute

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to reaching our target.

Summary

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

We have the technology needed to reduce carbon emissions now. We don't need to wait for technology to catch up. The solutions for reducing emissions are political.

1. Reducing meat & dairy industries, and substituting it with crops and forestry.
2. Invest in low emission public transport and cargo transport.
3. Support electric cars
4. Substitute the remaining non-renewable power generation with renewable sources.

There are no technological uncertainties in this issue. The uncertainty is political.

Other comments

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

New Zealand is a global leader in environmental issues, and our target can and will influence the targets of other nations. This means we have a real chance of creating real global change, despite our small size. We must be seen to set an ambitious target. And we must push larger nations to do so, as well.