

Climate Change Contribution Consultation

From:

Khyla Russell



Dear Mr Groser

I have read your discussion document. I am deeply disappointed at the National government's weak response to the continually rising carbon emissions that are driving global warming and climate change.

I am a gardener , a gazetted Kaitiaki and gatherer of kai moana , a great grandmother and have been a tertiary and iwi education roles for the past 30 years. My scientist friends have been telling me for years now what scientists in many fields are saying about this issue and what the 2009 Nobel Laureate Symposium rightly called "The fierce urgency of now". I have been actively involved since 2009 with 350.org, a movement that aims to raise awareness among the public about climate issues.

Politicians need to listen to those who make their living watching and understanding the planet. These scientists are the point of utter desperation, if not despair, at the lack of effective response from governments and business, at the 'growth-at-all-costs mentality that refuses to see we live in a finite world and that this economic model is destroying that world.

Here is my submission.

- I ask you to adopt a **minimum target of a 40% emissions reduction** in net emissions below 1990 levels by 2030 – the minimum required to keep us under 2 degrees global warming.
- I ask you also to commit New Zealand to the more ambitious target of achieving **zero carbon emissions by 2050**.
- The Government consultation document treats action on climate change as a cost, **whereas failure to take action is actually the cost**. Treasury found that if New Zealand continues on its current trajectory of increasing emissions, the cost to taxpayers of even a modest 5% reduction target will be up to \$52 billion. **The more we lower our emissions the more we will reduce this cost**.
- **Climate change is a threat to our economy** and the things it most depends on, like tourism and farming. Our agricultural nation depends on a stable climate. Our farmers will suffer increased droughts and damaging storms and profits will suffer.
- Responding to climate change is **worth our while**. The New Climate Economy Report released in 2014 by a team of internationally renowned economists, led by Lord Nicholas Stern, found that countries can improve their economic performance while cutting emissions. The Chair of the Bank of America, the head of the OECD, the World Bank, the Vice Chair of Deutsche Bank, and many others, endorsed this finding.
- I request that you **stop downplaying our responsibility for climate change** by saying New Zealand is too small to make a difference. It's not in our national character to sit on the fence and watch others get the job done.

- It's **time for us to do the right thing again**. We were the first to give women the vote. We stood behind our Pacific neighbours in rejecting nuclear testing. Now's our chance to create a climate plan that New Zealanders can be proud to stand behind, and that starts with a target of reducing emissions by at least 40% by 2030.
- I also support the submission of 350 Christchurch, which calls for the **following actions to reduce carbon emissions**:
 - Amend the RMA to require consideration of the effects of proposals on climate change.
 - Plan for the closure of all NZ coal mining operations as each one reaches the end of its current consent.
 - Immediately stop all onshore and offshore oil and gas exploration.
 - Halt the sale of prospecting / exploration rights for fossil fuels.
 - Replace the Emissions Trading Scheme with a "fee and tariff" system that has a high and predictably rising cost on carbon.
 - Transfer funding from the "Roads of National Significance" programme to urban active (walking, biking etc) and public transport.
 - Prohibit further expansion / intensification of the dairy industry.
 - Mandate the green star standard for all new residential and commercial buildings.
 - Require statutory organisations (eg schools, hospitals, council facilities) to convert their energy supplies to renewables such as electricity and wood waste.
 - Accelerate the move to 100% renewable electricity by building those projects which are currently consented.