

Attention: Tim Groser Minister for Climate Change
Submission on New Zealand's climate change target post 2020

I appreciate the opportunity to make a submission outlining my hopes and expectations with regards to climate change in the lead up to the United Nations Climate Negotiations later this year.

It is with real concern that I understand that our gross carbon emissions have risen by 21% between 1990 and 2013 to be the fifth highest per capita among 40 developed countries. We may be a small, relatively underpopulated country but nevertheless we should be leading the way on this as we have on so many issues in the past. Our fair share is not "what is the least we can get away with" - it should definitely be ambitious. 40% is a realistic and achievable target, particularly in a country that prides itself on its clean green image, and which expects that our economy will increasingly depend on the growth of tourism in the future.

With our emissions growing by 1% a year since 1990 we can no longer rely solely on the planting of forests, forests which in time are cut down, only to contribute to the problem. Nor is carbon trading alone the answer. There needs to be firm, domestic and international action. Before we can successfully do this however, we need to be clear about the benefits of cutting emissions on the health and well-being of the planet and all the life forms it supports, and recognise the huge potential costs to the economy and our population, of inaction.

Any country can find excuses for not reaching its targets. I would like to see us proudly lead the way in this.

1. Make it cheaper to buy a low emission vehicle.
2. Commit to more convenient public transport
3. Have policies that encourage companies and industry to reduce pollution
4. Phase out fossil fuel exploration including tax breaks, funding and subsidies.

Carol Sainsbury-Cowell

