

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



Copy of your submission

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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?

In light of the significant reductions needed to keep below 2 deg it is important that we set ambitious targets. The current government's efforts to date have been dismal so it's time to step up & take this seriously!

When considering costs it is important to consider the costs of not doing anything, something conveniently left out of the discussion document. What will being seen as a laggard do to the competitive advantage of our clean green image?

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?

Firstly, we should not hide behind our 'unique emissions profile' to limit our targets. We still have plenty of scope to set ambitious targets, and then use those targets to encourage innovation.

Focus on the areas where we can make significant improvements (energy & transport, particularly around electric cars, public transport etc) The co-benefits of these are significant, consider the health benefits of reducing Auckland's air pollution and improved resilience by not having to rely on imported oil.

How will our contribution affect New Zealanders?

3. What level of cost is appropriate for New Zealand to reduce it's greenhouse gas emissions? For example, what would be a reasonable reduction in annual household consumption?

An automatic assumption that taking action is going to cost households should not be a given.

Addressing broader sustainability issues has significant benefit for both business and individual households through reduced waste, efficient use of resources etc, which could actually reduce cost to households.

The economic benefits of moving to a low carbon economy could be more significant. Our clean green image is critical to our success and needs to be safeguarded. As other countries move to improve their performance we will need to be far better to keep our advantage. So I believe that the opportunities are great and the cost of not taking significant action will be far greater, therefore Include health, fairness, and the true costs of inaction on climate change in the assessment of costs and benefits

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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? In the short term focus on the areas where the technologies are available - energy & transport.

Electric vehicles may not be a full solution (due to distances travelled etc) but do have significant advantages, particularly for the million or so daily commuters.

Bring in fuel efficiency standards on all imported vehicles.

Commit to 100% renewable energy.

Use the carbon price to incentivise further forestation and slow down the significant rate of dairy conversions.

Place an immediate moratorium on fossil fuel exploration in NZ.

Summary

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

We can't let uncertainty about technologies & costs prevent us from taking action and setting ambitious targets. Low targets will not foster the levels of innovation and change required. Set the targets high and put the mechanisms and policies in place to allow us to achieve them.

Take action now with the things that are certain. The longer we wait to take real action the more will have to be done, but if we start to reduce our emissions now then achieving our post 2020 targets will be easier.

Other comments

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

A major part of our agricultural emissions comes from dairy and has been particularly affected by the rapid intensification over the last decade or so. Although this may have improved our export earnings the costs of achieving this has not been fully considered. Although varying from one part of the country to the other I believe, in general, the number of cows exceeds the carrying capacity, resulting in significant impacts on water, among other things.

Research is showing that farmers moving to high intensity farming are not necessarily better off, and could be more resilient and just as profitable by returning to a less intense and more sustainable way of farming. This would have significant environmental and emission reduction benefits.