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?  No

1b. What is most important to you?
(a) The discussion document and The MFE Climate Change web site contain serious errors in basic science, omissions and contradictions. This makes it impossible to make meanifull “objectives to our contribution” Throughout the documents the term “low-carbon economy” is used. This is a serious error, Carbon is a basic element, a big part of all animal and plant life and a major part of our soils, where more carbon is beneficial. “Carbon dioxide” which should be used, is an inert, very minor trace element in the atmosphere but it is of great importance for ALL life on earth as it is the basic plant food along with sunlight and water for all plant growth and the production of oxygen. To maximize plant growth and for plants to maximize the most efficient use water they need 600-1000 PPM of carbon dioxide.

The inclusion of Agriculture in our emissions profile and comparing Agriculture with fossil fuel emissions is fraudulent. Agriculture is a major part of the carbon dioxide cycle, agriculture can only emit what carbon dioxide is taken in by crop and grass growth. In practice Methane does not accumulate in the atmosphere, it has a life 10-12 years, then breaks down into carbon dioxide and water vapour. A steady level of ruminant emissions cannot contribute to global warming. In the 1980’s NZ had 70 million sheep, today we have less than 30 million sheep. In spite of a big growth in dairy cows we have less stock units than the 1980’s, the balance being taken up with plantation forests. e.g the East coast of the North Island.

Water vapour (clouds) is the most important greenhouse gas in regulating global temperatures but this is not discussed.

New ground breaking research by 79 scientists from the renowned Cern research laboratory in Switzerland show for the first time how gas vapours from pastoral animals can react to create the essential tiny particles around which the condensation droplets that cause clouds to form.

Biofuel technology from plant material is promoted, the emissions from this is offset by the carbon dioxide sequested by the plant material. Likewise, correctly wood and wood waste is promoted for use in furnaces and home heating

I support the following from the discussion document
When we set our contribution, it is important the target is realistic for future governments to achieve. There are obviously major uncertainties involved in trying to frame any commitment to which a future New Zealand government would be held to account in 2030. Some of these uncertainties relate to:
• The rules that will apply on forests and land-use change. Given the significance of the land sector to New Zealand, these rules are particularly important to us as they can considerably affect the cost of our target.
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- Technology. Uncertainties surrounding future technology, particularly in agriculture, will affect our ability to transition to a lower-carbon future. While we are starting to see promising opportunities, their commercial viability is not yet clear.

The warning about agriculture emissions technology from the Prime Minister’s science adviser Peter Gluckman, of the uncertainties of any technology to modify nature must be heeded. We need to remember all the hype of the nitrogen inhibitor technology and its subsequent failure.

From the discussion document. “How the climate will change in the future depends on the amount of greenhouse gases we release into the atmosphere. It also depends on how the Earth responds to the increased heating. So we cannot be precise about future climate change. But we are generally sure of the direction of change (eg, the world will become warmer and global average sea-levels will rise). We can also give plausible ranges for those changes”.

The scenarios of future climate change looked at by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) show the world’s average temperature is expected to increase by between 0.9 and 5.4 degrees Celsius at the end of the 21st century, relative to the average temperature from 1850-1900.

The statement above shows the IPCC do not know the effects of increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and contradicts with the previous paragraph. 0.9° means no effect!

(b) A much better balance of science must be presented

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?

Agricultural emissions must be removed from New Zealand’s emission profile, NZ farmers are one of the most efficient farmers in the world. There are so many uncertainties highlighted NZ cannot set any meaningful targets.

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?

The costs of carbon credits and an Emissions Trading Scheme are a futile exercise which will have no measurable effect on the world’s future temperature. Carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere are 400 PPM or 0.0004% manmade carbon dioxide emissions are 3.5% of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere or 0.000014% Reducing the manmade portion 10-20% can make no measurable difference to future global temperatures. (Reducing manmade carbon dioxide emissions by 1/3 equals 5 PPM in the atmosphere)

International trading of carbon credits is a recipe for bribery and corruption. Many international “carbon units” are only available from shifting production from developed nations to 3rd world developing nations – a totally futile exercise.

Any expenditure must be directed to area’s that will produce better outcomes, (see Q5)

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?

Our high level of renewable electricity generation creates opportunities, including greater use of renewables in other sectors, through the use of new technology eg electric vehicles.

Research into biofuels.
Summary

5. How should New Zealand take into account the future uncertainties of technologies and costs when setting its target?
There are so many uncertainties and unanswered questions we cannot set any realistic targets for the next 10-20-30 years that bind future governments.

Does carbon dioxide have any significant effect on the world's temperature?
The IPCC does not know, their predictions are from 0.9° - 5.4° by 2100, vastly reduced from earlier reports.
In the past 1000 years the climate has varied from the Medieval warm period 900-1300 cooled to the little ice age 1600-1800 and warmed again over the 150 years by 0.8° The world's environment and food production would be in serious trouble if there had been no recovery from the little ice age. During the past 17 years there has been no further warming putting the IPCC computer models into question.
The ice core research actually shows that the temperature rise precedes the rise of carbon dioxide levels, not as the misleading information presented claiming that carbon dioxide emissions cause temperature rise.
Agriculture must be removed from New Zealand's "emissions" agriculture is carbon dioxide neutral.
The costs of carbon credits and an Emissions Trading Scheme are a futile exercise which will have no measurable effect on the world's future temperatures.
Any expenditure must be directed to areas that will produce better outcomes and meaningful results,
Cleaner technologies in furnaces,
More efficient engines,
Improved water storage (we run 92% of our rainfall into the sea)
Greater use of solar water heating and solar electricity,
Much greater improvements in recycling and the elimination of landfills. (Wetlands and landfills are a greater emitter of methane than ruminant animals)
Research into biofuels.

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.
A much better balance of independent science must be presented, ie those outside government agencies, government research institutions and the IPCC before any meaningful targets that bind future governments are committed to.