

# 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? No

1b. What is most important to you?

The target is far too low. Compared to most countries that will have to make much larger reductions despite their relative poverty we are in an extremely privileged position. We can, and should, set an example in this and show we're serious - it will be in our best interest (as well as being "the right thing"). I'm fearful that the Paris meeting will be something of a 'Dutch Auction' and we don't want to provide the low point.

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?

Really major reductions of CO2 in the transport and energy sectors are possible by eliminating fossil-fuel electricity generation and providing the infrastructure and encouragement for electrically powered vehicles. Major increase in solar PV, wind (and tidal?) elec generation obviously needed.

Agriculture is a major problem, and if emissions can't be reduced by 'rumen and feed management' or other means then the number of animals will have to be decreased. Not necessarily a bad thing - in terms of the overall efficiency of producing edible protein from sunlight, nitrogen, water and soil minerals (which is surely what we should be looking at to feed an increasing world population rather than just an elite who can afford dairy luxuries?), cropping (e.g. wheat) is much more efficient than animal production.

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?

Not fair to expect the same percentage reduction across all income levels. From the noticeable increase in consumer junk like the Range Rovers I've witnessed in Chch since the 'dairy boom' I'd suggest the upper bands could take a 20% hit, with perhaps a 10% average and zero for the lowest. Your Table 1 (page 7) suggests that would easily cover a significantly greater than 40% reduction on 1990 levels by 2030.

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?

MUCH greater use of 'plug-in rechargeable' electric vehicles. (Virtually none at present - they're in production but the importers 'see no market'. I have tried in vain to buy a plug-in rechargeable Toyota Prius, available in the US and Japan at least, which would reduce my gasoline use by over 50%!).

More use of electrified rail for heavy transport (the decision to de-electrify the NIMT line for 'economic' reasons is

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criminally insane in my view, and a perfect illustration of how conventional economics is just incapable of guiding the decisions we need to make).

Heavy transport road vehicles - possible conversion to electro-generated hydrogen IC engines or fuel-cell powered electric motors?

Terminate the Comalco Tiwai Point operation (great opportunity missed recently) to make more hydro elec available. There will be much more than a thousand new jobs in creating the infrastructure for the above  
Phase out the hydrocarbon exploration/extraction industries.

Vast increase in distributed solar PV generation, stimulated by 'fair payment' for returns to grid. Again conventional economics has failed us badly. It simply ignores what it can't calculate (like the real cost of NOT reducing global warming). Solar PV needs to be encouraged at all levels (or at the very least not actively discouraged, as it is at present). It's intermittency has a perfect complement in the 'buffering capacity' of our hydro-elec system.

Further increases of wind (and geothermal?) elec generation. Possibility of ocean tide/wave elec gen.

## Summary

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

As best it can, and roll with the punches! This is not a flippant answer - unsatisfactory as it is, one can only be grateful that it's less unsatisfactory than going on with our heads in the sand and hoping that the effects of doing nothing will not be too bad. There's now a broad scientific consensus that if we can't keep global warming below 2deg (let alone 4deg) the world will be facing major life-threatening circumstances.

## Other comments

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

NZ does have some very good scientists - instead of a single 'government science adviser' how about a small panel, four or five say, covering appropriate engineering and science disciplines.

PLEASE NOTE: I have already made a submission via a form distributed by the Green Party. I am not trying to 'vote twice' and if I'm only allowed one submission please take this one in preference as it has allowed me to make more detailed observations and suggestions.

The elephant-in-the-room is of course the impact of world-wide population growth on an earth with finite resources. I have no suggestions as to how that might be tackled but it could help to bring it into some focus if countries like NZ commenced internal discussions around what would be sensible limits for them. The problem will not just go away (other than by the disastrous mechanism of another world war) unless world leaders somehow find the stomach to at least acknowledge it.

Finally, thank you for preparing the Discussion Document, which I found valuable. My only criticism is that it doesn't seem to have had a very wide circulation and the associated public meetings were not well advertised (in Christchurch at least).