

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?

All are important - if you take a long term view of each. Worrying about the costs to society now is pointless if you don't also include the potential costs in the future. It is far cheaper to start reducing emissions now rather than waiting until we are forced to, so delaying action is a short term gain which is likely to cause long term pain.

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?

This question is impossible to answer because insufficient options have been looked at.

Given our emissions and economy the uncertain status of methane and forestry need resolution in their international treatment.

In the mean time we should set a target that excludes methane - or give a different target for methane (e.g. capping at current levels). The focus should be on getting our carbon dioxide emissions to zero, preferably by 2050 as the IPCC suggests. We should also have an evidence based position on trees to take to Paris.

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?

This question is impossible to answer.

The modelling is flawed, given it doesn't include forestry or technological changes like electric cars and improvements in renewable generation. It also ignores potential benefits and the costs of inaction which are potentially also large - either with the impact of climate change or the impact on trade if others act and we do not.

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?

All of them. And you've missed some - our clean green brand, a role in wind, marine and geothermal energy development, creating denser more liveable cities with reduced dependence on the car and more active transport (health benefits again).

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Summary

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

We should assume that technologies will keep getting cheaper. The modelling used in the consultation didn't do that, which is flawed.

Uncertainties are usually dealt with in scenarios. Some of these would have been nice in the modelling too. Lets run some different plausible scenarios - note that none of them are the base scenario used in the modelling because those assumptions aren't plausible:

1 the world doesn't act. In this scenario climate change will continue and have hugely negative impacts. NZ should logically invest in adaptation, and some mitigation actions might have adaptation benefits and so provide a win win - reducing fossil fuel dependence is one great example.

2 the rest of the world acts. In this scenario if NZ doesn't act then we will likely be hit with trade sanctions at some stage and forced to start acting - this will be expensive either in lost exports or in making the investments needed to decarbonise our economy.

3 somewhere in between - a 3 degree stabilisation for example

Other comments

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

Yes, if you want a decent consultation you need to provide decent information and a decent timeframe.

It really is impossible to sensibly comment on a target with the poor level of information available here, which makes this consultation look remarkably like a sham.