

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



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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?

All three of these objectives are indefinite and vague enough that they inspire no confidence. The situations faced by our nation and our dependents are urgent, and the opportunities at hand will not last. The costs of a 'low risk', 'long term transition' approach are too high.

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?

If we maintain our all-eggs-in-few-baskets dependence on dairy and extractive primary industries, the target will be set deplorably low. We must risk industrial collapse now while it is survivable, and while we have capacity. The entire structure and premises of our industry must change.

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?

40%

Not 'reasonable', but neither is allowing the continued unquestioned pillaging of the planet by super-rich corporates that plan to escape to Mars ASAP.

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?

3 - 'a transition to a low carbon economy...' is essential and very possible; and it should follow that 4 - 'reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing forest sinks...' would be a part of such a vision.

Sudden desertification - which is likely and perhaps already happening - will do nothing for our present renewables models.

Staying in line with other economies will not see us leading the necessary change and will not see us profiting early from that change.

## Summary

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

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target?

By focussing on what strengths and capacities we have here and now, and by setting our target locally, on what we have and do in this country, we will reduce our exposure to global uncertainties.

In investment terms, we presently need an extraordinarily broad base of investments in our portfolio, as we do not know what will best benefit us in the future.

In problem solving terms, we need a great fluency of ideas and possibilities as soon as possible if we are to consider all options properly and come up with the real innovation that we need.

In practical terms, the process of target setting needs to be real, democratized, and binding. The answers are not likely to come from those with a vested interest in the present economic and governance models.

Other comments

6. Is there any further information you wish the Government to consider? Please explain.  
In the words of the WWF:

I want our government to set an ambitious emissions reduction target, as part of a vision for a low carbon future.

A 40% reduction target is realistic and achievable. Even using the government's conservative and questionable economic modelling, New Zealand household income is still projected to increase from \$73,000 per year today, to \$83,200 per year in 2027 with a 40% emissions reduction target.

It is important that New Zealand does its fair share. Many countries can claim 'special circumstances' but in the long run, every country will need to pursue a low-carbon future, regardless of their own set of challenges. The sooner we start down this path, the easier and cheaper it will be.

I want the government to set in place ambitious policies to reduce emissions in New Zealand. I want the government to make it cheaper to buy a low emissions car, more convenient to travel by public transport and to set in place policies to help companies reduce pollution. A clean energy future for New Zealand is 100% possible.

In the words of the Greens:

I ask you to adopt a minimum target of a 40% emissions reduction in net emissions below 1990 levels by 2030 – the minimum contribution required to keep us under 2 degrees global warming.

The Government consultation document treats action on climate change as a cost, whereas failure to take action is actually the cost. Treasury found that if New Zealand continues on its current trajectory of increasing emissions, the cost to taxpayers of even a modest 5% reduction target will be up to \$52 billion. The more we lower our emissions the more we will reduce this cost.

Climate change is a threat to our economy and the things it most depends on, like tourism and farming. Our agricultural nation depends on a stable climate. Our farmers will suffer increased droughts and damaging storms and profits will suffer.

Responding to climate change is worth our while. The New Climate Economy Report released in 2014 by a team of internationally renowned economists, led by Lord Nicholas Stern, found that countries can improve their economic performance while cutting emissions. The Chair of the Bank of America, the head of the OECD, the World Bank, the Vice Chair of Deutsche Bank, and many others, endorsed this finding.

I request that you stop downplaying our responsibility for climate change saying New Zealand is too small to make a difference. It's not in our national character to sit on the fence and watch others get the job done.

It's time for us to do the right thing again. We were the first to give women the vote. We stood behind our Pacific neighbours in rejecting nuclear testing. Now's our chance to create a climate plan that New Zealanders can be proud to stand behind, and that starts with a target of reducing emissions by at least 40% by 2030.

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There are more organisations calling for more hardline and radical action, and I could go on. Suffice to say, that if you ask most high school kids these days (I am a secondary teacher) they might not know the ins and outs of making it work, but they are prepared for serious change, NOT HALF MEASURES AND PLATITUDES AND ENDLESS FAILED TALKS, and they expect it to be delivered in their lifetime.