

# 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? Yes

1b. What is most important to you?

RE: We aim for a fair and ambitious contribution in light of unique national circumstances

- Every nation is unique, so we can't use this consideration to dodge responsibilities.
- New Zealand has a reputation to lead by example as we have done in many other situations, e.g. granting suffrage to women and banning nuclear ships.
- We are a small economy, therefore we can enact change quickly.
- Key emitters should be targeted for their emissions.

RE: Costs and impacts on society should be managed appropriately

- We should not be using short term fiscal micro-economic modelling.
- The costs of not doing anything should be figured into the model.
- Social and environmental costs should be figured into the model, e.g. biodiversity loss.
- Energy, transport, agriculture, forestry and waste sectors should pay their share according to their emission levels and be expected to reduce them.

RE: Target has flexibility to respond to different sectors fairly

- A 40% target gives us room to be flexible, so this should be the minimum target.
- Legislation should specify commitment to this minimum 40% target.

RE: Policy should guide NZ over the long term in transition to a low emissions world

- 15 years is a short-term goal that we need to achieve this by 2030.
- The long-term goal must include when New Zealand will achieve zero emissions.
- Achieving zero emissions by 2050 is achievable.
- Technology, behaviour and attitude must change; economic and energy adaptations are required, and should be enacted with policy and education. Once attitudes and behaviours have momentum, the targets will be progressively more achievable.

The most important aspect is that we are planning for the long term. Because of this, climate change policy has to be above politics. A Climate Commission or similar to the UK would be a good way to manage this. The domestic abatement target should be legally binding.

## 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?

Our current GHG-based economy is not sustainable, so it is already a liability. We believe that roughly 25% of our economy is at risk by inaction. Taking action is an investment ? not a cost. Only by rethinking our economic base can we achieve the 40% target. We need to move from a dependence on high-carbon agriculture to a carbon-

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neutral economy.

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?

This is a national problem, not an issue of individual household consumption. Primary emitters, not households, should bear the costs. Household consumption is quite flexible, and will respond to leadership from business and government with programmes such as providing insulation to households and increasing investment in public transport.

Households should not be forced to pay the cost for emissions by polluters and government inaction. The government should end subsidies to the fossil-fuel industry. In addition, a carbon tax would be an excellent means of increasing funds to support the goal of a 40% reduction..

It is a false choice to say that we cannot have both a healthy economy and reduce emissions.

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 the opportunities in this question are interconnected and are important for the economy and for reducing emissions. With the right leadership and a good plan, these benefits can all be achieved. A Climate Commission could lead and co-ordinate these opportunities. A low-carbon economy is essential and has many advantages to the current GHG-based one. Agriculture has the most opportunities for reductions, and therefore the most opportunities for benefits. Likewise, organic farming promotes increased carbon sequestration.

Fuel- and energy-efficiency research and development schemes would also reduce emissions and create new jobs. Increased cycling and public transport also create health and social co-benefits.

## Summary

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

A 40% or more domestic abatement reduction in emissions by 2030 is a fair and achievable target that does not rely on unknown future technologies and scenarios. There is plenty of room to surpass this target by changing from the current business systems. The target should be binding and legislated, as the UK has done.

One way to reduce the uncertainties is to introduce a Climate Protection Audit of legislation for activities with GHG impact, particularly agriculture, energy and industry.

## Other comments

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

This is urgent ? action and a binding plan are required immediately.

This consultation does not include consideration of the opportunities that government could develop with business and communities to address climate change.

We expect all submissions and advice to Ministers resulting from this consultation to be published.

Lastly, we look forward to the next step where together, government, business and communities can develop opportunities to reduce New Zealand's impact on climate change and be a model for other countries' efforts in this regard.

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Ministry for the  
**Environment**  
*Manatū Mo Te Taiao*