

“Consultation” on New Zealand's contribution to climate change mitigation is a cynical gesture. Until there has been a thorough programme of education and examination of options the general public can contribute very little. Meaningful response by lay people would require more research than most can manage.

The Government has access to all the expertise available, from the IPCC, NIWA, our universities, the Wise Response group and others, but neither Labour or National have had the courage to face the fundamental changes necessary and take realistic action. Pushing responsibility onto the public is a gross abdication of duty, especially when any consultation is as likely to be as meaningful as that in Christchurch over ECan, school rearrangements or the reconfiguration of Victoria Square. Putting out a discussion document in May, calling meetings at very short notice and demanding submissions by 3 June is a transparent fraud.

**20 years has been wasted so far, through denial, disinformation and delay. Very serious changes are already inevitable.**

**New Zealand, relatively wealthy and far more favourably situated than most other countries, must make a significant contribution to reducing the impacts.**

**40% reduction on 1990 emissions is a minimum.**

As in the explosion of debt before the Great Financial Crisis, we have been supporting current extravagance by pushing the costs into the future. Those benefitting will be gone before the real costs hit. **This intergenerational transfer is a massive moral crime.**

The discussion document gives some estimated costs for reducing household consumption. This is about as useful as giving the cost for major surgery without considering the cost of not doing anything. The real costs of changing climate are going to fall on the younger and future generations, not on the politicians making or avoiding decisions now. **Difficult changes and sacrifices will have to be made. This must no longer be camouflaged, we must have discussions on how the burdens will be shared.**

Contribution to reducing impacts is very important but making the huge changes necessary for New Zealand to survive effects already inescapable seems to have had no consideration. The world faces savage falls in food production, epidemic disease, failure of infrastructure and trade links, destruction of low lying land due to ocean rising and floods, inability to maintain technologies as suppliers of components collapse, breakdown of societies, huge flows of climate refugees and a massive population crash.

**Our present economic system and allocation of wealth and resources is incompatible with the changes needed to maintain a decent society throughout the rest of the century, let alone into the long term. This token pretense of public contribution is a disgrace, as relevant as the consultation on changing our flag. Spending millions on the distraction of promoting a new flag when in a hundred years we may not have a cohesive society under it illuminates just how immoral our governing politicians are.**

**A meaningful commitment to powerful sacrifices to help reduce the damage would indicate that there is hope. Failure will prove that action from below will be the only way to save our children, grandchildren and those to come.**