Setting New Zealand’s post-2020 climate change target

Submission form

The Government is seeking views on New Zealand’s post-2020 climate change contribution under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

You can have your say by making a submission using this form or using the online tool available at www.mfe.govt.nz/more/consultations.

For more information about this consultation:

- Read our Consultation on New Zealand’s post-2020 international climate change contribution web page
- Read our discussion document: New Zealand’s Climate Change Target: Our contribution to the new international climate change agreement

Submissions close at 5.00pm on Wednesday 3 June 2015.

Publishing and releasing submissions

All or part of any written submission (including names of submitters), may be published on the Ministry for the Environment’s website www.mfe.govt.nz. Unless you clearly specify otherwise in your submission, we will consider that you have consented to website posting of both your submission and your name.

Contents of submissions may be released to the public under the Official Information Act 1982 following requests to the Ministry for the Environment (including via email). Please advise if you have any objection to the release of any information contained in a submission and, in particular, which part(s) you consider should be withheld, together with the reason(s) for withholding the information. We will take into account all such objections when responding to requests for copies of, and information on, submissions to this consultation under the Official Information Act.

The Privacy Act 1993 applies certain principles about the collection, use and disclosure of information about individuals by various agencies, including the Ministry for the Environment. It governs access by individuals to information about themselves held by agencies. Any personal information you supply to the Ministry in the course of making a submission will be used by the Ministry only in relation to the matters covered by this consultation. Please clearly indicate in your submission if you do not wish your name to be included in any summary of submissions that the Ministry may publish.
Questions to guide your feedback

Your submission may address any aspect of the discussion document, but we would appreciate you paying particular attention to the questions posed throughout and listed in this form. You may answer some or all of the questions. To ensure your point of view is clearly understood, you should explain your rationale and provide supporting evidence where appropriate.

Contact information

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Objectives for the contribution

1a. We have set the following three objectives for our contribution:

- it is seen as a fair and ambitious contribution – both by international and domestic audiences
- costs and impacts on society are managed appropriately
- it must guide New Zealand over the long term in the global transition to a low emissions world.

Do you agree with these objectives for our contribution?

☑️ Yes
☐ No

1b. What is most important to you?

To me, it is most important that New Zealand's target is ambitious and represents our "fair share" in leading the world towards a zero carbon future. It must send a strong signal in order to facilitate the large scale change that is required in the way we use energy. It must be a clear step away from business-as-usual, and show that the government is serious about safeguarding our climate for future generations.
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?

New Zealand is well placed to be a global leader in demonstrating how to transition to a zero carbon world. Given our already-high proportion of renewable energy generation, our energy sector has great potential to be fully renewable. Our clean green brand also puts NZ in a great position to take bold steps to reduce emissions and reap the benefits to our image from being a leader in this field.

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 do you think would be a reasonable impact on annual household consumption?

I believe that we should in fact view the 'cost' associated with reducing emissions as an investment in our future. I believe that we simply cannot put a price on a liveable climate, and that the cost of inaction is immense and unthinkable. I do not believe that we should let the perception of cost hold us back from ambitious emissions reductions; I do however implore the implementation of domestic policy to distribute the cost fairly and ensure that those most vulnerable within our communities do not suffer disproportionately.

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?

Transitioning from a carbon intensive economy is an important opportunity to provide energy security and protect NZ from oil price fluctuations and conflict over dwindling oil reserves. This must be reflected in our actions across all spheres, and as such, no further oil exploration should occur in NZ territory. It is widely known that we cannot afford to burn all current known oil reserves if we wish to maintain a stable climate, and thus to continue to encourage the search for further reserves is irresponsible and nonsensical. We cannot say one thing when we are at the UNFCCC and then behave in direct contrast to that rhetoric at home.
Summary

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

New Zealand should not be relying upon future technologies and carbon offsets to achieve our emissions targets. In most cases we have the technology and solutions that we need to make large reductions. We must not waste time pinning our hope on future technologies to allow us to continue to live business-as-usual, it is time to front up to the fact that major change is needed in the way that we live and organise our societies. The earth’s climate system will not negotiate. We must work with what we have available and act decisively NOW. Neither should the uncertainty around future carbon prices discourage us from setting ambitious targets. Offsets should not be New Zealand’s main strategy for meeting reduction targets, we should focus on reducing emissions domestically, and use offsets only to support domestic action. Wealthy nations have been hiding behind carbon markets, using offsets to make ourselves feel better while continuing to burn fossil fuels. This is woefully inadequate and not the enthusiastic and ambitious approach that is needed to ensure a safe climate into the future.

Other comments

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

I wish to implore you to have the courage to set bold targets going into Paris. Please do not hang back and await other nations’ ambition. New Zealand can be a leader here, and so many young New Zealanders are so hungry to see us step up. It is not enough to talk about our high renewable energy, etc., resting on our laurels. We must build upon this and act decisively and swiftly to a clean energy future. I implore you to seek cross-party agreement and put targets and domestic policy in place that will stand the test of time, and achieve the change that this challenge requires. Climate change is the challenge of our generation. It is worth investing the time and energy into tackling now, before it is too late. Please do not see cost as a barrier, but rather as an investment toward a prosperous, and please put your all into achieving success in Paris. Finally, thank you for opening this process up to public consultation. This is an important step, and I hope our voices will be listened to.

When your submission is complete

Email your completed submission to climate.contribution@mfe.govt.nz or post to Climate Change Contribution Consultation, Ministry for the Environment, PO Box 10362, Wellington 6143.

Submissions close at 5.00pm on Wednesday 3 June 2015.