

Email [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Hon. Tim Groser,
Minister for Climate Change Issues,
Parliament Buildings,
Wellington.
31st May, 2015

Submission on New Zealand's Response to Climate Change Issues

I am asking that the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC):

- (i) commits to a **global and NZ zero carbon target by 2050** or sooner, with annual steps outlining how to get there as quickly as possible.
- (ii) places an immediate **moratorium on fossil fuel exploration**, and pledges to phase out existing extraction within the decade. All subsidies, funding and tax breaks to the fossil fuel industry are also phased out within the decade
- (iii) includes **credible, transparent, cross-party plans**, with a legislated, independent Climate Commission to ensure NZ meets its targets and stays within the global carbon budget.
- (iv) Abides by the **articles laid out in Te Tiriti o Waitangi**
- (v) includes **health, fairness, and the true costs of inaction on climate change** in the assessment of costs and benefits
- (vi) follows a **transparent decision-making process** after the consultation process ends.

You are probably aware that I copied this from '350 aotearoa', an organisation I have belonged to from the years when we actually believed that 350 parts per million of carbon dioxide was the goal of achievement where beyond this we would enter dangerous climate change. I note that the new level is now 400 parts per million, a level that we were very worried about back then.

New Zealand ranks fourth worst among 60+ countries for its climate protection policies and unsurprisingly also ranks 25th of 26 countries in a 2014 review of emissions trading schemes. I know it is easy to say that New Zealand contributes to only a tiny portion of world carbon emissions as a country, but the figures that matter is how serious we are to change the way we do things, and also what we contribute per capita to carbon emissions.

I have been considering climate change issues for the past ten years, at times feeling panic regarding how I could see life will be for my precious grandchildren. Much of what I saw back then is happening and getting worse. For a while I was writing letters to the editors of various publications, organising and conducting climate change marches and discussion groups in our local community, fighting climate change deniers with words and actions. I guess I am now in a state of apathy, because New Zealand is continuing 'business as usual' and because there is no good climate change leadership in the country. I so badly want this time for our government to take it seriously and begin the revolution to renewable energy use by seriously encouraging ways to divest of fossil fuel energy.

Please, please be serious this time. It is so awful to see my country as a self-centred, self-interested population, shutting its minds to the future of our children and grandchildren, and watching the horrors of what is already happening in other countries. What happens when Australia becomes too dry and hot to live in? Will we be coping with Australian boat people? Are we going to build concentration camps to house them the way Australia is currently doing for refugees seeking security by boat to Australia? All over the world people are becoming increasingly desperate to escape their lives of horror to something better. It seems that climate change and population explosion has become the perfect storm, and we "fiddle while Rome burns!"

Please, please wake up. The world is changing in a frightening way and life is getting impossible for other less lucky humans and ecosystems than we are and have. It is so incredibly selfish to hunker down trying to protect for the short term the lives and standards of living of New Zealand's already well off.

Yours sincerely,

Josephine Anne (Jo-Anne) Vaughan.

PS I look at the harshness of that last paragraph and would like to say that another part of me appreciates how hard you work to protect the economy of this little country at the bottom of the world. I do realise that it helps no-one if we lose the ability to maintain our economy. I do realise it is a very difficult juggling act, but we just have to be serious about climate change this time. Short term decision making doesn't provide for the future of our children and I suspect if Auckland is the example, we are already being flooded by refugees looking for a better future. My granddaughter is one of two pakeha NZer in her High School class in Auckland.

