

From: [REDACTED]
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Submission to Tim Grosser, Minister for Climate Change Issues, from Mary D. Woodward of [REDACTED]

As a graduate of Auckland University of 63 years standing, I have been studying since the 1970s the effect of various adverse effects on the environment, arising from unfettered human activity, and I have been growing ever more impatient to see our New Zealand government responding to what has seemed quite obvious to many of its citizens.

This government has done little to address the issue of climate change; in fact many opportunities to lead the world with a strong voice of reason and caution have been overlooked. New Zealand has a unique reputation for leadership, throughout the world, as I have personally experienced through contact with people of varying cultures in a number of different countries. With a small population we are in a position to make changes more readily than in other less fortunate countries; we can be a pattern and example for them to follow, as we have been already in many endeavours. I am hopeful, and indeed expectant, that the opportunity to put a strong case for the need to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the short term will be grasped by our government, and expressed vigorously at the coming Paris conference on Climate Change.

As an environmentalist and founding member of the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society I fear the effects that a fast-changing climate will have in altering our New Zealand landscape; it is already changing once productive land into desert in many parts of the world. Each day the media brings us news of flooding and landslides, heat waves and snow storms, wind damage and ocean storms, disasters of unprecedented scale that hit one country after another.

As a grandmother of 87 years of age I fear greatly the problems that our grandchildren and their contemporaries will experience in future years, problems emanating from pollution of the atmosphere and the oceans by greenhouse gases; problems that will by then be well beyond reversal, as we already see in the increasing loss of diversity of life on this planet.

As a Quaker I seek equality for mankind, and regret the imbalance of effects caused by the frequently irresponsible lifestyle of the citizens of developed nations, who utilise the 'commons' (air, water, forests, fisheries, and all the resources of the earth we hold in common) for our own benefit and enrichment, and repay those gifts with pollution. This is no way for humanity to go forward. We live at a crucial point in the story of mankind. We need now to turn away from the path of destruction, and choose the path of life.