

Climate Change Policy

Vision

We enjoy a liveable future in Aotearoa New Zealand, stemming from our urgent actions to negate the global climate crisis through an equitable and robust evidence-based process that prioritises mātauranga Māori¹.

Summary

Tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti seek to mitigate climate harms by prioritising a cultural shift that addresses the root causes of climate change. This will be achieved by focusing on Te Tiriti o Waitangi-based solutions, energy sufficiency², efficiency and democratisation, supporting sustainable modes of transport, rapidly phasing out fossil fuels, agricultural diversification to plant-based, climate-safe and resilient models, and economic transformation that avoids growth. Adaptation planning, just transition and free public services will prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable, and increase social equity.

Values and Principles

Actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change are based on these values and principles:

- *Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi:* Tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti co-design solutions to address climate change, using a whole-system lens and prioritising tino rangatiratanga, for the benefit of land and people.
- *Urgency:* The window for reducing greenhouse gases to achieve a climate-safe world has almost closed. Immediate and transformative change to most human systems is required if we are to minimise species extinction and ecosystem collapse.
- *Ecological Wisdom:* We must reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to safe ecological and atmospheric limits, and sequester CO₂, to allow the regeneration of ecosystems harmed by climate change.
- *Global Responsibilities:* Aotearoa New Zealand, a relatively wealthy country with high per capita and historic emissions, has a legal and moral obligation to provide international leadership by reducing emissions and providing climate finance to developing countries; especially the Pacific.
- *Social Responsibility:* Our transition to a climate-safe world means protecting community wellbeing; stopping excessive consumption; and addressing inequalities by empowering marginalised groups.
- *Economic Transformation:* An economic transformation must address the climate crisis by supporting collective wellbeing through prioritising indigenous values, sufficiency and

¹ 'Mātauranga Māori' refers to Māori knowledge - the body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including the Māori world view and perspectives, Māori creativity and cultural practices.

² 'Energy sufficiency' refers to people using only enough energy to meet their needs, and avoiding 'excessive' or 'frivolous' consumption.

equity; and providing opportunities for every member to develop their skills, in an inclusive society.

- *Appropriate Decision-making*: The decisions about how best to mitigate and adapt to climate change should be inclusive, transparent, prioritise the voices of those adversely affected, and based on mātauranga Māori and other science.
- *Non-violence*: Climate safe actions must avoid perpetuating: the harm on people and the environment caused by colonisation; our sense of entitlement as a developed nation; and ongoing exploitation.

Strategic Priorities

The Green Party's strategic goals include:

"Aotearoa New Zealand will lead the world in reducing gross domestic emissions of all greenhouse gases, and will be on track to end fossil-fuel use and production no later than 2035, through legally binding mechanisms.

Our nation will lead the world in sequestering carbon through ecologically sound means.

Adaptation to unavoidable climate change will be well underway.

Sustainable transport, renewable energy and regenerative practices in all areas of economic activity, including land use and food production, will predominate.

Comprehensive support for communities and individuals affected both by the transition to a net zero emissions economy and by the impacts of climate change within New Zealand and the Pacific will be well established."

In addition to climate-relevant actions in other policies, these goals will be achieved through:

- 1.3. Support the autonomy and self-determination of whānau/hapū/iwi and Māori businesses to develop their own climate change adaptation plans, and ensure that sufficient funding and other resources are provided to redress inequities as Māori seek to develop those plans, and to implement them.
- 2.11.6 Require that all government policies and actions, the legislated emissions reduction targets and our Nationally Determined Contribution, are transparent, credible, fair and align with our global obligation to restrict global warming to within 1.5°C of pre-industrial levels with no overshoot.
- 5.1 Support and resource the establishment of regional, representative, Tiriti-based citizens' assemblies, and empower them to recommend their own climate adaptation plans based on Just Transition principles.
- 6.1 Rapidly phase out the dependence of our economic systems on fossil fuels and economic growth.
- 7.6 Update all New Zealanders with the latest climate change-related evidence in an empowering, capacity-building way, as part of a regular accountability statement that enables all New Zealanders to be part of the solution.

Connected Policies

The following Green Party policies all contribute to the Climate Change Policy. See: [Agriculture and Rural Affairs](#), [Conservation](#), [Democracy and Constitutional Transformation](#), [Economic, Energy](#), [Environmental Protection](#), [Food](#), [Forestry](#), [Global Affairs](#), [Health](#), [Housing and Sustainable Communities](#), [Income Support](#), [Marine](#), [Mining](#), [Trade and Foreign Investment](#), [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](#), [Transport](#) and [Workforce](#) policies.

Policy Positions

1. Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Issues

Climate change has and will continue to particularly damage Māori customary practices, cultural identity, and wellbeing. Historical and current injustices have weakened the personal and financial resources of whānau/hapū/iwi, and Māori communities and businesses, to engage as equal partners with tangata Tiriti to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Actions

- 1.1. Enable and support tangata whenua to develop, implement and lead actions to protect the connection of Māori with their tāonga by mitigating and adapting to climate change.
- 1.2. Ensure Māori leadership networks are resourced to provide research, monitoring and advice in relation to climate change, and hold the government to account in terms of climate-related policies and laws that negatively impact Māori.
- 1.3. Support the autonomy and self-determination of whānau/hapū/iwi and Māori businesses to develop their own climate change adaptation plans, and ensure that sufficient funding and other resources are provided to redress inequities as Māori seek to develop those plans, and to implement them.
- 1.4. Fund hapū/iwi to co-design the development of any national guidelines, policies and legislation in relation to climate change.
- 1.5. Fund and prioritise Māori-led research relating to climate change.
- 1.6. The Crown must urgently act to redress its wrongs to Māori by, at a minimum, assisting Māori with their adaptation plans by returning Crown land reserved for Māori that is safe from sea level rise, back to mana whenua control.

2. Urgent Transformation in Critical Sectors

Issues

The agriculture, energy, and transport sectors together account for over 80% of all greenhouse gas emissions in Aotearoa New Zealand, and are still growing. Yet, the policies governing these sectors and the overarching legislative framework for mitigating climate change are too weak. Urgent actions are needed to avert catastrophic climate change impacts and minimise social harm.

Actions

A. Agriculture

- 2.1. Urgently implement regulatory and legislative action to radically reduce gross agricultural emissions, prioritising changes that have co-benefits for ecosystem health and agricultural resilience (see also Emission Pricing Mechanisms, below).
- 2.2. Reduce the density of animals (especially cows) on farms, in order to reduce the related reliance on fertilisers, irrigation systems, biocides, imported feed, and consequent climate harms from high levels of methane and nitrous oxide.

- 2.3. Support and advise farmers to build diverse and resilient regenerative systems, in the face of changes to the climate, and global food systems.
- 2.4. Ensure that agricultural strategies and interventions for Māori customary and freehold land, and general land owned by Māori, are co-designed with Māori.

(For details and further actions, see our [Agriculture and Rural Affairs](#) policy)

B. Energy

- 2.5. Introduce regulatory levers and other mechanisms to rapidly phase out fossil fuels, foster energy conservation and efficiency, and enable appropriate renewable energy development.
- 2.6. Substantially reform the electricity market so that it honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi, accelerates decarbonisation and supports public ownership and participation.
- 2.7. Strengthen the institutional capacity and cross-sector collaborations needed to improve energy efficiency and conservation.
- 2.8. Provide regulatory framework, environmental standards and finance to accelerate the research and deployment of appropriate renewable energy, cognisant of the need for an overall energy descent.

(For details and further actions, see our [Energy](#) policy)

C. Transport

- 2.9. Create dramatic transport mode shift through planning, infrastructure and road rules; education, behavioural interventions and public subsidies; and prioritised investment in city and regional active and public transport networks, including passenger rail throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 2.10. Deliver a frequent, interconnected and electrified rail and coastal shipping network across Aotearoa for freight use.

(For details and further actions, see our [Transport](#) Policy)

D. Climate Change Response Act

- 2.11. Strengthen the Climate Change Response Act by:
 - 2.11.1. Requiring implementation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including through co-governance decision-making.
 - 2.11.2. Covering all sectors (including agriculture, non-municipal waste, and emissions from biomass combustion) and gases (e.g., fluorinated gases, methane and nitrous oxide).
 - 2.11.3. Including domestic air and shipping fuel emissions in calculating emissions both in the public and private sectors.
 - 2.11.4. Provide for robust independent monitoring and enforcement of legal obligations for emissions reduction, including through independent institutions.
 - 2.11.5. Mandating that any deployment of non-forestry carbon sequestration technologies must support an urgent pathway to net carbon-zero, avoid any environmental damage associated with its operation, and avoid exacerbating systemic inequalities.
 - 2.11.6. Require that all government policies and actions, the legislated emissions reduction targets and our Nationally Determined Contribution, are

- transparent, credible, fair and align with our global obligation to restrict global warming to within 1.5°C of pre-industrial levels with no overshoot.
- 2.11.7. Procure offshore emissions credits only as a last resort. These credits must be sourced only from secure high-credibility/ high-integrity sources, and exclusively to achieve essential public goods or to mitigate the harm to community wellbeing resulting from aggressive emissions reductions.

3. Economic Transformation

Issues

Along with other countries, fossil fuels are currently deeply embedded in almost all parts of Aotearoa New Zealand's economy. Given the historical link between economic activity, energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, this dependence is not only a barrier to economic resilience, but also limits the effectiveness of climate policies, making economic transformation a fundamental pillar of our climate response.

Actions

- 3.1. Rapidly phase out the dependence of our economic systems on fossil fuels and economic growth (for details, see our [Economic Policy](#)).
- 3.2. Ensure the agreements reached at all trade negotiations support international emissions reduction targets (see our [Trade and Foreign Investment Policy](#)).
- 3.3. Promote both public and private investment in greenhouse gas emissions abatement technologies and in technologies underpinning Aotearoa New Zealand's national and community adaptation plans (see our [Sustainable Business Policy](#)).
- 3.4. Tighten government procurement rules to ensure that government spending and investment encourages and supports the private sector to transition away from climate change-causing activities and climate-related risk (see our [Economic Policy](#)).
- 3.5. End all fossil fuel exploration and phase-out production and their intensive use in industries (see our [Energy Policy](#)).
- 3.6. Promote the circular economy for local businesses, based on long-lasting products, sharing, repairing, reuse and refill; and prioritise the model in our trade agreements (see our [Economic](#) and [Waste and Hazardous Substances Policies](#)).
- 3.7. Strengthen New Zealand's local, iwi and other community economic systems in order to reduce the need for, and the greenhouse gas harms from, long-distance imports (see our [Economic Policy](#)).
- 3.8. Remove subsidies and other counter-productive incentives on high-emitting industries (see our [Sustainable Business Policy](#)) and industries that overshoot their allocation of greenhouse gas emissions.

A. Emission Pricing Mechanisms

- 3.9. Ensure that the settings of the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) are:
 - 3.9.1. sufficient to meet our emissions reductions as stipulated above;
 - 3.9.2. consistent with the advice of the Climate Change Commission; and
 - 3.9.3. effective at incentivising gross emissions reductions over net emissions reductions.

- 3.10. In the event of changes in forestry-related remuneration/compensation, ensure that existing foresters are not unfairly disadvantaged, especially where tangata whenua have invested in carbon farming on marginal land.
- 3.11. Ensure that additional NZUs made available through the ETS are consistent with our international commitments to achieve our 2030 and 2050 emissions reductions targets.
- 3.12. Accelerate phasing out the free allocation of NZUs to Emission-Intensive and Trade-Exposed (EITE) industries (see our [Trade and Foreign Investment](#) Policy)
- 3.13. Implement, with urgency, a framework for:
 - 3.13.1. pricing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions that is consistent with our Nationally Determined Contribution and international climate agreements; and
 - 3.13.2. reinvesting the emission-related revenues gained from the agricultural sector to support its transition (see our [Agriculture and Rural Affairs](#) Policy).
- 3.14. Where the ETS is proving ineffective in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, implement alternative emissions pricing mechanisms.
- 3.15. Use revenues from the ETS and other emissions pricing mechanisms to fund emissions abatement.

B. Specific Economic Sectors

- 3.16. *Tourism*: Investigate how arrival, departure and airport levies or regulations (e.g., a cap on numbers) can be used to help mitigate this non-essential activity and respond to the environmental and climate harms of tourism, which include long-haul travel emissions (see our [Tourism](#) Policy).
- 3.17. *Food*: Regulate food supply chains to reduce emissions that occur through food processing, refrigeration, packaging, transport, retail, cooking and waste (see our [Food, Energy, Transport](#) and [Environmental Protection](#) Policies).
- 3.18. *Urban Design, Construction and Infrastructure* (for details, see our [Housing and Sustainable Communities](#) Policy): Update standards for urban design, construction, and infrastructure to cover:
 - 3.18.1. Designing with regenerative principles for resilient long-term infrastructure.
 - 3.18.2. Moving goods and people using net-zero emissions.
 - 3.18.3. Reducing embodied and operational carbon, energy, and waste.
 - 3.18.4. Addressing increased flooding risk and severity, including compensation to individuals and families for damage to modest stranded assets.
 - 3.18.5. Accelerated implementation of healthy home standards.
 - 3.18.6. Identifying the climate threats to vulnerable people and communities.
 - 3.18.7. Developing inclusive plans to avoid social harm.
- 3.19. *Fishing*: Regulate the fishing industry to transition to a zero-emission fleet, processing and operations, including banning all dredging and bottom trawling which release carbon dioxide from the ocean floor (see also our [Marine](#) Policy).

4. [Global Responsibilities and International Leadership](#)

Issues

The people and countries most vulnerable to the devastating impacts of climate change are the least responsible for emissions, including island nations in the Pacific and indigenous peoples. While recognising growing domestic inequality that must be addressed, Aotearoa is a relatively wealthy country, has high historical emissions and per capita emissions that are currently double the world average. Accordingly, we have a legal and moral responsibility, underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, to lead climate action and champion global equity.

Actions

- 4.1. Embed our commitment to Te Tiriti and co-governance in all international climate negotiations.
- 4.2. Support Indigenous-led networks internationally to combat climate change, and collectively work towards autonomous actions by Indigenous nations.
- 4.3. Participate in ambitious country groupings for climate action.
- 4.4. Advocate internationally for:
 - 4.4.1. Strengthening international climate agreements, and all countries substantially increasing their Nationally Determined Contributions, with developed countries taking the lead, so that global emissions halve by 2030 and reach carbon-negative by 2050 to limit global average temperature rise to 1.5°C with no overshoot.
 - 4.4.2. Decisions founded upon equity, common but differentiated responsibility, ecological integrity, just transition, climate justice and best available science.
 - 4.4.3. A legally binding mechanism to ensure international compliance with climate commitments.
 - 4.4.4. Scaled up transparent global commitments for developed country finance to developing countries that address the urgency, extent and inequity of the climate crisis, including increasing financing of climate adaptation, with plans to implement, monitor and report on the global adaptation work programme.
 - 4.4.5. An approach to all international climate change negotiations and institutions that:
 - 4.4.5.1. enables leadership by vulnerable countries, especially Pacific nations; and
 - 4.4.5.2. supports meaningful participation and decision-making by vulnerable people and communities.
 - 4.4.6. Climate initiatives that also address the biodiversity crisis and protect nature, including protecting the ecological integrity of forests, and the rights of indigenous and forest-dependent peoples.
 - 4.4.7. Accelerating the international phase-out of fossil fuels and an immediate end to fossil fuel subsidies.
 - 4.4.8. Cancelling developing country debts to advance a just transition, equity and rapid emission reductions.
 - 4.4.9. Ambitious and specific action to reduce bunker fuel emissions.
 - 4.4.10. Including all military emissions in all mandatory greenhouse gas reporting and Nationally Determined Contributions.
- 4.5. Cognisant of the precautionary principle, recognising our social responsibilities, and in the framework of international regulations, oppose any deployment of

- global-scale geoengineered technologies (e.g. solar radiation management) as a response to the climate crisis.
- 4.6. Implement and strengthen international climate agreements to which Aotearoa New Zealand is a signatory by:
 - 4.6.1. substantially increasing Aotearoa New Zealand's Nationally Determined Contribution to the 'Paris Agreement';
 - 4.6.2. monitoring and reporting annually to the public of Aotearoa New Zealand on our progress in relation to all international climate commitments; and
 - 4.6.3. facilitating the public of Aotearoa New Zealand to inform and support our international stance.
 - 4.7. Actively support Pacific nations to help them plan for and build their resilience to climate change, in line with Pacific priorities, including ongoing financial support and immediate responsive support following extreme weather events.
 - 4.8. Implement an accountability framework that ensures that all climate finance support provided by Aotearoa New Zealand to other countries is kept separate from our Official Development Assistance commitments.
 - 4.9. Actively support Pacific states' leadership on:
 - 4.9.1. addressing the security and sovereignty issues related to the future survival of island nations, including at the United Nations Security Council;
 - 4.9.2. legal protection for the rights of people displaced by climate change;
 - 4.9.3. protection of cultural and political identity consistent with their sovereign rights as countries; and
 - 4.9.4. systems of loss and damage compensation through an international finance facility under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

5. Ecological Resilience and Carbon Sequestration

Issues

Climate change and our indigenous biodiversity crisis are inextricably linked, leaving us with unprecedented adverse effects on ecosystems. If ecosystems fail, our ability to mitigate or adapt to climate change fails too. Increasing numbers of people have become concerned about the degradation of the natural world – especially in relation to climate change; yet the role that mātauranga Māori could play in restoring ecological resilience and increasing carbon sequestration, is being ignored.

Actions

- 5.1. Embed climate change imperatives into all environmental protection legislation (see also our [Environmental Protection](#) Policy), including:
 - 5.1.1. holding local government to account for meeting their responsibilities under the Climate Change Response Act;
 - 5.1.2. setting legally binding emission reduction targets across regions and/or sectors consistent with Emission Reductions Plans, both under the Resource Management Act and its replacement legislation; and
 - 5.1.3. founding environmental protection in a changing climate on Te Tiriti o Waitangi and on values and understandings from Te Ao Māori.
- 5.2. Ensure that resource management, conservation and other legislative and regulatory instruments for systems that impact on ecosystem health effectively

protect and restore the resilience of biodiversity and ecosystems and their ability to adapt to climate change (see our [Conservation, Marine, Housing and Sustainable Communities](#), and [Transport](#) Policies).

- 5.3. Ensure that resource management legislation properly addresses the tino rangatiratanga of iwi and hapū to protect their land, water, and other natural resources, in cooperation with regional councils.
- 5.4. Prioritise scientifically robust methods for carbon sequestration that occur through the restoration of native ecosystems, including native forests, wetlands, urban canopies, freshwater, and 'blue carbon' (coastal) ecosystems (see our [Conservation](#) and [Marine](#) Policies).
- 5.5. Support an expanding and diverse forestry sector for Tiriti-based and equitable short-term carbon sequestration and carbon-neutral resources (see our [Forestry](#) policy).

6. [Social Responsibility](#)

Issues

The current levers that Aotearoa New Zealand has developed for reducing emissions are insufficient for addressing the realities of climate change. Future generations now face a more rapid transition towards a carbon-negative economy that threatens to worsen socioeconomic inequalities. Māori and other marginalised groups will face greater challenges and hardship from coastal erosion, job losses in high emission sectors and the impacts of extreme weather.

Actions

A. Just Transitions³

- 6.1. Support and resource the establishment of regional, representative, Tiriti-based citizens' assemblies, and empower them to recommend their own climate adaptation plans based on Just Transition principles.
- 6.2. Bring together communities, workers and their unions, employers, whānau/hapū/iwi, and Māori organisations, to co-design carbon-negative economic strategies, supported by large scale, transformational public investment.
- 6.3. Support exemplar Just Transition clauses in Public Service collective employment agreements.
- 6.4. Ensure that Just Transitions are prioritised so that the marginalised are not disproportionately affected by climate change and the transition away from emission intensive activities. This includes:
 - 6.4.1. Funding Māori-led initiatives for transitioning away from fossil fuel and agribusiness ventures, and into sustainable and ecosystem-benefitting industries.

³ Just Transition is an enabler of system transformation that upholds the rights and dignity of all involved, as we meet the challenges of our climate, ecological and social crises. The principles support the achievement of fairness, equity and community wellbeing as we shift to a carbon negative economy. It involves all sectors of society, according to their ability, and working in partnership with iwi/hapū/Māori organisations, all planning and leading their own part of the transformation, for the good of all. To ensure inclusiveness and fairness, central government support will be critical in championing community efforts, empowering trade union movements, building a regional focus and honouring our international commitments, especially in the Pacific.

- 6.4.2. Proactively identifying disproportionately impacted people (e.g., those with a disability and remote communities), and supporting them to develop and implement inclusive plans to avoid physical, social and economic harm.
- 6.4.3. Ensuring women are empowered and female dominated work is prioritised in all Just Transition policy, initiatives and funding, including by improving conditions and pay for all women and female dominated work, while reducing energy dependence and carbon emissions.
- 6.5. Provide support for people whose work has been impacted by climate change, in the following ways:
 - 6.5.1. Free vocational training and redeployment opportunities for those in high-emission industries to transition to climate-safe work.
 - 6.5.2. Access to redundancy compensation for working people adversely affected by climate change measures (for example, see our [Economic, Transport, Housing and Sustainable Communities, Health](#), and Workforce policies).
 - 6.5.3. Actively strengthen human and labour rights to reduce inequitable vulnerabilities to the effects of climate change.
- 6.6. Introduce a range of social protection and other measures to strengthen community resilience to changes related to climate change including more free public services (see our [Energy, Transport, Housing and Sustainable Communities, Local Government, Food](#) and [Health](#) policies).

B. Health and Wellbeing

- 6.7. Support the health sector to prepare for climate-related health issues, including those related to emotional wellbeing, to significantly reduce its emissions, and to promote actions that have climate and health co-benefits. (see also our [Health](#) policy).
- 6.8. Develop and implement strategies to support the wellbeing of people displaced by climate change, including supporting whānau/hapū/iwi and Māori communities to deal with detachment and loss of identity from places of historical and customary significance (see also our [Health](#) policy).
- 6.9. Develop a National Food Strategy for self-sufficiency in food production that incorporates Māori food sovereignty as part of an adaptation strategy for extreme weather events caused by climate change and security of food supply in Aotearoa New Zealand (see our [Food](#) Policy).

[7. Appropriate Decision-Making](#)

Issues

Urgently reducing greenhouse gas emissions to reverse climate change is a collective global responsibility, but the biggest polluters are large profit-driven corporations, who use their considerable power to influence decision-makers in order to meet their own (short-term) vested interests. Such actions reduce the power and the voice of individuals and communities to mitigate and adapt to climate change, which subsequently reduces their ability to protect future generations from those problems.

Actions

- 7.1. Develop a legal framework for achieving accountability to future generations.
- 7.2. Ban the advertising of all products and services that directly consume fossil fuels.

- 7.3. Improve coordination of climate mitigation and adaptation activities across the public and private sectors.
- 7.4. Support effective decision-making about adapting to climate change in Aotearoa New Zealand by:
 - 7.4.1. Increasing resourcing and accountability for climate adaptation at local government levels.
 - 7.4.2. Implementing culturally appropriate measures to gauge the effectiveness of adaptation actions.
 - 7.4.3. Prioritising long-term, nature-based solutions over short-term engineering solutions, in alignment with tikanga Māori.
 - 7.4.4. Provide additional resources to those least resourced to undertake required adaptation actions.
- 7.5. Implement methods of participatory democracy as one approach to reduce the ability of vested, privileged interests to negatively influence policy actions that are necessary for climate change action (see our [Local Government](#) and [Democracy and Constitutional Transformation](#) Policies).
- 7.6. Update all New Zealanders with the latest climate change-related evidence in an empowering, capacity-building way, as part of a regular accountability statement that enables all New Zealanders to be part of the solution.
- 7.7. Substantially increase funding for grassroots climate-change organisations that focus on education, adaptation and community empowerment.
- 7.8. Support Māori, local, rural, and remote communities with emergency-response tools for extreme weather events.
- 7.9. Make topics relating to climate change a compulsory part of every student's education, with a goal of building climate hope and action, and supporting them through this climate crisis (see our [Education](#) and [Tertiary Education](#) policies).