

Climate Change Policy

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 sufficiency¹, efficiency and democratisation, supporting sustainable modes of transport, rapidly phasing out fossil fuels, agricultural diversification to more plant-based, climate-safe and resilient models, and economic transformation that avoids growth. Adaptation planning, just transitions and free public services will prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable, and increase social equity.

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 Māori².

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 emerging economies, especially in 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 *Energy sufficiency* refers to people using only enough energy to meet their needs, and avoiding 'excessive' or 'frivolous' consumption.

² *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.

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.

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."

Actions in this policy that will help achieve this include:

- Requiring that the legislated emission reduction targets and Nationally Determined Contribution (and all government policies and actions to achieve them) 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. (2.1.6)
- Supporting and resourcing the establishment of regional, representative, Tiriti-based citizens' assemblies, and empowering them to recommend their own climate adaptation plans based on Just Transition principles. (2.2.3)
- Supporting the autonomy and self-determination of hapū, iwi, and Māori businesses to develop their own climate change response plans. (1.1.2)
- Providing the public with the latest climate change-related evidence, as part of a regular accountability statement that enables all New Zealanders to be part of the solution. (2.2.7)
- Prioritising scientifically robust methods for carbon sequestration, including in soils, that occur through the restoration of native ecosystems. (4.2.1)
- Proactively identifying disproportionately impacted people (e.g., women, those with a disability, and remote communities) and supporting them to develop and implement inclusive plans to avoid physical, social and economic harm. (5.1.1)

Connected Policies

Urgent transformation is needed in a wide range of sectors and aspects of society to avert the potentially catastrophic impacts of climate change and minimise social harms. These changes are detailed in other policies, including:

- Phasing out the dependence of our economic systems on fossil fuels and economic growth and ensuring that the [Government in the Economy](#) encourages and supports the private sector to transition away from climate change-causing activities and climate-related risk.
- Regulating, incentivising, and supporting low-emission [Business](#) practices and technologies, including through [Research, Science, and Technology](#), and supporting a circular economy based on long-lasting products, sharing, repairing, reuse and refill, and minimising [Waste and Hazardous Substances](#).
- Reducing the need for, and the greenhouse gas harms from, long-distance imports by strengthening New Zealand's local economies and other systems that prioritise [Community in the Economy](#), and ensuring that the agreements reached at all [Trade and Foreign Investment](#) negotiations support international emission reduction targets.
- Reducing gross emissions from domestic [Agriculture](#), [Tourism](#), [Marine](#) fishing, and other high-emission sectors, and resourcing a just transition to resilient, regenerative alternatives.
- Designing for resilient, minimal-emission [Transport](#), [Housing and Sustainable Communities](#), [Food](#), and [Energy](#) systems that prioritise wellbeing.
- Supporting an expanding and diverse [Forestry](#) sector, where appropriate, for Tiriti-based, sustainable, and equitable short-term carbon sequestration and carbon-neutral resources.
- Developing legal frameworks for protecting the [Human Rights](#) of future generations, and ensuring [Governance](#) processes are designed to uphold them, protect the natural world, and enable a good quality of life for all.
- Ensuring [Workforce](#) policy settings, [Livelihoods](#) support, and free public services are sufficient to meet basic needs, and enable resilience to climate impacts and a Just Transition.
- Preparing and providing for climate-exacerbated [Biodiversity and Environmental Regeneration](#), [Health](#), [Immigration](#), [Emergency Management](#), and [Security and Defence](#) issues.

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, including by:
 - 1.1.1. Ensuring 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.

- 1.1.2. Supporting the autonomy and self-determination of hapū, iwi, and Māori businesses to develop their own climate change response plans.
- 1.1.3. Ensuring that sufficient funding and other resources are provided to redress inequities as Māori seek to develop and implement climate change response plans.
- 1.1.4. Funding hapū/iwi to co-design the development of any national guidelines, policies and legislation in relation to climate change.
- 1.1.5. Funding and prioritising Māori-led research relating to climate change.
- 1.1.6. Funding Māori-led initiatives for transitioning away from fossil fuel and agribusiness ventures, and into sustainable and ecosystem-benefitting industries.

2. Climate-positive Governance

Issues

As with other countries, fossil fuels are deeply embedded in almost all parts of Aotearoa New Zealand's economy - economic activity, energy consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions are strongly linked. The dependence on fossil energy is not only a barrier to economic resilience, but also limits the effectiveness of climate policies. The biggest climate 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. This reduces the power and the voice of individuals and communities to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to protect future generations. The overarching legislative framework for addressing climate change and associated pricing emissions are too weak to avert catastrophic climate change impacts and minimise social harm.

Actions

- 2.1. Strengthen the Climate Change Response Act by:
 - 2.1.1. Requiring implementation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including through co-governance decision-making.
 - 2.1.2. Covering every sector (including agriculture, non-municipal waste, and emissions from biomass combustion) and greenhouse gas (i.e., methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases, in addition to carbon dioxide and others).
 - 2.1.3. Including domestic air and shipping fuel emissions in calculating emissions both in the public and private sectors.
 - 2.1.4. Providing for robust independent monitoring and enforcement of legal obligations for emissions reduction, including through independent institutions.
 - 2.1.5. 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.

- 2.1.6. Requiring that the legislated emission reduction targets and Nationally Determined Contribution (and all government policies and actions to achieve them) 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.
- 2.1.7. Procuring offshore emissions credits only as a last resort sourced from secure, high-credibility, high-integrity sources, and only used to achieve essential public goods or to prevent harm to community wellbeing resulting from aggressive emissions reductions.
- 2.2. Ensure the timely and effective implementation of climate-related legislation by:
 - 2.2.1. Holding Local Government to account for meeting their responsibilities under the Climate Change Response Act;
 - 2.2.2. Setting legally binding emission reduction targets across regions and/or sectors that are consistent with national Emission Reduction Plans.
 - 2.2.3. Supporting and resourcing the establishment of regional, representative, Tiriti-based citizens' assemblies, and empowering them to recommend their own climate adaptation plans based on Just Transition principles.
 - 2.2.4. Bring together Māori and other relevant groups to co-design carbon-negative economic strategies, supported by large-scale, transformational public investment.
 - 2.2.5. Promoting research and development into alternatives to fossil fuel-dependent materials and processes.
 - 2.2.6. Improving coordination of climate mitigation and adaptation activities across the public and private sectors.
 - 2.2.7. Providing the public with the latest climate change-related evidence, as part of a regular accountability statement that enables all New Zealanders to be part of the solution.

A. Emission Pricing Mechanisms

- 2.3. Ensure that the settings of emissions pricing mechanisms, including the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), are:
 - 2.3.1. Sufficient to meet the emissions reduction obligations stipulated above and compensate for the costs of mitigating and adapting to climate change;
 - 2.3.2. Consistent with the advice of the Climate Change Commission; and
 - 2.3.3. Effective at incentivising gross emissions reductions over net emissions reductions.
- 2.4. Ensure that all sectors are covered by an effective emissions pricing system, by:
 - 2.4.1. Phasing out the free allocation of NZUs to Emission-Intensive and Trade-Exposed (EITE) industries.
 - 2.4.2. Implementing a framework for pricing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions.

- 2.4.3. Including the emissions from international aviation in emission pricing schemes, and seeking to renegotiate international agreements as necessary to achieve this.
- 2.4.4. Including marine-based 'blue carbon' in the ETS.
- 2.4.5. Where the ETS is proving ineffective in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, implementing alternative emissions pricing mechanisms.
- 2.5. Ensure that existing foresters receive equitable treatment from any changes in forestry-related carbon offsetting systems, especially where tangata whenua have invested in carbon farming on marginal land.

3. 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 inequalities that must be addressed, Aotearoa is a relatively wealthy country, has high historical and per capita emissions, and ranks poorly against other countries for its climate change policies. Accordingly, we have a legal and moral responsibility, underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, to lead climate action and champion global equity.

Actions

- 3.1. Advocate internationally for:
 - 3.1.1. 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 net carbon-negative by 2050 to limit global average temperature rise to 1.5°C with no overshoot.
 - 3.1.2. Embedding urgent climate action across all international agreements and institutions.
 - 3.1.3. Decisions founded upon equity, common but differentiated responsibility, ecological integrity, just transition, climate justice, and best available science.
 - 3.1.4. A legally binding mechanism to ensure international compliance with climate commitments, such as our commitment to the International Methane Pledge.
 - 3.1.5. Scaled-up, transparent global commitments for developed country finance to emerging economies 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.
 - 3.1.6. Global action that supports small island nations already experiencing climate catastrophe.
 - 3.1.7. An approach to all international climate change negotiations and institutions that:

- 3.1.7.1. Centers Indigenous leadership and enables autonomous action by indigenous nations
 - 3.1.7.2. Enables leadership by vulnerable countries, especially Pacific nations; and
 - 3.1.7.3. Supports meaningful participation and decision-making by vulnerable people and communities.
- 3.2. Adopt a collaborative approach to global climate action that focuses on:
- 3.2.1. Embedding our commitment to Te Tiriti and co-governance in all international climate negotiations.
 - 3.2.2. Supporting indigenous-led networks internationally to combat climate change.
 - 3.2.3. Participating in ambitious country groupings for climate action.
 - 3.2.4. Supporting Pacific nations to plan for and build their resilience to climate change, in line with Pacific priorities, including providing ongoing financial support and immediate responsive support following climate-related events.
 - 3.2.5. Enabling the public of Aotearoa New Zealand to inform our international stance.
- 3.3. Actively support Pacific states' leadership on:
- 3.3.1. Addressing the security and sovereignty issues related to the future survival of island nations, including at the United Nations Security Council;
 - 3.3.2. Legal protection for the rights of people displaced by climate change;
 - 3.3.3. Protection of cultural and political identity consistent with their sovereign rights as countries; and
 - 3.3.4. Systems of loss and damage compensation through an international finance facility under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
 - 3.3.5. 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.
 - 3.3.6. Accelerating the international phase-out of fossil fuels and an immediate end to fossil fuel subsidies.
 - 3.3.7. Cancelling debts held by countries with emerging economies to advance their just transition, equity, and rapid emission reductions.
 - 3.3.8. Comprehensive action to reduce bunker fuel emissions.
 - 3.3.9. Including all military emissions in all mandatory greenhouse gas reporting and Nationally Determined Contributions.
 - 3.3.10. Oppose deployment of global-scale geoengineered technologies (e.g. solar radiation management) as a response to the climate crisis, as indicated by the framework of international regulations, the precautionary principle and our social responsibilities.

- 3.4. Provide global leadership in implementing international climate agreements to which Aotearoa New Zealand is a signatory, including by:
 - 3.4.1. Substantially increasing Aotearoa New Zealand's Nationally Determined Contribution to the 'Paris Agreement';
 - 3.4.2. Monitoring and reporting annually to the public of Aotearoa New Zealand on our progress in relation to all international climate commitments; and
 - 3.4.3. Implementing a climate accountability framework that includes climate finance support provided by Aotearoa New Zealand to other countries, separate from Official Development Assistance commitments.

4. Ecological Resilience and Carbon Sequestration

Issues

All species face habitat stress, changing seasonal cues, shifting food webs, and other climate-exacerbated pressures that threaten ecosystems. If ecosystems fail, our ability to sequester greenhouse gases, and adapt to climate change fails too.

Actions

- 4.1. Ensure that all environmental protection and resource management legislation:
 - 4.1.1. Embeds climate change imperatives.
 - 4.1.2. Effectively protects and restores the resilience of biodiversity and ecosystems and their ability to adapt to climate change.
- 4.2. Align carbon sequestration, including 'carbon farming', with ecological resilience, including by:
 - 4.2.1. Prioritising scientifically robust methods for carbon sequestration, including in soils, that occur through the restoration of native ecosystems.
 - 4.2.2. Recognising that carbon capture and storage technologies cannot be relied on as a credible technology in the immediate future.

5. Just Transitions³

Issues

Due to insufficient action in the past, humanity now faces more extreme and unavoidable climate changes which, in turn, require a more rapid transition towards a carbon-negative economy. Both of these changes threaten to worsen socioeconomic inequalities. For example, 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

³ A *Just Transition* requires a system transformation that applies principles of fairness, equity, and wellbeing to uphold the rights and dignity of all involved. In this context, it is required to address our current climate, ecological, and social crises.

- 5.1. Ensure that marginalised groups are proactively protected from climate change and the transition away from emission-intensive activities, including by:
 - 5.1.1. Proactively identifying disproportionately impacted people (e.g., women, those with a disability, and remote communities) and supporting them to develop and implement inclusive plans to avoid physical, social and economic harm.
 - 5.1.2. Strengthening human and labour rights in ways that reduce inequitable vulnerabilities to the effects of climate change.
 - 5.1.3. Resourcing grassroots climate-change organisations that focus on education, adaptation and community empowerment.
- 5.2. Support people whose work has been impacted by climate change responses, including by:
 - 5.2.1. Funding free vocational training and redeployment opportunities for those in high-emission industries to transition to climate-safe work.
 - 5.2.2. Providing access to redundancy compensation for people working in sectors that are adversely affected by climate change measures
- 5.3. Strengthen community resilience to climate change and the transition away from emission-intensive activities including by:
 - 5.3.1. Developing and implementing 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.
- 5.4. Support effective climate adaptation decision-making and action by:
 - 5.4.1. Increasing resourcing and accountability for climate adaptation at local government levels.
 - 5.4.2. Implementing culturally appropriate measures to gauge the effectiveness of adaptation actions.
 - 5.4.3. Prioritising long-term, nature-based solutions over short-term engineering solutions, in alignment with tikanga Māori.
 - 5.4.4. Providing additional resources to those least resourced to undertake required adaptation actions.
 - 5.4.5. Ensure that every student learns how to both respond and stay hopeful in the face of climate change impacts on their lives.