



COMMISSION FOR ECOLOGY, JUSTICE AND PEACE  
INTEGRAL ECOLOGY COMMITTEE

28 March 2021

**SUBMISSION TO HE POU A RANGI – CLIMATE CHANGE COMMISSION**  
**On Commission's climate change advice consultation**

*The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life. A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system... Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it.*

Pope Francis: Laudato Si' - On the Care of our Common Home, 2015 (paragraph 23)

**Introduction**

1. The Archdiocese of Wellington Ecology Justice and Peace (EJP Commission) welcomes the opportunity to submit on the Climate Change Commission's (CCC) 2021 Draft Advice for Consultation. The EJP Commission's mandate includes supporting the communities of the Archdiocese and the wider community to hear and respond to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. It is from this mandate that this submission is developed. The EJP Commission would like to congratulate the Commission for its comprehensive recommendation to the government on New Zealand's path to net zero by 2050.
2. We recognise that human activity is changing our climate. We also recognise this is a threat to life. We know that change is required at all levels of our society. That includes the changes we can make as individuals, families and households, and together as communities. This also requires structural change, including change in policy and practice which is beyond the control of individuals, and must be made by governments, businesses and community leaders. Maintaining public support through a three-decade transition to zero-carbon emissions will require developing and upholding a strong social contract – a duty of care.
3. **Big issues question 1: Do you agree that the emissions budgets we have proposed would put Aotearoa on course to meet the 2050 emissions targets?**  
Agree: We are not experts in the calculation of emissions budgets and targets. However, we accept that the best scientific information available at this point in time has been used to develop this advice. While recognising that there will always be a range of policy options and perspectives, we accept the advice of the Climate Change Commission that this proposed course of action will put us on course to meet the 2050 targets.

**4. Big issues question 2. Do you agree we have struck a fair balance between requiring the current generation to take action, and leaving future generations to do more work to meet the 2050 target and beyond?**

Agree: We agree in principle that the balance is needed and is represented in the advice. However, we believe that there are sectors of our society which may be able to move more quickly, while others will need support to be able to change. For example, not every New Zealand car-owning household is able to move quickly to owning an electric vehicle. There are issues of cost, access to charging stations, and stages of life. But there are also some businesses and households right now who are considering purchasing a new vehicle, can afford to buy an electric car and have a garage or parking arrangements where electric cars can be charged. Moving to a zero-emissions transport system should not be put on hold until every New Zealand household can change. We see a moral responsibility on those businesses, organisations and households that are able to change to do so, and for the structural and policy settings to recognise that some New Zealanders are able to act more quickly than others.

**5. Big issues 3. Do you agree with the changes we have suggested to make the NDC compatible with the 1.5°C goal?**

Disagree – our changes are not ambitious enough

New Zealand has learned this year the value of “going hard and early” to protect our society from Covid-19. We need to follow the same principles in our response to climate change. We recognise that we are already close to the 1.5-degree goal, and that life for many of our Pacific neighbours will change irrevocably even if we achieve this goal. Like combatting a global pandemic, we can't afford to think only of our own wellbeing as if what happens in other parts of the world does not affect us. We run the risk of transferring to future generations not only the costs and burden of adaptation for our everyday activities, but also leaving to them the foreseeable challenges of responding to constant humanitarian disasters, from mass environmental migration to frequent weather-related emergencies.

**6. Big issues 4. Do you agree with our approach to meet the 2050 target that prioritises growing new native forests to provide a long-term store of carbon?**

Agree. We see many benefits in growing new native forests, including as carbon sinks, remediating ecosystems, and increasing biodiversity.

**7. Big issues 5. What are the most urgent policy interventions needed to help meet our emissions budgets?**

Our greatest concerns are about promoting equity and inclusion, identifying and overcoming barriers, and supporting communities and workers.

For example, within the transport recommendations, members of our Commission in principle welcome and would support the changes required to move towards a zero-emissions transport fleet. However, for some of us, public transport options don't sufficiently provide for disability access, and bus-rail connections don't allow for the additional time that a person with a disability needs to move between services. We prefer to see positive incentives, such as subsidised travel that makes public transport a cheaper option for everyone, rather than disincentives such as charging for the use of “park and ride” carparks at railway stations or congestion charging.

The economic costs that will be required by businesses and the public sector are often recognised better than the economic costs that will be required by community organisations, including churches, marae and local volunteer organisations. We are advocating within our Archdiocese for all decisions to take integral ecology, including climate change, into account. But we recognise that

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many of our parishes and groups already operate on a shoestring and – however willing to change – will really struggle to find funds needed to make the changes necessary to use alternative forms of transport, heating and power. Support for change needs to be targeted towards the community sector, as well as to public and private sectors of the economy.

Emission budgets are also about a host of other issues that New Zealanders care about and are also strongly impacted by the ways the wider New Zealand economy produces and consumes energy. The transition to zero-carbon emissions also represents an opportunity to build a more just society, increase the availability of high-quality jobs, and build an energy system without the social injustices that pervade the current system. We need to ensure those individuals, communities, and businesses that are marginalized today can share equitably in future benefits. The EJP Commission encourages the Climate Change Commission to continue to include regular opportunities for, and responses from community input, as well as ensure fair access to benefits and fair sharing of costs, and also to advise Government on the need for ongoing community consultation as policies and programmes are developed and implemented

Maintaining public support through a three-decade transition to zero-carbon emissions cannot be achieved without the development and upholding of a strong social contract – a duty of care. New Zealand will need specific policies to engage and encourage public support for the transition, ensure an equitable and just zero-carbon emissions energy system, and facilitate the recovery of people and communities disadvantaged by the transition.

**8. Big 6. Do you think our proposed emissions budgets and path to 2035 are both ambitious and achievable considering the potential for future behaviour and technology changes in the next 15 years?**

Agree. As a church group, we don't necessarily have technical solutions to offer. What we feel is needed at this time is a common plan and a common vision that New Zealanders can rally around. We are satisfied that the Climate Change Commission is offering such a plan and vision. We give it our support.