

# ACT Climate Change Policy

## Goal

That no New Zealand government will ever impose needless and unjustified taxation or regulation on its citizens in a misguided attempt to reduce global warming or become a world leader in carbon neutrality.

## Background

- The Labour Government is determined that New Zealand will lead the world in the race to carbon neutrality even though nothing New Zealand could do, including disappearing off the face of the planet, would have any impact on global climate.
- New Zealand is not warming. There is no warming trend since 1970 and the slight warming trend since 1950 is not statistically significant.
- If it were to warm moderately, we would likely benefit in terms of land-based production, human health and reduced heating bills. Arguments that we would lose from sea-level rise or more extreme events are unproven conjectures.
- Policies to reduce emissions in New Zealand could not conceivably reduce global warming, even if warming were globally harmful.
- The Government ratified the Kyoto Protocol in advance of Australia for short-term political gain without the benefit of any supporting analysis from Treasury. New Zealand can expect to pay billions of dollars to foreign governments like Russia, for carbon credits to offset their emissions.
- Now the government wants to force us all to pay more for fuel and electricity beyond 2012.
- Treasury's analysis of the Emissions Trading Scheme made no case that its benefits would exceed the costs. The scheme lends itself to corrupt allocations of permits and seedy MMP negotiations were necessary to ram it through parliament.
- It is reckless to distort the New Zealand economy in the cause of an ineffectual Protocol that expires in 2012 and won't be rolled forward because its 1990 targets are unacceptable to China and the United States.
- The NZ Institute of Economic Research states in their 2008 study "*The Impact of the Proposed Emissions Trading Scheme*" that:
  - Dairy land values will fall by 40%
  - Beef and sheep land values will fall by 23%
  - Annual household incomes will fall by \$3,000
  - The average hourly rate will fall by \$2.30
  - Annually 22,000 new jobs will be lost
- Only ACT opposes Labour in seeking to force New Zealanders to pay much more for energy and electricity.
- ACT believes that New Zealand can play a responsible role in the international community while keeping its powder dry. In particular, it should not move faster than Australia or the United States.

## ***Principles***

**Freedom** - People should be free to live and work how they choose, including making their own decisions as to what light bulbs to use, unless there is clear scientific evidence that their actions are damaging the environment, or unless they are harming others.

**Put New Zealanders needs first** – Until there is clear scientific evidence that we should do otherwise, energy policy should be primarily concerned with affordability and stability of supply.

**Proceed with caution** – The precautionary principle works both ways. ‘Green Business’ opportunities which address non-existent problems and needs are not “business opportunities” but a massive risk and likely to destroy wealth on a massive scale

**Do not make needless rods for our own backs** – The government is globally unique including methane gas (produced by ruminants) in calculating our Kyoto commitments. This is extreme, contrary to all other member countries and should be amended

**Distinguish between real pollutants and carbon dioxide** – carbon dioxide is a vital and necessary greenhouse gas crucial for plant growth and human survival

**Make decisions based on sound science** – not on blind belief or ideology which is increasingly divorced from reason

### **A commonsense approach to Climate Change would recognise that:**

- There is no point destroying our economy in pursuit of ‘carbon neutrality’ if carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are not driving global warming.
- Any carbon trading scheme is prone to fraud – and indeed invites fraud

## ***Policy Detail***

- ACT will repeal the Emissions Trading Scheme and withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol
- Major investments in infrastructure will not depend on the anti-global warming hypothesis for their economic viability. (Hydro power and geothermal power stands on its own feet.)
- Reform the Resource Management Act and Local Government Act to be neutral on climate change and ‘sustainability’ (often a code word for anti-global warming).
- Reform Transport legislation to make transport serve efficiency and mobility rather than ‘sustainability’ unless a real issue of sustainability can be identified
- Ensure that government agencies and advisors acknowledge any conflicts of interest.

If you believe that New Zealanders should not be taxed on the basis of unproven global warming theories, then **give ACT your Party vote**, for better informed policy on climate change.