



28 March 2021

Climate Change Commission
PO Box 24448
Wellington 6142

Attention: Submissions Analysis Team

Rangitikei District Council submission on the climate change draft advice to Government

Introduction

The Rangitikei District Council thanks the climate Change Commission for the opportunity to submit on its 2021 Draft Advice for Consultation.

The Rangitikei district is one of the larger territorial authorities in New Zealand. We are characterised by a relatively low population spread between small towns rather than having a metro presence. As such we have responsibilities for providing each separate community with its infrastructure needs, which is a challenge. We work hand in hand with numerous iwi and the rural sector to mitigate both the effects of climate change and to transition our economy in light of climate change effects.

We are not a wealthy authority and are challenged by the continual changes in Governmental direction and policy. However we support the need to be proactive with climate change issues.

Our district does face significant climate change issues summarised as:

1. Climate change impacts, such as having extremes of dry and wet weather systems. Agriculture is by far our biggest GDP earner.
2. Rising sea levels will impact on some of our beach communities, although on a regional/national scale it is of low significance.
3. Dramatic Climatic effects. For our authority this is huge, in 2004 we had what has been described as a one in one hundred or one in two hundred year flood event. Large areas of the district were inundated. Since then these events have become more frequent, as a Mayor I seem to be declaring Civil emergency events every couple of years.

Support to the submission of LGNZ.

Our Council is in support of the LGNZ submission and would like to emphasise the following points:

1. **Funding.** We support the view that new obligations are likely to incur cost, we do not support passing this cost on through rates and support the approach by Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) that a new National fund be established to meet emission targets.
2. **Partnership with Iwi/ Maori.** As outlined in the LGNZ submission we also applaud the efforts to draw on the He Ara Waiora framework to understand wellbeing from a Te Ao Maori a matauranga Maori perspective and to remove barriers to give effect to the Treaty Partnership, acknowledging the need to co design the draft advice.
3. **Central and local government working in partnership.** We support the statement made by LGNZ that a strong, reciprocal relationship between local and central government is critical to achieve the draft Advice's ambitions and that local government be represented at the decision-making table, we would support LGNZ being invited to do this.

Support to ICNZ's (Insurance Council of New Zealand) view on climate change and the role of Government.

Our Council supports the action points noted by ICNZ as follows.

1. **Avoiding developments in areas subject to flooding, rising sea levels or coastal erosion.** This action fits well with the principal of avoidance rather than having to face what could be expensive mitigation issues.
2. **Embracing collaboration and coordination on climate change issues within the regions.** All elements of local government, regional authorities need to work collectively with Government.
3. **Ensuring that buildings are resilient to Climate Change impacts.** New buildings need to be resilient and this is an issue where Government and the building acts have to be the principal advisors.
4. **Supporting vulnerable groups or areas particularly adversely impacted by Climate Change.** There will need to be Governmental assistance in the areas of managed retreat or avoidance. Our authority does not have the capacity to fund this. We could potentially help under policies of economic development but our options are limited.

Other general notes to the submission:

1. Our Council takes climate change seriously. As Mayor I am a member of the Climate Change Action Joint Committee along with the other Mayors of the greater region. A membership which includes the appointment of tangata whenua. This committee is committed to showing leadership to coordinate regional responses to Government policy, including developing a regional action plan.
2. Our Council has partnered with both the New Zealand Government and iwi to have heavy truck movements, where possible, to be replaced by rail. We are in receipt of grant money which will significantly help to achieve this through a new rail hub being established at Marton. We support any action to move freight to rail especially when powered by the electrification of the main trunk line. Equally our Council would support any move to lower the Carbon emissions through the use of either Hydrogen or E vehicles. We note the move to H vehicles especially

where heavy transport is concerned. Our district, and Marton in particular, being the centre of the road/rail networks for the North Island is well positioned to support these moves.

3. Our Council would like the Government and the Commission to record that our rural sector is responding to climatic change by changing agronomic practices, retiring and planting our water ways and retiring areas to plantation forestry. This being done largely at their expense, but they are too often held up as having little motivation to change.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Watson', written in a cursive style.

Andy Watson
Mayor of Rangitikei