

Office of Hon Simon Watts

Minister of Climate Change
Minister for Energy
Minister of Local Government
Minister of Revenue



Kiwis in Climate
kiwisinclimate@gmail.com

25-CORM-00165

Dear Kiwis in Climate members,

I write to respond to your letter dated 10 December 2025 about the Government response to the Climate Change Commission's 2050 emissions target recommendations. I note your concerns for economic growth, investment certainty, competitiveness, and international standing.

In considering options for the 2050 target, the Government has weighed the Methane Review, the Commission's recommendations and officials' advice. As you noted in your letter, the Government has decided to depart from the majority of the Commission's recommendations.

Decisions to change the 2050 target are based on our understanding of the evidence regarding climate change and the temperature response to emissions, related economic policy implications, and balancing relevant Government objectives. The decision to change the biogenic methane component of the 2050 target provides clarity to the agricultural sector about action required to meet the targets, and maintaining the net zero target for long-lived gases (including the approach to international shipping and aviation emissions) provides for stable policy direction and is more feasible to implement.

We have set a clear direction for climate action in our climate strategy and in our second emissions reduction plan. Our current projections show that we can meet our first and second emissions budgets and the 2050 target. The Government is also committed to meeting both its domestic and international climate change targets in ways that support New Zealand's economy to thrive, without placing unnecessary costs on our businesses and communities – we are confident our approach will enable this.

More information is available on the Ministry for the Environment website at:
<https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/climate-change/Government-response-to-the-Climate-Change-Commission-2050-target-review.pdf>

Thank you again for writing to me on this important issue. I look forward to meeting with you in March for the Kiwis in Climate book launch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Hon Simon Watts
Minister of Climate Change