

(Cabinet Office, 2021)

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Office of the Minister of Climate Change

DEV - Cabinet Economic Development Committee

Agreement to update New Zealand's first Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks agreement to increase the ambition of New Zealand's first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC1), our emissions reduction target under the Paris Agreement.
- 2 In parallel to this paper, I am seeking Cabinet decisions on accessing offshore mitigation towards NDC1 in the paper *Progressing international cooperation to reduce emissions and complement domestic action*.

Relation to government priorities

- 3 New Zealand has a strong interest in an effective and ambitious global response to climate change. New Zealand is a small actor and cannot unilaterally prevent the adverse effects of climate change. It is in our interest, as well as those of our Pacific neighbours, for all countries to commit to and deliver ambitious action.
- 4 The Government declared a climate change emergency on 2 December 2020, agreeing that climate change "demands a sufficiently ambitious, urgent, and coordinated response across government to meet the scale and complexity of the challenge" [CBC-20-MIN-0097 refers]. Increasing our NDC1 complements the other actions our Government has taken and is planning to take to address climate change, including the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Act, New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) reform, and sector-specific approaches for transport, energy, agriculture, and waste.
- 5 Enabling a just transition to a low-emissions, climate resilient future is also a Government priority. The Cabinet Business Committee has noted the intention to "put the climate at the centre of government decision-making" and agreed that "climate change requires decisive action by all levels of government, the private sector, and communities" [CBC-20-MIN-0097 refers].

Executive Summary

- 6 The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty that aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change including by holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. New Zealand ratified the Paris Agreement in 2016 and took its first Nationally Determined Contribution under the Agreement (NDC1), to reduce

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