

From Z to Air New Zealand: New Zealand's leading businesses take up the climate change challenge

Business leaders joining forces on a mission to reduce emissions in New Zealand

Strictly Embargoed - 0600 12th July 2018: 60 businesses making up nearly fifty percent of New Zealand's emissions have joined forces to tackle the issue of climate change.

It's a significant move by the New Zealand business community, being praised as "strong" and "unprecedented" by local and global organisations.

On a mission to reduce emissions in New Zealand, the group of 60 CEOs have formed the Climate Leaders Coalition, recognising the role that business can play in bringing about change and signing a joint statement, which commits their companies to action.

The goal of the new group - which includes the leaders of Z, Westpac, Ngai Tahu Holdings, Vector, Air New Zealand, Spark and NZ Post - is to help New Zealand transition to a low emissions economy and, in doing so, create a positive future for New Zealanders, business, and the economy.

Together, the members of the Climate Leaders Coalition represent a variety of businesses from different industries which contribute to almost half of New Zealand's emissions.

To mark the significance of the announcement and commemorate the launch of the Climate Leaders Coalition, SkyCity Entertainment Group - a member of the coalition - will light up Auckland's Sky Tower in the colour green, tonight.

The CEOs' Climate Change Statement is the first step taken by the Climate Leaders Coalition in their drive for positive change.

By signing the CEO Climate Change Statement, each of the business leaders have committed to measuring and reporting their greenhouse gas emissions and working with suppliers to reduce emissions, with the aim of helping to keep global warming within two degrees, as specified in the Paris Agreement.

Convenor of the Climate Leaders Coalition and leading the collective commitment by business to drive the transition to a low emissions economy is **Z Energy CEO, Mike Bennetts**.

Bennetts explains: *"I knew that many businesses were making progress with their own company's response to climate change but that still left a gap around what we could be doing more of together to increase the pace and scale of impact from our collective efforts. So, it made sense to discuss those opportunities and commit to further action. At the very least that is a common commitment that we can all be held accountable for and provides other businesses with the confidence to lean into their own responses knowing they are not alone in doing that."*

Livia Esterhazy, CEO, WWF NZ, adds: *"We are incredibly excited by the strong stance taken by these leading New Zealand businesses. WWF works with companies all over the world helping them cut their emissions. Globally, it's unprecedented for businesses representing almost half of a country's emissions to come together like this. These businesses recognise that acting on climate change is not only good for the planet, but it is also a business opportunity not to be missed. The Climate Leaders Coalition creates enormous potential for change and sets a positive example that all New Zealanders can all be proud of."*

Within the second part of the CEO Climate Change Statement, business leaders cement their support for the Paris Agreement and New Zealand's commitment to it, and back the introduction of a Climate Commission along with the establishment of carbon budgets, enshrined in law.

In addition to committing to the Statement, the businesses involved in the Climate Leaders Coalition are also dedicating considerable resources, expertise and funding towards projects which centre around solutions-driven thinking.

Leaders involved are viewing climate change as an opportunity for their business to innovate and access new markets, with many already eager to realise the potential, having multiple initiatives and actions underway.

Karen Silk, Acting CEO, Westpac, says: *“When businesses unite around a central goal, it creates real momentum to change. One of the things that binds all of our organisations together is a love for our country and a desire to make it a great place to live - for us and for future generations.*

“By working together on a future that is focussed on low emissions, and sustainable innovation and practices, we can all play our part towards improving the country’s prosperity and to continuing to make it a desirable place to live.”

The Climate Leaders Coalition demonstrates the significant leadership direction being taken by businesses on the issue of climate change. Now, the CEOs involved are calling for other leaders to join them.

Mike Sang, Chief Executive, Ngai Tahu Holdings, adds: *“Ngāi Tahu Holdings is pleased to join other like-minded organisations in working to tackle climate change. We are committed to the journey of adopting increasingly sustainable business practices across our businesses, in line with our tribal whakataukī – “Mō tātou, ā, mō kā uri ā muri ake nei” – for us and our children after us. This is something we all need to do together, and we encourage others to join.”*

Nigel Topping, CEO of global non-profit coalition, We Mean Business, adds: *“As an organisation that works with businesses from around the globe on climate change, we welcome the strong stance taken by business leaders in New Zealand. Collective action of this sort, by businesses representing such a significant percentage of a country’s emissions is world-class and will help accelerate the world’s transition to the low-carbon economy.”*

Business owners looking to commit to action on climate change and play their part in the transition to a low emissions economy can find out more about the CEO Climate Change Statement, by visiting www.climateleaderscoalition.org.nz

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Notes to Editors:

The Climate Leaders Coalition has been launched in partnership with the Sustainable Business Council – a global network partner of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development.

CEO Climate Change Statement (in full).

For the generations after us, for the country we love, for the viability of our businesses, we are ambitious for action on climate change. If we act now we can forge a path to create a future that is low-emission, positive for our businesses and economy, and inclusive for all New Zealanders. We are committed to playing our part to make that future real. If we don't, our competitiveness is at risk.

We take climate change seriously in our business:

- *We measure our greenhouse gas emissions and publicly report on them*
- *We set a public emissions reduction target consistent with keeping within 2° of warming*
- *We work with our suppliers to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions*

We believe the transition to a low emissions economy is an opportunity to improve New Zealand's prosperity:

- *We support the Paris Agreement & New Zealand's commitment to it*
- *We support introduction of a climate commission and carbon budgets enshrined in law*

Climate Leaders Coalition members

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Z Energy • Westpac • Ngai Tahu Holdings • Air New Zealand • Vector • Spark • New Zealand Post • The Warehouse Group • Toyota • IAG | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fonterra • Ports of Auckland • KiwiRail • Christchurch Airport • Stuff • SkyCity Entertainment Group • Meridian Energy • Vodafone • Oji Fibre Solutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste Management • Fuji Xerox • Dempsey Wood • Sanford • Contact Energy • Auckland Airport • BNZ • Flick • Proxima |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4sight Consulting • Wellington Zoo • 3R • EnergyTS • Wellington Airport • Transpower • Lion • Fujitsu • Unilever • DB Breweries • Enviro-Mark Solutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCS • True • EcoStore • Deloitte • Ravensdown • Ecotricity • Beca • Watercare • Toyota Financial Services • EnergyclubNZ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kiwi Property • Countdown • Microsoft • Silver Fern Farms • Synlait • Freightways • Downer • Hawkins • TIL Logistics Group • Netlogix • Toll |