



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

McGuinness Institute title:
[CAB-16-MIN-0395] Paris Agreement
on Climate Change: Approval to Begin
the Parliamentary Treaty Examination
Process

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Paris Agreement on Climate Change: Approval to Begin the Parliamentary Treaty Examination Process

Portfolio Climate Change Issues

On 15 August 2016, following reference from the Cabinet Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee, Cabinet:

Starting the Parliamentary treaty examination process

- 1 **noted** that on 6 April 2016, Cabinet approved the text of the Paris Agreement, which is a multilateral treaty on climate change that was adopted in December 2015 by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) [CAB-16-MIN-0145];
- 2 **noted** that on 11 July 2016, the Cabinet Business Committee directed officials to begin work to enable New Zealand to ratify the Paris Agreement by the end of 2016 [CBC-16-MIN-0004];
- 3 **agreed** to present the text of the Paris Agreement, attached as Appendix 1 to the paper under CAB-16-SUB-0395, and the National Interest Analysis, attached as Appendix 2 to the paper under CAB-16-SUB-0395, to the House of Representatives in accordance with Standing Order 397 for Parliamentary treaty examination;

Finalising New Zealand's first nationally determined contribution

- 4 **noted** that on 6 July 2015, Cabinet approved New Zealand's provisional intended nationally determined contribution, which communicated a target to reduce New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions to 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2030 [CAB Min (15) 23/10];
- 5 **noted** that the statements about provisionality relating to international carbon markets and forestry accounting, communicated in New Zealand's intended nationally determined contribution, are not required in New Zealand's first nationally determined contribution;
- 6 **noted** that, while access to international carbon markets has been secured in legal terms, New Zealand will need to work actively with other countries to ensure these markets provide a sufficient supply of emissions reductions for New Zealand to purchase to help achieve its nationally determined contribution;
- 7 **noted** that on 11 July 2016, the Cabinet Business Committee agreed to additional resources to enable further work to be undertaken to develop and build access to international carbon markets [CBC-16-MIN-0004];

- 8 **agreed** that New Zealand's first nationally determined contribution will communicate a target to reduce New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions to 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2030, as outlined in Appendix 3 to the paper under CAB-16-SUB-0395;
- 9 **noted** that the National Interest Analysis, which will be available to the public, will signal New Zealand's final target, prior to the official submission of the nationally determined contribution to the UNFCCC Secretariat;
- 10 **agreed** that New Zealand's first nationally determined contribution under the Paris Agreement will signal the possibility that New Zealand will review the proposed approach to accounting forestry emissions and removals, while recognising that moving away from this approach must not reduce the ambition of the nationally determined contribution;
- 11 **authorised** the Minister for Climate Change Issues to approve any necessary minor or technical amendments to New Zealand's first nationally determined contribution prior to submitting it to the UNFCCC Secretariat;
- 12 **authorised** the Minister for Climate Change Issues to approve the communication of New Zealand's first nationally determined contribution, subject to the satisfactory completion of the Parliamentary treaty examination process, at or before the time New Zealand's instrument of ratification for the Paris Agreement is deposited;

Ratifying the Paris Agreement

- 13 **agreed** to New Zealand ratifying the Paris Agreement by depositing an instrument of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, subject to the satisfactory completion of the Parliamentary treaty examination process;
- 14 **invited** the Minister for Climate Change Issues, in consultation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to report back to Cabinet after the Parliamentary treaty examination process about when to deposit the instrument of ratification for the Paris Agreement;
- 15 **noted** that the Paris Agreement will enter into force 30 days after a minimum of 55 Parties to the UNFCCC, accounting in total for at least an estimated 55 percent of total global greenhouse gas emissions, have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations;
- 16 **noted** that the Paris Agreement will enter into force for New Zealand once New Zealand has ratified the Paris Agreement in accordance with paragraphs 13 and 14 above, and the Paris Agreement enters into force generally as set out in paragraph 15 above.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution: (see over)

Hard-copy distribution:

Prime Minister
Minister of Finance
Minister for Climate Change Issues
Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister for the Environment
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Minister for Primary Industries
Associate Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Maori Development