

Media release

Net zero emission targets should be legislated now

Reaching net zero emission by 2040 should be legislated now, as championed by OraTaiao: The New Zealand Climate and Health Council with other health sector organisations, says the NZ College of Public Health Medicine (NZCPHM).

In its submission on the Zero Carbon Bill, NZCPHM is lending its full support to OraTaiao's submission, which states urgent government action is required now across all greenhouse gases.

"Climate change is almost certainly already contributing to the global burden of disease and premature death, with larger health impacts expected over coming decades. If we don't fight for equitable prevention methods and promote appropriate climate change action, we are all at risk," College president, Dr Felicity Dumble, said.

"In addition, there are clear health benefits to be gained from many actions taken to reduce climate risks, such as healthier transport systems and better insulated and more energy efficient housing."

Dr Dumble believes that "OraTaiao's submission is a thoroughly thought-out direction that would, if heeded, give Kiwis certainty and transparency that their government is proactive about acting quickly and decisively in the best interests of our communities, iwi, whānau, and businesses."

In addition, the College agrees with OraTaiao's and others' calls for the government to consider Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations.

"Climate change has serious implications for health equity in New Zealand, especially Māori, Pacific, vulnerable, and lower socioeconomic populations, who are at risk of disproportionate health impacts," Dr Dumble said.

"Therefore, the government must work in Te Tiriti partnership to improve population health, and create a more equitable, just and resilient society."

Furthermore, as signatories of the 2015 Paris Agreement, she believes New Zealand must do its fair share as a wealthy and high emitting country. "The climate gap between those who have emitted most and those who will be impacted first and worst (and are least able to adapt) is large. Established economies, like New Zealand, which have historically had high greenhouse gas emissions and have benefitted from activities that cause high emissions are in a position and have a responsibility to mitigate past actions and contribute rapidly and proportionately more than countries with historically lower emissions."

The NZCPHM is encouraging its members, and health professionals, to make individual submissions, using www.zerocarbonbillhealth.org.nz.

For more information contact Pam Watson (04) 472-9183

See OraTaiao media release '[The Zero Carbon Bill – a crucial Bill for health, and an easy way to submit](#)'.
