

# Shifting to a low-carbon Kāpiti

Kāpiti Coast District Council is looking at whether our district should set a districtwide emissions reduction target, as some other councils have done.

There is a survey open until 5pm on Monday 19 September 2022. We encourage all locals to respond. Link: <https://haveyoursay.kapiticoast.govt.nz/shifting-to-a-low-carbon-kapiti>

The results will be included in a briefing to a public Council workshop on 27 September, then published on Council's website. The survey is non-binding but provides information to help the new Council decide the next steps in early 2023.

Here is the response submitted by Low Carbon Kāpiti Inc. for your reference.

1) How concerned are you about climate change?

1. ☒ **Very concerned**

2) How concerned are you about the impacts of climate change on the Kāpiti Coast?

1. ☒ **Very concerned**

3. Do you think there are actions that we can take (as Council, residents, businesses, and mana whenua of the Kāpiti Coast) that will help to reduce the impacts of climate change?

1. ☒ **Yes**

4. Should the Kāpiti Coast District Council set an emissions reduction target for the Kāpiti Coast District?

1. ☒ **Yes**

5. Are you prepared to take actions to reduce your carbon footprint?

1. ☒ **Yes, it must be done no matter what**

6. If the Kapiti Coast District were to have a climate change mitigation target, should it be:

1. ☐ A quickly established target aligned with national direction
2. ☐ A carefully researched target, based on robust analysis of what is possible for the district, but which may take longer to develop
3. ☒ **A combination – for example, a high level, long-term aspirational target supported by short-term targets along the way.**

7. In the areas where local councils do have some influence, should Council prioritise taking actions that will support and enable our District to meet whatever target we set?

1. ☒ **Yes, it must be done no matter what**

8. If we agree that we must all work together to reduce emissions, which approach do you think will most successfully help the district achieve lower emissions?

1. ☐ Focus on reducing our current volume of carbon emissions (to put less into the atmosphere)
2. ☐ Focus mostly on offsetting our current volume of carbon emissions (this might mean planting more trees to store carbon, and buying carbon credits)
3. ☒ **Focus on reducing emissions first, and then offsetting the remainder**
4. ☐ Focus on planting trees first, and then find other ways to reduce emissions once that is underway
5. ☐ Not sure

9. How quickly do we need to make changes?

1. ☒ **Very quickly – we need change now so we can aim for our target sooner than 2050**

10. On a scale from Very important to Not important at all, how important is it for Council to focus on each of the following areas as a way of contributing to reducing emissions? Choose from Very important, Somewhat important, Neutral, Little bit important, Not important at all.

Use land use planning to create neighbourhoods that support low carbon living (e.g. enabling residents to walk, cycle or use public transport, and design standards for housing and subdivisions)

**Very important** ☒

Improve transport infrastructure to enable walking, cycling, public transport, and electric vehicles

**Very important** ☒

Advocate for central and regional government to improve public transport

**Very important** ☒

Provide advice to households and businesses on how to reduce energy use and waste

**Very important** ☒

Find ways of attracting low carbon business and enterprises to Kāpiti

**Very important** ☒

Look for ways to support local renewable energy generation

**Very important** ☒

Explore opportunities for districtwide carbon sinks such as creating forests or wetlands or other nature-based solutions

**Very important** ☒

Provide grants or facilitate funding for community-based initiatives that support the shift to low carbon living

Very important ☒

Advocate for central government investment to help our community to transition to low carbon living e.g. home insulation subsidies

Very important ☒

11. What is the best way to drive behaviour change?

1. ☐ Educate and incentivise – 100% all the way
2. ☐ Mainly educating and incentivising (70%), but also some charging and regulating (30%)
3. ☒ **We must do both - educating and incentivising (50%) / charging and regulating (50%)**
4. ☐ Mainly charging and regulating (70%), but also some educating and incentivising (30%)
5. ☐ Charge and regulate – 100% all the way

12. Is there anything else you would like Council to consider in the future?

Firstly, we would like to comment on some of the above questions:

Question 4. If the Council sets a target it needs to be ambitious, both in the quantity of carbon emission reductions and the rapidity with which they are to be achieved. The target should be more ambitious than the Government one.

Question 6. We chose option (c), a combination. We felt that option (a), a quickly established target aligned with the national one would not be strong enough. We thought option (b), a carefully researched target, would take a long time and could be conservative.

Question 8. We chose the third option, reducing emissions first and then offsetting the remainder. It is critical that emissions are reduced if we are to have any impact on climate change. Offsetting should be used as an additional activity to mop up emissions that cannot be reduced by other means.

Also, the nature of the offsetting is important. Planting trees/restoring wetlands etc is good (and Kāpiti has many options in this respect). However, purchasing carbon credits is not such a good idea, especially if they are dodgy overseas ones. We should not be paying other countries to do our work for us.

Question 11. Education and incentives can only go so far in driving behaviour change. We need to have regulation/charging as well to ensure progress. However, the following points should be noted:

- There are limits to what Council can regulate,
- Regulations will only work if they can be enforced. For example, it is difficult to control illegal fishing in the Kāpiti Marine Reserve due to a lack of money for enforcement officers.

Secondly, we would like to comment on some of the requirements for a successful implementation of a district wide emissions reduction plan. A recent report (1) has identified seven main 'gaps' — which can also be seen as opportunities — in the Wellington region's emissions reduction efforts. We need:

1. Greater central government involvement or a significant delegation of its powers to local government so councils have more control over emitting activities.
2. Measurement and management of the emissions embedded in imported goods.
3. Proper evaluation of the projected impact of existing emissions reduction plans.
4. Consideration of more direct involvement of local government in emissions reduction enterprises, such as renewable energy generation and native reforestation.
5. Short-term (possibly temporary) actions to arrest emissions growth, such as re-purposing road space for active and public transport.
6. Withdrawal of support for any new fossil-fuel dependent activities and infrastructure.
7. Central and local government collaboration to require low-emissions materials for new infrastructure, providing clear signals to industry to invest in supplies of these.

Finally, we note that Kāpiti is set to grow over the next 30 years, with an increase in population of some 30,000, requiring new houses, new infrastructure etc. Growth and emissions reduction are pretty much incompatible. This is the dilemma facing humanity. We need to start asking ourselves how we can continue to thrive whilst avoiding ever increasing demands on our finite planet for land and material resources, for activities that have no lasting merit. This will involve major changes in our consumption-oriented lifestyles - how we work, how we play and how we carry out our lives. We need to start this discussion.

(1) Roos, Jake: Regional Emissions Reduction Strategy: Stage 1 Report, 2022.