

Working Paper 2024/04

Timeline of international and domestic climate-related adaptation and mitigation strategies

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This research aims to identify and provide a qualitative overview of the current and future climate strategies that the New Zealand Government is, or will be, employing. These strategies form Aotearoa New Zealand's role in addressing the climate crisis, and as a party to international climate agreements. The purpose of this working paper is to conceptualise the trajectory of the climate strategies and targets that have been set, and how they will be monitored and measured over time. This work will inform the Institute's *Report 18: Climate Change Strategy for Aotearoa New Zealand* (see more below).

1.2 Background

The information presented in this paper aims to contribute to an evidence base that the Institute will use to develop core assumptions that will influence and develop the narrative underpinning future *ClimateChangeNZ* research – namely the latest *Project 2058* report, *Report 18*, which the Institute is currently developing. The aim of *Report 18* is to explore what an actionable and inclusive climate strategy would look like for Aotearoa New Zealand.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The strategies that the Government has put in place or agreed to in order to manage the impacts of climate change require constant review and assessment to ensure that New Zealand develops the most cost-effective and durable strategies to both mitigate and adapt to climate change.

2.2 Method

The research process of this working paper is outlined below.

Step 1: Identify the climate-related strategies of interest (the data set)

The scope of this research covers climate-related strategies that have a nationwide specific focus on mitigation and adaptation. Strategies were identified from the Ministry for the Environment's (MfE's) *Government climate-change work programme*¹ and strategies that have been implemented as part of New Zealand's commitment to the Paris Agreement.

The strategies identified were:

- Nationally determined contributions (NDCs): NDC 1–NDC 5
- Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP): ERP 1–ERP 6
- Emissions Budget (EB): EB 1–EB 6
- Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)
- Carbon Neutral Government Programme (CNGP)
- 2050 Targets (see Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019)
- Climate Change Commission (see Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019)
- Climate Finance (MFAT)
- National Communication (Paris Agreement): 8th–15th National Communication
- Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) (Paris Agreement): BTR 1–BTR 13
- National Climate Change Risk Assessment (NCCRA): NCCRA 1–NCCRA 15
- National Adaptation Plan (NAP): NAP 1–NAP 5
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR))
- 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)

Step 2: Categorise the identified documents as either 'mitigation' or 'adaptation'

The strategies were then identified as addressing either adaptation or mitigation, and categorised accordingly. More often than not, mitigation and adaptation strategies are published separately.

The Climate Change Commission distinguishes adaptation and mitigation by stating: 'Climate mitigation and climate adaptation are two sides of the same coin. Some level of climate change is already baked in due to historic global emissions. We'll need to adapt to that. The slower the world is at reducing emissions, the greater the adaptation burden becomes.'² One of the subsections added to the 'Purpose' of the Climate Change Response Act 2002 was for New Zealand to develop and implement clear and stable climate policies to:

- reduce greenhouse gas emissions (i.e. mitigation)
- respond to the changing climate (i.e. adaptation).³

Step 3: Categorise the identified documents as either 'international' or 'domestic'

Strategies were then further sub-categorised as either 'international' or 'domestic'. Strategies that form part of New Zealand's obligations under the Paris Agreement were classified as international, while Government- and Ministry-led strategies were classified as domestic.

The identified strategies were classified below.

Table 1: New Zealand's climate strategies categorised

Mitigation		Adaptation	
International	Domestic	International	Domestic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ERP EB ETS CNGP 2050 Targets CCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate finance (in the Pacific) National communication BTR Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCCRA NAP CCC

Step 4: Stipulate the time frames

For strategies that have ongoing reporting periods and/or targets, the time frames were identified for when they are to be expected in the future, e.g. 'Emissions reduction plans are produced every five years.'⁴ The strategies were then projected onto a visual timeline (see Figure 1).

2.3 Limitations and assumptions

This type of analysis requires comprehensive and detailed understanding of the system. The Institute acknowledges that it may not be aware of all the key strategies. Part of the reason for publishing this timeline before our major report *Report 18: Climate Change Strategy for Aotearoa New Zealand* is to enable us to obtain feedback early so that we can be sure we know about all existing strategies.

These strategies and instruments will continue on to 2050. We acknowledge that these may change as governments review and adjust their policy settings in response to the challenges and opportunities that become available.

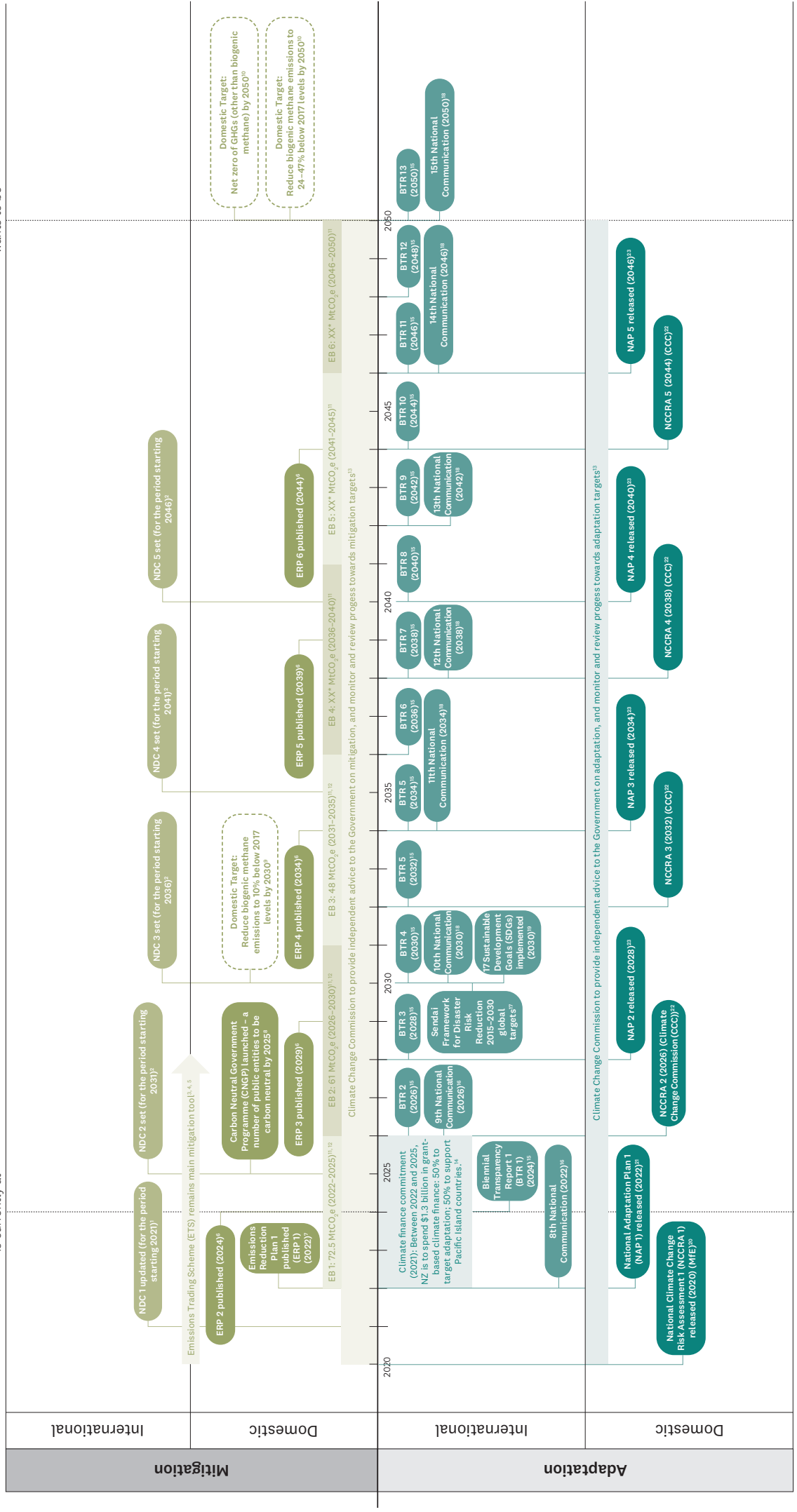
3.0 Results

The application of the method above resulted in Figure 1: Overview of New Zealand's climate strategies.

Figure 1: Overview of New Zealand's climate strategies

2050
Where New Zealand wants to be

2024
Where New Zealand is currently at



Endnotes

- 1 See the Ministry for the Environment (MfE). (2023, 29 June). Government climate-change work programme. Retrieved 7 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/climate-change/about-new-zealands-climate-change-programme
- 2 See Climate Change Commission. (n.d.). Climate adaptation. Retrieved 7 March 2024 from www.climatecommission.govt.nz/our-work/adaptation
- 3 See Ministry for the Environment (MfE). (2020, August). *National Climate Change Risk Assessment for New Zealand*. Retrieved 7 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/publications/national-climate-change-risk-assessment-for-new-zealand-main-report
- 4 See Ministry for the Environment (MfE). (2024). About the Emissions Reduction Plan. Retrieved 5 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/climate-change/emissions-reductions/erp

Figure 1: Overview of New Zealand's climate strategy/strategies

- 1 See The Treasury. (2023). *Nga Kōrero Āhuarangi Me Te Ōhanga: Climate Economic and Fiscal Assessment 2023*. Figure 2.1. P. 22. Retrieved 5 March 2024 from www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-04/cefa23.pdf
- 2 See McGuinness Institute. (2024). *Discussion Paper 2024/01 – Risks hiding in plain sight: Does a commitment under the Paris Agreement to purchase offshore carbon credits create a requirement to report that commitment in the financial statements of the New Zealand Government? (Final draft)*. (P. 18). Retrieved 5 March 2024 from www.mcguinnessinstitute.org/publications/discussion-papers
- 3 See Ministry for the Environment (MfE). (n.d.). The New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme is the Government's main tool for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/climate-change/ets
- 4 Climate Change Response Act 2002, s 3(b)(i) and (ii).
- 5 Climate Change Response (Emissions Trading Reform) Amendment Act 2020, s 2(a).
- 6 See Ministry for the Environment (MfE). (2024). About the Emissions Reduction Plan. Retrieved 5 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/climate-change/emissions-reductions/erp
- 7 See Ministry for the Environment (MfE). (2024). Emissions budgets and the emissions reduction plan. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/climate-change/emissions-reductions/emissions-budgets-and-the-emissions-reduction-plan
- 8 See Ministry for the Environment (MfE). (2023). About the Carbon Neutral Government Programme. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/climate-change/carbon-neutral-government-programme/about-carbon-neutral-government-programme
- 9 See Climate Change Response Act 2002, s 5Q(1)(b)(i).
- 10 See Climate Change Response Act 2002, s 5Q(1)(a) and (b)(ii).
- 11 See Climate Change Response Act 2002, s 5X(3).
- 12 See Ministry for the Environment (MfE). (2024). Emissions budgets and the emissions reduction plan. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/climate-change/emissions-reductions/emissions-budgets-and-the-emissions-reduction-plan
- 13 See Climate Change Response Act 2002, s 5B.
- 14 See New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade (MFAT). (n.d.). New Zealand's climate action in our region. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from mfat.govt.nz/en/environment/climate-change/supporting-our-region

- 15 See United Nations Climate Change (UNFCCC). (n.d.) Biennial Transparency Reports. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from unfccc.int/biennial-transparency-reports
- 16 See Ministry for the Environment (MfE). (2022). *National Communication and Biennial Report 2022 snapshot*. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/publications/national-communication-and-biennial-report-2022-snapshot
- 17 See United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2015). *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from www.undrr.org/publication/sendai-framework-disaster-risk-reduction-2015-2030
- 18 See United Nations Climate Change (UNFCCC). (2012). *Report of the Conference of the Parties on its seventeenth session, held in Durban from 28 November to 11 December 2011*. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from unfccc.int/documents/7108
- 19 See United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from sdgs.un.org/2030agenda
- 20 See Ministry for the Environment (MfE). (2020). *National Climate Change Risk Assessment for Aotearoa New Zealand: Main report – Arotakenga Tūraru mō te Huringa Āhuarangi o Āotearoa: Pūrongo whakatōpū*. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/publications/national-climate-change-risk-assessment-for-new-zealand-main-report
- 21 See Ministry for the Environment (MfE). (May 2022). *Aotearoa New Zealand's first national adaptation plan*. (p. 12). Retrieved 3 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/climate-change/adapting-to-climate-change/first-national-climate-change-risk-assessment-for-new-zealand
- 22 See Ministry for the Environment (MfE). *First national climate change risk assessment for New Zealand*. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/climate-change/adapting-to-climate-change/first-national-climate-change-risk-assessment-for-new-zealand
- 23 See Climate Change Response Act 2002, s 5ZT(1).



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