

Climate Action





Climate Action

Climate change is the biggest issue facing the planet today.

Climate change is defined as the long-term change of temperature and normal weather patterns. This is currently occurring worldwide as a result of global warming. It is accelerating because of human activity.

Activities like burning fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas), cutting down forests and intensifying animal agriculture are releasing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into our atmosphere. These GHG emissions act like a blanket and trap heat from the sun in our atmosphere, often referred to as the 'greenhouse effect,' which warms our planet.

To avoid the irreversible impacts of climate change we need to keep that warming under 1.5°C by cutting GHG emissions in half by 2030. In reality, scientists say that we are heading towards a 3°C increase. Every fraction of a degree of warming makes a difference.

This resource sheet will help you:

- **Understand the impacts of climate change.**
- **Find out what your business can do to make a difference.**
- **Take action to measure and reduce your carbon emissions.**
- **Learn about other businesses that have made a difference.**



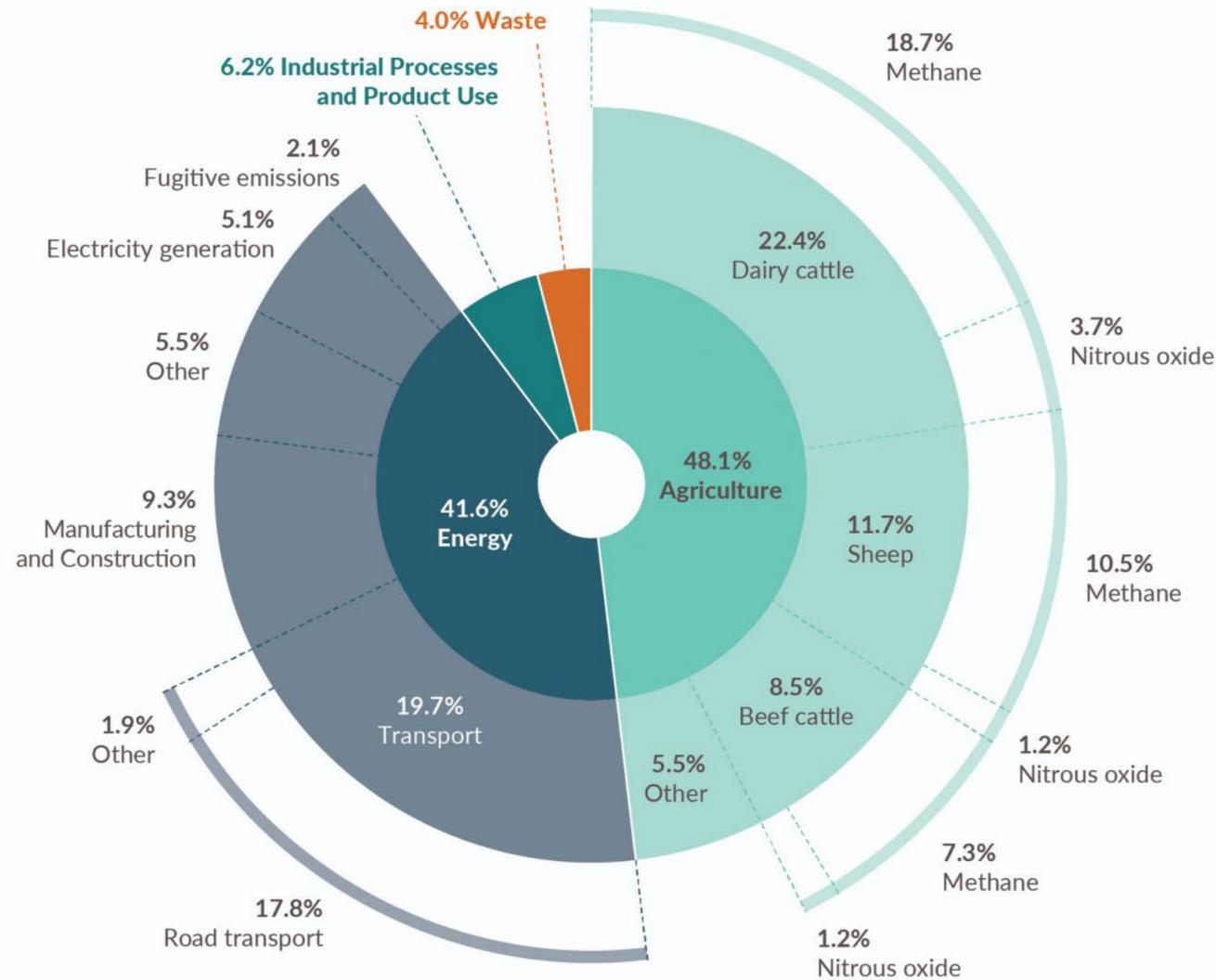


New Zealand's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Fugitive emissions are from the leakage, burning and controlled release of gases in oil and gas operations as well as escaping gases from coal mining and geothermal operations. Agricultural methane is mainly from livestock digestive systems and nitrous oxide is mainly from manure on soil

Note: Percentages in the graph may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Source: New Zealand's Greenhouse Gas inventory 1990-2019, published May 2021



What is the situation in NZ?

Although NZ only contributes around 0.2% of the world's total GHG emissions, our gross emissions per capita make us the fifth highest emitter among developed countries. The impacts of climate change in NZ include rising seas, melting glaciers, and more extreme weather conditions.

The Ministry for the Environment regularly publishes NZ's emissions profile. The most recent findings show:

- Between 1990 and 2019, NZ gross GHG emissions increased by about 25%.
- Agriculture and energy (including road transport) are the two sectors with the largest contributions to NZ gross GHG emissions.

- NZ has a relatively high proportion of methane and nitrous oxide, and lower share of carbon dioxide. This is unique compared to other countries, due to the majority of our electricity being generated from renewable sources, and a strong agriculture sector.
- However, CO2 emissions have grown faster than any other GHG since 1990 (2.5% growth per annum), predominantly due to increasing road-transport emissions.
- Energy use is closely related to the level of economic activity.



What is NZ doing to reduce its emissions?

Together, small emitters like Aotearoa New Zealand make up about 30% of global greenhouse emissions.

Under the Paris Agreement, which is a global response to the threat of climate change, in November 2021, Aotearoa New Zealand committed to a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030 compared to 2005 levels. This is made up of actual emission reductions in this country, plus reductions overseas through the purchase of carbon offsets.

Aotearoa New Zealand's previous emissions target was 30% reduction by 2030. The new 50% reduction target is stronger, but has still been rated as "highly insufficient" by an international group of climate science researchers (Climate Action Tracker). They assessed the target was not consistent with holding warming to below 2°C. More ambitious targets, and larger reductions in Aotearoa New Zealand's domestic

emissions, are needed to be compatible with limiting warming to 1.5°C as the Paris Agreement aims to do.

Looking further ahead, Aotearoa New Zealand's Zero Carbon Act, introduced in 2019, aims to achieve net zero emissions of all greenhouse gases, except for methane from agriculture and waste, by 2050.

The independent Climate Change Commission is providing advice to government on climate change mitigation and adaptation, and monitoring progress towards the 2050 target and emissions budgets. It published its first advice in May 2021. The Government's first Emissions Reduction Plan was released in 2022.





How can business make a difference?

Businesses have a vital role in keeping global warming below 1.5°C. Now is the time for all businesses to take climate change seriously and start transitioning to zero carbon. Your business can work towards lowering emissions, and benefit financially at the same time.

In 2022, global investment in the low carbon energy transition jumped to NZ\$1.8 trillion to be level with fossil fuel investments.

The New Zealand economy relies on income from our exports and international tourism. With the global spotlight on climate change, there will be high expectations for a 'clean, green' Aotearoa New Zealand. This will impact all of our key sectors, and require dramatic changes to ensure we maintain this image in the years to come.

The 2018 Productivity Commission's report outlines the opportunities for New Zealand of transitioning to a thriving, low-emissions economy.

More than ever, people are influencing business to respond to mounting environmental and social issues. The investment community is increasingly looking for safe, long term investments and consumers care more about the impacts of the products they consume. For example, Kantar's Better Futures Report 2023 reveals 51% of Kiwis have stopped buying certain products and services because of their impact on the environment or society.





How can emissions be reduced at my business?

Whether your organisation is big or small, there are many simple things you can do to reduce your carbon footprint.

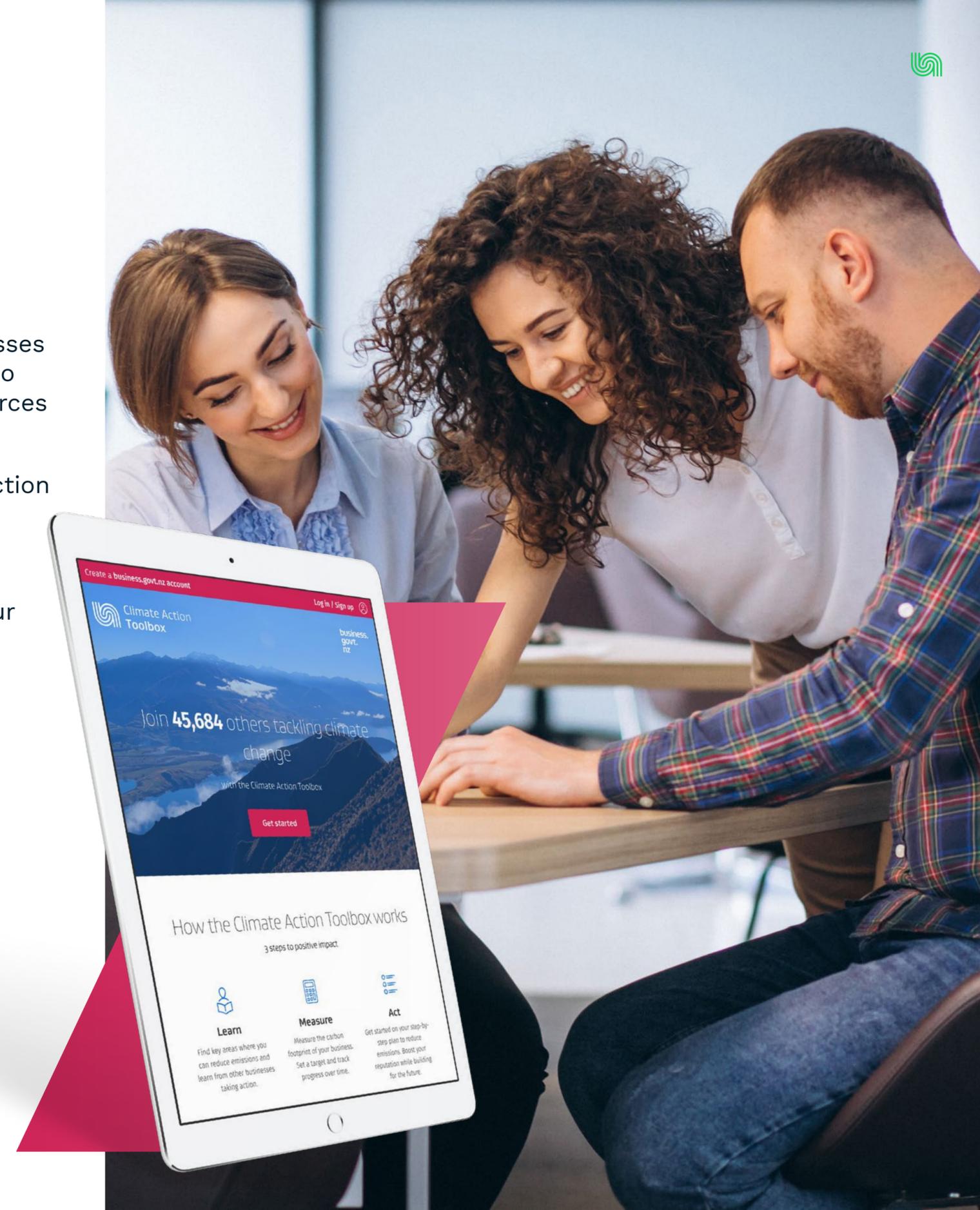
The free online [Climate Action Toolbox](#) is a great place to start. The Toolbox focuses on five key areas where your business could reduce its carbon footprint. Start with a two-minute assessment to identify which areas are relevant to your business.

Explore action ideas. There are more than 50 easy step-by-step guides to help you make a start or to improve on what you are doing already. You can make an action plan then use it to track your progress.

The Toolbox also includes a [free emissions calculator](#) to help you identify where your emissions come from and refine your action plan. Enter data on your activities and calculate your carbon emissions. The Toolbox will give you recommended actions based on your results and set a target for monitoring progress over time.

The tool includes more than 45 inspirational case studies of businesses taking climate change already. It also provides links to useful tools, resources and information including:

- Involving your people in climate action
- Building climate action into your strategy
- Communicating and marketing your success
- Preparing for climate change risks
- Understanding how climate action affects your finances





Offsetting carbon emissions

The ultimate aim is to reduce all possible emissions to zero. Emissions that can't be avoided can be offset.

Carbon offsetting is a way for you to invest in carbon-reducing projects like tree planting or clean energy generation from wind and solar. In turn, this helps to balance out the emissions your business has created.

Gain carbon neutral or carbon positive status through a carbon programme based on international standards. Providers of carbon offsets include:

- [Toitū Envirocare](#)
- [Ekos](#)
- [CarbonClick](#)
- [Oxygen Consulting](#)
- [MyImprint](#)
- [The Lever Room](#)

Most providers offer carbon certifications.

Some companies like [Air New Zealand](#) make it possible to offset activities,

like flights, with one-off carbon credits.

If you're unable to invest in certified carbon offsets, we recommend supporting a tree planting project, preferably for native species. Check out SBN's nature [regeneration projects](#) for ways you can support this work.

What else can I do?

It is always a good idea to engage your organisation and colleagues on the small, quick, yet important wins, and raise awareness about climate change and carbon footprints. Small, positive changes driven by an internal, organic, and passionate group can have a huge impact.



If you are looking for big, organisation-wide strategic changes, here are a few options:

- Connect with [SBN's advisory team](#) for one-on-one business support, to help set ambitious carbon reduction targets.
- Set greenhouse gas emission reduction targets with [Science Based Targets](#).
- Join the [Climate Leaders Coalition](#).
- Gain carbon management and carbon neutral certifications with providers like [Toitū Envirocare](#), [Ekos](#), [Oxygen Consulting](#), [MyImprint](#) and [The Lever Room](#).
- Consider an internal engagement programme such as [FutureFit in business](#).

The key for these long term ambitions is to have leadership buy-in through a clear understanding of why your organisation should make such commitments, the benefits and costs, and also the costs or risks of inaction.

Resources

Use the **Climate Action Toolbox** to measure and reduce carbon emissions from your business. Start with the quick self-assessment and create an action plan with easy step-by-step guides to help you reach your targets.

CLIMATE ACTION TOOLBOX 

tools.business.govt.nz/climate/

Ministry for the Environment

Check out the Ministry for the Environment's [Measuring emissions: 'A guide for organisations'](#).

Greenhouse Gas Protocol

The Greenhouse Gas Protocol's [Corporate Standard](#) provides requirements and guidance for companies and other organisations preparing a corporate-level GHG emissions inventory.

FutureFit

[FutureFit](#) provides a snapshot of your personal carbon footprint, gives you personalised tips to reduce it, tracks your progress and shows how collective action can make a difference.

FutureFit in business

[FutureFit in business](#) is a comprehensive package to help businesses engage their people to

take climate action and become more resilient. The business package includes FutureFit (the gamified carbon footprint tool) along with a suite of resources and a customised, business-wide reporting dashboard that enables you to see the collective carbon savings from all staff, in real time. Smaller businesses can access a set of free resources online [here](#).

Livelihoodly

[Livelihoodly](#) has practical tips for reducing your environmental impact at work.



Case studies

Check out these case studies on reducing carbon emissions.

Soar Printing

Soar Printing has reduced its CO₂ emissions by 44% in the past 10 years.

Fisher & Paykel Healthcare

Fisher & Paykel Healthcare is helping employees switch to electric cars, by installing 46 charging stations.

AUT University

AUT University has set a target of reducing CO₂ emissions by 50% by 2025 and is already making impressive progress.

Air New Zealand

Air New Zealand has turned to electricity to power its aircraft on the ground instead of aviation fuel.

Be inspired by more case studies in the [Climate Action Toolbox](#).



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