

MEDIA RELEASE

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ELECTION HOPEFULS MUST MEET URGENT NEED FOR SUSTAINABILITY

New Zealand's largest network on sustainable business demands politicians commit to tackling the country's pressing environmental and social issues.

The Sustainable Business Network includes more than 500 businesses from all sectors up and down the country. The SBN demands every party prioritise sustainable approaches to climate change, transport, water quality and investment, to secure election victory.

Rachel Brown is CEO of the Sustainable Business Network.

She says: "We have some of the greatest levels of social inequality we have ever seen. Climate change is already costing us dearly. Our way of life is critically under threat, and it's down to a lack of political aspiration and long-term strategic planning.

"Successive governments simply haven't done enough. This election is a chance for us to make a step change on this. We are missing opportunities to drive innovation, efficiency and future national income. We are missing opportunities to create new solutions and new jobs.

"Whatever the political complexion of the incoming government it must act decisively to improve our society, environment and economy. Globally trust in our major institutions, including government, media and business, is at an all-time low. In a recent study 75% of respondents said they believe business is the institution with the potential to make the most positive difference to communities. The new government must provide support for businesses stepping up to meet the social and environmental challenges we face."

The SBN position

Climate change

- Implement a Zero Carbon Act, or equivalent, with a statutory emission reduction target of net zero by 2050 and statutory interim targets.

- Establish an independent commission to advise the government on climate change mitigation and adaptation, with a statutory duty to report on progress made.
- Create a meaningful carbon price, either achieved through an enhanced Emissions Trading Scheme (including a cap and a floor price) or a carbon tax/charge.

Transport

- Set a target for a zero carbon emission land transport system by 2050, with interim targets.
- Introduce a minimum fuel/carbon efficiency standard and/or 'feebate' scheme reducing registration fees for efficient vehicles, funded by increased fees for inefficient vehicles.
- The sale of all internal combustion cars to end by 2035, at the latest.

Water quality

- Clear enforceable limits on water use and pollution.
- A levy on the commercial use of water. Funds raised through the levy can be used to restore waterways.
- Policy and funds for more efficient, smarter water management systems.

Investment

- Set ethical investment standards for all default KiwiSaver providers.
- Require larger companies to meet new issue-based reporting requirements, akin to the UK's Modern Slavery Act, the EU's Timber Regulation or the US' Dodd-Frank reforms on conflict minerals.
- Create and implement ethical Government procurement guidelines.

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Contact:

Fiona Stephenson
National Communications Manager – Sustainable Business Network
021 233 1053, fiona@sustainable.org.nz

About the Sustainable Business Network

Sustainable Business Network members collaborate on a range of projects designed to reshape the future and address a host of issues including a low carbon economy, restoring nature and community wellbeing.

The Sustainable Business Network (SBN) provides advice and support to help business succeed through becoming more sustainable. It is the largest and longest-standing organisation of businesses dedicated to sustainability in New Zealand. The SBN actively helps our network of progressive companies to connect, be inspired and act.

www.sustainable.org.nz

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