



You Choose Climate Change Survey

One of the tasks given to the New Zealand delegation to the Children's Climate Forum in Copenhagen was to prepare recommendations and ideas on how to respond to the climate change issues important to their country. They began by finding out more about the main contributors to New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions, and discovered that New Zealand has the highest car ownership rate in the world, and one of the lowest driving ages! This means that the issue of transport is crucial, and challenging the way New Zealanders think about transport has the potential to have a significant impact on the country's emissions. It is an issue that strongly effects young people and is also one on which they have the ability to impact, especially as many of the delegates are already old enough to drive their own car.

The climate Kiwis wanted to know what their peers thought about the issue, so they launched a survey called 'You Choose', outlining three options for the future in terms of transport. The survey gave background to the issue and outlined three scenarios to choose from.

Scenario 1: Business as usual

- We keep on doing what we are currently doing and the way we shop, socialise and work continues to be linked to car travel.
- We build more roads and systems to handle the increase in the number of cars on the road and car journeys.
- We encourage more people to travel to work by alternative modes of transport, in particular, by bus.

Scenario 2: Improving current models

- We continue to build more roads so the number of cars still increases but almost all major motorways now come with new carpool and bus lanes.
- The government has encourages teenagers and the workforce (e.g. through TV ads) to use the improved inner-city bus service and car pool maps that help people travel to and from work in around half the time.
- A higher class of bus service with new improved timetables is only found in the some of the busiest cities. Travel from city to city is still mostly by car. Green house gases slightly decrease.

Scenario 3: Changing the model

- Public transport is revamped and is made cheaper, safe and more accessible. Towns and cities are designed to make things more accessible and easier to walk, cycle and skate.
- Vehicles now run off sustainable bio-fuels, solar or other renewable energy sources. The design of the roads is made to get people from A-B more quickly.
- The entire rail network is extended and electrified for fast inner and intercity travel. No more traffic jams!

The survey was answered by 243 people of all ages, but mostly young people. Most respondents answered online, but the climate Kiwis also canvassed opinion at local events during the weekends.

The results are in!

Of the 243 respondents, **8** selected scenario 1, which is '**Business as Usual**'. **23** selected scenario 2, which is '**Improving Current Models**' and an overwhelming **211** selected scenario 3, which is '**Changing the Model.**' (and one person chose both 2 and 3!) That means **96%** called for change.

Many respondents explained their choice, and here are a few representative quotes.

- "I think scenario three sounds like the most efficient and effective environmentally friendly choice. When we run out of petroleum there will have to be an alternative fuels. Getting to places faster means less travel, less time, and less traffic." **Hakopa (13)**
- "I wouldn't want cars to disappear altogether- road trips are the best! Maybe a system like they have in big cities like New York and London, where you sign up to a company and pay a monthly or yearly fee and can hire their cars whenever you want. The advantage being that the cars are more eco-friendly hybrids, and less people will feel the need to own cars and use them all the time, because you can still have access to one when you really do need/want it." **Rosie (22)**
- "I choose Scenario 3. Even though it would have a high initial cost to set up infrastructure and heavy investment would be required in behavioural change education, this would in turn result in more positive impacts rather than negative when we look at it in the long term. Public transport being made cheaper would encourage more people to use them. It would benefit both them and our environment. i think scenario 3 for me is a good option as we will have a more sustainable environment. Less greenhouse gas emissions meaning one step closer to stopping global warming." **Maneesha (18)**
- "I believe very strongly that our current model of transport need to be completely revamped. I use my bike wherever possible but it is dangerous. I would like to see new systems designed around sustainable forms of transport like cycling skating and walking. I think it would be great if we could get train public transport up and running again, and I would also support government initiatives that encourage use of alternative fuels- although we need to be very careful about biofuels, as there are food issues around this." **Chrissy (16)**
- "Scenario 1 - the economic costs of "trying" to "stop" climate change far outweigh any minimal environmental gains." **Kurt (18)**

- “I strongly disagree with Scenario 1. Obviously we are not making enough of a difference doing what we are doing right now, so of course we need to change, and quickly. Verbal encouragement doesn't work a lot of the time, which is why I think that Scenario 3 is definitely the best way to go about our problem. This will make people consider taking public transport as an alternative and safer way to travel. And we really need sustainable resources in our car tanks soon, because we're running out very quickly. HEAL THE WORLD!” **Kalisha (14)**
- “I personally choose for New Zealand to REDUCE our carbon foot-print, by making dramatic changes to food production, transportation and distribution. I want a huge shift and push for VEGETARIAN diets for New Zealanders and all global-minded citizens. Cars produce a lot of Carbon but cows produce a whole lot more... So lets become vegetarian, for us, for health but most of all for the Environment.” **Te Rata (21)**