



A Green New Deal for New Zealand: A Warm Home and a Cool Planet

A Green New Deal takes on three of New Zealand's biggest problems at once. It tackles the economic crisis, the environmental crisis and the climate crisis at the same time.

When you insulate old homes, for example, it helps make people warmer and our planet cooler - and that's good for the environment. Simultaneously, it creates jobs here in New Zealand and that's good for our economy.

When you get both economic and environmental benefit, it's a Green New Deal initiative and when you have a series of programmes that give you a 'double-dividend', then you've got a Green New Deal. So it's a way to think about how we make public investments and how we choose to spend taxpayers' money.

It's also a fair deal. It puts people and the environment at the heart of decision-making as we re-engineer our economy to deliver fairness and equity for all Kiwis. It's not the whole answer for New Zealand - but getting on the path to a sustainable economy is a critical step.

Unfortunately, our Government does not have a plan for a Green New Deal. It says "one crisis at a time might just do" and, in fact, the Green Party-initiated home insulation programme is about the only 'two-for-one' programme it is thinking about right now.

So Kiwis might not get the most bang for their buck from the millions of taxpayers' dollars the National-led Government plans to spend to stimulate the economy.

As an example, John Key's Government has put nearly \$1 billion dollars towards roads. But if we spend money improving and increasing rail and bus services instead, we get a bigger economic boost and more jobs. We will also get less gridlock - especially in places like Auckland - and less vehicle pollution, as well as a faster, cheaper way to get to work.



*A Green New Deal
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Many other countries have adopted Green New Deal packages. They recognise that the world needs a recovery plan for the climate and the economy. US President Barack Obama, for example, has promised to spend US\$94 billion to develop green programmes. That's about US\$310 for every citizen. Here, our Government's green stimulus spending is a fraction of that.

The Government's one-problem-at-a-time approach means that

we put off until tomorrow what we should do today, and that delay will cost Kiwis a lot more money. The experts tell us we can spend a dollar today to fight climate change or five dollars tomorrow to do the same job, but with more risk that it's too little too late.

So we face some important decisions in New Zealand. Learn more about the current plans and the alternatives at www.greennewdeal.org.nz. And tell the Government about your priorities by talking with Members of Parliament. Tell us, the Green MPs, how you think a Green New Deal can work best for Kiwis.



The United Nations Secretary-General has called on world leaders to launch a "Green New Deal" that creates jobs and fights climate change.

- www.un.org,
29 Jan 2009

New Green MPs do the Green New Deal

The Green Party's newest MPs are hard at work on the Green New Deal.

Kevin Hague, the Green Party's Commerce Spokesperson, recently spoke in Parliament in favour of the proposed national cycle network, because: "It will bring in sustainable tourism dollars, will assist in reducing greenhouse-gas emissions by encouraging people in some major urban centres to ride bikes instead of using cars, and will produce health gains. It will also create jobs."

Kevin has also criticised the Government's failure to promote some good, Green New Deal ideas. The Small Business Advisory Group, for example, wants practical advice for small and medium businesses on how to improve environmental performance and the financial bottom line. Kevin thinks it would be a real chance to support Kiwi business, and build a stronger and more sustainable economy.

Catherine Delahunty sees an opportunity for Green New Deal jobs in forestry and toxic clean-ups: "We are promoting investment in tree planting and the clean-up of toxic sites," she says. "Both are good for the economy as well as for people and the environment."

Catherine is passionately committed to a Green New

Deal that is fair for all New Zealanders. For example, Catherine challenged the Finance Minister on the lack of women's organisations invited to the Job Summit. And she's campaigned for more money to go to teachers and school staff, as well as building new schools.

Kennedy Graham has put some serious intellectual backbone into the Green New Deal campaign. The former diplomat and academic has studied the global economic and historical context of the current crises.

In the House, Kennedy has challenged the Government to make sure New Zealand does its fair share as part of international climate change negotiations: "We have a choice here in New Zealand," he says. "We can benefit by taking rapid action or we can delay and our economy will suffer in the long term. We're asking the Government to make the right choice."



Kevin Hague MP, Catherine Delahunty MP, Dr Kennedy Graham MP

Wind power spins off benefits for ex-soldier

The answer to New Zealand's energy needs is blowing in the wind, according to Craig Bennett of Christchurch's Windflow Technology. Craig puts together the wiring and electrical parts that power wind turbines and provide New Zealand with clean green energy.

"I'm doing a small part to help the greater environment. Wind is a clean form of power production," says Craig.

Craig's career path to becoming part of the new green economy includes an eight year stint with the New Zealand Army where he made certain our Armed Forces were in a state of readiness, working in a storeroom ordering mechanical parts.

Later, Craig worked at New Zealand Post as an electrician, but when faced with restructuring, Craig opted to look to the future - he recognised that sustainable energy production was a growth industry.



Initially, Craig worked on wind turbines for Vesta in the North Island before moving back to Christchurch with his wife and three young children. Craig's work now involves ensuring wiring is in place to control the blades of the community-scale wind turbines assembled at Windflow Technology. It is essential the blades turn at the correct speed, he says, to maximise the wind's potential for energy.

The company Craig works for employs 50 workers in its Christchurch base and even exports its wares overseas...well, sort of.

Craig gets a sustainable job - we get a sustainable planet

"Technically our turbines go overseas - we have an order for 97 turbines for the Te Rere Hau windfarm, just out of Palmerston North. We are currently fulfilling that contract."

For Craig it is important that his job is sustainable and that the industry he works in is good for the planet as it helps provide Kiwis with electricity.

"I'm hoping that with more wind turbines the power industry will end up achieving a smaller carbon footprint for New Zealand," says Craig.



A lot of politicians talk - we want to listen.

What do you think about a Green New Deal for New Zealand? Give us your comments and ideas at www.greennewdeal.org.nz.

Warm dry homes, healthy Kiwis and new jobs

Last year, the Greens persuaded Labour to fund a major home insulation programme for New Zealand. MP Jeanette Fitzsimons says: "This year we are working with the National Government on a similar programme. It is a common-sense way for Government to create jobs and make us more energy efficient. The energy savings mean lower electricity bills, plus we don't have to build new power stations which cost billions. It's a good deal all round."

We will also be healthier, Jeanette says: "Kiwi homes are notoriously cold, which contributes to our high rates of asthma and respiratory disease. With home insulation, we can save millions of dollars in health care costs and take pressure off doctors and nurses."

For every dollar spent on insulating old, cold houses, there is close to a two dollar benefit from health and productivity savings because fewer New Zealanders end up in hospital, and they take less time off work or school. Plus, people in warm homes are less likely to shift house, resulting in positive benefits for children's education.

Nearly a million New Zealand homes can benefit from a nationwide home-insulation programme, and it's estimated that for every 1000 homes we retrofit each year, we keep 22 full-time workers in real jobs.

The Greens-sponsored home insulation fund is designed to help with the cost of insulation, clean heaters and other energy efficiency measures around the house. To find out how this applies to you check out this website after the Budget: www.greennewdeal.org.nz.

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Sustainable transport vs congestion?



We have to make choices about transport in New Zealand. One choice is sustainable transport – trains and buses together with bikeways and walkways. The other option is to build more roads.

Investment in sustainable transport is Green New Deal investment, says Green MP Jeanette Fitzsimons: "It creates more jobs than road building and it makes us more energy-efficient too."

So it is no surprise the Green Party has been a big supporter of an electric rail network for Auckland. Green MPs argued long and hard for government funding. Now electrification is on track but a lot of important related work is in doubt while the current Government funds roads.

The good news is that sustainable transport works.

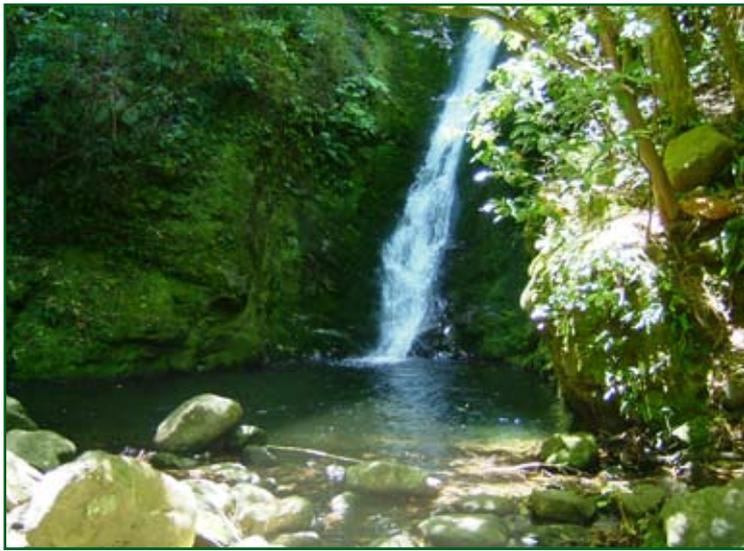
If we choose to build extra roads, not only do we get fewer jobs, but we'll be forced to drive because the good public transport options simply won't be there, Fitzsimons explains. And then we are reliant on oil imported from overseas. New Zealand spends about \$8 billion importing oil each year and most of that is for cars and trucks. As a result, we are creating wealth in places like Dubai and Iran rather than Dunedin and Auckland. We also leave a lot of New Zealanders stuck between high oil prices and poor public transport, making it hard to get to work when the price of petrol goes up.

"We can choose to keep more money and more jobs in New Zealand and free ourselves from the ups and downs of the international oil market," says Jeanette. "And we can choose to move towards a clean economy rather than prop up the old system that brings with it pollution and congestion."

The good news is that sustainable transport works. In Auckland for example, the Northern Busway has been a big success – the number of passengers more than doubled last year.

Meanwhile, more Aucklanders are using the train to get to work. There was an 18% increase in ridership last year and that's before double-tracking work finished, and before rail electrification, station upgrades and integrated ticketing. A properly-funded sustainable transport system for Auckland can provide a faster, cheaper ride to work, more jobs and less carbon emissions. It's a pretty good deal.

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Clean water for Kiwi kids

Green Party MP Russel Norman reckons the Government has a great opportunity to choose a Green New Deal investment package that creates the jobs we need and restores the rivers we love.

“It’d be great if kids could swim in their local river or play in the neighbourhood creek again without getting sick. If we make our water healthy again, it benefits recreational fishers, paddlers and boaties as well as the environment,” Russel says.

Kids should be able to swim in the local river without getting sick

Despite the best efforts of some farmers, our water quality is suffering greatly. In the Waikato, 75% of waterways tested were unsafe for even stock to drink, let alone humans, and 70% were not safe for swimming. But farming is incredibly important to our economy, and Russel says we can do it better: “We can produce world-class milk products and have healthy streams and rivers for swimming and fishing.”

A Green New Deal investment in streamside planting and fencing off rural waterways is one of the most important environmental steps our country could take, says the Green

MP. “Planting on the banks of rivers and streams stabilises soil against slumping and erosion. The plants also filter pollutants before they get into the water.” Building fences, meanwhile, keeps stock from wandering through streams, collapsing the banks and defecating in the water.

We can have a world class dairy industry and clean water

A major fencing and planting programme can put clean water back into the heart of our rural communities. New Zealand once had pristine water flowing through lowland forests and plains. In the past, much of that forest was cleared and turned into pasture. More recently, the landscape changed again, as many farms converted to intensive dairy in response to high international prices for milk products. This unprecedented conversion to dairying has seriously degraded our rural waterways, because stock roam through unfenced streams and because fertiliser run-off pollutes our water. So it’s time to clean it up.

And, according to Russel, there’s an economic obligation to our kids as well: “We’ve got a recession and the Government’s stimulus package will take on debt that our children and grandchildren will have to repay. If we’re going to borrow from the future, we need to ask if tax cuts for today’s wealthy are really the best investment.

“We should invest instead in wealth that all Kiwis can share by choosing a Green New Deal that cleans up our rivers and streams.”

It’s an investment future generations will get to enjoy, not just pay for, and it will reinstate part of the Kiwi birthright – a swim in the local river.



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What would your Green New Deal look like?

The Green MPs are ready to listen to your ideas – in fact, they’re on a Listening Tour around the country to talk about a Green New Deal path to a sustainable economy. They want to hear what ordinary Kiwis reckon about how best to spend their tax dollars. The nine Green MPs are going to all points; from Timaru to Thames, from Motueka to Mt Albert. Dates and locations are at www.greennewdeal.org.nz. You’re invited to any of those Green New Deal meetings.

The Greens have also put together a stimulus package that creates jobs and tackles climate change. You can see the proposals online, choose the parts you like best and give us your comments. And of course, you can always email, phone or write, anytime.

A lot of politicians talk; we want to listen.