

New Zealand declares a climate change emergency

Phil Taylor in Auckland

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*Jacinda Ardern calls climate change 'one of the greatest challenges of our time' and **pledges** carbon-neutral government by 2025*

A motion tabled in parliament on Wednesday recognised "the devastating impact that volatile and extreme weather will have on New Zealand and the wellbeing of New Zealanders, on our primary industries, water availability, and public health through flooding, sea level rise, and wildfire".

Thirty-two other nations have formally acknowledged the global crisis by declaring a climate emergency.

The motion **acknowledged** the "alarming **trend** in **species** decline and global biodiversity" (...)

Speaking in parliament after its introduction, Ardern said the country must "act with urgency".

"This declaration is an acknowledgement of the next generation. An acknowledgement of the burden that they will carry if we do not get this right and do not take action now," she said.

pledge (v.) = promise

acknowledge (v.) = recognize

trend (n.) = change

species (n.) = animal or plant sorts

“It is up to us to make sure we demonstrate a plan for action, and a reason for hope.”

(...)

Experts say the country is well behind on changes needed.

The lack of action was “embarrassing” and had become

“untenable”, University of Canterbury political science

professor Bronwyn Hayward said last week. “The irony is,

even under [President] Trump, the US is going to have

made better **per-capita** reductions than we have.”

Writing in The Conversation, Robert McLachlan, a professor

of applied mathematics at Massey University, said

New Zealand was yet to make emissions reductions.

Of 43 industrialised countries, New Zealand is among 12

that have seen net emissions increase between 1990

and 2018.

(...) “[New Zealand is] on the right side of history.

I absolutely believe and continue to stand by the statement

that climate change is the biggest challenge of our time.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/dec/02/new-zealand-declares-a-climate-change-emergency>

per-capita (adv. - Latin) = for each person/inhabitant