

## SDGs - New Zealand Statement for Circulation

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**United Nations Environmental Assembly  
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### **Statement by New Zealand**

In New Zealand, our economy and our natural resources are inextricably linked. Many of our businesses depend on our natural resources for their success – be it our farmers, our extractive industries, or our tourism sector. Our resource base is a significant source of our wealth and competitive advantage. There are real opportunities to innovate and use fresh thinking to generate better outcomes in the way we use our natural resources. The challenge is how we use those resources productively, while maintaining high quality environmental standards that preserve and enhance the quality of our environment for ourselves and future generations.

This challenge is one that we share with most developing countries and it underpins the approach that we are taking to the post-2015 development agenda.

The post-2015 development agenda is a universal agenda. It will address issues that are of common concern, require widespread support or require common action. The goals that we set for the next fifteen years will not just be applicable to developing countries. They will be applicable to all countries.

While we will agree goals and targets at the global level, each country will need to identify targets we to achieve sustainable development at home, and to contribute to sustainable development abroad.

Our shared commitment at Rio+20 was to create sustainable development goals that “address and incorporate in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development and their inter-linkages”.

New Zealand focuses at home and abroad on economic development – it’s through economic development that we will eradicate poverty and create jobs and prosperity. But economic development in itself is insufficient. It must be sustainable economic development. And it must be inclusive – addressing the needs of the poor, of the vulnerable, of women and men and boys and girls, of indigenous people, and of persons living with disabilities.

The case for achieving healthy, productive and resilient oceans illustrates why it’s important to balance all three dimensions of sustainable development.

Oceans and seas are globally important. Achieving healthy, productive, and resilient oceans and seas is relevant for all countries regardless of whether they have a coast.

- Oceans are the arteries of global trade. People in every nation depend on the viability and efficacy of ocean-borne trade to access markets and enhance sustainable economic development.
- 350 million people depend on marine resources for their jobs and livelihoods. These aren’t just fishers, but include people working in canneries, tourism, boat building, scientific research and marketing to name a few.
- Oceans and seas contribute to the nutrition and health of people everywhere: fisheries provide the largest single source of protein and a healthy marine environment reduces pollutants and harmful substances which would otherwise threaten human health.
- And finally, healthy oceans and seas are important because they contribute to environmental resilience serving as a major carbon sink, regulating the world’s climate and providing the world’s most significant water source making agriculture globally possible.

The case for sustainable energy also illustrates the importance of balancing the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Energy is an enabler of social and economic development. It drives growth and contributes to livelihoods. It supports our ability to learn and to live healthy and productive lives.

But 85 percent of our primary energy is generated by fossil fuels, generating pollution, and increasing energy insecurity. Despite heavy subsidisation, it is proving too costly for many remote and marginalised communities – no more so than in our own region of the Pacific.

That's why New Zealand is supporting sustainable energy for all. In order to ensure access to affordable, sustainable and reliable modern energy services we want to see a significant increase in renewable energy, improvements in energy efficiency and phasing out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption.

We look forward to working with our partners, in the Pacific and beyond, to achieve a truly universal and sustainable post 2015 development agenda. We will continue to innovate and use fresh thinking to address the challenge of using our precious natural resources productively, while maintaining high quality environmental standards that preserve and enhance the quality of our environment for ourselves and future generations.

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