

# Transport

## Notes for Emissions Reduction Plan, November 2021

### Paul Bruce, Our Climate Declaration

NZ like other industrialised countries, is in overshoot mode, with biophysical limits exceeded and 2.4 earths required if every inhabitant were to follow our consumptive lifestyle. The emission reduction plan has to plan for a reduction in use of resources in order to avoid overheating our planet, loss of biodiversity and further contamination of the biosphere.

Transport is the area which has seen the largest increase in emissions over recent decades. The number of vehicles per capita has increased, as has the size of vehicles with SUVs the most popular purchase. This is in spite of the availability of smaller fuel efficient ICE vehicles on the market, and manufacturers now offering EV or hybrid versions for most models.

Right now, our car-dominated transport system is a major source of emissions, kills or injures thousands of people each year, and both causes and worsens major inequities.

We can't meet our climate change targets without reducing how much we drive – not even by replacing petrol and diesel cars with EVs.

The fair path leads away from gridlocked traffic towards connected urban communities. If our leaders programme the transport system with the right settings now, they can secure us connected, low-emissions cities that work better for everyone for the future (Report [here](#))

A genuinely green transport system would involve system change [of a different kind](#)<sup>ii</sup>. It would start by reducing the need to travel – as the mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, is doing with her [15-minute city policy](#)<sup>iii</sup>, which seeks to ensure that people's needs can be met within a 15-minute walk from homes.

It would [encourage walking and cycling](#)<sup>iv</sup> by all who are able to do so, helping to address our health crisis as well as our environmental crisis. For longer journeys, it would prioritise public transport. Private electric vehicles would be used to address only the residue of the problem: providing transport for those who could not travel by other means. As [George Monbiot](#)<sup>v</sup> said in a recent Guardian article - "Simply flipping the system from fossil to electric cars preserves everything that's wrong with the way we now travel, except the power source. The mining of the materials required for this massive deployment of batteries and electronics is already destroying communities, ripping down forests, polluting rivers, [trashing fragile deserts](#)<sup>vi</sup> and, in some cases, [forcing people into near-slavery](#)<sup>vii</sup>. Our "clean, green" transport revolution is being built with the help of blood cobalt, [blood lithium](#)<sup>viii</sup> and [blood copper](#)<sup>ix</sup>."

#### Major points

- 1: Design 15 - minute cities where everyone can access everything they need for work, school, play, and shopping within a 15 - minute trip walking, on wheels, or public transport.
- 2: Set a firm target for ending imports of fossil fuel powered vehicles – 2030 suggested for banning petrol and diesel car imports, and hybrids from 2035, needs to be brought forward to 2025 and 2030 respectively.
- 3: The proposed 20% vkt reduction by 2035 needs a Ministry that looks after it. MoT say they're not responsible for it even though it's in their plan... at present they deal with how people travel, not whether they do. Mode shift will cover some of the reduction but not travelling is the crucial bit that is missing. Road to Zero has a large program of work and budget that includes partnerships and advertising but this needs to be extended to reducing emissions.
- 4: Provide safe cycle ways in all towns/cities on arterial routes with removal of street parking, and where this is not possible, a reduction of speed limit to 30km/hr.
- 5: Lease e-cars to shift workers who are unable to access public transport, walk or cycle.
- 6: Invest in light rail in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, and integrate with existing rail network to support high density transit orientated development.
- 7: Construct new sleeper trains at re-opened railway workshops, and electrify missing sections of main trunk line from

Palmerston North southwards, and Hamilton northwards. Re-establish regular daily passenger rail service between Auckland and Wellington and upgrade regional bus services elsewhere.8: Restrict domestic air

services to electric aircraft or where not possible, turbo prop which avoid harmful water vapour entering the upper atmosphere and the formation of contrails. All aviation services to include full carbon tax.

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- i [https://helenc Clark.foundation/app/uploads/2021/11/HCF\\_Te-Ara-Matatika\\_Walker\\_November-2021-EASY-READ-SUMMARY\\_v2.pdf](https://helenc Clark.foundation/app/uploads/2021/11/HCF_Te-Ara-Matatika_Walker_November-2021-EASY-READ-SUMMARY_v2.pdf)
- ii <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/sep/23/electric-cars-transport-train-companies>
- iii <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/07/paris-mayor-unveils-15-minute-city-plan-in-re-election-campaign>
- iv <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/nov/10/what-if-we-just-gave-up-cars-activists-press-cop26-leaders-to-dream-big>
- v <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/nov/14/cop26-last-hope-survival-climate-civil-disobedience>
- vi <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2019-06-11/saving-the-planet-with-electric-cars-means-strangling-this-desert>
- vii <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/nov/08/cobalt-drc-miners-toil-for-30p-an-hour-to-fuel-electric-cars>
- viii <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/tracking-human-rights-violations-environmental-impacts-in-lithium-batteries-supply-chains-in-china-drc-so-america/>
- ix <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2017/02/myanmar-suspend-copper-mine-linked-to-ongoing-human-rights-abuses/>