FOOD SYSTEMS
NDC SCORECARD

New Zealand Assessment

September 2025

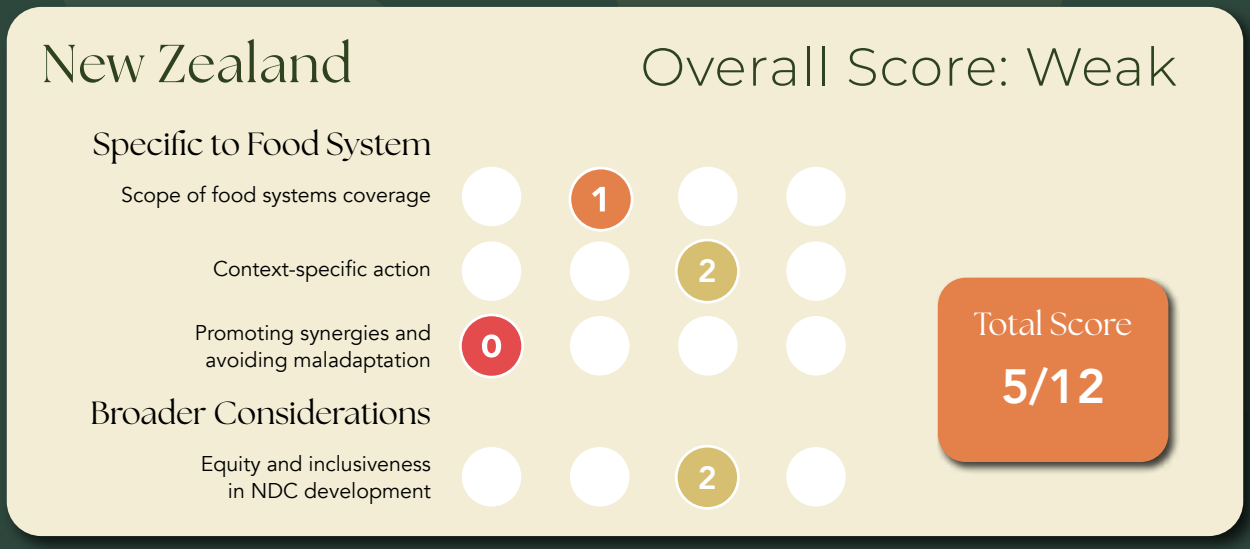
I. Introduction

New Zealand is a long, narrow multi-island nation in the South Pacific Ocean near Australia. Its diverse and complex climate varies from warm subtropical in the North to cool temperate climates in the South, with alpine conditions in the mountains. New Zealand is a high-income country with a high-impact diet (Food Systems NDC Scorecard methodology, Appendices II, IV) but a small population that is widely dispersed (New Zealand's Second Nationally Determined Contribution [NDC], p. 16). New Zealand's NDC reports that the country has an export-dependent economy, relying heavily on agriculture, but is distant from most of its trading partners (NDC, p. 16). The NDC also includes Tokelau, which is a dependent territory near American Samoa and vulnerable to climate change (NDC, p. 18). New Zealand's food sector is dominated by meat and dairy production and is largely for export—for example, 95% of total dairy produced is exported (Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, 2022).

New Zealand submitted its NDC on January 31, 2025 (NDC Registry). The NDC describes an incremental approach building on the framework created in the country's Climate Change Response Act (NDC, pp. 2, 12). New Zealand reports that its intention is to reduce its net GHG emissions to 51%–55% below 2005 levels by 2035, which is an iterative progression from its first NDC's goals (NDC, pp. 2, 5). This reduction would reduce its emissions to between 38.98 and 42.44 Mt (megatonnes) CO2-e by 2035 (NDC, p. 2). New Zealand states that its emission profile is unique, noting that in 2022, 49% of its gross emissions came from biogenic methane and 9% from nitrous oxide, predominately from its agricultural sector (NDC, pp. 2, 8, 17). Due to New Zealand's geography and population distribution, fossil-fuel-powered transport is another heavy contributor to the country's energy sector gross emissions (NDC, pp. 16–17).

This NDC was evaluated according to the Food Systems NDC Scorecard methodology, using the documents below. All scores are based on evaluations of the NDC and documents cited within each area of the assessment. Where not specified, in this assessment "NDC" may refer to content within an NDC submission document or other documents analyzed as part of the NDC (see Appendix).

For New Zealand, we analyzed the NDC, New Zealand's Second Emissions Reduction Plan 2026–30, and the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme. For additional information on policies considered within this evaluation, please see the Appendix.



II. Scope of Food Systems Coverage (0–3 points)

TOTAL AREA SCORE = 1 POINT (WEAK)

In this area, the scorecard framework evaluates whether the NDC or policies referenced within the NDC addresses each stage of the food system to assess the full extent of the country's climate mitigation and adaptation potential. The stages are as follows: (1) food production; (2) food loss; (3) food processing; (4) food distribution; (5) food consumption, including food access, diets, and nutrition; and (6) food waste. This area does not assess the policies' benefits or harms; these considerations are addressed in subsequent areas of this assessment. The NDC will receive a "strong" score of 3 points if it addresses all subareas; a "medium" score of 2 points if it addresses at least food production, food consumption, and either food loss or waste; a "weak" score of 1 point if it addresses at least one subarea; and an "absent" score of 0 points if no subarea is addressed.

Since New Zealand's NDC demonstrates action at the food production, food distribution, and food waste stages of the food system but does not demonstrate action at the food loss, food processing, or food consumption stages, the NDC received **a weak score of 1 point** for the scope of food systems coverage area.

(1) Food production
The NDC demonstrates action at the food production stage primarily through a technology-based approach, citing agricultural-emissions-reduction technologies as a principal method of reducing emissions while increasing production (New Zealand's Second Emissions Reduction Plan 2026–30 [ERP2], p. 9). Stated benefits include improved efficiency and decreased emissions per unit of production (NDC, p. 17).

(2) Food loss
Nothing in the NDC suggests action in this subarea.

(3) Food processing
Nothing in the NDC suggests action in this subarea.

(4) Food distribution
The NDC demonstrates action at the food distribution stage in the ERP2. The plan details a scheme for regulated stewardship of refrigerants for cold-chain transportation and storage of perishable foods (ERP2, p. 81). Nothing else in the NDC suggests additional action in this subarea.

(5) Food consumption
Nothing in the NDC suggests action in this subarea.

(6) Food waste
The ERP2 demonstrates action at the food waste stage through projects on organic waste management. The ERP2 details plans to reduce landfill emissions, which include investing in organic waste diversion infrastructure and bolstering resource recovery (ERP2, pp. 16, 79, 80).

III. Context-Specific Action (0–3 points)

TOTAL AREA SCORE = 2 POINTS (MEDIUM)

In this area, the scorecard framework evaluates the depth of food systems integration within the NDC through a framework of seven critical subareas for climate change mitigation and adaptation in the food system: (1) addressing food insecurity and malnutrition, (2) mitigating emissions in food production, (3) reducing fossil fuel use in the food system, (4) reducing agricultural deforestation, (5) shifting from high-impact dietary patterns, (6) reducing food loss and/or waste, and (7) enhancing climate-resilient food production. Subareas 6 and 7 are evaluated for all countries, and the other five are evaluated if applicable to a given country.

Subarea 1 is evaluated for all countries except high-income countries. Although food insecurity is present in high-income countries, this subarea is assessed only for low- and middle-income countries where the prevalence of food insecurity and malnutrition are associated with greater climate vulnerabilities. Subareas 2 and 3 are evaluated for high- and upper-middle-income countries only. Subarea 4 is scored for countries that are ranked among the 25 countries with the highest rates of agricultural deforestation according to Global Forest Watch data, and subarea 5 is evaluated for countries with a high-impact diet—countries whose consumption of animal-source foods (ASFs) exceeds EAT-Lancet recommendations by 25%.

The action in each applicable subarea is first assessed as strong, medium, weak, or absent:
- Actions are strong when a specific policy has been adopted or a plan to adopt a specific policy is in place.
- Actions are medium when an intent to take action is mentioned (i.e., no detailed implementation plan exists).
- Actions are weak if only a descriptive mention of it is included and absent when no action is mentioned.

On the basis of these assessments, the NDC will receive a strong, medium, weak, or absent rating for the area as a whole. (See more details in the Food Systems NDC Scorecard methodology, p. 7.)

Subarea 1 was not analyzed because New Zealand is a high-income country. Subarea 4 was evaluated but not scored because New Zealand is not one of the countries with the highest rates of agricultural deforestation.

Since New Zealand's NDC demonstrates strong action in subareas 2, 3, 6, and 7 but no action in subarea 5, the NDC received **a medium score of 2 points** for the context-specific action area.

(1) Addressing food insecurity and malnutrition
This subarea was not analyzed for New Zealand.

(2) Mitigating emissions in food production
The ERP2 describes a treatment for anaerobic lagoons called EcoPond, which reduces methane emissions from manure lagoons by adding polyferric sulphate and concentrated sulphuric acid to the lagoon (ERP2, p. 63). The ERP2 also describes initiatives and activities aimed at reducing emissions from agriculture and states the government's intention to implement an agricultural-emissions-pricing system—outside New Zealand's existing emissions trading scheme—by 2030 (ERP2, pp. 59–66).

(3) Reducing fossil fuel use in the food system
New Zealand's emissions trading scheme "raises the cost of emissions and reduces the cost of removals," supporting emission reductions across the economy (ERP2, p. 13). While the scheme does not cover agricultural emissions, it does cover emissions from the energy and transport sectors, which contribute to food system activities (ERP2, pp. 34, 48).

(4) Reducing agricultural deforestation
Although we did not score its NDC on reducing agricultural deforestation, New Zealand does have a general approach on deforestation, noting that forests are both a sink and a source of emissions (ERP2, p. 68). In September 2024, the Ministry for Primary Industries made baseline projections that the LULUCF sector would remove 52.7–62.6 Mt CO2-e between 2026 and 2030 (ERP2, p. 68). New Zealand also notes that it has projected an emissions range because afforested areas are still developing into their highest levels of carbon sink. However, forests planted in the 1990s are maturing and being harvested and will no longer remove carbon (ERP2, p. 68).

(5) Shifting from high-impact dietary patterns
Nothing in the NDC suggests action in this subarea.

(6) Reducing food loss and/or waste
The ERP2 demonstrates action to reduce food waste through policies aimed at reducing organic waste emissions (ERP2, p. 80). The plan to improve the management of organic waste includes supporting infrastructure projects that "divert and process organic waste" (ERP2, p. 80). Nothing in the NDC suggests action to reduce food loss.

(7) Enhancing climate-resilient food production
The ERP2 describes one policy related to climate-resilient food production. The ERP2's Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme lends support to Māori agribusiness to enhance food-and-fiber production resilience (ERP2, p. 87).

IV. Promoting Synergies and Avoiding Maladaptation (0–3 points)

TOTAL AREA SCORE = 0 POINTS (VERY WEAK)

Measures put forth in the NDC can promote synergies with other sustainability, social, and health objectives. These measures could also conflict with the same objectives. In this area, the scorecard framework evaluates the extent to which the NDC has sought to promote synergies and avoid maladaptation or make trade-offs with other sustainable development objectives. This is a two-step evaluation process. The first step is an assessment of whether the NDC considers seven topics in relation to the food system that support sustainable development synergies: (1) nutrition; (2) One Health, animal health, and/or animal welfare; (3) other health considerations; (4) human rights; (5) biodiversity, nature, and ecosystems; (6) gender; and (7) small-scale producers. For each synergistic subarea addressed 0.5 points are given, up to a maximum of 3 points.

New Zealand's NDC **received 1 point in the synergies main subarea** because it addresses two of the seven synergistic topics.

The second step is an assessment of the NDC for risks of maladaptation related to the inclusion of five to eight high-risk activities: (1) expansion of agricultural frontier; (2) increasing production of crops such as soy, corn, rapeseed, wheat, and sugar cane for animal feed and energy; (3) increasing pesticide use; (4) intensification measures that threaten the livelihood of small-scale farmers, pastoralists, and fishers; and (5) increasing water consumption. The remaining high-risk activities are evaluated only for high- and upper-middle-income countries: (6) intensification of animal agriculture (and expansion of animal agriculture subsectors), (7) increasing consumption of particular animal products in a country that already exceeds by 25% or more EAT-Lancet levels for ASF consumption, and (8) increasing fertilizer usage.

New Zealand's NDC **lost 1 point in the maladaptation main subarea** due to its approach to accounting for biogenic methane.

For each synergistic subarea, the NDC receives 0.5 points up to a maximum of 3 points. For each maladaptive high-risk activity, the NDC loses 1 point. The number of points subtracted from high-risk activities or policies can equal but not exceed the number of points gained for the synergistic topics mentioned.

The NDC's synergies score of 1 point was reduced by 1 point for the risk of maladaptation, resulting in **a very weak total score of 0 points** for the promoting synergies and avoiding maladaptation area.

Synergies

(1) Nutrition
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand considers this subarea in the context of food systems.

(2) One Health, animal health, and/or animal welfare
The ERP2 addresses animal health considerations in the section about providing technology for agriculture. It mentions that the ban on gene technology outside laboratories is in the process of ending, and once it does the government will have an independent regulator oversee future applications of gene technology (ERP2, p. 30). The ERP2 states that it could be used to alter genetic material of plants, animals, viruses, or bacteria with the hope of promoting health and potentially addressing climate issues, such as helping farmers mitigate their emissions and increase productivity (ERP2, p. 30). Nothing in the NDC suggests additional considerations in this subarea.

(3) Other health considerations
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand considers this subarea in the context of food systems.

(4) Human rights
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand considers this subarea in the context of food systems.

(5) Biodiversity, nature, and ecosystems
The ERP2 discusses nonforestry removals with a stated intention to develop a framework to recognize them as a nature-based solution to addressing climate change (ERP2, pp. 73–74). An example provided in the ERP2 is "on-farm vegetation," like riparian plantings if a farm is next to a body of water, to sequester carbon and improve biodiversity (ERP2, p. 74). The other policy involves New Zealand's green investment plans; it mentions the possibility of starting "voluntary carbon and biodiversity credits," and the ERP2 includes efforts to develop "a sustainable finance taxonomy to give stakeholders ... clarity and confidence on which economic activities are green and transitional" (ERP2, p. 27).

(6) Gender
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand considers this subarea in the context of food systems.

(7) Small-scale producers
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand considers this subarea in the context of food systems.

Maladaptations

(1) Expansion of agricultural frontier
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand engages in this high-risk activity.

(2) Increasing production of crops primarily for nonfood uses (animal feed and energy)
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand engages in this high-risk activity.

(3) Increasing pesticide use
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand engages in this high-risk activity.

(4) Intensification measures that threaten the livelihood of small-scale farmers, pastoralists, and fishers
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand engages in this high-risk activity.

(5) Increasing water consumption
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand engages in this high-risk activity.

(6) Intensification of animal agriculture and expansion of animal agriculture subsectors
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand engages in this high-risk activity.

(7) Increasing consumption of particular animal products in a country that already exceeds by 25% or more EAT-Lancet levels for ASF consumption
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand engages in this high-risk activity.

(8) Increasing fertilizer usage
Nothing in the NDC suggests that New Zealand engages in this high-risk activity.

Additional Maladaptation

One policy was assessed as maladaptive: New Zealand's approach to accounting for biogenic methane.

New Zealand's NDC repeatedly references achieving net-zero with the exclusion of biogenic methane by 2050 (NDC, pp. 20, 30, 33). However, "net-zero" refers to a specific state in which anthropogenic emissions and sinks are balanced. This meaning cannot be retained while excluding particular greenhouse gases from particular sources—even where a country views these emissions as difficult to abate. Given that net-zero has become a highly influential political concept for mobilizing climate ambition, it must not be weakened with such qualifications. Additionally, the ERP2 highlights that New Zealand's government commissioned and is considering a report on a "biogenic methane target consistent with the principle of no additional warming" (ERP2, p. 66). While "no additional warming" is a relatively recent concept, it has attracted widespread concern. The potential risks of this approach include encouraging companies to present large quantities of emissions as climate-neutral or negative, rewarding high methane emitters (at the country or company level) and undermining efforts to rapidly reduce methane emissions to achieve the Paris Agreement's temperature goals.

Most countries face significant challenges in addressing their primary emissions categories, just as New Zealand's NDC correctly recognizes that New Zealand does with agricultural methane emissions. Critically important, however, is that countries undertake meaningful mitigation based on action rather than changes to emissions accounting.

In addition, the ERP2 identifies several methods New Zealand is using or will use in the future to reduce methane emissions (ERP2, p. 63). These include genetic modification to breed sheep and cattle to produce less methane, two different methane vaccines, and a bolus to be given to ruminant species that would remain in their rumens for approximately six months and may reduce the amount of methane the animals produce (ERP2, p. 63). While reducing methane emissions is crucial for mitigation, New Zealand's plans for methane inhibitors, in particular, focus on removing and relaxing regulation for such technologies rather than ensuring robust oversight. This is a concern, given that products in this category can impact animal and human health. However, for lack of further detail, no points were deducted.

V. Equity and Inclusiveness in NDC Development (0–3 points)

TOTAL AREA SCORE = 2 POINTS (MEDIUM)

In this area, the scorecard framework evaluates the NDC on the main subareas of equity and inclusiveness throughout the NDC's development. The NDC as a whole was scored on this area, not just the NDC's content concerning food systems. Each main subarea was scored up to 3 points, and the total score is the average of the two main subarea scores.

New Zealand's NDC received **a medium total score of 2 points** for the equity and inclusiveness area.

Equity

The scorecard framework evaluates equity through (1) equitable 1.5°C alignment, (2) just transitions, (3) consideration of the needs of marginalized and/or vulnerable groups, and (4) equitable finance. Subarea 4 is evaluated only for high-income countries on whether they commit to financing for developing countries. The equity main subarea will receive a strong score of 3 points if all issues are addressed, a medium score of 2 points if two or three issues are addressed, a weak score of 1 point if one issue is addressed, or an absent score of 0 points if no issues are addressed.

New Zealand's NDC received **a weak score of 1 point in the equity main subarea** because it addresses subarea 2 but not subareas 1, 3, and 4.

(1) Equitable 1.5°C alignment

In accordance with New Zealand's Greenhouse Gas Inventory (1990–2022), the country commits to reducing emissions to between 38.98 and 42.44 Mt CO2-e by 2035—net emissions will decrease by 51%–55% below gross 2005 levels by 2035 (NDC, p. 2).

Equitable 1.5°C alignment is assessed according to the fair shares assessment approach of the Civil Society Equity Review (CSER), using the Climate Equity Reference Calculator. Under this analysis, a country's emissions reduction is determined to contribute its mitigation fair share if the country meets either of two CSER benchmarks, each corresponding to different but reasonable visions of equity.

According to the 1850 High Progressivity benchmark, New Zealand would need to reduce its 2005 emissions by 114% to equitably contribute to 1.5°C alignment. Using the 1950 Medium Progressivity benchmark, New Zealand would need to reduce its 1990 emissions by 106% to equitably contribute to 1.5°C alignment. Since New Zealand's 51%–55% planned reduction does not meet either benchmark, the country falls short of its fair share and is therefore not considered equitably aligned with efforts toward 1.5°C.

(2) Just transitions
The NDC and existing policy also commits to mitigating climate change's impact and provides options to help those affected navigate the effects of new emissions-reduction policies and to adjust policies to help those affected by mitigation (ERP2, pp. 26, 83, 86). An example of a financial policy supporting this goal is the Winter Energy Payment, which provides financial assistance and income support to New Zealanders facing higher costs or employment challenges related to New Zealand's emissions-reduction efforts (ERP2, p. 86). New Zealand is also considering tax bracket adjustments for low- and middle-income households to address the impacts of climate mitigation policy, paid for by the proceeds of New Zealand Unit auctions (ERP2, p. 83). Worker retraining is available through the Ministry for Social Development and the Apprenticeship Boost, especially for Māori and regional communities (ERP2, p. 87). Additionally, New Zealand plans to further address the impacts of climate mitigation policy by providing targeted support for Māori through the Māori Climate Platform (ERP2, p. 83).

(3) Specific consideration of the needs of marginalized and/or vulnerable groups
When evaluating the costs of delivering the NDC, New Zealand took into account the impacts on households, sectors, and regions, paying particular attention to especially vulnerable groupings, such as children, Māori, and Pasifika (NDC, p. 15). While developing the second NDC, the New Zealand Government considered how the NDC might impact Māori rights and interests (NDC, p. 15). The Government of Tokelau was also engaged to understand Tokelau's interests and views in the NDC's development (NDC, p. 18). The Māori Climate Platform plans to focus on investing in Māori-led climate action to ensure whānau (extended families), hapū (clans or descent groups), and iwi (tribes) are at the forefront of the government's climate response (ERP2, p. 87). Also, Māori agribusinesses are supported by the Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme and Māori-led approaches to reducing biological emissions (ERP2, p. 87). New Zealand plans to address the impacts of climate mitigation policy by supporting families with young children through the FamilyBoost tax rebate (ERP2, p. 86). Supports such as these are also available for employers or employees looking to retrain in response to mitigation efforts (ERP2, p. 87). However, as New Zealand's NDC and ERP2 did not specifically consider women, it did not fulfill the criteria for this subarea.

(4) Equitable finance
The NDC did not receive points for addressing the finance subarea, as the NDC does not include a commitment to providing financing to developing countries.

Inclusiveness in NDC Development

Inclusiveness in NDC development was evaluated on whether the following groups were included in the NDC's development: (1) multiple government ministries, (2) departments and agencies of government, (3) subnational bodies, (4) the private sector, (5) academia, (6) civil society organizations, (7) Indigenous Peoples, and (8) other vulnerable and/or marginalized groups, earning 0.5 points for each for a maximum of 3 points.

New Zealand's NDC received **a strong score of 3 points in the inclusiveness main subarea**.

In the NDC development process, New Zealand included multiple governmental ministries, departments, and agencies (ERP2, pp. 21, 38); the private sector (ERP2, p. 13); and youth (a vulnerable group) (NDC, pp. 16, 18). In addition, the ERP2 mentions engagement with climate scientists (academic) and environmental NGOs (civil society) (ERP2, p. 5).

VI. Analysis and Conclusions (Total score 0–12 points)

NEW ZEALAND'S NDC TOTAL SCORE = 5 POINTS (WEAK)

New Zealand's NDC received **a weak total score of 5 points out of 12**. This score is based on evaluations of the NDC, ERP2, and New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme.

All evaluations and scores are dependent on New Zealand's continuation of the first two reductions plans, as well as drafting and implementing the third plan, which will be published in 2029 (NDC, p. 12).

In the **scope of food systems coverage area**, New Zealand's NDC received a **weak score** because although it demonstrates action in the food production, food distribution, and food waste stages of the food system, it lacks action in the food loss, food processing, and food consumption stages.

In the **context-specific action area**, New Zealand's NDC received a **medium score** because it demonstrates strong action in four subareas—mitigating emissions in food production, reducing fossil fuel use in the food system, reducing food loss and/or waste, and enhancing climate-resilient food production—but lacks action in the shifting from high-impact dietary patterns subarea. Although the NDC does contain policies that seek to reduce the emissions intensity of animal agriculture, policies that focus solely on mitigating emissions at the production stage are not nearly as environmentally beneficial as those that combine this focus with plans to reduce the overall demand for animal-based foods—lowering production emissions from both angles.

Also in the **context-specific action area**, where New Zealand addresses mitigating food production emissions, it outlines only technological fixes and on-farm improvements—proposing to continue animal agriculture without reducing scale. New Zealand contends that reducing its production could result in production leakage that increases production in more emission-intensive countries. However, it does not include action to reduce domestic demand for animal-based foods. Recent studies specific to New Zealand's context support the potential for changes in consumption patterns to deliver positive impacts for emissions and public health. A study from Otago University (NZ), found that whole plant foods—including vegetables, fruits, legumes, and whole grains—emitted substantially less climate pollutants than animal-based foods (particularly red and processed meats). Improvements to human health and savings in healthcare-system costs were also identified.

A 2023 Auckland University study (NZ) supports these findings, showing that consumption of red and processed meat and dairy were responsible for 54% of dietary GHG emissions and concluding that "encouraging New Zealanders to purchase foods with lower carbon footprints could feasibly help the country reach its emissions reduction goals" (Kliejunas et al., 2023, p. 7).

Accordingly, supporting a shift in demand away from emission-intensive food would support GHG emissions-reduction targets, as well as provide other environmental and health benefits.

The current technologically driven focus on production, therefore, has significant inherent limits that could be addressed with a food systems approach that also accounts for consumption patterns. Further, many of the technological fixes listed are not fully operational yet (e.g., methane-reducing technologies), and the emissions-reduction impact is not fully known or understood.

Additionally, the 2024 decision to remove agricultural activities from New Zealand's emissions trading scheme enables agricultural emissions to continue evading regulation.

Considering activities to improve resilience, the inclusion of the Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme within the climate-resilient food production section of the ERP2 is a positive step, but it should be complemented with policies that address resilience throughout the agricultural system, such as diversifying cropping and reducing dependence on fertilizers.

In the **promoting synergies and avoiding maladaptation area**, New Zealand's NDC received a **very weak score** because it considers only animal health (subarea 2) and nature and ecosystems (subarea 5) out of the seven synergistic topics, and it shows New Zealand's maladaptive approach to accounting for biogenic methane. This approach risks undermining the significance of net-zero targets and overlooking the importance of current methane emissions. Further, while decreasing GHG emissions intensity can be valuable, technological solutions such as methane inhibitors require robust regulatory oversight to ensure human and animal health.

In the **equity and inclusiveness in NDC development area**, New Zealand's NDC received a **medium score** due to a low emissions-reduction pledge, lack of climate finance discussion, and no consideration of climate impacts on women.

The following are some of the ways New Zealand could improve its NDC score in accordance with this evaluation: (1) developing policies that address food processing, food distribution, and food consumption; (2) creating a plan for and detailing how New Zealand will shift from high-impact dietary patterns to lower-impact diets (e.g., with strategies to promote more plant-based diets); (3) increasing its emissions-reduction pledge; (4) making a commitment to providing climate financing to developing countries; (5) considering the specific needs of women and girls in the policymaking process; and (6) considering women and girls in the context of the food system. The suggested decrease in animal agriculture through shifting from high-impact diets could also help offset New Zealand's unique emissions profile.

Appendix

Documents Evaluated

- New Zealand's Second Nationally Determined Contribution
- New Zealand's Second Emissions Reduction Plan 2026–30
- New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme

Document Selection

An NDC submission typically references a number of policy documents. In some cases, these policy documents are referenced to provide context clarifying the content of the NDC. In other cases, these policy documents are referenced because they form part of a country's contribution to mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Where a country considers the documents integral to its climate change response, the Food Systems NDC Scorecard considers the content of these documents, if adequately referenced in an NDC submission, to be part of the NDC.

As a reference's intended function is not always clear, the Food Systems NDC Scorecard considers it holistically:

- How the NDC discusses the policy document.
- Location of the reference. For example, if the reference is within the planning processes section of an "information to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding" table, this is a strong indication that the policy was incorporated into the NDC.
- Content of the referenced policy document itself—namely, the extent to which it considers climate change and therefore constitutes part of the country's climate policy framework.
- The Party's overall policy framework—for example, whether a cited policy is active rather than obsolete or superseded by other policy documents and whether other policy documents should perform the same function.

For New Zealand, the NDC submission as well as the ERP2 and the Emissions Trading Scheme were included in this analysis. The NDC submission describes New Zealand's emissions-reduction plans as setting out the policies and strategies for achieving its emissions budget and describes the Emissions Trading Scheme as a critical tool in reducing the country's emissions to ensure Paris Agreement obligations are met.

Scope of Assessment

This evaluation focuses on a food system perspective. While evaluating equity and inclusiveness more broadly, it does not specifically assess other sectors (such as energy) or indicate the quality of a country's climate policy overall. Additionally, the scoring reflects the presence or absence of particular types of action or consideration within the areas and subareas examined. This does not necessarily reflect ambition in the depth of action. For example, a policy to slightly mitigate food production emissions in a subsector will count equally in scoring to a policy to significantly mitigate emissions. The scores should be understood as indicators to consider alongside the fuller analyses. Finally, while NDCs are critical policy instruments, implementation is necessary to translate the ambition into action. Accordingly, an ambitious NDC alone does not guarantee effective action, just as the ambitiousness of action is not limited to the content of an NDC.

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Please contact the Food Systems NDC Scorecard project (info@foodsystemsndcscorecard.org) with any feedback, comments, or questions.