

9

In the Shadow of Covid-19? Climate change and the 2020 election

Sam Crawley

Introduction

The effects of climate change are already being felt in New Zealand and around the world and will continue to worsen over the coming decades (IPCC 2021).¹ Urgent government action is needed to substantially reduce emissions and ensure that global warming does not exceed the internationally agreed maximum of 1.5°C by 2100 (DDPP 2015). For that action to occur, politicians will likely need to feel public pressure to act, particularly during elections when their jobs are on the line. However, as discussed in several of the previous chapters, the 2020 New Zealand election was clearly the ‘Covid-19 election’. Unsurprisingly, the worst pandemic in a century occupied the minds of politicians and voters throughout the 2020 campaign.

This chapter therefore investigates two questions about public attitudes towards climate change during the 2020 New Zealand election. First, given the way in which Covid-19 dominated the election, was there any room for debate about climate change or was it ‘crowded out’ as an issue by Covid-19? There is finite space on the election agenda and certain topics can be pushed

1 I am grateful to Ralph Chapman for his comments on an earlier version of this chapter.

aside by high-salience issues such as Covid-19 in 2020 (Pralle 2009). Using data from the NZES, I show that, while climate change was not one of the major talking points of the 2020 election, this had more to do with it being perceived as a niche issue, rather than Covid-19 taking space away from debate about climate change.

Second, I ask to what extent does the ‘Team of Five Million’ slogan—used by the government to signify united public support of the country’s Covid-19 response—apply to public opinion on climate change in New Zealand? As I will illustrate, some degree of consensus has been reached among politicians, with all the major parties accepting that climate change exists and almost all backing major climate legislation. However, the analysis of NZES data shows that, while all but a very small minority of New Zealanders believe that climate change is happening, there are partisan divides when it comes to the degree of support for government action.

In the next section, I briefly review recent progress on climate change mitigation policy in New Zealand and discuss the ways in which the main parties (and other actors) incorporated climate change into their campaigns. I then examine the results of a series of questions on climate change that were included in the 2020 NZES asking participants about their beliefs on the existence and causes of climate change, their perceptions of the likely harm climate change will cause, and their support for government action on climate change. I conclude by suggesting that the data indicate that we may not see a ‘climate election’ in New Zealand in the near future.

The politics of climate change in New Zealand

A renewed focus on climate policy

When taking power in 2017, the incoming Labour-led government promised a renewed focus on climate change (Hall 2020). This emphasis marked a contrast from the previous National-led government, which had received heavy criticism internationally for being a ‘laggard’ on climate policy (Barrett et al. 2015). Immediately before the 2017 election, Jacinda Ardern—in a frequently referenced quote—declared climate change as her ‘generation’s nuclear-free moment’ (Bramwell 2017), alluding to the ban on nuclear weapons and nuclear marine vessel power instituted by the fourth

Labour government in the 1980s. Ardern's government enacted a range of policies to progress action on climate change, including significant changes to the Emissions Trading Scheme, a large-scale tree planting program, an end to new offshore oil exploration permits, and the creation of a green investment fund (Leining et al. 2020).

The centrepiece of Labour's climate strategy during the 2017–20 term was the *Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019* (known as the *Zero Carbon Act*). The Act was designed as a framework for further action and included several important features, such as a 2050 'net zero' emissions target enshrined in law and the requirement for the government to regularly set carbon budgets (Ministry for the Environment 2019). The Act also established the Climate Change Commission (CCC), which was modelled on a similar body that has operated in the United Kingdom since 2008 (Hall 2021). The CCC is designed to be an apolitical body that advises the government on climate policy and emissions targets. The *Zero Carbon Act* was supported by all parties in parliament at the time, except for ACT party's single MP, David Seymour (Bailey et al. 2021).

The government also took steps to ensure an understanding was reached with the important farming industry. In 2003, Helen Clark's fifth Labour government stumbled over this hurdle when trying to introduce a modest charge to finance research on methane emissions from livestock (Roper and Toledano 2005). After fierce opposition from farming industry groups and others, including protests on the steps of Parliament House, Clark's government was eventually forced to abandon the policy. Not wanting to repeat past mistakes, Ardern's government reached an agreement with Federated Farmers of New Zealand and other major farming groups to form a partnership between the government and primary industries aimed at reducing emissions from this sector (Malpass and Cooke 2019). The partnership, dubbed '*He Waka Eke Noa*' (lit. 'We're all in this together'), aims to find ways for producers to manufacture products sustainably or—as a backstop—to fold agricultural emissions into New Zealand's Emissions Trading Scheme.²

2 In 2022, He Waka Eke Noa produced a set of recommendations that includes pricing agricultural emissions outside the Emissions Trading Scheme. While the major farming groups now support pricing of farming emissions, there has been a backlash from some members of the farming community, who have organised under the name 'Groundswell' (McKenzie 2022).

Several steps forward on climate policy were thus made under Ardern. The question remains, however: how substantial is this action on climate change? While the *Zero Carbon Act* provides a robust framework to reduce New Zealand's emissions, the 'rubber has yet to meet the road'. One of the clearest signals that there is still much more to do is New Zealand's 2030 emissions target, which is set out in the Nationally Determined Contribution document that New Zealand is required to submit under the Paris Agreement. This target was initially set by John Key's National government in 2015 at 30 per cent below 2005 levels. Despite international criticism of this target, it was not improved on by the Labour-led government during the 2017–20 term (Corlett 2021). Monitoring body Climate Action Tracker has rated New Zealand's 2030 target—and the revised target set by the government in late 2021—as 'insufficient'. New Zealand's current emissions target is therefore incompatible with the internationally agreed goal of limiting warming to a maximum of 1.5°C (CAT 2021). Moreover, Climate Action Tracker assesses New Zealand's overall approach to climate change, including policy and action, as 'highly insufficient'.

Perhaps most tellingly, New Zealand's emissions have not declined over the past decade, as they have in many other developed countries (McLachlan 2020). Since 2008, New Zealand's carbon dioxide emissions trajectory has been relatively flat. In fact, in 2019, emissions increased by 2 per cent over 2018, largely due to decreased rainfall, meaning electricity generation relied less on hydro and more on coal (Ministry for the Environment 2021a). To be compatible with the 1.5°C pathway, emissions would have to peak very soon (Ministry for the Environment 2021b). Policies that have a more immediate effect on New Zealand's emissions are thus required.

Overall, then, the Labour-led government has made some progress towards enabling declines in emissions towards net zero by 2050 but has so far taken few substantive steps to realise these emissions reductions. In other words, there is a gap between New Zealand's climate ambition and its policy. It is likely that the focus of political debates about climate issues over the coming years will be on how quickly this gap should be closed.

Climate change during the 2020 election campaign

Climate change featured in several ways throughout the 2020 campaign, which—as discussed in Chapter 4—was substantially disrupted by a Covid-19 outbreak immediately before the start of the official campaign period. Climate change appeared in the policy platforms of all the main parties, in debates and media coverage of the campaign, and in more ‘specialised’ areas of campaigning, which catered to the small section of the public for whom climate change is a critical issue. Below, I briefly review some of these appearances.

Beginning with policies, the Labour, Green, and Māori party platforms covered a range of climate issues. The Greens made climate change a central pillar of their campaign, including policies on clean energy, transport, agriculture, and forestry. Labour promised to decarbonise the public transport fleet by 2035 and to introduce fuel-efficiency standards for imported vehicles. Green Party co-leader Marama Davidson, however, criticised Labour’s climate policies and record since taking office, claiming the action it had taken would not lead to rapid cuts in emissions (Cheng 2020). The Māori Party also released a detailed climate policy, which included the withdrawal of permits for mining, oil, and gas extraction, and the establishment of a large fund for Māori-owned community energy projects.

National, ACT, and New Zealand First—while not making climate issues as central to their platforms as the Labour, Green, and Māori parties—all included climate policies in their campaign manifestos. National’s climate policy centred on encouraging the uptake of electric vehicles but promised to roll back Labour’s ban on new oil and gas exploration permits. Even the libertarian ACT party—which in the past has taken ambiguous positions on the existence of climate change (Cooke 2016; Vaughter 2012)—emphasised the need to reduce emissions, despite opposing the *Zero Carbon Act*.

Almost all the televised leaders’ debates, which are viewed by a wide audience, covered climate change to some extent (Craig 2021). For example, the *Stuff* leaders debate between Jacinda Ardern and Judith Collins on 6 October included approximately 10 minutes dedicated to a discussion of electric vehicles and how uptake could be increased. During the *Newshub*

debate between the two main leaders on 30 September, approximately eight minutes covered climate change—this time focussing on the oil and gas exploration ban and agricultural issues.

Climate issues came to the fore in a range of less ‘mainstream’ campaigning venues. For example, climate activist group Generation Zero ran a campaign during the 2020 election that included an online discussion dedicated to climate issues, featuring representatives from many of the parties. News website *Newsroom* invited party leaders to respond to questions, with climate change selected by readers as one of the top five issues to be addressed (Newsroom Staff 2020). One of the leaders of the School Strike 4 Climate NZ, Sophie Handford, was involved in a ‘Vote Climate 2020’ campaign, which posed climate questions asked by voters to candidates (McGlennon 2020).

Climate change was thus very much a part of the 2020 campaign but, for the most part, was confined to relatively brief appearances during the leaders’ debates or to the more specialised venues described above. Assessing the campaign activity of the parties and media alone makes it difficult to say whether 2020 represents a change from previous elections in the prominence of climate change as a campaign issue. On the one hand, debate about climate change issues does seem to have become a regular feature of election campaigns and the coverage of environmental issues in the media has increased since 2014 (Mills et al. 2018). On the other hand, previous elections have also featured debates about and activities related to climate change. In 2014, for instance, several organisations—including Oxfam and Greenpeace—ran a ‘Climate Voter’ campaign, asking voters to pledge to vote with climate issues in mind, to which tens of thousands of people signed up. It is thus unclear whether 2020 represented a relatively ‘normal’ election for climate issues and policies or whether it was ‘crowded out’ by Covid-19. Examining the public opinion data on this topic, which I turn to in the next section, can help to provide more clarity here.

Public opinion on climate change in 2020

What the public thinks about climate change has been the focus of research in countries around the world for many years. We now understand that public opinion on climate change is complex and most people cannot easily be categorised as either a ‘denier’ or a ‘believer’ (Corry and Jørgensen 2015). For instance, among people who accept that climate change is happening,

some do not support government policies to address it, some see it as an issue that does not require action for years or decades, and some are uncertain in their views (Crawley et al. 2020).

Researchers have also attempted to understand variation among deniers, identifying three main ways in which people deny climate change (Poortinga et al. 2019; Rahmstorf 2004). Not accepting that climate change is happening is the first type of denial and is found in only a small percentage of the population in most countries (Leiserowitz et al. 2022). The second type, which is usually more prevalent than the first, holds that climate change is happening but is primarily caused by natural processes, rather than almost entirely by humans as the science suggests. The third type of denial—which tends to be the most common—is that climate change will not cause any serious consequences and thus is not worth worrying about (Leiserowitz et al. 2022; Poortinga et al. 2019).

Levels of belief in climate change seem to be increasing in New Zealand. Research relying on data from 2010 or earlier suggested that New Zealand had relatively high levels of denial compared with most other developed countries—on par with countries such as Australia and the United States (Smith and Mayer 2019; Tranter and Booth 2015). More recent surveys have shown that few people in New Zealand do not believe climate change is happening at all (for example, Thaker 2021). For instance, data from the New Zealand Attitudes and Values Survey show that, in 2009, 14 per cent of people disagreed with the statement ‘Climate change is real’, but by 2018 this had dropped to 6 per cent (Milfont et al. 2021). This compares with the United States and Australia, where a survey in 2022 found that 11 per cent and 10 per cent of the population, respectively, did not believe that climate change is happening (Leiserowitz et al. 2022). The rise in belief could be related to better communication of the scientific consensus about climate change (Kerr and Wilson 2018) and to political debates that are less contentious in New Zealand than in the United States and Australia (Linde 2020).

One of the reasons researchers are interested in public opinion on climate change is that it can help us to understand the political response to the issue. Politicians are much more likely to act on climate change if they feel public pressure to do so, and public opinion has been shown to influence climate policy, at least in some circumstances (Drummond et al. 2018; Schaffer et al.

2021). For example, Vandeweerd et al. (2016) found that representatives in the US Congress were more likely to support climate change legislation if their constituents had high levels of concern about the issue.

In New Zealand, as outlined above, there has been criticism that the government's climate policies do not go far enough (Corlett 2021). Taking a broad view of climate opinion can help us to understand the role that public opinion could be playing in the apparently slow government response to climate change. Moreover, there appears to be elite consensus on climate change, at least with respect to its existence and seriousness. No party currently in parliament openly denies that climate change is happening and all major parties have policies to address it, although there are disagreements about the course of action. Investigating public opinion on climate change in New Zealand can show us whether there is a corresponding (near) consensus among the public on climate change or what could be thought of as a 'climate team of five million'.

Using 2020 NZES data, several aspects of public opinion on climate change are examined.³ First, I investigate the extent to which NZES participants felt climate change was the most important issue of the election. I then consider different elements of the New Zealand public's beliefs about the climate change phenomenon itself: whether it exists, what is causing it, how harmful it is, and how soon that harm is likely to be felt. Next, I examine people's perceptions of action on climate change, including the degree to which they believe action can be effective, and how much they support government action. Finally, I examine how demographic and ideological factors (such as political orientation and party choice) relate to people's opinions on climate change.

3 In most of the statistics below I include 'Don't know/No response' as a separate category. While such responses are often removed when presenting frequency data, they are important when it comes to climate opinion. This is because some climate change issues are complex, which could cause people to respond with 'Don't know'. Moreover, on some issues (such as the existence of climate change), 'Don't know' could indicate a form of denial, given most people have had the opportunity to form an opinion by now (Haltinner and Sarathchandra 2021). All statistics presented in this chapter (including those based on the regression models below) have had the NZES sample weighting variable applied.

Prominence of climate change in 2020

The NZES includes a question asking people to nominate their most important issue for the election. Participants are asked to write open-ended answers in the box provided. I use these data to investigate how prominent climate change was as an issue in the minds of voters in 2020, compared to the two previous elections. The prominence of climate change was measured by taking all responses to the most important issue question that mentioned either ‘climate’ or ‘warming’. For comparison, I also include all responses that were classified by NZES coders as relating to the environment (which also include those relating to climate change).

Table 9.1 Percentage of responses to ‘most important issue’ question relating to climate change and the environment, 2014–2020

Year	Climate	Environment
2014	0.33% (9)	1.98% (56)
2017	0.83% (29)	5.30% (183)
2020	2.28% (84)	4.63% (172)

Note: Responses containing the word ‘climate’ or ‘warming’ were classified as relating to climate change. Responses that mentioned any environmental issue were classified as the environment, including those that mentioned climate change.

Source: Vowles et al. (2022).

Table 9.1 shows that climate change appears to be growing in importance as an election issue among the public. In 2017, just less than 1 per cent of participants mentioned climate or warming, while in 2020 the number had climbed to 2.3 per cent—a statistically significant increase.⁴ However, the number of responses indicating that environmental issues were the most important dropped slightly between 2017 and 2020. These results indicate that while roughly the same number of people saw environmental issues as most important in 2020 as they did in 2017, of those people, more now saw climate as the main environmental issue about which to be worried.

If Covid-19 crowded out climate change during the 2020 election, we could expect to see a decline—or at least no change—in the importance of climate change among the public. The fact that we see the importance of climate change rising since 2020 suggests that Covid-19 may not have taken space away from it in 2020. It is obviously not possible to tell from these data whether the importance of climate change would have risen further

⁴ A chi-squared test resulted in a value of 32, $p < 0.001$.

if Covid-19 had not dominated. However, polling data from Ipsos suggest that the public importance of climate change in New Zealand has been stable over the past few years, only rising in February 2023 in response to Cyclone Gabrielle (Ipsos 2023).

Despite the increase in the importance of climate change between 2017 and 2020, it appears to be seen as a niche issue. Only 2.3 per cent of participants saw climate change as the most important issue in 2020, whereas 15 per cent saw the economy as the most important, and 8 per cent listed an issue relating to housing (see Appendix 1.1 for more details). In other words, while Covid-19 may not have crowded out climate, the NZES data—in line with that from Ipsos—suggest that few voters see climate change among the main issues that influence their vote choice in an election.

What does the New Zealand public believe about climate change?

The NZES included two questions about people’s climate beliefs. The first asked participants, ‘Do you believe that climate change is happening and, if so, why?’ The results (Figure 9.1) show a majority (70 per cent, 2,538 responses) of New Zealanders accept that climate change is happening and that it is mostly caused by humans. Only 2 per cent (n = 77) of people do not think climate change is happening, while a further 18 per cent (n = 662) believe it is happening but is caused mostly by natural processes. Some 10 per cent (n = 370) of respondents either did not know what is causing climate change or did not give a response. This is a substantial number, given that scientific information about climate change has been available to the public for many years and this could indicate a high degree of latent denial among the public (Haltinner and Sarathchandra 2021).

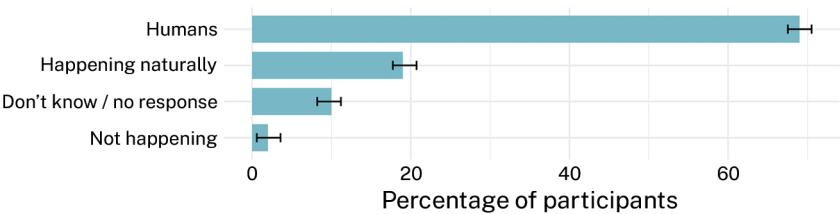


Figure 9.1 ‘Do you believe that climate change is happening and, if so, why?’

Note: Error bars indicate 95 per cent confidence intervals.

Source: Vowles et al. (2022).

Another dimension of climate opinion worth considering is people's perceptions of the risks of climate change. Previous international research has shown that even among people who accept that climate change is happening and is primarily caused by humans, some do not see it as a serious problem (van der Linden 2017). Low levels of concern about climate change can be driven by the belief that it simply will not cause much harm for humans (which can be considered a form of denial) or by the belief that society will take effective action to avoid the worst consequences of climate change (I return to these two explanations for low risk perception in the next section) (Lo and Chow 2015).

People's degree of climate risk perception, however, can be moderated by their perception of the immediacy of its effects. As mentioned, the effects of climate change are already being felt in New Zealand and elsewhere. It is highly likely these effects will worsen over the coming decades as the world experiences the results of warming that is already locked in by present-day emissions (IPCC 2021). Despite this, many people do not see the harm caused by climate change as being immediate, in part because the worst effects could be (perceived to be) some decades away (McDonald et al. 2015).

To gauge people's perceptions of the degree of harm climate change will cause, the NZES survey asked: 'Do you think climate change will harm you? And how much will it harm future generations of people?' Figure 9.2 shows the results of this question. Most people do not think climate change will harm them substantially. Only 15 per cent ($n = 544$) believe it will harm them 'a great deal', with a further 33 per cent ($n = 1,189$) believing it will harm them moderately. However, most people see climate change as a serious threat to the next generation already born, and particularly to future generations not yet born, whom 70 per cent of participants ($n = 2,549$) thought will be harmed 'a great deal'. These results could be driven in part by participant age, with older people perhaps expecting the worst effects of climate change will be beyond their lifetime. While older people were less likely than younger people to say climate change will harm them a great deal, older people were also less worried about harm to any generation. It seems, then, that while most New Zealanders see climate change as a serious threat, they perceive this threat as temporally distant, primarily affecting people not yet born.

A TEAM OF FIVE MILLION?

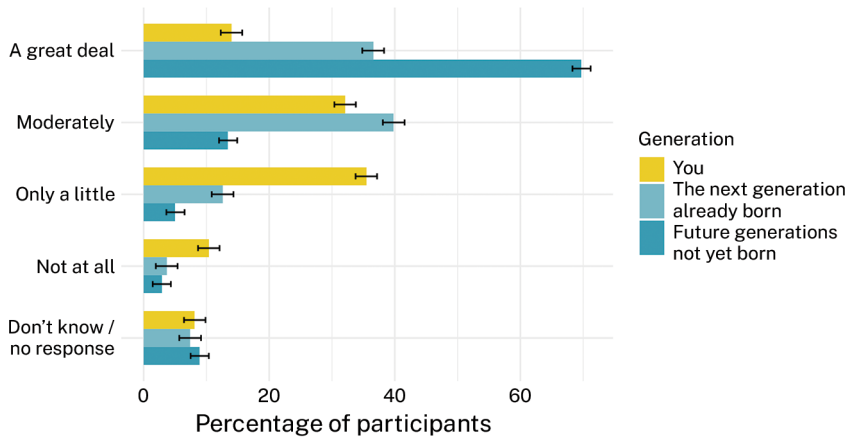


Figure 9.2 ‘Do you think climate change will harm you/future generations of people?’

Note: Error bars indicate 95 per cent confidence intervals.

Source: Vowles et al. (2022).

Perceptions of climate action

This section considers two NZES questions about people’s perceptions of climate action. The first asked participants how effective they thought climate action is likely to be, and the second measured the degree to which people support government action on climate change.

People’s level of ‘response efficacy’—the degree to which they see action on climate change as likely to be effective—is an important indicator of how likely they are to support action on climate change and to take action themselves (Bostrom et al. 2018; Bradley et al. 2020). People who believe that not much can be done about climate change are, unsurprisingly, unlikely to believe action is worth taking.

Figure 9.3 presents the results for the question asking people how likely it is that action by governments, businesses, and people will significantly slow climate change. New Zealanders are evenly divided on this topic, with 47 per cent (n = 1,701) believing climate action is very or somewhat likely to be effective, while 43 per cent (n = 1,561) think it is somewhat or very unlikely that climate action will make a difference. Despite the high levels of belief in the reality of climate change illustrated in the previous section, many New Zealanders appear to be sceptical that emissions can be brought under control.

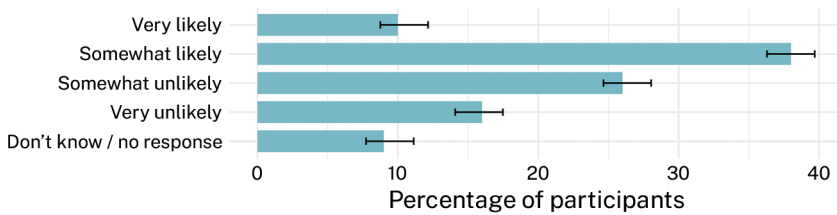


Figure 9.3 'In your opinion, over the next 20 years, how likely is it that action by governments, businesses, and people in general will significantly slow climate change?'

Note: Error bars indicate 95 per cent confidence intervals.

Source: Vowles et al. (2022).

The response efficacy data can also help to determine the extent to which people who do not see climate change as a serious risk are putting faith in climate action to curb emissions or are simply unaware of the likely effects of climate change in the coming decades. To test these possible explanations, correlations between perceptions of risk (Figure 9.2) and climate external efficacy (Figure 9.3) were examined. The results show a small but positive correlation between each of the three risk variables and the efficacy variable.⁵ In other words, people who see climate change as likely to cause significant harm also tend to be more optimistic about the effectiveness of climate action. Conversely, people who do not see climate change as a significant risk are generally less likely to see climate action as effective. It appears that many people who do not see climate change as likely to cause harm to themselves or future generations believe this because they are sceptical about the risks suggested by the science.

Governments play a critical coordination role in addressing climate change (Aklin and Mildenberger 2020; Hepburn 2010). To reach emissions targets that are aimed at limiting warming to 1.5°C, emissions must be reduced rapidly across all industries. Reducing emissions cannot, therefore, be left to individuals and businesses, but requires government action, including a carbon price and additional measures such as investment, subsidies, and regulations (Tvinnereim and Mehling 2018). People who accept that climate change is happening and is a serious problem do not necessarily support

⁵ The correlations were calculated by coding the three harm variables as numeric, ranging from one (not at all) to four (a great deal), and the response efficacy variable to range from one (very unlikely) to four (very likely). The Spearman's rho rank coefficient was 0.17 for harm to 'you', 0.18 for harm to 'the next generation already born', and 0.17 for harm to 'future generations not yet born'. All correlations were significant at $p < 0.001$.

government action on climate change (Drews and van den Bergh 2016). Measuring the public’s level of support for government action on climate change can therefore help us to understand how much public pressure the government is under to take climate action.

The 2020 NZES asked participants to what extent they supported stronger government policies to reduce emissions. The same question was also asked in 2017, and Figure 9.4 presents the results from both surveys. As can be seen, most New Zealanders support government action on climate change. In 2020, 61 per cent ($n = 2,214$) agreed that stronger government policies are needed to reduce emissions—a slight drop from 2017 when 65 per cent ($n = 2,243$) agreed with the same statement. Overall, the responses were very similar between 2017 and 2020, indicating that people tend to have stable opinions on climate change action and that the Covid-19 crisis did not substantially affect those opinions.

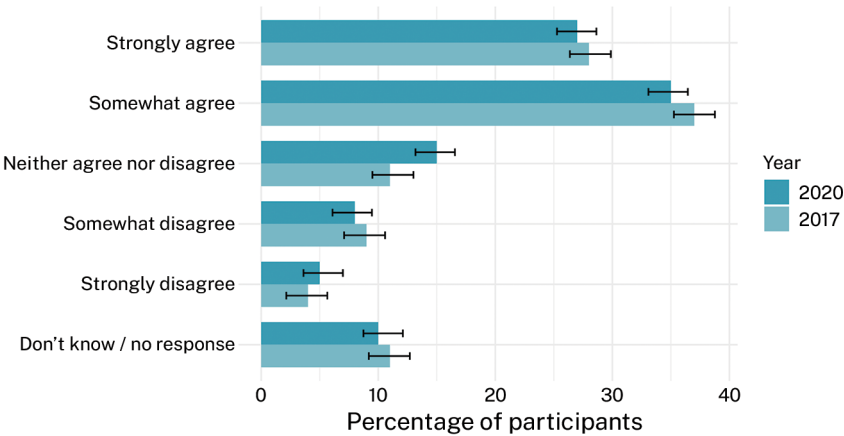


Figure 9.4 ‘How much do you agree or disagree with the statement: “To act against climate change, stronger government policies are needed to reduce carbon emissions”?’

Note: Error bars indicate 95 per cent confidence intervals.

Source: Vowles et al. (2022).

Demographic and ideological attributes and climate opinions

Investigating the relationships between demographic and ideological factors and public opinion on climate change can provide insight into why people hold certain climate views. Previous research has found several such factors have consistent relationships with climate opinion (Crawley 2021; Hornsey et al. 2016; van der Linden 2017). In particular, people's left–right political orientation is frequently found to relate to their climate views, with those on the right less likely than those on the left to accept that climate change is happening, is a serious problem, and requires government action to address it (McCright et al. 2016). Differences in demographics also seem to relate to climate opinion. Women, younger people, people in higher income brackets, and people with higher levels of education are, on average, more likely to accept the science of climate change and the need for government action than men, older people, people receiving lower incomes, and people with lower levels of education (Hornsey et al. 2016).

I investigated how these different attributes related to climate opinion in New Zealand using linear regression, with Figure 9.5 presenting the results. The outcome variable for this analysis is support for government action, for which participants were asked how much they agree that stronger government action is needed to address climate change.⁶ This variable was coded as numeric, ranging from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree), meaning three is the midpoint of the scale. Figure 9.5 shows the predicted means for each predictor variable on support for government action.⁷ The dashed line indicates the overall sample mean.

6 Models using the other measures of climate opinion (existence/cause of climate change, perceptions of risk, external efficacy) as the dependent variable were also investigated. The results were similar to those presented below. All predictors were added to the model as categorical. The reference categories were: Labour (party vote), centre (left–right), 18–31 (age), men (gender), '\$196,001 and over' (income), and not having a degree. All categories showed a statistically significant effect ($p \leq 0.05$) versus the reference category, with the exceptions of gender diverse, Māori Party, TOP, 'No income', '\$38,000 or less', and '\$149,001 – \$196,000' (income). Although left–right orientation and party choice had a medium correlation (Cramer's $V = 0.43$), models that omitted each of these variables produced similar predicted means to those presented in Figure 9.5.

7 Predicted means indicate the average degree of support for government action for a given predictor (for example, voting for Labour) while holding all other variables constant.

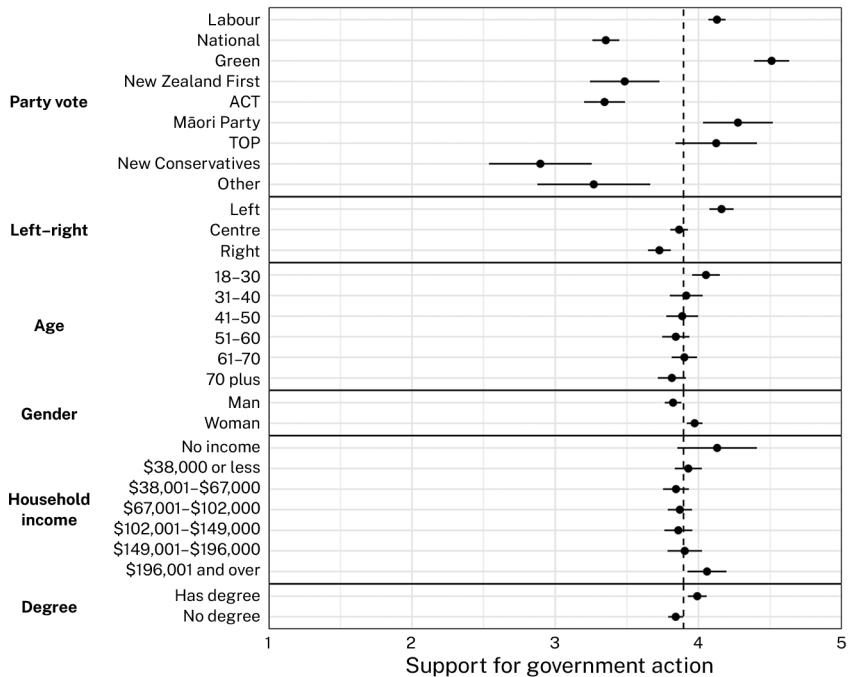


Figure 9.5 Support for government action according to demographic and ideological predictors
Source: Vowles et al. (2022).

The first predictor examined is the 2020 party vote. Unsurprisingly, on average, a person who reported voting for the Green Party is more likely to agree that stronger government action on climate change is necessary compared with a person voting for any other party. Labour, Māori Party, and TOP voters have means just over four (somewhat agree), while ACT, New Zealand First, and National voters all have roughly similar levels of support, which is below 3.5, for government action. New Conservative Party voters are, by far, the least supportive of government action on climate change, with a mean score (2.9) just below the midpoint of the agreement scale.

Turning to political orientation, participants were asked to place themselves on a scale, where zero indicates the far left of politics and 10 is the far right. A recoded variable—where zero to three was categorised as ‘left’, four to six as ‘centre’, and seven to 10 as ‘right’—was used in the model. As can be seen in Figure 9.5—and aligning with most previous research on public opinion on climate change—people who were categorised as being on the left of politics were more likely to support government action than those in the centre or on the right.

All the demographic variables investigated had significant but small effects on supporting government action on climate change. As per previous studies in other Western countries, younger people, women, people on higher incomes, and people holding a university degree were all slightly more likely to support government action on climate change than older people, people on lower incomes, and people without a degree.⁸ Although all these demographic variables had a statistically significant relationship with people's climate opinions, it is important to note the small size of the relationships. For instance, the difference in the predicted means of men and women was only 0.15 on the five-point scale. The differences for left–right political orientation and party vote were larger compared with the demographic variables. Thus, as the divisions over New Zealand's Covid-19 response discussed in Chapter 8, people's ideological outlook or partisanship tends to be a better predictor of their climate views than demographic factors.

The economic situation and climate opinion

The response to Covid-19 led to a severe economic downturn in 2020. While the worst fears of economic doom had been allayed by late 2020, worries about the economic outlook could influence people's climate opinions. Scruggs and Benegal (2012) showed that, after the 2008 GFC, a decline in public concern about climate change in the United States and Europe was most likely driven by feelings of economic insecurity. It is reasonable to expect that the same could happen with the economic problems caused by the pandemic, given that most people tend to have a 'finite pool of worry' (Weber 2010). If people are concerned about the economic situation caused by Covid-19 and therefore do not have the 'resources' to be worried about climate change, it could suggest that the pandemic reduced the space for climate change during the election.

To test this hypothesis, variables measuring people's perspectives on the status of the economy over the previous 12 months were investigated. The first question asked participants to rate the state of the New Zealand economy, while the second asked them to rate the financial situation of their household. The answers ranged from 'got a lot worse' to 'got a lot better'. These variables were included in the regression model described above, and Figure 9.6 presents the results.

⁸ Participants who identified as gender diverse were included in the regression models but are not reported on above due to the small number ($n = 15$).

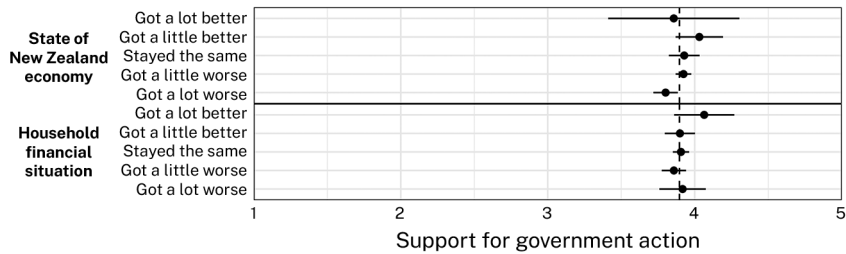


Figure 9.6 Support for government action according to economic outlook predictors

Source: Vowles et al. (2022).

Neither variable had a substantial impact on people’s support for government action on climate change.⁹ People who think the New Zealand economy ‘got a lot worse’ in the past 12 months were slightly less likely to support stronger climate policies compared with the other responses. There is no clear relationship between support for government action on climate change and people’s perceptions of their household financial situation over the past 12 months. These results are therefore another piece of evidence suggesting that Covid-19 did not have a significant impact on people’s climate views during the 2020 election. The perceived economic impacts of Covid-19 do not seem to relate substantially to support for government action on climate change, which contrasts with the effects of economic worry on climate concerns in some countries after the GFC.

Discussion and conclusion

Several years ago, some considered New Zealand to be among the countries with the highest levels of ‘hard’ climate denial (Tranter and Booth 2015). However, the results of the 2020 NZES coincide with other recent surveys showing that only a very small percentage of New Zealanders (2 per cent) do not believe that climate change is happening (Milfont et al. 2021; Thaker 2021). That said, a relatively large number of NZES participants (18 per cent) thought that climate change is mostly the result of natural causes.

⁹ The reference category in the regression model was ‘stayed the same’. For the ‘state of the New Zealand economy’ variable, the only category with a statistically significant coefficient relative to the reference category was ‘got a lot worse’ ($p = 0.02$). None of the coefficients was statistically significant for the ‘household financial situation’ variable.

While most participants accepted that climate change will harm people ‘a great deal’, many thought this harm would apply mainly to future generations not yet born or to the ‘next generation already born’ rather than to themselves. Some 44 per cent ($n = 810$) of participants believe that climate change will affect them personally either only a little or not at all. Given that research shows extreme weather events such as flooding and droughts are likely to become substantially more frequent over the next 20 years (IPCC 2021), these findings suggest that many people are not fully aware of (or do not fully accept) how close significant climate consequences are.

Turning to people’s perceptions of climate action, a large majority of the New Zealand public supports stronger government action on climate change. This degree of support did not wane substantially between 2017 and 2020, despite the visible activity by the government on climate during the 2017–20 parliamentary term. However, many New Zealanders who accept the existence and severity of climate change do not believe action on climate change is likely to be effective. Such low levels of response efficacy could create a problem for the country’s climate response. People are less likely to support and engage in pro-environmental behaviour if they do not believe the overall response to climate change is likely to make a substantial dent in emissions (Bradley et al. 2020).

There are clear partisan divides in climate opinion, with Green, Labour, Māori Party, and to a lesser extent, TOP voters tending to have stronger support for climate policies and more concern about climate change than National, ACT, and New Zealand First voters. It is important to note that people who voted for the second group of parties in 2020 still, on average, support stronger government action on climate change. The mean level of support for climate policy among these voters is, however, lower than those of the more left-oriented parties. Overall, these partisan divides suggest that the New Zealand public is not as close to ‘consensus’ on climate change as the parties appear to be. There does not seem to be a ‘team of five million’ when it comes to climate change. We can thus expect cross-party support for policies relating to some of the more contentious climate issues (such as agriculture) to be very difficult to achieve.

What all these data suggest is that the dominance of Covid-19 as an issue in 2020 did not take away space from climate change; there is simply not much demand from New Zealand voters for more climate debate during an election campaign and the presence of Covid-19 did not seem to change this. As illustrated above, the electoral importance of climate change among

voters rose between 2017 and 2020, while support for government action did not change much in the same period. There is also little evidence that the economic problems created by Covid-19 influenced people's climate opinions. This—admittedly, mostly indirect—evidence does not readily support the hypothesis that climate change struggled to find space on the electoral agenda due to the issues surrounding the pandemic.

Overall, while 2020 may have been a historic election for Labour, it does not seem to have been one for the issue of climate change. It remains a relatively niche issue in terms of salience, at the front of the minds of only a small section of voters. There is a small (and probably growing) section of the population who see climate change as their most important issue and who may take an interest—or be involved—in the kinds of climate-related campaign events discussed earlier in this chapter. However, it should be noted that the picture is complex. As already mentioned, most NZES participants agree that stronger government action is required on climate change, suggesting there is strong public demand for policies beyond the *Zero Carbon Act*.

Combating climate change will likely require far-reaching changes to society (O'Brien 2018). Politicians generally need a clear electoral mandate to build or confirm support for such changes. An election in which an issue takes centre stage during the campaign can help to create this mandate. The 2020 'Covid-19 election' was a good example of this, even though Covid-19 was not the only important campaign issue, as Chapter 1 illustrated. Labour won in a landslide during an election in which Covid-19 was the most important issue for a large part of the electorate, suggesting that (as discussed in Chapter 2) Labour was rewarded by voters for its management of Covid-19. Labour won a mandate to continue its elimination policy, at least for several months after the election.

A similar example was observed in the 2022 Australian federal election, in which climate change was seen by many as the defining issue of the campaign (Baker 2022). Voters were unhappy about the performance of Scott Morrison's government on climate change and handed a mandate to the Australian Labor Party to do more on the climate (Quiggin 2022). It is important to note the context in Australia is quite different to that in New Zealand. Climate policy in Australia had been lagging far behind most of the developed world for several years (Mann and Turnbull 2022), so Australian voters had strong reasons to make it an important election issue. The 2022 Australian election could reasonably be labelled a 'climate' election.

What, then, are the prospects of a climate election happening in New Zealand in the current decade? Based on the data presented above, the outlook is not promising. The low salience of climate change suggests that most voters and politicians are occupied with other issues during an election campaign. Public opinion does not always move in a straight line and it is entirely possible that the increased prominence in the news of climate change (and its effects) will lead to larger sections of the public viewing it as an important issue during future New Zealand election campaigns. However, those wishing to see the gap closing between climate ambition and substantive policy may benefit from reflecting on why so few of the New Zealand public view climate change as an important issue.

References

- Aklin, M., and M. Mildenerberger. 2020. 'Prisoners of the Wrong Dilemma: Why Distributive Conflict, Not Collective Action, Characterizes the Politics of Climate Change.' *Global Environmental Politics* 20(4): 4–27. doi.org/10.1162/glep_a_00578.
- Bailey, I., O. Fitch-Roy, T.H.J. Inderberg, and D. Benson. 2021. 'Idealism, Pragmatism, and the Power of Compromise in the Negotiation of New Zealand's Zero Carbon Act.' *Climate Policy* 21(9): 1159–74. doi.org/10.1080/14693062.2020.1868393.
- Baker, E. 2022. 'Vote Compass Data Shows Climate Change, Cost of Living and the Economy Are the Big Election Issues, But Voters Still Split Along Party Lines.' *ABC News*, 22 April. Available from: www.abc.net.au/news/2022-04-22/vote-compass-federal-election-issues-data-climate-change-economy/101002116.
- Barrett, P., P. Kurian, and J. Wright. 2015. 'Environmental Security and the Contradictory Politics of New Zealand's Climate Change Policies in the Pacific.' In *Environmental Security in the Asia-Pacific*, edited by I. Watson and C.L. Pandey, 157–78. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. doi.org/10.1057/9781137494122_6.
- Bostrom, A., A.L. Hayes, and K.M. Crosman. 2018. 'Efficacy, Action, and Support for Reducing Climate Change Risks.' *Risk Analysis* 39(4): 805–28. doi.org/10.1111/risa.13210.
- Bradley, G.L., Z. Babutsidze, A. Chai, and J.P. Reser. 2020. 'The Role of Climate Change Risk Perception, Response Efficacy, and Psychological Adaptation in Pro-Environmental Behavior: A Two Nation Study.' *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 68: 101410. doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2020.101410.

- Bramwell, C. 2017. 'Ardern Heads into Greens' Territory.' *Radio New Zealand*, 21 August. Available from: www.rnz.co.nz/news/political/337619/ardern-heads-into-greens-territory.
- Cheng, D. 2020. 'Election 2020: Greens Say Labour's Climate Policy Not Good Enough.' *New Zealand Herald*, 7 October. Available from: www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/politics/election-2020-greens-say-labours-climate-policy-not-good-enough/27WXVCMZI6LKOP6ASHEKPDHQOU/.
- Climate Action Tracker (CAT). 2021. *Country Summary: New Zealand*. 15 September. Berlin: Climate Action Tracker. Available from: climateactiontracker.org/countries/new-zealand/.
- Cooke, H. 2016. 'ACT Deletes Climate Change Policy from Their Website.' *Stuff*, [Wellington], 26 February. Available from: www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/77338800/act-delete-climate-change-policy-from-their-website.
- Corlett, E. 2021. 'New Zealand Plan to Halve Greenhouse Gas Emissions Criticised as an "Accounting Trick".' *The Guardian*, 1 November. Available from: www.theguardian.com/world/2021/nov/01/new-zealand-plan-to-halve-greenhouse-gases-criticised-as-an-accounting-trick.
- Corry, O., and D. Jørgensen. 2015. 'Beyond "Deniers" and "Believers": Towards a Map of the Politics of Climate Change.' *Global Environmental Change* 32: 165–74. doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2015.01.006.
- Craig, G. 2021. 'Performing Politics: Leaders' Debates in the 2020 Election.' In *Politics in a Pandemic: Jacinda Ardern and New Zealand's 2020 Election*, edited by S. Levine, 282–97. Wellington: Te Herenga Waka University Press.
- Crawley, S. 2021. 'Disentangling the Relationships Between Conservative Economic and Social Attitudes and Support for Environmental Action.' *Journal of Political Ideologies* 28(2): 297–317. doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2021.1966939.
- Crawley, S., H. Coffé, and R. Chapman. 2020. 'Public Opinion on Climate Change: Belief and Concern, Issue Salience and Support for Government Action.' *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 22(1): 102–21. doi.org/10.1177/1369148119888827.
- Deep Decarbonization Pathways Project (DDPP). 2015. *Pathways to Deep Decarbonization: 2015 Report*. Paris: Sustainable Development Solutions Network & Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations. Available from: www.iddri.org/sites/default/files/import/publications/ddpp_2015synthesisreport.pdf.

- Drews, S., and J.C.J.M. van den Bergh. 2016. 'What Explains Public Support for Climate Policies? A Review of Empirical and Experimental Studies.' *Climate Policy* 16(7): 855–76. doi.org/10.1080/14693062.2015.1058240.
- Drummond, A., L.C. Hall, J.D. Sauer, and M.A. Palmer. 2018. 'Is Public Awareness and Perceived Threat of Climate Change Associated with Governmental Mitigation Targets?' *Climatic Change* 149: 159–71. doi.org/10.1007/s10584-018-2230-2.
- Hall, D. 2020. 'Ardern's Government and Climate Policy: Despite a Zero-Carbon Law, Is New Zealand Merely a Follower Rather Than a Leader?' *The Conversation*, 5 October. Available from: theconversation.com/arderns-government-and-climate-policy-despite-a-zero-carbon-law-is-new-zealand-merely-a-follower-rather-than-a-leader-146402.
- Hall, D. 2021. 'Expertise Within Democracy: The Case of New Zealand's Climate Change Commission.' *Political Science* 73(2): 103–22. doi.org/10.1080/00323187.2021.2022902.
- Haltinner, K., and D. Sarathchandra. 2021. 'Considering Attitudinal Uncertainty in the Climate Change Skepticism Continuum.' *Global Environmental Change* 68: 102243. doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2021.102243.
- Hepburn, C. 2010. 'Environmental Policy, Government, and the Market.' *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 26(2): 117–36. Available from: www.jstor.org/stable/43664556. doi.org/10.1093/oxrep/grq016.
- Hornsey, M.J., E.A. Harris, P.G. Bain, and K.S. Fielding. 2016. 'Meta-Analyses of the Determinants and Outcomes of Belief in Climate Change.' *Nature Climate Change* 6(6): 622–26. doi.org/10.1038/nclimate2943.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). 2021. '2021: Summary for Policymakers.' In *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Geneva: IPCC Secretariat. Available from: www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/.
- Ipsos. 2023. *19th Ipsos New Zealand Issues Monitor*. 26 February. Auckland: Ipsos. Available from: www.ipsos.com/en-nz/19th-ipsos-new-zealand-issues-monitor.
- Kerr, J.R., and M.S. Wilson. 2018. 'Changes in Perceived Scientific Consensus Shift Beliefs About Climate Change and GM Food Safety.' *PLOS One* 13(7): e0200295. doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0200295.

- Leining, C., S. Kerr, and B. Bruce-Brand. 2020. 'The New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme: Critical Review and Future Outlook for Three Design Innovations.' *Climate Policy* 20(2): 246–64. doi.org/10.1080/14693062.2019.1699773.
- Leiserowitz, A., J. Carman, N. Buttermore, L. Neyens, S. Rosenthal, J. Marlon, J. Schneider, and K. Mulcahy. 2022. *International Public Opinion on Climate Change, 2022*. Report, 29 June. New Haven, CT: Yale Program on Climate Change Communication & Data for Good at Meta. Available from: climatecommunication.yale.edu/publications/international-public-opinion-on-climate-change-2022/.
- Linde, S. 2020. 'The Politicization of Risk: Party Cues, Polarization, and Public Perceptions of Climate Change Risk.' *Risk Analysis* 40(10): 2002–18. doi.org/10.1111/risa.13530.
- Lo, A.Y., and A.T. Chow. 2015. 'The Relationship Between Climate Change Concern and National Wealth.' *Climatic Change* 131(2): 335–48. doi.org/10.1007/s10584-015-1378-2.
- Malpass, L., and H. Cooke. 2019. 'Government Sets Deadline for Farmer Emissions.' *Stuff*, [Wellington], 24 October. Available from: www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/116816786/government-sets-deadline-for-farmer-emissions.
- Mann, M., and M. Turnbull. 2022. 'How Australia's Electoral System Allowed Voters to Finally Impose a Ceasefire in the Climate Wars.' *The Guardian*, 28 May. Available from: www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/may/28/how-australias-electoral-system-allowed-voters-to-finally-impose-a-ceasefire-in-the-climate-wars.
- McCright, A.M., S.T. Marquart-Pyatt, R.L. Shwom, S.R. Brechin, and S. Allen. 2016. 'Ideology, Capitalism, and Climate: Explaining Public Views About Climate Change in the United States.' *Energy Research & Social Science* 21: 180–89. doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2016.08.003.
- McDonald, R.I., H.Y. Chai, and B.R. Newell. 2015. 'Personal Experience and the "Psychological Distance" of Climate Change: An Integrative Review.' *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 44: 109–18. doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2015.10.003.
- McGlennon. 2020. 'Meet the Young People Bringing Climate into Focus for the 2020 Election.' *Stuff*, [Wellington], 14 October. Available from: www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/123072530/meet-the-young-people-bringing-climate-into-focus-for-the-2020-election.

- McKenzie, P. 2022. 'New Zealand's Once All-Powerful Farmers Split Amid Anger Over Ardern Climate Policy.' *The Guardian*, 30 May. Available from: www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/30/new-zealands-once-all-powerful-farmers-split-amid-anger-over-ardern-climate-policy.
- McLachlan, R. 2020. 'Climate Emergency Or Not, New Zealand Needs to Start Doing Its Fair Share of Climate Action.' *The Conversation*, 1 December. Available from: theconversation.com/climate-emergency-or-not-new-zealand-needs-to-start-doing-its-fair-share-of-climate-action-151083.
- Milfont, T.L., E. Zubielevitch, P. Milojev, and C.G. Sibley. 2021. 'Ten-Year Panel Data Confirm Generation Gap but Climate Beliefs Increase at Similar Rates Across Ages.' *Nature Communications* 12: 4038. doi.org/10.1038/s41467-021-24245-y.
- Mills, K., C. Berti, and V. Rupar. 2018. 'What Kind of Country We Want for Our Children: An Analysis of Media Coverage of the 2017 New Zealand General Election.' *Kōtuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online* 13(2): 161–76. doi.org/10.1080/1177083X.2018.1476390.
- Ministry for the Environment. 2019. *Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019*. [Last updated 5 April 2021]. Wellington: New Zealand Government. Available from: environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/climate-change-response-amendment-act-2019/.
- Ministry for the Environment. 2021a. *New Zealand's Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990–2019*. 1 April. Wellington: New Zealand Government. Available from: environment.govt.nz/assets/Publications/New-Zealands-Greenhouse-Gas-Inventory-1990-2019-Volume-1-Chapters-1-15.pdf.
- Ministry for the Environment. 2021b. *New Zealand's Projected Greenhouse Gas Emissions to 2050*. 30 August. Wellington: New Zealand Government. Available from: environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/climate-change/emissions-reduction-targets/new-zealands-projected-greenhouse-gas-emissions-to-2050/.
- Newsroom Staff. 2020. 'Election 2020 and Climate Action: Leaders Answer Your Questions.' *Newsroom*, [Auckland], 28 September. Available from: www.newsroom.co.nz/page/election-2020-and-climate-action-leaders-answer-your-questions.
- O'Brien, K. 2018. 'Is the 1.5°C Target Possible? Exploring the Three Spheres of Transformation.' *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 31: 153–60. doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2018.04.010.

- Poortinga, W., L. Whitmarsh, L. Steg, G. Böhm, and S. Fisher. 2019. 'Climate Change Perceptions and Their Individual-Level Determinants: A Cross-European Analysis.' *Global Environmental Change* 55: 25–35. doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2019.01.007.
- Pralle, S.B. 2009. 'Agenda-Setting and Climate Change.' *Environmental Politics* 18(5): 781–99. doi.org/10.1080/09644010903157115.
- Quiggin, J. 2022. 'The Election Showed Australia's Huge Appetite for Stronger Climate Action. What Levers Can the New Government Pull?' *The Conversation*, 23 May. Available from: theconversation.com/the-election-showed-australias-huge-appetite-for-stronger-climate-action-what-levers-can-the-new-government-pull-183548.
- Rahmstorf, S. 2004. 'The Climate Sceptics.' In *Weather Catastrophes and Climate Change: Is There Still Hope for Us?*, 76–83. Munich: Munich Re Group. Available from: www.pik-potsdam.de/~stefan/Publications/Other/rahmstorf_climate_sceptics_2004.pdf.
- Roper, J., and M. Toledano. 2005. 'Taking in the View from the Edge: Issues Management Recontextualized.' *Public Relations Review* 31(4): 479–85. doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2005.08.005.
- Schaffer, L.M., B. Oehl, and T. Bernauer. 2021. 'Are Policymakers Responsive to Public Demand in Climate Politics?' *Journal of Public Policy* 42(1): 136–64. doi.org/10.1017/S0143814X21000088.
- Scruggs, L., and S. Benegal. 2012. 'Declining Public Concern About Climate Change: Can We Blame the Great Recession?' *Global Environmental Change* 22(2): 505–15. doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2012.01.002.
- Smith, E.K., and A. Mayer. 2019. 'Anomalous Anglophones? Contours of Free Market Ideology, Political Polarization, and Climate Change Attitudes in English-Speaking Countries, Western European and Post-Communist States.' *Climatic Change* 152(1): 17–34. doi.org/10.1007/s10584-018-2332-x.
- Thaker, J. 2021. *Climate Change in the Kiwi Mind: An Audience Segmentation Analysis*. Wellington: Massey University. Available from: www.researchgate.net/publication/354935732_Climate_Change_in_the_Kiwi_Mind_An_Audience_Segmentation_Analysis.
- Tranter, B., and K. Booth. 2015. 'Scepticism in a Changing Climate: A Cross-National Study.' *Global Environmental Change* 33: 154–64. doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2015.05.003.
- Tvinnereim, E., and M. Mehling. 2018. 'Carbon Pricing and Deep Decarbonisation.' *Energy Policy* 121: 185–89. doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2018.06.020.

- van der Linden, S. 2017. 'Determinants and Measurement of Climate Change Risk Perception, Worry, and Concern.' In *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Climate Change Communication*, edited by M.C. Nisbet, M. Schafer, E. Markowitz, S. Ho, S. O'Neill, and J. Thaker. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available from: papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2953631. doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.013.318.
- Vandeweerd, C., B. Kerremans, and A. Cohn. 2016. 'Climate Voting in the US Congress: The Power of Public Concern.' *Environmental Politics* 25(2): 268–88. doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2016.1116651.
- Vaughter, P.C.-D. 2012. 'The Role of Information Flow in Climate Change Policy Formation in New Zealand: A Social Analysis.' PhD dissertation, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN. Available from: hdl.handle.net/11299/139740.
- Vowles, J., F. Barker, M. Krewel, J. Hayward, J. Curtin, L. Greaves, and L. Oldfield. 2022. *2020 New Zealand Election Study*. [Online]. ADA Dataverse, V3. doi.org/10.26193/BPAMYJ.
- Weber, E.U. 2010. 'What Shapes Perceptions of Climate Change?' *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 1(3): 332–42. doi.org/10.1002/wcc.41.

This text is taken from *A Team of Five Million?: The 2020 'Covid-19' New Zealand General Election*, edited by Jennifer Curtin, Lara Greaves and Jack Vowles, published 2024 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.

doi.org/10.22459/TFM.2024.09