

New Zealand to help pay for cleaner cars to reduce emissions

May 16 2022, by Nick Perry



Electric vehicle charging stations is seen at a carpark in Auckland, New Zealand, on July 1, 2021. New Zealand will help pay for lower-income families to scrap their old gas guzzlers and replace them with cleaner hybrid or electric cars as part of a sweeping plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions the government announced Monday, May 16, 2022. Credit: Jason Oxenham/New Zealand Herald via AP

New Zealand's government said Monday it will help pay for lower-income families to scrap their old gas guzzlers and replace them with cleaner hybrid or electric cars as part of a sweeping plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The government said it plans to spend 569 million New Zealand dollars (\$357 million) on the trial program as part of a larger plan that includes subsidies for businesses to reduce emissions, a switch to an entirely green bus fleet by 2035 and curbside food-waste collection for most homes by the end of the decade.

"This is a landmark day in our transition to a low emissions future," Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said in a statement. "We've all seen the [recent reports](#) on sea level rise and its impact right here in New Zealand. We cannot leave the issue of [climate change](#) until it's too late to fix."

The plan represents a step toward the pledges the nation made under the 2016 Paris Agreement on climate change and New Zealand's stated goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Ardern, who was scheduled to launch the plan but cancelled after testing positive for COVID-19 late last week, said every community and sector had a role to play and that reducing reliance on [fossil fuels](#) would help shield households from volatile price hikes.



Heavy traffic clogs a motorway out of Auckland on Dec. 25, 2021. New Zealand will help pay for lower-income families to scrap their old gas guzzlers and replace them with cleaner hybrid or electric cars as part of a sweeping plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions the government announced Monday May 16, 2022. Credit: Brett Phibbs/ NZ Herald photograph via AP

The plan also sets a target of reducing total car travel by 20% over the next 13 years by offering better transportation options in cities as well as improved options for cyclists and walkers.

The programs will be paid for from a 4.5 billion New Zealand dollar (\$2.8 billion) climate emergency response fund. Officials said that over time, money collected from polluters would pay for the programs rather than taxes from households.

But the plan remained short on some details, including for the gas guzzler replacement plan which the government said would be finalized over the coming months.

And some critics said it continued to give an easy ride to the nation's huge agriculture industry, which creates about half of the nation's total [greenhouse gas emissions](#) but is also vital to the economy as the nation's biggest export earner.



New Zealand Climate Change Minister James Shaw announces the government's emissions reduction plan at Parliament in Wellington, New Zealand Monday, May 16, 2022. New Zealand will help pay for lower-income families to scrap their old gas guzzlers and replace them with cleaner hybrid or electric cars as part of a sweeping plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Credit: Mark Mitchel/ NZ Herald via AP



Electric vehicle charging station is shown at a carpark in Auckland, New Zealand, July 1, 2021. New Zealand will help pay for lower-income families to scrap their old gas guzzlers and replace them with cleaner hybrid or electric cars as part of a sweeping plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions the government announced Monday, May 16, 2022. Credit: Jason Oxenham/New Zealand Herald via AP



New Zealand's Deputy Prime Minister Grant Robertson, centre, walks with ministers James Shaw, left, Michael Wood, second left, Damien O'Connor, second right, and Megan Woods before announcing the government's emissions reduction plan at Parliament in Wellington, New Zealand Monday, May 16, 2022. New Zealand will help pay for lower-income families to scrap their old gas guzzlers and replace them with cleaner hybrid or electric cars as part of a sweeping plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Credit: Mark Mitchel/ NZ Herald via AP



Electric vehicle charging station and car share parking are seen in Auckland, New Zealand, on Aug. 12, 2021. New Zealand will help pay for lower-income families to scrap their old gas guzzlers and replace them with cleaner hybrid or electric cars as part of a sweeping plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions the government announced Monday May 16, 2022. Credit: Michael Craig/ NZ Herald photograph via AP

"Some of the policies announced, like the cash-for-clunkers system, are proven to be dogs and have been tried and failed overseas," said David Seymour, leader of the libertarian ACT Party.

Seymour said consumers should be able to choose how they reduce emissions through the market-based emissions trading scheme.

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