

# REACH Public Consultation on Singapore's Climate Ambition

5 - 26 September 2022

Respondent Name: Dennis Tan

**1 Singapore has stated that we intend to achieve net zero emissions by or around mid-century. Reaching net zero emissions by 2050 is:**

- (a) Just right
- (b) Too ambitious
- (c) Not sufficiently ambitious

**Answer: (c) Not sufficiently ambitious**

**1.1 [If answered (b) or (c) above] What is a suitable year to reach net zero?**

- (a) Not Sure
- (b) 2030-2039
- (c) 2040-2049
- (d) 2050-2059
- (e) 2060-2069
- (f) Beyond 2070

**Answer: -**

**1.2 Please feel free to provide your thoughts on what makes a suitable net zero year.**

The latest climate science by the IPCC recommends reaching net-zero globally by the 'early 2050s' to ensure that warming can be limited to 1.5°C. However, as a country with one of the highest GDPs per capita globally, as well as one that has relied on the fossil fuel industry for economic growth, Singapore can and should do more. The IPCC's recommendations tend to lean on the conservative side, and there is a risk that the effects of climate change may accelerate due to the thawing of permafrost, releasing large amounts of carbon and creating what scientists call a 'carbon feedback loop'. Therefore, not only should Singapore align with climate science, we should aim to get ahead of the curve and reach net zero if possible.

**2 Should we enhance Singapore's 2030 NDC which currently pledges to peak emissions at 65 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e around 2030?**

- (a) Yes
- (b) No
- (c) Neutral/ Maybe/ Not sure

**Answer: Yes**

**3 What should our 2030 NDC ambition be and why? (Refer to Paras 3 - 4 of Consultation Document)**

Singapore's current ambition to peak emissions at 65MtCO<sub>2</sub>e around 2030 is currently inadequate. Our 2030 NDC ambition should be to peak emissions by 2025 and to halve emissions around 2030. This is in line with the IPCC's recommendations to keep us on the pathway to limit global warming to 1.5°C, and would send a strong message that Singapore is committed to stronger climate action to care for our future generations. Enhancing the 2030 target is important, as cutting emissions earlier rather than later will mitigate more warming.

**4 What can the Government do to support Singapore's transition to a low carbon future?**

1) While the government will raise the carbon tax progressively to S\$50-80/tCO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030, a more ambitious target can be set. The government can announce plans to raise the carbon tax to US\$75/tCO<sub>2</sub>e (S\$102), which MAS chief Ravi Menon has acknowledged as the 'right' price of carbon. To ensure a just transition, part of the proceeds of carbon taxes should be distributed to lower-income households through carbon dividends. Lastly, there should be transparency on the carbon tax allowances given to companies, especially those that significantly contribute to the country's carbon emissions.

**5 What can businesses and industries do to support Singapore's transition to a low carbon future?**

1) Businesses and industries, if they have not already done so, should voluntarily commit to net zero targets and practices that reduce their direct and indirect emissions, and make it easier for individuals to lead a low carbon life (e.g. encourage use of reusable containers, reduce disposable items and packaging)

2) Institutional investors and sovereign wealth funds can set clear timelines to divest from assets that are involved in projects linked to fossil fuels and deforestation. For example, student group Students for a Fossil Free Future found that some Singaporean universities still have endowments that are indirectly invested in fossil fuels. To support Singapore's transition, these companies should announce clear and transparent timelines with an aim to divest fully from such projects by 2030.

3) Banks and financial institutions should provide funding support for 'transition financing', helping companies to finance their transition away from fossil fuel-related activities (such as early retirement for coal-powered plants or hard-to-abate activities).

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**6 What can individuals and communities do to support Singapore's transition to a low carbon future?**

1) Other than changing their own personal habits and encouraging others to do so, individuals and communities can also commit to participating in organisations that advocate for climate action. Even if you can only commit for a short period every week, this would go a long way into ensuring the sustainability of such organisations and advocacy efforts for stronger climate action.

2) Individuals and communities can also play a part by writing in to their MPs and going to Meet-the-People Sessions to ask their MPs to push for stronger climate action in Parliament.

**7 While there may be trade-offs or inconveniences, I am willing to contribute / play my part in helping Singapore realise its net zero ambition.**

- (a) Strongly Agree
- (b) Neutral
- (c) Agree
- (d) Strongly Disagree
- (e) Disagree

**Answer: Strongly Agree**

**8 Do you have any other thoughts on Singapore's climate ambition that you wish to share?**

Climate justice is an important concept that points out how the vulnerable and marginalised populations who contribute the least to the climate crisis are also the ones to stand to lose the most from it. While white collar workers can live in air-conditioned environments most of the time in their offices, homes and cars, construction workers, food delivery riders and rental flat tenants have little protection from the increasingly hotter weather.

However, climate justice has not played a large role in the government's narrative on mitigating climate change. While there are some efforts such as vouchers for purchasing energy efficient appliances, much more needs to be done to ensure that everyone is protected from the devastating impacts of the climate crisis, are able to work in well-paying, low-carbon jobs, and protected by a strong social safety net.