



AS IT IS

New Zealand to Help Pay for Cleaner Cars

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New Zealand's government recently announced it will help pay for poorer families to replace their old cars with cleaner **hybrid** or electric vehicles.

The government said it plans to spend \$357 million on the test program.

The move is part of a wider plan to reduce greenhouse gas **emissions**. Greenhouse gases are believed to cause warming temperatures in the Earth's atmosphere.

New Zealand plans to provide aid for businesses to reduce emissions and have buses that run on environmentally safe fuel by 2035. The government also plans to provide food-waste collection for most homes by 2030.

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 is a step toward New Zealand's stated goal of reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Reaching net-zero emissions means not creating more carbon in the atmosphere than oceans and forests can remove.

Ardern said that reducing dependence on fossil fuels would help protect families from extreme price increases.

The plan also sets a goal of reducing total car travel by 20 percent over the next 13 years.

The programs will be paid for from a \$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 families.

Some critics of the plan say it continued to be less restrictive on New Zealand's huge agriculture industry. Agriculture creates about half of the nation's total greenhouse gas emissions. But the industry is also important to the economy as the nation's biggest export earner.

David Seymour is the leader of New Zealand's ACT political party. He said that some of the announced programs are proven to be ineffective "and have been tried and failed **overseas**."

Seymour added that people should be able to choose how they reduce emissions through the market-based emissions trading plan.

I'm Jonathan Evans.

Nick Perry reported on this story for the Associated Press. Jonathan Evans adapted this story for Learning English.

Words in This Story

hybrid – adj. related to something that has two different types of components performing essentially the same function

emissions – n. something that is given off

impact – n. a strong effect

fund – n. a sum of money for a special purpose

overseas – n. beyond or across the sea