



To the Prime Minister of New Zealand | An open letter on the SDGs

As the CEOs of leading organisations in the international aid and development sector we applaud your attendance at the United Nations General Assembly when the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted in late September.

New Zealand was actively involved in the negotiations that led to the agreement on the 17 development goals. We are pleased by the strong N.Z. support for the retention of the goal on oceans as it is so important to our Pacific neighbours. These initiatives, led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Murray McCully, have been consistent with New Zealand's longstanding aid and development focus on the Pacific.

We congratulate you on your UN General Assembly announcement that New Zealand is to create one of the world's largest ocean sanctuaries around the Kermadec islands. By prohibiting all fishing and mining over 620,000 km² you have sent a strong signal that countries need to balance economic development aspirations with environmental sustainability. We welcome that commitment by government. The SDGs require all nations to do that and more.

As well as sustaining the world's oceans and marine resources, these new universal goals also require us, collectively, to sustain nature on land, combat climate change and its impacts, and finish the unfinished work of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Although the MDGs end in December, the need to alleviate poverty continues. It is appropriate that the new Goal 1 is *"End poverty in all its forms everywhere."* As you will be aware, other goals include ending hunger, achieving gender equality, along with goals focused on health, education, water, sustainable energy, justice and accountable institutions, and reducing inequality within and among countries.

The SDG text states: *"The SDGs and targets are integrated and indivisible, global in nature and universally applicable..."* Our challenge now, as a country, is to collectively decide how to incorporate these aspirational and global targets into our national planning processes, policies and strategies.

Therefore we strongly encourage you, as Prime Minister, to lead the national response on the Sustainable Development Goals and the creation of aspirational and realistic national targets under the goals.

A few developed countries are already planning their responses to the SDGs which will include 'national conversations' around the development of coherent and integrated actions across the economic, social and environmental strands of development. From an economic perspective, sustainable development and a greater coherence across departments creates the potential for considerable savings while achieving the goals.

Our country is known for its global leadership on issues that were aspirational for earlier generations. These global goals provide the vision for the world we want. They do not provide us with the road map to achieve them. This is the next step. We believe that, with the right leadership, we can again, as we have so often done, show the world how innovative and smart thinking can lead to inspired outcomes.

We would therefore welcome your articulation of a clear strategy on the approach the New Zealand government will take for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. Our sector has worked with partners overseas to implement the MDGs for the last decade. We are now ready to support your government in developing a strategy for implementing the SDGs through a set of aspirational national targets. The approach to setting national targets needs to engage effectively with a wide range of stakeholders and sectors, including civil society.

We would welcome the opportunity to participate in these conversations, particularly as we see these goals as helping secure the future for our children, our country and our planet.

Yours sincerely



Rachael Le Mesurier

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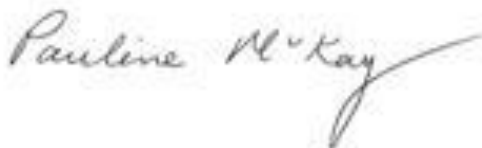
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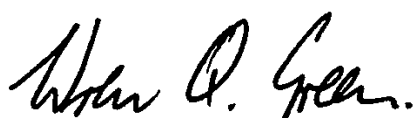
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