

A step forward for climate change research in New Zealand

Motu Economic and Public Policy Research has been awarded close to \$1.7 million of Foundation for Research, Science and Technology funding for nearly four years of research on the economics of climate change and its impact on New Zealand.

The programme is titled, "Integrated Research on the Economics of Climate Change Impacts, Adaptation and Mitigation".

Motu will be collaborating with a number of organisations on this research including Victoria University of Wellington and Infometrics as well as international collaborators.

Motu Director and Senior Researcher Dr Suzi Kerr says: "The foundation's announcement is a positive step towards developing policies that would, if implemented, reduce New Zealand's vulnerability to climate change."

The project will look at the impact of climate change on the agricultural and energy sectors and the flow-on effects on the economy.

"Eventually we will be able to assess multiple pressures introduced by climate change, such as changing water availability combined with increasing demand for irrigation and hydroelectricity."

The research will also look at the costs, benefits and various impacts of climate change policies, including emissions trading plans, on New Zealand.

"We will be able to answer questions like 'how will these proposed climate change policies change our economy and society?' and 'how will climate change impacts and emissions trading overseas affect NZ businesses?'"

"This research will create frameworks that will make it possible for researchers to provide analyses of climate change policy decisions specific to New Zealand in hours, days or weeks, rather than years."

NIWA, Motu, Landcare Research/New Zealand Centre for Ecological Economics, Infometrics, AgResearch and GNS Science have formed a collaborative alliance, EcoClimate, in order to better understand and prepare for the impacts of climate change in New Zealand.

This connects and strengthens major research programmes in NIWA, Landcare Research, AgResearch and GNS Science, which are funded separately by the foundation.

These programmes each have well-developed relationships with government departments, industry and other stakeholders in key areas of climate change science that have recently been complemented with a new EcoClimate policy dialogue process. The new Motu research programme represents a major step forward in linking these NZ climate change research programmes, integrating science and economics into policy analysis.