

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

Geoffrey Simmons

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Submitter Type: Individual

Clause

1. What process should the Government use to set a new emissions reduction target in legislation?

Position

The Government sets a 2050 target in legislation now

Notes

Clause

2. If the Government sets a 2050 target now, which is the best target for New Zealand?

Position

Net Zero Long-Lived Gases and Stabilised Short-Lived Gases - Long-lived gases to net zero by 2050 while also stabilising short-lived gases

Notes

Methane is different and needs to be treated differently in terms of targets (or change the measurement method to acknowledge the difference between a stock and flow).

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Position

Domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)

Notes

If the target is right then international carbon units shouldn't be needed by 2050 - maybe for the 2030 target though.

Clause

4. Should the Zero Carbon Bill allow the 2050 target to be revised if circumstances change?

Position

Yes

Notes

But the justifiable reasons to change the target should be set out and the process for doing so. E.g. if the science changes or international agreements change considerably. Cost and economics is no reason to change a long term target.

Clause

5. The Government proposes that three emissions budgets of five years each (i.e. covering the next 15 years) be in place at any given time. Do you agree with this proposal?

Position

Yes

Notes

Clause

6. Should the Government be able to alter the last emissions budget (i.e. furthest into the future)?

Position

Yes - the third emissions budget should be able to be changed but only when the subsequent budget is set

Notes

Changes could be permitted as per the above - changes in the scientific understanding or international agreements. However, if these changes are not consistent with a pathway to the 2050 target they must show the impact on future budgets and a plan for getting back on track, akin to the Fiscal Responsibility Act (see comment below)

Clause

7. Should the Government have the ability to review and adjust the second emissions budget within a specific range under exceptional circumstances? See p36 Our Climate Your Say

Position

Yes

Notes

Changes could be permitted as per the above - changes in the scientific understanding or international agreements. A large scale natural disaster may also push back timeframes, however this cannot be an excuse for doing nothing - after all doing nothing will lead to more natural disasters. However, if these changes are not consistent with the 2050 target they must show the impact on future budgets. This is somewhat akin to the Fiscal Responsibility Act. The Govt has a job to deliver (budget surpluses with the FRA, the 2050 target with Zero Carbon Bill) and when circumstances don't allow it to achieve that job, it has to set out a path to doing the job again.

Clause

8. Do you agree with the considerations we propose that the Government and the Climate Change Commission take into account when advising on and setting budgets? See p44 Our Climate Your Say

Position

No

Notes

This is a good list but should also include scenario planning. Given the long term nature of these plans and interdependency with international players the CCC should develop a set of scenarios and run the budgets through them.

Clause

9. Should the Zero Carbon Bill require Governments to set out plans within a certain timeframe to achieve the emissions budgets?

Position

Yes

Notes**Clause**

10. What are the most important issues for the Government to consider in setting plans to meet budgets? For example, who do we need to work with, what else needs to be considered?

Notes

Government should look broadly at co-benefits (e.g. health benefits of public and active transport and insulation) and co-costs (e.g. planting trees in dry areas may not be a great idea) of policy actions in setting the plan. Equity impacts are also important. Buy in from MSD, MOH, MOT and Regional Councils is needed at a senior level.

Clause

11. The Government has proposed that the Climate Change Commission advises on and monitors New Zealand's progress towards its goals. Do you agree with these functions? See p42 Our Climate Your Say

Position

No

Notes

I think the CCC is worthy of slightly more power. Their budgets and ETS settings should be the default starting point for any Government. If a Government decides to do something else, it not only has to explain why, but if the plan proposes less action, it must set out a plan of how to get the nation back on track to the 2050 target - akin to the Fiscal Responsibility Act.

Clause

12. What role do you think the Climate Change Commission should have in relation to the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (NZ ETS)?

Position

Makes decisions itself in respect of the number of units available in the NZ ETS

Notes

As per the above I think the CCC makes the decision, but the Govt has the power to overrule if it deems necessary and can still show how it will achieve the 2050 target.

Clause

13. The Government has proposed that Climate Change Commissioners need to have a range of essential and desirable expertise. Do you agree with the proposed expertise? See p45 Our Climate Your Say

Position

No

Notes

I would add: - scenario planning/ futures thinking/ systems thinking - some understanding of the major areas of possible co-cost and co-benefits of climate policy. To me this includes equity impacts, public health and transport.

Clause

14. Do you think the Zero Carbon Bill should cover adapting to climate change?

Position

Yes

Notes

Clause

15. The Government has proposed a number of new functions to help us adapt to climate change. Do you agree with the proposed functions? See p47 Our Climate Your Say

Position

Yes

Notes

The risk of adaptation (as we see clearly around the country) is that such systems tend to cater to the squeaky wheel (rich locals) rather than true need. EG Wellington spending billions building sea walls while Haumoana slips into the sea. This natural tendency of the public needs to be counterbalanced somehow, which will take some work on the social side. It is essential that Govt responses clearly differ in regards to 1. vulnerability - e.g. whether someone loses their primary house or beach house and 2. effectiveness - e.g. whether to build sea walls that will protect an area for a few decades and destroy beaches in the process.

Clause

16. Should we explore setting up a targeted adaptation reporting power that could see some organisations share information on their exposure to climate change risks?

Position

Yes

Notes