In the Matter of
The Discussion Document Our Climate Your Say:
Consultation on the Zero Carbon Bill

Submission by
Waimakariri District Council

19 July 2018
Person for Contact: Geoff Meadows, Policy Manager
General Submission

The Waimakariri District Council welcomes the opportunity to submit to the Discussion Document Our Climate Your Say: Consultation on the Zero Carbon Bill. The Council has read the Discussion Document with interest, and spent time at a Council workshop on 10 July 2018 in reaching consensus for the following submission.

2050 Target

The Council supports the introduction of a new 2050 emissions reduction target through the Zero Carbon Bill, and supports the option of net zero long-lived gasses and stabilised short-lived gasses, so that emissions of long-lived greenhouse gasses are reduced to zero by 2050, while also stabilising emissions of short-lived gasses. There is no reason why New Zealand should not meet this target by not only reducing domestic emissions, but also by using some emissions reductions from overseas through international carbon units, provided these international units have strong environmental safeguards.

Emissions Budgets

The Council supports the first three emissions budgets, set in 2020, to be five-year budgets so that the initial set of three emissions budgets of five years each provide certainty to 2035. The question of the revision of these budgets, once they have been initially set, should not be revised unless the monitoring of the forecast reductions indicates a failure to meet the long term goal of zero carbon by 2050. The proposal that the Bill requires the Government to publish a plan to meet future emissions budgets is supported.

Climate Change Commission

The Council carefully considered the proposed role of the Climate Change Commission and supports the proposal that the Commission advises on and monitors New Zealand’s progress towards its goals. In relation to the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), this Council supports the proposal that the Commission makes decisions itself in respect to the number of units available in the ETS. The Council supports the proposal that the Commissioners need to have a range of essential and desirable expertise.

Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change

In principle, the Council supports the idea that the Zero Carbon Bill should cover adapting to Climate Change. This may include the development of a National Adaptation Plan which would be very helpful for local government in planning for, and dealing with, natural hazard risks that arise from Climate Change. The notion of a targeted adaptation reporting power is also supported in-principle.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the Discussion Document for the proposed Zero Carbon Bill.