Submissions form

We seek your feedback on the specific proposals in the Zero Carbon Bill.

Either email this submission to ZCB.Submissions@mfe.govt.nz (Microsoft Word document (2003 or later) or PDF) or post to Ministry for the Environment, PO Box 10362, Wellington, 6143.

Publishing and releasing submissions

All or part of any written submission (including names of submitters) may be published on the Ministry for the Environment’s website, www.mfe.govt.nz. Unless you clearly specify otherwise in your submission, the Ministry will consider that you have consented to website posting of both your submission and your name.

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Personal / organisation details

You must provide either a company name or given name(s)

Company name The Alliance Party

Given names

Surname

Contact person Kay Murray
Submitter type, pick one:

- Individual
- NGO
- Business / Industry
- Local Government
- Central Government
- Iwi / Māori
- University
- Research Institute
- School
- X Community Group
- Unspecified / Other

2050 target

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

Pick one:

- X the Government sets a 2050 target in legislation now
- the Government sets a goal to reach net zero emissions by the second half of the century, and the Climate Change Commission advises on the specific target for the Government to set later.

Optional comment

It is imperative that the world act quickly to prevent catastrophic climate change. By setting a target in legislation now New Zealand is pledging to take immediate action which is what every country needs to do.

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

Pick one:

- net zero carbon dioxide: Reducing net carbon dioxide emissions to zero by 2050
- net zero long-lived gases and stabilised short-lived gases: Long-lived gases to net zero by 2050, while also stabilising short-lived gases
- X net zero emissions: Net zero emissions across all greenhouse gases by 2050.

Optional comment

The situation is urgent no one can afford to be half hearted in their efforts.
3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

   Pick one:
   
   X **domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)**
   
   Optional comment

   *Real action is needed worldwide, by everyone. Using the efforts of communities elsewhere to give the appearance of reducing our own emissions via exchange of carbon credits is not an option. It is simply window dressing which puts the responsibility for action on climate change on to other nations, shows a lack of support for our Pacific neighbours and sets a poor example to other developed countries.*

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

   Pick one:
   
   x no.

   Optional comment

   *The only revision allowed should be if new research indicates the target needs to be moved forward. Moving the target outwards is not an option. We made need to achieve carbon neutrality before 2050.*

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**Emissions budgets**

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

   Pick one:
   
   X yes
   
   Optional comment
Legally binding budgets, set in advance, are essential to ensure the long term success of the Act. They will give certainty to government and the business community about the direction they need to take and the expectations for the years to come.

6. Should the Government be able to alter the last emissions budget (ie, furthest into the future)?
   Pick one:
   - yes, each incoming Government should have the option to review the third budget in the sequence
   - yes, the third emissions budget should be able to be changed, but only when the subsequent budget is set
   X no, emissions budgets should not be able to be changed.

   **Optional comment**
   The possibility of revision creates uncertainty and interferes with the stability of a planned transition to a low carbon economy. New governments should only be able to alter the actual policies which are used to bring about the planned reduction to meet the emissions budget.

7. Should the Government have the ability to review and adjust the second emissions budget within a specific range under exceptional circumstances?
   Pick one:
   X yes

   **Optional comment**
   Only under exceptional circumstances such as a natural disaster, and not in such a way as to make the third budget unachievable.

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?
Pick one:
X no.

Optional comment

Only the following considerations should be taken into account when advising and setting the budgets

- scientific knowledge about climate change
- technology relevant to climate change
- social circumstances, particularly impacts on disadvantaged sectors of society, which should be addressed with separate policies from those around emissions targets
- energy policy, which needs to be set with close consideration to emissions targets so that energy needs can be met appropriately while meeting those targets.
- Government obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi
- The three government objectives for climate change policy: sustainable economy, global and local leadership and creating a just and inclusive society

Government response

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

Pick one:
X yes

Optional comment

It is essential that policies are developed and put into practice in a timely way. Six months after the setting of a budget would be an appropriate timeframe for the implementation of policy and plans.

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?

Comment
The Government’s policy plans to meet emission budgets should be comprehensive, fair, cost-effective, environmentally sustainable, and reflect a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

There must be consultation with Maori, advice from the Climate Change Commission and consideration given to experts in other climate change related fields. Representatives from community groups should have the opportunity for input and debates must take place with full public scrutiny and accountability.

Clear plans should be made public as soon as possible, so that communities and businesses can plan ahead. Those in sectors which will be impacted by change must be supported and the burden of coping with climate change must not be left for the next generation.

Plans for the future must take into account the responsibility borne by those who have profited from the pollution based practices of the past and present.

Climate Change Commission

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?

Pick one:

X yes

Optional comment

The Climate Change Commission must be free to give advice without political influence and there must be no conflict of interest in its monitoring function. It must therefore remain independent of the policy and decision making functions of government.

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

Pick one:

NEITHER

advising the Government on policy settings in the NZ ETS
makes decisions itself, in respect of the number of units available in the NZ ETS.

**Optional comment**
We are opposed to the emissions trading scheme in its totality because we are of the opinion it will mitigate against efforts to reduce emissions.

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?

Pick one:

- X yes
- no.

**Optional comment**
Climate change commissioners must have an absolute commitment to preventing catastrophic climate change that overrides all other interests e.g. allegiances to specific sectors of the economy. Expertise in public health and a commitment to social justice should also be included.

Adapting to the impacts of climate change

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

Pick one:

- X yes
- no

**Optional comment**
The Climate Change Commission could also contribute expertise to our adaption response to climate change.

15. The Government has proposed a number of new *functions* to help us adapt to climate change. Do you agree with the proposed functions?

Pick one:

- X yes
- no.
Optional comment

The government should prepare a national climate risk assessment and a policy plan to address the identified risks.

Consideration must be given to the responsibilities of local versus central government in adaption responses and adequate resources allocated to affected areas.

We recommend that the work of Sir Alan Mark and the Wise Response group be re-examined in the current context of accepting that action on climate change is urgently needed.

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?

Pick one:

X  yes

no.

Optional comment

This option could be a way to encourage a co-operative common approach to managing climate change risks that allows the sharing of information to promote mutual support between organisations. It would also improve public knowledge and increase the public awareness of the reasons behind climate mitigation actions.