

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

George Dewar

Reference no: 62

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 Emissions - Net zero emissions across all greenhouse gases by 2050

Notes

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Position

Domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)

Notes

Using units from overseas would be acceptable to me only as a last resort. I think we have a duty to implement our own emissions reductions here.

Clause

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

Position

No

Notes

It can always be revised via new legislation, and that seems like the right hoop to have to jump through to me.

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 - each incoming Government should have the option to review the third budget in the sequence

Notes

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

Those circumstances would need to be properly defined, and the decision to change the budget should ensure that the 2050 target can still be met.

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

I am concerned about the Climate Change Commission taking factors such as fuel poverty into account, unless they can make recommendations that include policy to address these issues. The Commission could not operate effectively if it felt, for example, that setting a high price on emissions would unduly disadvantage the poor through high fuel prices, but could not recommend or assume that the government implement policy (such as an increase to income support). The Commission should either have the power to advise on policy changes to mitigate social concerns, or not be required to take them into account and leave this to the Government to address. Furthermore, consideration should be given to whether the considerations need to be weighted. For example, economic and fiscal considerations are important, but should not be allowed to prevent the target from being reached. If the Government of the day is unwilling to implement recommendations for those reasons then it should be held accountable for that. Other than this I do agree with the proposed considerations.

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

The Government could be required to consult with parties that would be affected by the plan to meet the budget. For example, if new taxes based on the efficiency of new and imported vehicles was to be imposed then it would seem appropriate to consult with vehicle dealers and importers. The Government must be able to implement the policies it considers are required, but should also consider how the affected groups could be assisted and their disadvantage mitigated - the "just transition".

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

Yes

Notes**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

Advising the Government on policy settings in the NZ ETS

Notes**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

Yes

Notes**Clause**

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

Notes

I think that the adaption provisions are important, but should go into a separate bill - say, the Climate Change Adaption Bill. This would make the purpose of each bill very clear.

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**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

A key example that comes to mind is local lines companies, who have a lot of vulnerable above-ground infrastructure. More frequent storms could see more frequent, longer power outages. Requiring these and other organisations to report on these risks would provide the Government with the information required to consider if further mandated or assisted action should be undertaken.

Clause

Do you have any other comments you'd like to make?

Notes

I am immensely pleased to see this incredibly important legislation taking shape, and I wish to thank the Minister and MfE for their hard work.