

To: Ministry for the Environment.
Submission on Zero Carbon Bill

From: Anthony Clifford

I'm strongly in favour of the Zero Carbon Bill. Climate change is occurring now; global warming is increasing exponentially. CO₂, methane and other green house gasses are being added to the atmosphere at a faster rate at present than has happened in almost all know periods of warming in the geological past. This has driven species to extinction and will totally destroy many more species. The distributional ranges many species are changing already in relation to rising atmospheric and sea temperatures, increased intensity of storms, wild fires and other negative effects. Ecological devastation is increasing and is set to greatly worsen. As climates change, rainfall patterns change, crops fail and sea levels rise, many more millions of people will be forced to migrate in increasingly greater numbers – this has begun already – in fact this is the Century of the migrant. People will migrate because a changing atmosphere will destroy their living conditions in their home countries. The beautiful world we still have will soon be unrecognisable. Coal mining, oil drilling, and dairying (especially intensified, factory dairying) add CO₂ and Methane to the atmosphere. Global warming began increasing with the start of the industrial revolution in the 17th Century and then rose sharply after 1950 and continues to climb steeply. Hence a truly effective Zero Carbon Bill must be passed immediately.

I have a M. Sc. (Honours) degree with first class honours in Zoology, have had a life-long interest in the natural sciences and have worked professionally as a scientist (zoologist). Thus I am intensely aware that the changing climate is already driving thousands of species to dwindling numbers and extinction and is already impacting severely on the lives of increasing numbers of people world-wide and will have a sharply increasing adverse effect on millions of people in the future.

Therefore the Government should set a 2050 target of net zero emissions of all greenhouse gasses – including CO₂ and Methane, in legislation, immediately.

I suggest the government prepare for emissions budgets set out over a five year period.

The Zero Carbon Bill must explain transparently how it will achieve emissions budgets, including transition.

The Climate Commission should advise the Government on targets and policy planning. The Government in turn should explain the policy to the public. The Climate Commission should oversee this from a position of independence from the Government and publish reports on progress and problems.

The Zero Carbon Bill should include adaptation to impacts of climate change.

The Government should establish a National Adaptation Plan, advising local government and coordinating responses across all the various sectors, including iwi and hapū.

Yours sincerely,
Anthony Harris.

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