

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

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Clause

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

Notes

Neither of these options. First explain what is a "target" and what is a "goal" - sounds like ambiguous terms (or easy to walk away from or manipulate later). Is a target something that will be embodied in legislation - a set, binding reduction? Is a goal just something that would be nice to see? However what fool would set anything like a binding target for 2050? We have no idea of the technologies that may be applicable, or the state of the climate in 10 years let alone 30. This is theatrics for a feel-good effect of a left leaning government.

Clause

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

Notes

None of these actually. Annoyingly all of these questions are framed with an agenda that pre-supposes the acceptance of the premise. They all miss the point. Who is going to do the emission accounting and what will be the methodology? How will you know if net emissions are zero or not? The methodology is very fluid and uncertain and highly dependent on initial assumption and where to you draw the boundaries? Which means that it is all ripe for political manipulation. Let alone that any reduction by New Zealand in this regard will not be even one squillionth of the total global emissions. Any argument of "moral leadership" as a justification for emission reductions should be rejected. New Zealand's government should do what is in the best interests of New Zealand primarily and that should mean not taking actions that will damage our economy or global competitiveness. If new technologies that become available are better, and at lower cost (which they generally are once achieving economy of scale), and have lower net negative affects than current or legacy technologies - great. However do not be ideologically insistent that emissions (whatever that means) must be reduced regardless of cost.

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Notes

Do not set binding targets - that is just political posturing and virtue signaling by a leftist administration with little idea of the economic impacts of what they are doing. And the environmental impacts / benefits will be negligible.. Sure plant trees - but what are you going to do with the wood fiber? Have you got a plan for that and how will that be accounted for in terms of embodied carbon (in the built environment) and the end of life emission of embodied carbon back to the atmosphere. Use electric vehicles if they are better and cheaper to run than fossil fuel vehicles (it could go that way with new battery technology and re-charging infrastructure). New Zealand makes most of its mains electricity by non-fossil fuel sources anyway so that may be a genuine reduction. However when will some bright spark bureaucrat in Wellington realize when we turn off all this petrol and diesel sales and the massive tax that the government makes from it then the price of electricity will have to go up accordingly. Be aware of the unintended consequences of any of this stuff - I realize that you think that is the right thing to do but be careful - most likely your interventions will cause more damage than good.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

Absolutely, changed, scrapped, turned into a reality TV series - whatever. Just get off the coolaid that makes you think that you are changing the world for the better and that you know unalterably what you are doing - almost certainly you don't. Economic and natural systems are much more complicated than we can appreciate. As a rule of thumb - if your policy or proposed intervention is not good for people and the economy in the short term, why expect it to be any better in the long term. Forget utopian visions that expect us to endure higher costs and reduced quality of life ("fuel poverty"?) for some imagined "brighter future". It won't work. When it comes to pain in the hip pocket like increasing the cost of being comfortable in winter, the electorate will not tolerate it.

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

No

Notes

Look, even if you want to do this stuff don't lock it in with some arbitrary "budget cycle". That will just mean that it becomes a political object tossed around with each national election. Honestly you have no idea of the world as it will be in 15 years - think back to 2003 - a relatively primitive internet, no smartphones, no social media to speak of, no google to speak of (or just barely), no Tesla, Ford and Holden were still the largest selling cars. Project forward 15 years - you can't with any certainty so don't waste time doing 15 year budgets.

Clause

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

Notes

As above - allow all of it to be altered at any time. They (the politicians) will do it anyway, politically it will be fudged beyond recognition as time goes on and governments come and go. Most certainly, do not allow who ever is going to run this boondoggle to have any independent authority or power - it will attract the ideologues and authoritarians who will be exactly the people who should not be given any power.

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

Notes

As above - without doubt there will be "exceptional circumstances". The trouble is that we have no idea what those circumstances will be, but things will change and with complex systems you have no way of predicting what those changes will be. I see grand vision utopians in the workings here with classic leftist 5 year master plans. The only certainty is that it will not work as you expect so drop those allusions from the start.

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

Notes

Yes - those list of considerations appear reasonable - but you need to specifically add the word "business" in there - not just weasel words like "economy" and "sectors". And will anyone in the boondoggle pay any attention to them is another question - personally I doubt it if the ideologues are in charge. But tell me, what is "fuel poverty"? Are you already anticipating that these policies will cause energy shortage, or large increases in the cost of energy?

Clause

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

Position

No

Notes

Don't do a zero carbon bill in the first place. For a start I don't think that you have any real idea what that means, how to measure it or what the full impacts will be - it is just a catchy slogan. Government can not achieve "emission budgets". There again is this leftist fallacy that governments can do these things. It is every person in New Zealand individually and collectively (as in businesses or groups) that affect the economy and the environment. All government should do is provide the appropriate legal and economic settings (including infrastructure in some cases) then get out of the way as much as possible and let the economy perform. The more ham-fisted government tries to be directly involved and interfering the worse the outcome will be in all likelihood.

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

Don't stuff up the economy stupid - that would be good start. Work mainly with business - primary industries, manufacturing, transport & logistics, tourism, building & construction, investors & risk managers. Private enterprise and business is what drives the economy and where the money comes from. Again leftist governments seem to live in the delusion that they make money - they don't. The government will have a role in directing resources and setting the playing field, but the money for this boondoggle and anything else that government does comes ultimately from individual and business earnings so don't choke the chicken that lays the eggs! Work with good economists who understand resource economics and the long term impact of tax and other fiscal levers / mechanisms on revenue and money cycle. Raising taxes does not necessarily increase revenues. Also as the government, don't try to pick the winners - allow the markets to sort that out.

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

Advisory only - don't give these people any hint of actual power or decision making authority. Witness the evolution of the Climate Commission in Australia in 2011 with an agenda to change the world one country at a time. By 2013 it was defunct and re-launched

as the Climate Council with a more realistic advisory role only. So don't set yourselves up for a fall and with unrealistic expectations.

Clause

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

Notes

No role or function except possibly advisory - ETS is a corrupted and flawed mechanism - don't link them with any decision making power

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

The framing of this part of the proposal is sloppy - do you mean "expertise" or "interests", or both? Where is business in all this???? Oh, I see, in the desirable but not essential bin which means that it will be ignored. The good old staunch socialist leanings are showing now. Climate change policy (including emissions trading) - Expertise in climate change policy??? What could possibly go wrong there? Take me straight to the ultra left green party instead. • resource economics and impacts (including social impacts, labour markets and distribution) Agreed but listen to business (particularly resource using industry such as farming and agriculture) - not just academics, NGO's and government experts. • te Tiriti o Waitangi, te reo me ona tikanga Māori and Māori interests What is this about? I thought you want "expertise" not interests? Or if you want various "interests" considered, list that separately. We are talking about all of New Zealand, not just Maori interests - what about the ethnic Chinese or Indian communities - do their interests get considered? • climate and environmental science including mātauranga Māori Do you mean scientists who may happen to be Maori? Or is there some special Maori version of the science that the rest of us are not privileged to? • experience with addressing adaptation challenges like planning, insurance and local government Yes - that it the main issue that you should be looking to get good expertise with. Local government will have to be involved (a mixed blessing at best) for local adaption works. Heaven help us when Phil Goff and others of that ilk let this go to their heads but that is the path for adaption with most of the built environment. • risk management - yes but on realistic scenarios with groups who have been in risk management for a long time (100+ years). Don't let the alarmists and doomsayers near this. • engineering and/or infrastructure - absolutely • community engagement and communications. Well that will provide many opportunities for politicians to have cups of tea and talk to communities - it won't change anything but you have to do it.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

Adaption should be the main focus - nothing that this boondoggle can do will have any actual impact at all on climate change - delusions of grandeur. If you want to be slightly useful, help business and communities prepare for some possible impacts - for example foreshore erosion and peak tide flooding may increase over the next 50 - 100 years to where physical reinforcements and land stabilization is required.

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

No

Notes

Highly politically and ideologically flavoured discussion here - cost of transport infrastructure repair, is that climate change or just expansion of the network and lack of maintenance or someone fiddling with the figures and the definition of maintenance? And a cost of replacing every building within 0.5 meter of the high tide mark - do you mean vertical 0.5 meter, or horizontal. If the figure is \$3 billion (over 30 - 50 years?), it seems very low and is hardly even pocket change. The government inflicted leaking homes debacle has probably cost over 10 times that anyway. And the evidence for increasing frequency or severe weather, or increasing severity of weather is weak. I grant you, it might happen but don't drag that out as justification for this boondoggle.

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

Better coordination and information sharing will be useful - but I can see that this lot will want to make up a whole new government department for "Climate Change Information Reporting" and staff it with 100 public servants writing reports for each other.

Clause

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

Notes

Climate change signature in New Zealand is not strong to date. Auckland Airport long term average temperatures show approximately 0.5 degree increase in 50 years - and some of that could be related to increased aircraft frequency and surrounding urban development which has elsewhere been noted to affect temperature observations. Over a similar period, Christchurch shows zero net average temperature change. Average wind speeds, and number of stormy days has not increased at those locations either. So maybe there is worse to come already loaded in the system with historical global emissions - that might be the case although I believe that the alarmists and doomsayers vastly overstate this threat. One only has to review the ridiculous predictions of James Hansen, Al Gore and other alarmists in the 1990's and early 2000's - none of those misleading prognostications have come to pass. However even if worse is to come, nothing in this proposal will affect any of that one iota. So if anything focus only on those initiatives where emission reductions can be shown to have a net economic benefit (or at worst neutral) within a short to medium time frame (3 - 5 years) - encouragement for an electric vehicle fleet may be applicable for example. Also focus on adaption where necessary. Don't let the utopian planners get their hands on lots of cash.

Supporting documents from your Submission

Auckland_Airport_Climate_Data.pdf

Uploaded on 07/06/2018 at 02:23PM

Christchurch_Climate_Data.pdf

Uploaded on 07/06/2018 at 02:23PM