

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

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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 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

Notes

Clause

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

Position

Net Zero Carbon Dioxide - Reducing net carbon dioxide emissions to zero by 2050

Notes

I think the inclusion of farming (short lived gasses) will eventually happen however I am concerned about the cost to individual farmers. Given agriculture has such a big contribution to our economy, it can be assumed that agri will have a larger share of our total emissions. Comparing our agri emissions with other OECD countries is rather pointless.

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Position

Domestic emissions reductions (including from new forest planting) and using some emissions reductions from overseas (international carbon units) that have strong environmental safeguards

Notes

A larger emphasis must be on new technologies. More funds should be put into the Green Investment Fund to develop new technologies to help decrease our emissions. I think too greater reliance is placed on planting trees. At the end of the day NZ produces only 0.17% (2013 figures) of the worlds GHG emissions. If we can develop technologies that can make an impact we may be able to help the bigger emitters reduce their emissions which will have a greater overall effect on climate change. I know that power companies in Hawkes Bay are charging customers utilising solar energy more because they need to cover their costs of still supplying power to these homes. There is therefore no incentive to utilise these technologies. This should change.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

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**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

Yes

Notes**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

It should be done however a given time frame is not necessary.

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

For me personally I believe there needs to be an emphasis on meeting our emissions goals collectively as a country, with collectively being the key word. I realise that this is only a small part of the whole equation however I am worried about the potential additional costs for individual farmers to mitigate their emissions.

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

I agree with the proposed however believe there should be further emphasis on the modelling of the economic impacts of reducing GHG emissions to both individuals and industry as a whole.

Clause

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

Position

No

Notes

Lets keep it simple. Reducing NZ's GHG emissions and adapting to climate change are two different things. Given NZ's contribution to global GHG emissions is so insignificant, it is highly unlikely any changes we make are going to have an impact on climate change. I do believe it is important to address climate change however the Zero Carbon Bill is not the right place to include this.

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

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

No

Notes**Clause**

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

Notes

As I have alluded to above, my main concern is that any new rules implemented are going to be focused on the Agriculture industry. I realise the contribution agri has to our GHG emissions however given the reliance we have on the Agri sector in terms of our GDP, this has to be expected. Comparing this to other countries is unhelpful as other countries don't have the reliance on commodity exports like New Zealand does. In the Appendix of the Consultation document under agriculture it states that land use change to lower emitting uses will likely be needed to achieve material emissions reductions from agriculture. I find this worrying and hope that no farmer will be forced to change their system. Sure, if there is voluntary land use change that is fine, however forcing reductions through capping cow numbers etc should not be an option. I know I have stated that I believe too high a reliance is placed on the planting of trees however this is a key part of reaching our targets. In the appendix under forestry it states that "forestry helps buy us time until other technological developments or options become available". This already sounds like a Band-Aid solution to a problem. However, farmers should be able to use techniques such as planting areas and retiring areas as a means of mitigating their emissions.