

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?

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

Without a viable path forward to meet the target, when it all becomes too difficult, the target will get ignored. The ZCB shows no indication that a viable path exists. Page 10 states "There are plenty of ways.. But this is aspirational and gives no indication it is feasible.

Clause

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

Position

Net Zero Long-Lived Gases and Stabilised Short-Lived Gases - Long-lived gases to net zero by 2050 while also stabilising short-lived gases

Notes

Ultimately there will be a trade-off between various options depending on the levels of reduction and the desired outcomes. It would be irresponsible to commit to decisions now with the level of uncertainty. Methane net emissions are already zero, provided ruminant populations do not grow. Methane recycles turning into carbon dioxide, and then grass to be released by the ruminant. Methane emissions are no higher now than decades ago and therefore NZ methane levels are not growing. The article fails to appreciate something that should be obvious.

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

Must keep options open. Those who think domestic planting sufficient should provide information on the number of hectares to be planted per year.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

The question implies that the way forward is clear. The best evidence is that at the global level it will be extremely difficult to meet any targets without population management. Without a clear path forward flexibility is essential.

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

It is extremely unlikely that any one has a clear forward path to meet the target. Needed technologies are not in place. The ignorant should not force their views on the future.

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

It is unlikely that anyone now has the capability predict what the future options are. Those who think they do are wrong.

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

Too little focus on economic trade-offs and the wellbeing of New Zealanders and even the feasibility of any action. A path forward that maintains a viable economy is essential otherwise targets will get ignore.

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

One cannot separate policy and action plans. The concept of passing the buck by an organization more powerful than government should be utterly repudiated. The Commission itself must to establish plans to meet the target taking into account the wellbeing of New Zealanders and the likelihood of success. If they have the power to impose on Government something that they do not take responsibility for will undermine democracy and lead to an anti-climate change revolution.

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 most important issue is that the focus should be on HOW to meet the target with specific proposals for renewables, population management, maintaining the economy, the importance of natural gas to reduce coal and oil. An honest look at options such as battery powered vehicles taking fully into account whether NZ can grow vehicle numbers at critical levels, and also the environmental cost in manufacture and disposal. Otherwise it is all pie in the sky. There is also a moral problem of NZ freeloading on other nations. Those who produce vehicles for us will carry the carbon burden.

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

But not adequate. It must be more than advising and monitoring. The Commission must take full responsibility for the path forward. The mention of an adaptation plan mentioned on page 46 and discussed later is completely inadequate. It is a typical bureaucratic plan that leaves the "how" out of it.

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

Also the Commission needs to ensure that facts are correct. Currently there is no recognition that NZ produced methane is already net zero. Failure to properly scope the issues will lead to disaster as credibility will fall.

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

Something like a war cabinet is needed. Expertise on the technological change and technological possibilities are essential and a

detailed plan forward is essential. How else can the Commission deal with the real possibility that battery powered vehicles won't come on stream quickly enough as internationally the growth rate required is enormously high. We are likely to need to use natural gas powered conventional vehicles in the short term. There is no recognition that economic survival and the well-being of the nation is at stake.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

Without having to face the "How" to achieve in a concrete way failure will be inevitable. It will all become the righteous telling the great unwashed what they should do. But the consultation document is far too weak on its understanding of adaption.

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

Completely inadequate in being able to create credible action plan. E.g. the problem is not sea level rise, that is a given, the problem is what we must do. It is all is smoke and mirrors.

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

But the adaptation concept in the report is too weak. Without the Commission taking responsibility for adaptation it will become the organization of blame

Clause

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

Notes

There is far too little focus on the seriousness of the problem and the difficulties in making real progress. The expertise seems too weak. Expertise on how to keep an economy functioning with transformative policies is essential. Clear plans must be prepared otherwise targets become pipe dreams. The most likely outcome, without clearly focusing on the difficulties, is that it will become too hard and reactions against climate change as in the US and Australia become more likely.