

Name	Lucy Edwards
Email	
A Zero Carbon Act is important to me because...	<p>Climate change is real. Its effects are vast, atypical and potentially irreversible.</p> <p>Due to the effects of Climate Change, families in Alaska were not able to hunt for food in the usual way last winter, as for the first time in around 90 years, the sea didn't freeze over. Recent forest fires in Portugal, Spain and Canada have been unprecedented and storms and severe weather patterns throughout the USA and the Pacific have been more frequent and more severe. Villagers of Vunidogoloa in Fiji became the first to relocate an entire community to new lands due to rising sea levels and coastal erosion. 25% of the Great Barrier Reef disappeared in 2016 alone due to coral bleaching and in the past 40 years, 50% of all marine life has died. Certain diseases are spreading, lakes are shrinking, permafrost is melting and productivity in warmer countries is decreasing. Kiribati may be underwater by 2050.</p> <p>New Zealand, whilst boasting a clean green and pure image, has contributed to these effects. Our net emissions have increased by about 54 per cent since 1990, due to deforestation and an increase in gross emissions. Our current targets are not binding, our policy to meet those targets appears non-existent and our government is unaccountable. We need strong binding targets for emission reduction in order to protect our environment for future generations and have any hope of meeting our international commitments. And we need to act now to prevent the worst effects of climate change being realised. A Zero Carbon Act would not only safeguard New Zealand's future, but that of communities in the developing world who are already on the frontline of climate change.</p> <p>As highlighted in a recent report commissioned by Westpac, Unless action is taken now, the public faces an unnecessarily expensive deal to make the shift to a low-carbon economy. A strong Zero Carbon Act would be the first step in taking the necessary action.</p>
Q1. What process should the Government use to set a new emissions reduction target in legislation?	The Government should set a target for 2050 in legislation now.
Q2. If the Government sets a 2050 target now, which is the best target for New Zealand?	The most ambitious target: reducing total greenhouse gases to net zero by 2050. I also support taking a science-based approach to ensure our efforts to reduce emissions are as impactful as possible: we should aim for negative levels of long-lived gases, while reducing short-lived gases to sustainable levels.
Q3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?	By using domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting).
Q4. Should the Zero Carbon Bill allow the 2050 target to be revised if circumstances change?	The 2050 target should not be altered in response to "economic changes" as this undermines its long-term certainty. However, the ability to revise the 2050 target in light of major changes in scientific understanding or international agreements should be permitted.
Q5. 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?	yes - I agree with 5-year budgets set 10-15 years in advance, so that 3 are in effect at all times.

Q6 - Q7. Should the Government be able to alter emissions budgets?	No - emissions budgets should not be altered in response to “economic changes” as this undermines their long-term certainty. However, the ability to revise budgets in light of major changes in scientific understanding or international agreements should be permitted.
Q8. Do you agree with the proposed considerations that the Government and the Climate Commission will need to take into account when advising on and setting budgets?	<p>I agree that the Government and the Climate Commission should take the following factors into consideration when advising on and setting budgets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scientific knowledge regarding climate change • technology relevant to climate change • economic circumstances and the likely impact of a decision on the economy, as well as the competitiveness of particular sectors of the economy • fiscal circumstances and the likely impact of the decision on taxation, public spending and public borrowing • social circumstances and the likely impact of a decision on fuel poverty • energy policy and the likely impact of a decision on energy supplies and the carbon and energy intensity of the economy.
Q9. Should the Zero Carbon Bill require Governments to set out plans within a certain timeframe to achieve the emissions budgets?	Yes - we must learn from the mistakes of the UK's Climate Change Act and specify a strict time frame for producing a plan.
Q10. 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?	The Government’s policy plans to meet emission budgets should be comprehensive, fair, cost-effective, environmentally sustainable, and reflect a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
Q11. 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?	Yes - the Commission should not be a decision-making body.
Q12. What role do you think the Climate Change Commission should have in relation to the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (NZ ETS)?	The Commission should advise the Government on policy settings in the NZ ETS. It should not make decisions itself with respect to the number of units available in the NZ ETS, or its implementation.
Q13. 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?	<p>I agree with the following collective expertise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • climate change policy (including emissions trading) • resource economics and impacts (including social impacts, labour markets and distribution) • te Tiriti o Waitangi, te reo me ona tikanga Māori and Māori interests • climate and environmental science including mātauranga Māori • experience with addressing adaptation challenges like planning, insurance and local government • risk management • engineering and/or infrastructure • community engagement and communications. • business competitiveness • knowledge of the public and private innovation and technology development system. <p>I think expertise in public health is also important.</p>
Q14. Do you think the Zero Carbon Bill should cover adapting to climate change?	Yes. This may require a separate adaptation sub-committee within the Climate Commission.

Q15. The Government has proposed a number of new functions to help us adapt to climate change. Do you agree with the proposed functions?

I agree with the proposed functions below, but recognise that nuance is required in terms of how local councils are involved:

- a national climate change risk assessment
- a national adaptation plan
- regular review of progress towards implementing the national adaptation plan
- an adaptation reporting power

Q16. Should the Government explore setting up a targeted adaptation reporting power that could see some organisations share information on their exposure to climate change risks?

Yes

Further comments