

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

Reference no: 8842

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 Emissions - Net zero emissions across all greenhouse gases by 2050

Notes

By not including all Greenhouse gases we would be effectively subsidising emitters of the greenhouse gases not included.

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

I support local action but understand that there are more opportunities to reduce greenhouse gases effectively if we consider valid and verifiable offshore reductions/captures. We must be careful to ensure they are real and that it isn't the carbon unit traders who are actually making all the money/taking benefits.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

We don't know what will happen in the future and should not lock the country into a course of action that may end up have more severe economic consequences than forecast or conversely our targets may not be ambitious enough.

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

Long time-frames are required to have both public and private sector certainty for investment.

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

See 4 above. We are not so good at forecasting that we should not allow ourselves to change in the future. The third budget being changeable will still allow for 10 years of certainty for investors, planners and public sector etc.

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

Only under exceptional circumstances or perhaps only by a predefined amount, say +/- 10%

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

Yes, but I think the scientific knowledge should be broader than just climate change, i.e. it should include the ecosphere rather than just climate, as climate changes may be locally acceptable but the changes to the local ecology, landscape and biota may be unacceptable. Hence consideration should be broader than climate, but should always be grounded in evidence and scientific principles.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

Governments should have targets that they can be assessed against.

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 consequences for the poorer sectors of our community should be a primary consideration, and secondarily they should consider what is actually achievable within the limitations of existing infrastructures, e.g. New Zealand is very reliant on high greenhouse emissions for connection to the rest of the world and to earn foreign exchange. What will be the consequences of airline travellers actually paying for the mitigation of their emissions, and will our primary products arrive at foreign markets with a competitive quality and price.

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 and Monitoring yes, I think some degree of decision making could also be delegated to the commission as a non-political entity. The Commission and its Officers will end up with more experience than the government of the day (as has the Commerce Commission) and we should allow them to use this expertise.

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

Makes decisions itself in respect of the number of units available in the NZ ETS

Notes

Commission should be able to manage this aspect within limits without reference to the government of the day (whose views are more ideologically driven rather than evidence based). We will need to be responsive to what works and what doesn't work in the 1-2 year time-frame rather than the 10 year plus time frame

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 would like to see a strong science and engineering presence as things actually need to happen rather than just be talked about.

Clause

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

Position

No

Notes

Yes, there will be consequences from the Zero Carbon Bill itself and these should be covered by adaptation is a much bigger subject and adding this will create complexity. Put this in a separate bill.

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

I agree with the ideas but think they should be in a separate bill, not the Zero Carbon Bill. Lets be clear what the purpose of these things are and adding this will add unnecessary delay to regulations and implementation that will follow the Zero Carbon Bill.

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**Clause**

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

Notes

The Zero Carbon Bill does not consider, recognise or encourage any carbon capture methods other than growing trees. This is very short-sighted and limiting what is possible to achieve. If we give carbon/greenhouse gases a sufficiently high price then CCS solutions become viable. No consideration is given to influencing consumption behaviour (other than carbon pricing) when alternatives exist. Why do we fail to learn from watching what works or fails in other countries?, Successful consumption levers include e.g. tax the use of cars with engines >2 litres as they do in northern Europe and that changes behaviour and reduces consumption dramatically. Encourage electric car uptake by using tax incentives (such as no GST) or rebates and subsidising electricity (works in California and Norway). New Zealand has very expensive electricity at the domestic consumer level and something needs to be done to bring this into line with other OECD countries, i.e. bring it down so we can afford to use electricity to replace wood/biomass, coal, oil and gas where possible. Also our electricity infrastructure will be strained if the proposed uptake of electricity conversions is even partially achieved - where will the money for the required upgrades come from?

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