

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

Reference no: 9381

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

If we fail to commit to net zero emissions at the earliest possible date it is highly likely that the global climate increase will exceed two degrees Celsius. As a small island nation this is not a risk we should take lightly.

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

"If we fail to commit to net zero emissions at the earliest possible date it is highly likely that the global climate increase will exceed two degrees Celsius. As a small island nation this is not a risk we should take lightly." New Zealand is only a small country with a small population, yet we have shamefully high greenhouse gas emissions among the smaller nations of the world. It is up to us to be at the forefront of global change and to set an example for nations both great and small that change is not only of critical necessity, but that it is possible. With some of the highest quality post-secondary training and education across various fields we have huge potential to corner the market in sustainable technologies. As the world is running low on non-renewable resources it is not a question of if we change our ways, it is when. There is unprecedented opportunity to put our resources into a new market and work at the forefront to create the necessary technologies of tomorrow. We now have a choice; to use this unfortunate situation as a boon to our economy to enrich our people and offer them a net of security, or to remain laggards due to indecision and let other nations have first pick of the crop.

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Position

Domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)

Notes

We need to take responsibility for a government that has allowed both individual businesses and corporate giants to run amok and destroy our 'clean and green' reputation. In the name of short term economic gain, we have allowed our rivers to be polluted, individuals job security to be de-stabilized, and unsafe work practices to be swept under the rug thanks to insidious corruption in the bureaucratic sector. The government needs to do many things. Firstly, it needs to take responsibility for protecting our people and our land for the long haul. This means putting down tough environmental legislation to discontinue practices by all those who would cut corners in industrial and agricultural business practices in the name of cutting individual costs. We need to have zero tolerance for industrial pollution; and for practices that put both employees and surrounding communities in harms way must be ceased by having significant legal repercussions. An important change to this could be putting court fines on a sliding scale. If a company or individual causes an environmental infraction, it is important for the repercussions to be meaningful. By allowing them to get off with only fines in the thousands, you are allowing many hundreds of kilometers of our land to remain at risk. It is important to make a legal consequence relevant to the person or group in question; not allowing them to walk out of court with only a sacrifice in small change to prevent them doing more harm in the future. You must have severe consequences for every case of contamination, pollution and malpractice that appears in court. By charging corporate bodies in the hundreds of thousands, or millions, they would have proper incentive to proceed with transparent and honorable business practices. It is also important that those who create destruction are to rectify any harm they have caused. By enabling farmers and industrial businesses to clean up their own environmental contamination, this will also give them sufficient cause not to do so again. The next change that must be made is creating new employment opportunity for those who are currently in communities or fields of employment that will soon be redundant or greatly reduced due to climate change adaptation. These are persons such as farmers, miners, fracking well operators, those involved with heavy machine industry and those who are reliant on the greenhouse gas vehicle industry. These people must have priority for new jobs; and government support until they have and maintain job security. On this note, it is imperative that the government offers support to sustainable industry start-ups that have large employee capacity; this could be in sustainable forestry, green industry or in the technological sector. It would be a great leap forward for our country if the government could lead by example, providing all government employees with a living wage, holiday pay and sick leave. As well as this, if the government was to put funds into re-purchasing agricultural land from individuals or businesses, and then creating sustainable forestry operations on said land, it would be a clear sign to the peoples of New Zealand that the current government is committed to giving the people a future that is secure and promises health and growth. It is additionally important that the government provides support for those who's industries are at

risk of harm due to fluctuating temperatures and extreme weather becoming more commonplace. Industries who rely on consistent seasonal conditions - such as small-time horticulture farmers and those who operate within the winter tourism industry - need to have government support in order to exist in stable business practice. It is also important that businesses and corporate practices that are more sustainable and which reach net zero emissions more quickly and efficiently need to be rewarded. Tax breaks, or more kosher incentives of the like, would be a huge motivator for people in such sectors. For those who go completely zero emissions there must be some kind of palpable reward in order to use them as an example to encourage others to follow suit.

Clause

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

Position

No

Notes

No. It is not acceptable to risk harm to our country and our people by allowing for such a clause to exist. The only time in which this could be relevant would be if additional measures to more quickly and effectively reduce emissions were to be put in place. We cannot risk moving any slower than we already are; the risks of harm are too great.

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

I think this is wise, especially if it means the government has to take clear, defined actions to mitigate and adapt to our changing climate.

Clause

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

Position

No - emissions budgets should not be able to be changed

Notes

As I have said above, no, it is too risky. We cannot afford to slow our journey to net zero emissions at this point in time. The only time where changing an emissions budget would be appropriate would be to make it more severe, for the sake of protecting our people of Aotearoa.

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

No

Notes

Absolutely not. It is too risky, see above.

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

I think the climate change commission needs powers higher than just that of an advisory body

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

Absolutely. It is the role of the government to protect the people; to ensure their wellbeing and prosperity. It is the government's lack of action in name of "free market rules" that have enabled heavy industry and the agriculture sector to ruin our country's conservation land, water ways, ocean life and emission footprint. The government must no longer put responsibility onto the backs of individual citizens; many of whom are ill-equipped to deal with the repercussions of an unchecked increased in climate, let alone have the resources to change this own footprint. The government must legislate to achieve these emissions goals. They must crack down on unsustainable, high emission practice within our country. By making it tougher for producers to put single-use products onto our shelves, or to put gas-burning transportation on our streets then this will enable the citizens of New Zealand to easily make the right choices to support our transition to net zero emissions. This can easily be done by putting out limits on the amount of plastic and otherwise un-biodegradable packaging, into our environment. Tough mandates are needed on single use plastic bags, Styrofoam, uncompostable take-out containers, single-use plastic wrap, wax-lined produce containers, polystyrene packaging containers and

pellets, and plastic microbeads to name a few. If these are no longer available on the shelves of our stores, or needed in construction and similar industries, then our emissions impact will decrease rapidly and significantly. If the government simultaneously provides financial incentives for companies who are compliant and who reach net zero emissions more quickly, then this will sit well with the largely uneducated population of New Zealand. The government also need to put out well-considered legislation on public transit. As our cities grow more dense and our population steadily expands, we will need affordable, practical, easily-accessible public transportation. This means action on several fronts. It means ensuring that local body governments are compliant and willing to create these necessary changes, that funding for transportation is increased to meet these needs, and that we have the workers to fill these positions. Firstly, we need staff. Which means that the bus/train/boat drivers unions need to be heard, and workers need guarantee of healthful, safe, secure and reasonable working conditions. This will in turn create many jobs, which will curry favour with the general public of New Zealand. Secondly, funding. We need to increase our reliance on rail transportation to get cars and buses off the road, which will ease congestion, improve public health and reduce emissions to boot. We also need funding to increase the number of 100% electric buses we have on our streets. This will enable service to increase all over the country, which will make transportation more accessible for a greater percentage of our population, enabling them to leave their private vehicles at home. Which brings me to my final point on the transport front. We, the people, need public transit that is firstly timely; that runs every five to twenty minutes over most areas of our major cities. It must be affordable, and we must be able to combine transport types in one payment, such as the compass system in Vancouver, Canada. It must be accessible to the disabled, those with small children in prams and cyclists to enable more people to move about with more freedom. Finally, it needs to stretch over a large expanse of both commercial and residentially zoned land; to enable more people to use it with greater consistency. It will be a large investment on the government's part. With that in mind, it is important that you frame it as such; something that costs a significant amount of capital up front, but that pays for itself over generations to come. It is also important to keep in mind that if your citizens are healthier and have more time to use as they please, then they will be more able and more enthused to create new technologies, businesses and opportunities for our country to grow as a whole. If you continually frame your actions in the lens of long-term prosperity then you will be able to garner more public support.

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

It is critical that the Climate Change Commission has decision making powers involving the ETS to avoid what has happened in the past with those who have higher than advised admissions simply purchasing more carbon units and not changing their actual greenhouse gas emissions in the slightest. If we continue to use the ETS and set our stock by it, then we must be more disciplined and equally scrutinize all greenhouse gas emitters.

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

The suggested range of expertise is very thorough, I would add that it is imperative that the commission includes those with expertise on sustainable, high-density urban planning which embodies a city with the spirit of community and human connection

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

Absolutely. Now that it looks as we will miss the 1.5*c threshold, we have a very narrow window to keep the climate below 2*c. With this increase, it is almost certain that more violent weather and more frequent large weather events will hit our small nation; we must be prepared so we can best ensure the safety and prosperity of New Zealanders in adverse circumstances. Coastal communities must have resources to deal with flooding and tsunami risks, inland communities must be well-equipped to deal with flooding, drought, and high-wind storms.

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

make that a maybe. You need to open up more jobs, create new departments specifically for the various facets of climate and use these to create links between specialists. There are many highly passionate, qualified New Zealanders who would be interested in working solely on creating viable, effective climate change adaptation measures for our Nation; you only need to reach out to them and set this in motion.

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 government has to take responsibility for reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the board to net zero. It must do this through: - new legislation to encourage proactivity - funding towards the public transport and environmental sectors - support for at risk industries - support for those in soon to be reduced industries to find new areas of work and financial stability - sufficient incentive for innovators to create new and widespread sustainable technologies and business sectors - sufficient incentives for existing corporate, industrial and agricultural high-emitters to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050 - committing to net zero emissions by 2050, and protecting this initiative as it is imperative to the survival and long-term wealth and safety of our country - smart marketing and PR to keep and grow support of the greater public of New Zealand - the creation of a new Ministry for climate change (or equivalent) to create new roles for experts across numerous related fields to work together on a long term reduction in emissions (climate change mitigation,) and climate change adaptation which can be put into effect promptly and effectively - the creation of a climate change commission of diverse experts (equal numbers of male and female, diverse ethnicity, body types and also inclusive of at least one disabled persons.) - Giving the CCC powers to act, rather than just to advise. The government of New Zealand must also have more frequent, much better advertised opportunities for submission and advocacy from all members of our population, as many have missed out this time due to severe lack of outreach.

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