

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

Reference no: 9663

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 2050 target in legislation now

Notes

As an ex-pat, I am so proud of New Zealand leading on an ambitious target to eliminate greenhouse gases. I am embarrassed by the politics in Australia and think the world will look with scorn at the inaction here. New Zealand has the opportunity, not only to do the right thing by taking strong action to eliminate emissions, but to build our reputation in the world, particularly in keeping with our clean, green, 100% pure image.

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

Animal production around the world is massive and unsustainable. If New Zealand is really putting this Zero Carbon Act together to show our leadership around the world, we must be very careful not to be soft on this target just because some greenhouse gases are short-lived. Methane still has a warming effect 40 or more times that of carbon dioxide. Nitrous oxide is linked with animal production. Globally, there are also other alarming sources of methane to consider, e.g. the feedback loop from melting permafrost. The short-lived gases target doesn't necessarily need to be zero but we should aim to reduce them, as a more ambitious target than stabilising.

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Position

Domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)

Notes

Carbon credits around the world are controversial. It may be hard to ensure transparency to prove they're actually doing what they say they're doing. New Zealand has a great forestry industry that could benefit from a carbon credit economy. Afforestation to provide habitat, i.e. native bush regeneration is also compatible with providing additional habitat for the resurgence of native animals we will see as a result of eliminating predators by 2050, and will be a massive boost for tourism. I am a Great Walk walker and enthusiast. I would come from Australia to complete more Great Walks, in fact, I'm doing two in February 2019. I would especially like to see the regeneration of our lowland podocarp forests as this environment was the most decimated from early land clearing efforts and would be valuable for many native animals. On other emissions reductions, it would be great to see New Zealand embrace efficient and effective public transport in our cities, complemented by a strategy to incentivise electric car uptake. All great for the 100% Pure image. Not to mention convenient for tourists to get around. I currently need to hire a car to get around nearly every time I come. The exception being when I go to the South Island for Great Walks - very well set up with bus and shuttle transport.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

Yes, the bill may need to be revised as new technologies come on board or other legitimate issues that need to be taken into consideration, for example, new research. There is no doubt we have to reduce emissions as fast as possible. However, any ability to revise the bill shouldn't allow a weakening of the targets. This would make it too easy for future governments to bail out. Look at what happened to Australia's carbon tax. It was making a measurable reduction on emissions but was rolled back by the LNP and now our emissions are increasing.

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

No

Notes

I think we should be setting budgets to the end goal at 2050. I would propose something like two or three five year budgets and a third out to 2050. We must ensure we are on track for the end goal.

Clause

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

Position

Yes - the third emissions budget should be able to be changed but only when the subsequent budget is set

Notes

It seems reasonable to have the revision of the budgets in line with the budget timeframes, not an election timeframe. I also propose an extra budget to 2050. It is important to keep the end goal in mind. Ideally it would be this budget that could be changed at the time of budget review (not election time).

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

I agree the government should be able to review the emissions budgets, as long as the budget review does not weaken the end goal of zero emissions by 2050 (or whatever is set).

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

Economic growth should not take precedent over an inclusive society or a healthy environment, and certainly not over reducing emissions as planned. It is clear that financial expenditure on emissions reductions now is cheaper than the cost later.

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 local governments must set emissions reduction plans. How can we meet emissions budgets without a plan? We, the people and businesses, need to know how to take action to achieve emissions reductions. But the central government must support the local governments with clear policy and financial support where appropriate.

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

It is most important that targets are science based. The path to zero emissions must be clear. Businesses and society has to know how to get to the targets and they'll need some help with incentives and clarity on actions to take. The targets must be understandable, measurable, and achievable. Consultation should include experts from a range of areas: scientists, e.g., climate, environment, economists, urban planners, sociologists, policy and communication; representatives from major business sectors, e.g., tourism, agriculture, forestry; representatives from public organisations, e.g., health, urban planning, DOC; and representatives from public interest groups, e.g., iwi, NGO's. A broad input will allow a balanced conversation but balance in the size and scope of included consultants is also necessary. Dialogue and good communication cannot be overstated.

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

An independent body is important and will hopefully protect the bill from political meddling.

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

Good range of experts. I would suggest "public and private innovation and technology development system" input is essential and environmental science should include experts in NZ ecology.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

Adaptation will be necessary. The world is not acting fast enough and we are seeing increased extreme events. We have pretty much locked in 1.5C and close to missing 2C. We will need to adapt.

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 do not have much knowledge in this area but the provisions seem reasonable.

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

Organisations are being urged the world over to share their exposure to climate change risks. By knowing these risks, the organisation and community can better prepare. The businesses might be worried about the impact on their profitability but that's the idea isn't it? They will be encouraged to do more to reduce their risks if a) they know what they are and b) their profitability might be affected by stating what they are.

Clause

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

Notes

Many people will be concerned about the impact on the economy. A strong narrative around a strong economy is important. Perhaps the focus can shift from consumerism and money to health (societal, personal and environmental) and an equitable society. It's hard to get it right, use examples of best practice from around the world and utilise the best science available. Be flexible as science and technology changes but don't waver on the end goal (unless making it more ambitious). The end result can only be positive for New Zealand.

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