

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

Reference no: 10596

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

I support the Government setting an earlier target of 2040, or 2045 rather than 2050.

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

We need to have an ambitious goal if we are to achieve anything. We cannot expect to reach the ideal situation if we do not aim for the ideal situation.

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Position

Domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)

Notes

Do not use emissions reductions from overseas as this has no credibility, and NZ has the means to achieve net zero carbon emissions without resorting to overseas credits.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

However, the 2050 target should only be revised in exceptional circumstances and following the advice of the Climate Change Commission experts.

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

Legally-binding budgets, set 10-15 years in advance so that 3 budgets are in effect at all times, at a level recommended by the Climate Commission and approved by Parliament, are fundamental to the Zero Carbon Act.

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

Budgets should only be revised in exceptional circumstances. It is not appropriate for an incoming new government to change an upcoming budget, which has already been set. This would create too much uncertainty and instability. A new government is able to introduce different policies to meet the upcoming target.

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

For example, it might be appropriate to change an upcoming budget after an extreme natural disaster (such as a major earthquake). Revising a budget in this situation would not mean changing the long-term 2050 target.

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

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

This time frame should be 6 months after an emission budget has been set.

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 Government should consider the advice of the Climate Change Commission for all aspects of responding to climate change, including setting plans to meet emissions budgets.

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

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

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

As well as the expertise listed on page 45 of Our Climate Your Say, the commission should include expertise in public health.

Clause

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

Position

No

Notes

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

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

Dear Minister I strongly support the passing of a legally binding climate law and the immediate creation of a Zero Carbon Act. I believe in a net-zero carbon future for New Zealand. We need to make dramatic reductions in our emissions to keep climate change limited to 1.5 degrees and protect our native flora and fauna, our societies and our important infrastructures for ourselves and future generations. We must act now to make a positive difference. The key things I support in a Zero Carbon Act are: • an Act that follows the climate science by covering all gases across all sectors • a target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040/45 • an Act that targets the emissions from transport, industrial activity, agriculture and all other sources • an Act that includes emissions budgets that should be at least as important as fiscal budgets, with plans set by the Government to achieve these budgets • an independent Climate Change Commission of experts to monitor emissions and give advice to the Government to keep New Zealand on track for its emissions reduction goals. I support Zero Carbon Act legislation that establishes the goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees. We should not settle for 2 degrees warming. Any higher than 1.5 degrees would result in devastating impacts for Pacific Island states and significant extinctions. That is not acceptable. To give us the best possibility of achieving no more than 1.5 degrees warming by the end of the century, we must start making rapid cuts in all greenhouse gas emissions now. I support a net-zero target of 2040/45, with the majority of cuts occurring over the next decade. I support all greenhouse gases being included in the law, consistent with international climate frameworks. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) clearly states that methane reduction is critical to succeeding in tackling climate change. Our climate law must include all greenhouse gases, including those from our biggest emitting sector - the agricultural sector. I support setting a gross emissions reduction target as well as a net emissions reduction target. We cannot rely on planting trees alone to offset our emissions. We must seek to decarbonise our industry and transport systems. As the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment stated in their submission to the Productivity Commission, June 2018, page 4: "Each tonne of emissions offset by forestry is a tonne not reduced at source. Relying too heavily on forestry could lead to continued high levels of gross emissions. Pressure to reduce these after 2050 could entail a more costly and disruptive transition than a deeper transition commenced earlier." I support the 'firewall' principle that New Zealand's targets must be achieved by actual reductions in our own domestic emissions and not through the purchase of overseas carbon credits or an over-reliance on forests as carbon sinks. I support setting legally binding climate budgets that are set at a bare-minimum ambition, which must be achieved or bettered by government within the prescribed timeframes. While budgets should be binding, policy recommendations from the Commission should be just that - recommendations. The world needs pathways to transformational change if we are to avoid catastrophic climate change. This is the scale of the challenge. The science is clear: the only way we can succeed is with big ambition. New Zealand must be bold and pass strong laws for the sake of our precious earth and future generations. I support the establishment of a Climate Change Commission. The commission's role should include: • devising binding climate budgets • identifying the level of reduction for each form of greenhouse gas (long-lived and short-lived) • monitoring adherence to the set 'firewall' • monitoring progress towards our targets • monitoring cumulative emissions • advising on adaptation. The Climate Change Commission should provide advice to the New Zealand government. To ensure transparency and accountability, I support the Government being required to table all reports from the Climate Change Commission to Parliament. I support the Government preparing a National Climate Risk Assessment. The Government must be required to produce an Adaption Programme to address the climate risks identified in the National Climate Risk Assessment.

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