

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

Roger Timothy Miller

Reference no: 11015

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

The Climate Change Commission are the experts charged with this responsibility. Also reduces the ability of future governments to chop and change (political meddling/interference)? ie. More consistency?

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

Short-lived gases such as methane behave much differently to long-lived gases like CO2 so should be treated differently in an emissions regime. This is not about protecting agriculture, it's just better science. See <https://theconversation.com/why-methane-should-be-treated-differently-compared-to-long-lived-greenhouse-gases-97845>

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

This makes the most economic sense. Carbon emissions is a world-wide not a national issue. Countries who are better placed to reduce emissions (ie. can do it cheaper) should be incentivised to do so. Free trade benefits everyone in the long run.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

Probably. You never know what might happen in the future. Though this could weaken the legislation and leave it open to abuse?

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

Industries etc need a carbon price path forecast to assist in investment decisions. 15 years sounds about right.

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

I think some flexibility is wise. But again industries need a forecast they can rely on. We can't be chopping and changing every 3 year election.

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

See previous question

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?

Notes

Not sure. In principle, markets (ie. an ETS) should be better than governments at finding the economically optimal way forward. If the market is not responding fast enough, the Commission can ramp up the pressure by reducing carbon budgets more quickly.

Government should only intervene if there is a clear market failure - eg. if there are clearly undesirable outcomes.

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

Not sure. See previous question.

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

Clause

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

Position

Yes

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

With regards to the ETS. I'm no expert but I believe the current ETS/International agreements don't deal with forestry/timber in an appropriate way. As I understand it, as soon as a tree is cut down it create an immediate carbon liability. This assumes that all trees that are cut down turn into CO2 more or less immediately. But this is clearly not the case with timber used in construction, furniture etc - these actually represent more or less permanent carbon sinks. This needs to be fixed. If the international community doesn't agree I think NZ should go it alone - ie. lead by example. This is just better science.