

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

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Reference no: 11137

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

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

The legislation should establish the goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees. We should not settle for 2 degrees warming, that would lock in devastating impacts on Pacific Island states and cause 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, there must be rapid cuts in all greenhouse gases beginning now. I support a net-zero target of 2040 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 makes it clear that methane reduction is critical to success in tackling climate change. It is politically and scientifically untenable for New Zealand's climate law to exclude any gases from our biggest emitting sector - the agricultural sector. We also need gross emissions reduction targets. While I support the reforestation of large areas (particularly with native trees), we need to avoid over-reliance on forests as carbon sinks in our carbon accounting. As the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment has stated, "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." A target should also be set to achieve net negative emissions, or "drawdown", equivalent to emissions being 120% below 1990 levels by 2050. Finally, New Zealand should also strengthen its Paris Agreement commitment, in line with achieving net zero carbon dioxide by 2040.

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Position

Domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)

Notes

I support the 'firewall' principle, that New Zealand's targets must be achieved by actual cuts in our own emissions, and not through the purchase of overseas carbon credits or an over-reliance on forests as carbon sinks.

Clause

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

Position

No

Notes

I am cautious about how answers to this question will be aggregated and interpreted, and have therefore answered 'No' to this question. Targets should not be allowed to be weakened, only strengthened.

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

Yes. There should also be a requirement that the largest cuts occur in the first decade following implementation of the Act, with this being reflected in the budgets.

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

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

I am cautious about how answers to this question will be aggregated and interpreted, and have therefore answered 'No' to this question. Targets should not be allowed to be weakened, only strengthened.

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, together with the following: to reduce cumulative emissions sufficiently to avoid dangerous climate change, the steepest emissions cuts to carbon dioxide must occur in the first 10 years.

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

Yes. We must learn from the mistakes of the UK's Climate Change Act and specify a strict time frame (6 months) for producing a plan.

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's policy plans to meet emission budgets should be comprehensive, fair, cost-effective, environmentally sustainable, and reflect a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The impact on vulnerable people should particularly be considered. Beneficiary groups, unions, and iwi need to be worked with.

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

Yes. The Commission should not be a decision-making body. However, the Government should be legally required to consider and formally respond to the Commission's advice, and to provide an explanation if they do not act on it.

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

I believe the ETS should be replaced with a carbon charge.

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

The Government should prepare a National Climate Risk Assessment and an Adaptation Programme to address the climate risks

identified in this Assessment.

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

The world needs pathways to transformational change if we are to avoid catastrophic warming. 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 law for the sake of our precious earth and future generations.