

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

Reference no: 11520

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 long as the climate change commission is flexible to new scientific data and developments, a firm target is needed, otherwise progress and innovation will be slow.

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 efficiently produce food, which is the primary producer of short lived gases. A target that is excessively harsh on primary producers will only shift production elsewhere that is less carbon efficiency, harming the businesses of primary producers in NZ, making food more expensive for those that can least afford it and leaving the void to be filled by less efficient producers.

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

We are very efficient producers of food and export over 80% of our produce. As much of our footprint is as a result of providing protein to different economies, this needs to be reflected in a trade balance that complements our economic strengths.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

The bill should be flexible for advances in scientific knowledge, monitoring measurements and considerations towards practical changes. The commission should hold a biennial consultation process that tracks changes in meeting these targets including any new info that comes to hand, with any altering of targets to be consulted on by way of non-binding referenda timed with general and/or local elections in a way that minimises partisan influence.

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

It is impossible to meet a target without any models of how they will be achieved. A 5-15 year time-frame is sensible for this kind of bill.

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

It is difficult to generate scientifically based outcomes when constantly used as a political football. Any decision to alter targets should be only allowed on agreement and/or recommendation from a climate commission that is established in a manner that is both

accountable and neutral to the government of the day.

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

Notes

Exceptional circumstances need to be clearly defined. Adjustments to the budget would need to be made to alleviate suffering, prevent undue hardship to groups of people who are powerless to change their circumstances or adapt to new scientific knowledge and developments. Without a definition of "exceptional circumstances" such a question cannot be answered.

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, these considerations are sound. It is important that in the event of a decision, any disproportionate negative effects on any particular group must be considered and mitigated in the short to medium term.

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, provided appropriate considerations raised in this consultation process are incorporated.

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

1. The Carbon Zero Bill needs to be transitional, not punitive. Society has been built on the basis of many practices, and people should not be punished for actions that have become embedded due to societal norms. Any practices that need to change to meet targets need to occur in consultation with affected parties and changes to such practices need to be fairly assisted by government if they are to regulate these changes. 2. Any regulation must be considered with respect to outcomes. If regulations are made to achieve the outcome of minimised negative climate change, then any regulations that are found to be irrelevant or counter to this outcome should be removed, and a triennial review process enacted, to be overseen by the climate commission, to alter or remove out-dated or inappropriate provisions. 3. If revenues are generated as a result of a climate commission or similar, then such revenues need to be dedicated solely to the remediation of climate change and/or assistance to those that are disadvantaged by regulation. Revenues are not to be diverted to other government activities and stern oversight should be held over the Climate Change Commission to ensure that revenues are not spent in a way that could perversely incentivise actions by those in the commission. 4. Minister Shaw indicated during a public meeting that New Zealand was involved with international alliances to meet climate change targets. If New Zealand is to be a world leader in climate change action, then we need a tangible voice at this table. We also need to ensure that any moves made by NZ government are in keeping with and/or recognised by other nations in our trade agreements.

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

These functions need to be decoupled from the political process and needs a process for appointments that removes it from political gerrymandering. Any appointments to the commission could be ratified by votes from the Vice-Chancellors and/or Deans of respective schools of NZ universities.

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

The ETS needs to be decoupled from the political process. Eventually, any NZ ETS needs to be linked with an international market, which can only be achieved with international agreements that do not exist at this point.

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

1. The commission should have a term limit of 2 terms (3-4 year terms) to prevent a culture of feathering ones' own nest and to encourage refreshment of expertise.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

We are a small nation. As we do not control the actions of others in adapting to climate change, our actions cannot be guaranteed to affect the outcome. As such, we must be prepared for failure and advice must be sought to protect us against the effects of failure.

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

Yes, provided that such functions are applied with the weight of statistical credibility and updated under an independent review process.

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

Yes. These climate change risks need to be publicised as well as the impacts of adapting to climate change and/or the impacts of preventing these changes. Any information generated as a result of this needs to be carefully handled so that it does not get misinterpreted.

Clause

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

Notes

Any climate change legislation needs to be considered in terms of genuine human need. Humans need food, shelter, warmth and community. Many people have become very rich on the idea of environmentalism and many people will be priced out of genuine human need on the basis of some environmental legislation that has been proposed. As a small country, we will not solve global issues while impoverishing our own population. Environmentalism is a two way street, and trading one form of crony capitalism for another will not fix anything. When embarking on any ground-breaking legislation, always remember the law of unintended consequences.

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