

# Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

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## Reference no: 11535

**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

If there is not a firm target set in legislation, there is a danger that the response will drift along for the next few years before real action is taken. A clear target (with clear, and ambitious interim targets) means everyone knows what we are aiming for. The quicker we get started, the easier it will be to get to zero.

### 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 short-lived gases still create problems, so it makes sense to deal with them at the same time as the long-lived ones. We are going to be faced with a major shift in the way we do things, and it would be unhelpful to go through that twice over.

### Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

### Position

Domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)

### Notes

NZ should take responsibility for its own emissions, not outsource the response to other countries. There would be significant costs involved in ensuring that international carbon units really were valid and that they remained in place (e.g. carbon sink forests stayed in perpetuity).

### Clause

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

### Position

No

### Notes

Unless there is a strong commitment made (preferably supported by all parties in Parliament) that is binding, there is a danger that the target will be watered down when the necessary changes start to be noticed. NZ has a responsibility, along with everyone else in the world, to deal with our mess. That should not be able to be swept under the carpet for reasons of political expediency.

### 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

Interim budgets is an essential spur to activity. They should be challenging right from the first 5 year period, so people (i.e. the ordinary population, who are the ones who need to change habits) and businesses (who can enable people to change) take the challenge seriously.

### 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 would be sensible to have a mechanism for revising budgets based on what has been achieved in the previous budget period, but the budgets should only be able to be revised to make them more challenging (not less).

**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**

It would be too hard to define a 'major event' to avoid the provision for adjusting being misused. And if there is a major event such as a catastrophic earthquake, that should be taken as an opportunity to rebuild in a zero-carbon way.

**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****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**

Need a range of short, medium and long term plans. It is probably most important to start with the long term ones (e.g. ensuring that all housing is built to a high standard of energy efficiency), but there should also be a focus on behaviour-change programmes that can deliver benefits in the shorter term (e.g. incentives for children to walk to school rather than be driven). The Government needs to work with all of us! We, as individuals, will be a crucial part of the change, and if we are not persuaded of the urgency of acting, the change will not happen as fast or consistently as it should. That means (a) politicians setting aside their political ambitions to work constructively together, (b) making it crystal clear that businesses are part of the solution (and might even benefit from changing), and (c) investing in comprehensive education programmes that inspire people to do better (encouraging rather than berating them).

**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**

Makes decisions itself in respect of the number of units available in the NZ ETS

**Notes**

The Commission will be an independent body of experts, so is better placed to make decisions than either the governing party or the whole parliament, both of which could (and probably would) be swayed by lobbyists and public opinion (which is likely to object to changes that put prices up or force them to change their habits). But there should be some review mechanism in place, just in case the Commission goes rogue.

**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**

The 'desirable' expertise items should probably also be 'essential' ones.

**Clause**

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

**Position**

Yes

**Notes**

Linking the two makes it clear that they are part of the same problem. Showing the cost of adaptation to people helps to highlight the need to change our carbon footprints. Adaptation measures could be tied in with carbon reductions, so that for example if houses need to be relocated, there is financial assistance to do so if the house owner rebuilds in a zero-carbon way.

**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**

Placing that power in the Commission would make sense, as it is independent and politically neutral.

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

Please get on with it!