A Zero Carbon Act is important to me because...

The near-total inaction of NZ governments clearly shows that action on climate change needs can no longer be a fair-weather political choice. A Zero Carbon Act gives all future governments a mandate to act on emissions reduction and the essential transition to a zero-carbon economy.

My own experience of NZ communities is that there is a wealth of knowledge, action and commitment to transitioning to a zero carbon economy at the grass roots level, but what has been missing until now is leadership and action from government and the farming sector. A Zero Carbon Act is the mechanism to change this.

Q1. What process should the Government use to set a new emissions reduction target in legislation?

The Government should set a target for 2050 in legislation now.

Q2. If the Government sets a 2050 target now, which is the best target for New Zealand?

The most ambitious target: reducing total greenhouse gases to net zero by 2050. I also support taking a science-based approach to ensure our efforts to reduce emissions are as impactful as possible: we should aim for negative levels of long-lived gases, while reducing short-lived gases to sustainable levels. Methane must be included as well as carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide. I also support taking a science-based approach to ensure our efforts to reduce emissions are as impactful as possible: we should aim for negative levels of long-lived gases, while reducing short-lived gases to sustainable levels. The emissions from transport, industrial activity, agriculture, and all other sources should be included in the target. Even ‘short-lived’ gasses can have a huge effect on our climate and need to be reduced. I support a 1.5°C net zero emissions target for 2040. This is because in terms of global urgency, the health gains from equitable mitigation, and especially fairness, the current target needs to be more ambitious, before 2040.

Q3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

By using domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting).

Q4. Should the Zero Carbon Bill allow the 2050 target to be revised if circumstances change?

The 2050 target should not be altered in response to “economic changes” as this undermines its long-term certainty. However, the ability to revise the 2050 target in light of major changes in scientific understanding or international agreements should be permitted.

Q5. 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?

yes - I agree with 5-year budgets set 10-15 years in advance, so that 3 are in effect at all times.

Q6 - Q7. Should the Government be able to alter emissions budgets?

No - emissions budgets should not be altered in response to “economic changes” as this undermines their long-term certainty. However, the ability to revise budgets in light of major changes in scientific understanding or international agreements should be permitted.
Q8. Do you agree with the proposed considerations that the Government and the Climate Commission will need to take into account when advising on and setting budgets?

I agree that the Government and the Climate Commission should take the following factors into consideration when advising on and setting budgets:

- scientific knowledge regarding climate change
- technology relevant to climate change
- economic circumstances and the likely impact of a decision on the economy, as well as the competitiveness of particular sectors of the economy
- fiscal circumstances and the likely impact of the decision on taxation, public spending and public borrowing
- social circumstances and the likely impact of a decision on fuel poverty
- energy policy and the likely impact of a decision on energy supplies and the carbon and energy intensity of the economy.

Q9. Should the Zero Carbon Bill require Governments to set out plans within a certain timeframe to achieve the emissions budgets?

Yes - we must learn from the mistakes of the UK's Climate Change Act and specify a strict time frame for producing a plan.

Q10. 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?

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.

Q11. 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?

Yes - the Commission should not be a decision-making body. But also the Commission must set NZ's Emissions Budgets – like the Reserve Bank independently sets NZ's Official Cash Rate. The Commission can also advise how NZ stays within these budgets, how NZ can best adapt to climate change, and monitor progress on NZ's emissions reductions. 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. It is also crucial that the Commission's advice is transparent. Just like the UK Climate Commission, the NZ Commission's advice should be released to all NZers, media and the government at the same time. The Government should not receive nor get advice on Emissions Budgets in advance of their public release. This will allow NZers to also hold government to account, and prevent governments from interfering or otherwise unduly influencing the Commission's independent and official advice.

Q12. What role do you think the Climate Change Commission should have in relation to the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (NZ ETS)?

The Commission should advise the Government on policy settings in the NZ ETS. It should not make decisions itself with respect to the number of units available in the NZ ETS, or its implementation.

Q13. 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?

I agree with the following collective expertise:

- climate change policy (including emissions trading)
- resource economics and impacts (including social impacts, labour markets and distribution)
- te Tiriti o Waitangi, te reo me ona tikanga Māori and Māori interests
- climate and environmental science including mātauranga Māori
- experience with addressing adaptation challenges like planning, insurance and local government
- risk management
- engineering and/or infrastructure
- community engagement and communications.
- business competitiveness
- knowledge of the public and private innovation and technology development system.

I think expertise in public health is also important.
| Q14. Do you think the Zero Carbon Bill should cover adapting to climate change? | No. This would distract from the central purpose of the Climate Commission. Adaptation could be worked on by other agencies while the Commission focuses on the carbon budget. |
| Q15. The Government has proposed a number of new functions to help us adapt to climate change. Do you agree with the proposed functions? | I agree with the proposed functions below, but recognise that nuance is required in terms of how local councils are involved:  
- a national climate change risk assessment  
- a national adaptation plan  
- regular review of progress towards implementing the national adaptation plan  
- an adaptation reporting power |
| Q16. Should the Government explore setting up a targeted adaptation reporting power that could see some organisations share information on their exposure to climate change risks? | Yes |
| Further comments |  |