

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

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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 crisis is a crisis of industrial culture. It is not just about setting targets and developing renewable energies. The intersecting environmental emergencies of catastrophic biodiversity loss, climate change, ocean warming, ocean acidification, land degradation, increasing climate refugees, indicate a crisis in ecoliteracy and in the values we need to develop to usher in a just, equitable thriving world. * This research below is from my recent cultural Ph.D. in Art in Ecology. Please feel free to contact me for more information. I am a New Zealander but have been studying in Ireland, so my information about the important yet under-acknowledged leadership role of the culture sector to be instrumental in developing NZ's values for an ecological age, are new. ** Please note, the NZ Prime Minister, Jacinda Adern, as holding NZ's Minister of Arts, Culture and Heritage portfolio, has particular potential to foster support for the NZ cultural sector to develop the new values for an ecological wellbeing for NZ's citizens and its nonhuman inhabitants. Recent research & international cultural policy (UNESCO, IFACCA) confirm that creative practices have a critical role to humanise, localise and make relevant, sustainability directives and policies that rely too heavily on facts and figures. The eco-social emergencies that NZ is facing, including climate change, indicate that NZ, like Britain, should urgently develop cultural policy and programmes to engage civil society toward eco-social well-being and sustainability. For the last decade, the UK's Julies' Bicycle organisation has partnered with the Art Council England to educate and support the cultural sector to lead (with science and government), situated, relevant, creative and engaging responses to the climate and other intersecting environmental crises. Possibly more relevant is the Creative Carbon Scotland (CCS) organisation, funded by the Scottish Arts Council and other partners, as it delivering a programme to inspire the creative sector to take a leadership role, in a country with a similar population to New Zealand. CCS has evolved to enable the Scottish culture sector to perform a critical role in its national discourse about a more sustainable Scottish Future. It has developed 3 main strategies, that I believe could be readily incorporated into Ireland's cultural agencies' policies 1 CCS works to educate interested creatives and organisations about why and how eco-social concerns may be addressed in their creative practices and work, whether they work on their own or with or for larger organisations. 2 CCS provides Scottish art institutions with very practical training in carbon measurement, reporting and reduction. 3 CCS is the go-to place for cultural sustainability policy development. They know that 'Individuals' and organisations' actions to increase environmental sustainability are accelerated by policy and strategic frameworks which support them.' At the moment 6 full-time staff are employed at CCS - this is how seriously the topic is being addressed in Scotland. It does help though, that Scotland has clearly publicised Carbon sector targets, that New Zealand still lacks. CCS receives targeted funding from Creative Scotland (the Scottish Arts Council) and from the City of Edinburgh Council CCS has partners throughout the art sector and with science and sustainability organisations, community groups and environmental NGOs. Importantly, if national art and sustainability policy are developed for New Zealand, it could help direct funding to establish such an agency and support creatives & organisations who wish to engage in this area. This would improve New Zealand's Art sector's potential to engage us all for Ireland's future; it would begin to evolve necessary ecoliteracy for the sector and give much-needed recognition and context for those in the arts we should be supporting with all our hearts.

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

We may only have a small time window of opportunity to curb the really damaging effects of carbon emissions on the climate, otherwise it may be too late, or at best, be less effective. We urgently need to set an ambitious target that sends a strong message to the world and encourages other countries to follow. Our previous government has allowed the status quo to continue for the past ten years and our emissions have continued to increase. We must act now and we need an ambitious target to help make up for this lost time. We have a moral obligation as an educated and civilized nation to follow the UK's lead and show we are responsible members of the global community. I am very grateful that the current government is acting so quickly on this all important issue. The discussion document quite rightly points out that it actually costs us more the longer we leave this, due to very costly damage control. The economic models show there is probably little economic impact if we adopt net zero emissions, as opposed to lesser targets, or even doing nothing.

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Position

Domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)

Notes

Please ensure that new and current forestry management adopt toward Close-to-Nature continuous cover forest management as practised in Europe AS A MATTER OF URGENCY. Soil degradation, runoff, limited biodiversity are all part of colonial industrial forestry model that New Zealand has followed. With climate change increasing frequency of weather bombs are showing that poor soil stability after serial monoculture plantations leads to devastating slips. ITS NOT ROCKET SCIENCE TO MOVE TOWARD CONTINUOUS COVER FORESTRY. New Zealand needs to embrace permanent forestry for environmental, social and economic benefits. See ProSilvaEurope.org and ProSilvalreland.org who are supporting a move to incentivise continuous cover forestry. The Irish Green Party now advocates for continuous cover forestry.

Clause

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

Position

No

Notes

No, unless a less ambitious target is set initially and then can later be improved upon. We collectively need to make a firm commitment to net zero emissions.

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, this is a good longer term timeframe to have in place and goes further out than the term of any one government.

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

Yes, but only if the previous budget is set and second and third budgets follow the advice of the Climate Commission. The government should not be allowed to deviate substantially from the Climate Commission's advice and if they do deviate to provide written public statements of its reasons for doing so. This is a good mechanism for keeping governments on track and accountable.

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

Yes, but only if it follows the Climate Commissions advice and NZ will still meet its net zero emissions target by 2050.

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, but I don't know if the NZ ETS can be made effective, as it has been manipulated by the sharemarket, making the price of carbon units so low that it is meaningless.

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, the government does need to set out longer term plans and put policies in place that ensure emission targets are met.

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 needs to put policies/strategies in place to support marginalized people and especially Maori, as their traditional communities tend to be coastal and more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. It needs to go even further than that and address how NZ will respond to climate change refugees. Adopting the Maori world view of looking after the land and water first, then

the people prosper is absolutely right. They also have it right, that we need to work together as a community and help each other out. Can this sort of thing be made into the core statement of intent of what this bill is about? We need something simple like this that we can all feel good about - and we need to work together for the common good. New Zealand culture is becoming increasingly narcissistic. One of my colleagues said in an email, in response to the Zero C Act submissions, that some 'people are worthless' and 'the reasonably well off should not be expected to help those who are suffering.' I am writing this in response to this attitude, as we need to move beyond ourselves. There seems to be a lot of apathy, ignorance, or fear in New Zealand about climate change and of our need to act quickly. Art and culture/religion are important in developing eco literacy and helping to get 'buy-in' from the public. Education about climate change needs to happen in schools, in workplaces, churches, other groups. This issue is way bigger than Health & Safety, so workplaces need to be putting these things into our performance reviews as compulsory objectives, as they are now doing with Health & Safety. Workplaces should be rewarded for their contribution for meeting emissions targets. Workers effected by the transition away from fossil fuel industries should be supported into other jobs. Local government should be making plans around resiliency, including financial resilience, as climate change will put more pressure on limited resources. Local governments tend to be taking on increasing debt, which is leaving communities vulnerable. Science and technology is our main hope for mitigating climate change and helping us to adapt. Commercialising science has resulted in less than half of the funding for science being utilized for doing science and the rest goes on administration. This also forces the focus to be commercially driven, rather than research driven. Science is now seen as a commodity, to make money from, rather than a longer term investment in NZ's future development

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

This works in the UK and an independent advisory body helps keep governments accountable and on track

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

The sharemarket manipulates any scheme like the NZ ETS to meet its own ends and the price of carbon units has been made so low, that they are meaningless. A better system maybe to introduce a global carbon tax on every product that uses fossil fuels in its production.

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

Yes, the Climate Commission must be made up of independent, unbiased experts as proposed. The arts and culture should be specified under community engagement and communications. Scientific expertise should be well represented in the Climate Commission.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

Yes, this is a very important issue and we definitely need plans and policies in place to help us to adapt to climate change.

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, but also include how we will respond to climate refugees and provide mechanisms to educate/engage New Zealanders, to help them transition away from fossil fuels. Change to a sustainable model for the economy, such as a sufficiency economy? Corporate structures in organisations are taking a disproportionate amount of the wealth and this is contributing to the income gap in NZ, which is having negative impacts on New Zealand, such as child poverty and creating the working poor, who don't receive a living wage.

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, the more information we have the better we can respond to risks/impacts and track how well we are doing.

Clause

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

Notes

Thank you all for your very hard work at getting this submission and detailed discussion document prepared. It is a very positive move in the right direction and gives me hope for the future. I trust you will find overwhelming support from parliament, NZ and the world for doing this.