

Subject: Zero Carbon Bill submission

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SUBMISSION ON THE ZERO CARBON BILL SUBMITTER: Chris Peterson,

(But this submission will hopefully be retrospectively endorsed by Sustainable Wairarapa Inc and Wairarapa Forest & Bird at their next meetings). Q1 Support legislation for Net Zero by 2050. While 2050 is the Paris date we note that several environmental NGOs are pushing for it to be 2040 presumably in recognition of the importance of doing more at this near end of the timeline as it is the amount (the stock) of, in particular, carbon dioxide in the atmosphere that is ultimately significant (the Carbon Budget concept). Q2 We probably go for Option 2 but find it difficult to decide between 2 and 3 and note that even environmental groups are somewhat divided on this point (eg Jeanette Fitzsimmons is for 2, Gen Zero for 3). Maybe the wording isn't as clear as it might be?. To me/us it all perhaps hinges around at just what level methane is to be stabilized at and whether there are to be different accounting categories for the long and short-lived gases - such as limiting the offsetting of methane to short-term rotation commercial forests and longterm gases to permanent, mostly native, forests. We support the "two basket" approach but with the proviso that this shouldn't necessarily mean stabilizing the methane at or near its current level. Methane is responsible, we understand, for a third of the climate warming in NZ and 25% worldwide and so presumably it will be a considerable determinant of the current rate of SLR due to thermal expansion plus glacial/ice sheet melt together with the intensity of floods and droughts now. While acknowledging the fairly unique situation around biological methane on NZ's GHG balance sheet there are huge numbers of domestic ruminant animals all around the world. So methane surely needs to be addressed globally and NZ will need to be seen to be doing its bit. We don't have quite the problem with fossil methane that confronts many other countries so I/we think that NZ needs to swallow the difficult economic proposition biological methane presents here and determine ways of seriously reducing it starting now - but not necessarily have to go to zero. Moreover it would seem that if it is accepted that nitrous oxide is a longterm gas that will need to go to net zero and that it largely comes from the fertilizer enabling intensive farming then a consequence of reducing nitrous oxide would presumably be less ruminants and so less methane? Finally, and importantly to us, we think that this vexed but critical decision on the methane stabilization level, and the timeline to it, should be left to the Climate Commission. Q3 We'd like to see NZ relying as far as genuinely possible on domestic reductions only and certainly not continue the farce to date where we've been meeting Treaty commitments by purchasing credits offshore (whether dubious or not) while at the same time our emissions have been inexorably rising. However, there is to us an issue here in that the country could presumably be net zero whichever way we go and whatever we do so long as there are enough trees planted? But we can't do that forever. While planting trees buys crucially important time it has also, it would seem, allowed the country to have cake while eating it too. To be serious about tackling global warming the focus has to be on the reduction of gross emissions. That won't be easy but must be faced head-on. Moreover, it seems from our reading that the world will need to be finding ways of going even further and achieving negative emissions at some stage when it becomes feasible and there are also reports suggesting that the 2-degree target is still too risky and the real one should be 1.5. We could, however, possibly accept the purchase of some international credits in the interests of Climate Justice if they were to assist vulnerable countries and in particular those Pacific islands where NZ has responsibilities. But maybe this could/should come out of separate Aid budgets? Q4 Yes, but only upwards if, as seems to have been the case to date, the sequential scientific evidence always seems to point to an ever more dire situation. In this regard we'd like to think weight is given not just to the plight of Humanity but also to all the other species we share this Planet with and the reality of looming widespread extinctions. Q5 Yes Q6 Not sure - but not option one! Q7 Yes but only under exceptional and prescribed circumstances Q8 Yes as long as they include consideration on the effects on health and on the threats to our native ecosystems and species Q9 Yes, publicly and transparently Q10 Local Government and Iwi are critical partners but the implications of policy on the less advantaged - and on our indigenous plants and animals - needs to be always top of mind Q11 Yes Q12 Not being a democratically elected body it should only advise Government on the ETS Q13 Yes Q14 Yes, mitigation and adaptation go hand in glove Q15 Yes, we see the need for the National Risk Assessment, the National Adaptation Plan and a supporting Fund, and for regular, public and transparent monitoring and reporting. Q16 Yes, the whole country, its businesses and its communities must be pulling together on this one so open reporting of all relevant information wherever it lies is essential.