

INTRODUCTION:

I am a retired married person who have been for many years concerned with the increased use of plastic and the throwaway society and since 1990 in particular, extremely concerned and conscientious of the on-set of climate change, having experienced profound changes over our lifetime. I feel a strong sense of responsibility in that our generation has contributed to this situation and has been slow to accept and act on these events which leave our children with a huge deficit in their lifetimes. I believe humankind has reached a stage of having to make the greatest decisions of all time.

I congratulate the present Government on the development of the Net Zero Carbon Bill legislation which enables New Zealand to honour it's Paris Accord commitment.

Climate change is an inter-generational and worldwide, peace and justice issue. We cannot afford to continue stealing from future generations, leaving them to resulting revolution and war arising from life-threatening migration, racial conflict, illnesses and disease, and lack of a living-giving world to provide for their needs. We must do everything possible to protect them from further environmental degradation which we know now will cause immense suffering. Our search for trade and profit (often for unnecessary goods) is no longer tenable. The physical cost to the environment and humanity, especially the impoverished must be acknowledged and dealt with when considering and setting goals for 2050. Action for positive change is no longer a choice but a necessity.

Our efforts must never be influenced by lack of action in other countries. I believe that, given time and effort, the benefits that accrue from considering the earth and its people; to boost communities to be resilient and healthy, will be considerable. Much of our perceived 'needs' will disappear in the face of a changing society; new technology, innovation, and employment that will emerge, if emphasis is placed on values that consider people rather than profit. The chase for more profit at the expense of service will be brought into balance as the obvious solutions are brought into action.

In honouring our Paris commitment Aotearoa/NZ cannot rely on a copy of other countries solutions due to the difference in GHG emissions. New Zealand's far greater agricultural emissions being 30% of the total compared with densely populated industrial nations, mean our solutions will need to closely focused on agricultural emissions, short-lived emissions such as methane being more harmful than CO2. This is especially significant in sharply reducing emissions as soon as possible. Goals must take into consideration the need to adapt farming practices and farmers to transition to a more sustainable method.

An independent Climate Commission made up of expert climate scientists is imperative along with members representing diverse interests although one major omission is that of Health which needs correcting as health issues will play a major factor (increase in, and new diseases), with greater onset of climate change. Accountability to the public would remain with government. All political parties should support the Bill and make a commitment to ensuring the Act is effective in achieving the 2050 net zero carbon goal and if at all possible keeping the Earth's temperature rise to no more than 1.5 degrees; 2 degrees being the maximum for a livable world.

Discussion Document

Potential costs and benefits in the discussion document does not take into account the economic effect or the social and environmental effect (fire, drought, flood), of continuing an irresponsible business-as-usual pattern. It must be accepted that competition in global business cannot be a major part of the world that the 2015 Paris Accord envisages. Business competitiveness as we know it today

cannot continue to contribute to GHG emissions. Where there is a decreased income in one sector there will likely be increase in more forward-thinking and acceptable ways of trade which will bring about innovation and benefits to balance the outmoded eg: sustainable industries such as insulating houses, renewable electricity generation etc which in many countries are already out-performing fossil fuel industries.

Ethics and Values:

To build the necessary drive for the change required to meet targets we will need, over a short period of time, a momentous transformation in the way our economic system operates. An 'economy' is essentially about the way in which people live, rather than the processes of money changing hands, greater profit in the hands of a few, and the use of, and increasing need for more energy. Exploitation of the earth and its peoples cannot continue, therefore a true economy will require assessment, not by GDP, but by citizen well-being. A halt to the endless growth economy and adaption to live within earth's limits, successfully managing and using earth's limited resources is the only way forward. These principles are essential to decisions made for the continuance of human and all life on earth.

Response to Discussion Document Questions:

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

Planning for a severe and immediate decline in GHGs is necessary. Maximizing the early decline would enable an easier levelling effect over the entire period having thus prevented the compounding influence of further climate change effects over the longer period. The alternative of a gradual decline from the outset would make the ultimate goal more difficult to achieve.

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

NZ/Aotearoa has only 30 years to achieve the goal of net zero emission across all greenhouse gases by 2050, which makes decisions paramount and urgent. In the next 10 years, a substantial reduction in methane is essential and a priority, which should take place over short-term economic impacts and trade balances. Decision-making should also take into consideration the effects of plant-based 'dairy' and 'meat' which will impact globally in time together with increases in demand for horticulture production rather than the extremely resource-intensive farming of animals for food – (proportionately greater energy required to produce food for animals for meat, versus growing vegetables). NZ has become too dependent on dairy exports which have a direct detrimental impact on our environment. Strategies to assist transitioning farmers to new agricultural methods will need to be considered to replace dairying exports with more sustainable exports.

3 How should NZ meet its targets?:

NZ should achieve its targets using domestic emission reductions only. International trading credits are not secure from environmental abuse and shift our responsibility to another country when trading. It is unfortunate and appears remiss, that aviation and shipping emissions are not accounted for under the Paris Agreement, however government would do well to advocate for their inclusion in all future international climate agreements.

The government could reduce emissions by:

- a. Gaining 100% renewable electricity generation as soon as possible
- b. Encouraging community and private energy schemes including both wind and solar
- c. Investigating the research already achieved in NZ on tidal energy
- d. Ending coal mining as well as oil and gas exploration
- e. Encouraging/subsidizing EVs and ensuring a good supply of second-hand vehicles together with a full charging network system.
- f. Free Registration and WOF on EVs; Increasing registration charges on fossil-fuel-demanding vehicles
- g. Developing extensive electrified public transport systems / subsidizing regional public systems
- h. Encouraging a Circular Economy
- i. Reducing long-distance road haulage in favour of rail
- j. Setting a carbon departure tax on aviation to off-set emissions caused within NZ airspace
- k. Setting higher building standards to include triple glazing, passive heating and quality insulation
- l. Setting urgently, a stabilized target for short-lived, but dangerous methane emissions
- m. Encouraging strong, local, self-reliant economies, especially in food and manufactured necessities.
- n. Instigating a low-level carbon-tax 'indicator' of incremental steps to a true carbon price
- o. Planning public schemes and encouraging private tree planting including native bush
- p. Using funding from carbon taxes to establish new sustainable business and service sectors; and for replacing employment lost in outmoded industry.

4 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 and should require input from the Climate Commission and be approved by Parliament.

5 The Government proposes that three emission budgets of five years each (ie: covering the next 15 years) be in place at any given time. Do you agree?

YES. I agree with 5-year legally-binding emissions budgets be set 10-15 years in advance, so that three are in effect at all times; recommended by the Climate Commission; approved by Parliament as a foundation of the Zero Carbon Act.

6 Should Government be able to alter the last emissions budget (ie, furthest into the future)?

YES, the third budget should be able to be changed, but only when the subsequent budget is set which means the third emissions budget can respond to development in the preceding years (climate developments, new science, international legal changes), but is in continuity with the new budget.

7 Should the Government have the ability to review and adjust the second emissions budget within a specific range under exceptional circumstances?

NO, only in case of dramatic changes in climate or world crises.

8 Do you agree with the considerations we propose that the Government and the Climate Commission will need to take into account when advising on and setting budgets?

YES – I generally agree with the proposed considerations that should be taken into account when setting budgets:

- a. scientific knowledge regarding climate change
- b. technology relevant to climate change
- c. economic circumstances and the likely impact of a decision on the economy, as well as the competitiveness of particular sectors of the economy
- d. fiscal circumstances and the likely impact of the decision on taxation, public spending and public borrowing
- e. social circumstances and the likely impact of a decision on fuel poverty
- f. energy policy and the likely impact of a decision on energy supplies and the carbon and energy intensity of the economy.
- g. Government obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- h. The three government objectives for climate change policy: sustainable economy, global and local leadership and creating a just and inclusive society.

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

YES, to allow for public consultation and feedback.

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?

As for Q8: 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.

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?

Yes - the Commission should not be a decision-making body. However, 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.

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

As the NZ ETS is based on 'market rules' it is not socially equitable, therefore we support a Tax and Dividend scheme over the ETS. The Climate Commission should advise the Government on policy in the ETS and should not be given the ability to make decisions itself in regard to the number of units available in the ETS.

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?

YES: Agree with the expertise listed and would also support suggested additions made by Wise Response in their submission.

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

YES, the Zero Carbon Bill should cover adapting to climate change. Local government should make the infrastructure changes for adaption supported by a co-operation from Central Government. This may require a separate adaptation sub-committee within the Climate Commission. Climate change means insurance for homes is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain – assistance may be required and equity decisions in terms of the fair distribution of tax/ratepayer funds may need legislation.

15 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 recognize that nuance is required in terms of how local councils are involved:

- a national climate risk assessment
- a national adaption policy plan to address those risks identified
- regular review of progress towards implementing the national adaptation plan
- an adaptation reporting power

16 Should the Government explore setting up a targeted adaptation reporting power that could see some organizations share information on their exposure to climate change risks?

YES

Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

Growing trees and trading carbon credits will not bring about the future healthy world our children urgently need.

Regional development will need support to transition: job creation especially for youth; public wellbeing through investment in place-based activities which create 'belonging' communities.

It is obvious that climate change will have a profound effect on the life of every citizen, conversely, it will take a profound change in our lives to deal with the causes, to mitigate, adapt and plan set steps for a safer world. Accepting that change is a must, we have no choice but to transition to a new pathway or nature will make a harsh and unacceptable change for us.

Haere me tahi táua - Let us go together!