

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

(Kirkwood)

Reference no: 12639

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

The Zero Carbon Act should set a 2050 target in law now. A safe climate future is too important to wait.

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

However, even if the government is unable to set a target across all gases, it should set a target of net zero long-lived gases by 2050 and mandate the Climate Commission to recommend or set a 2050 target for short-lived gases. The other options suggested, like merely aiming to stabilise short-lived gases or ignoring them altogether would both undercut the 'zero' part of the Zero Carbon Act and risks international criticism.

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Position

Domestic emissions reductions (including from new forest planting) and using some emissions reductions from overseas (international carbon units) that have strong environmental safeguards

Notes

By cutting emissions here (including by planting more forests) in New Zealand, not by buying overseas credits. Zero should mean zero.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

The 2050 target should not be able to be weakened, but only strengthened. This 'no backsliding' approach is consistent with the spirit of the Paris Agreement.

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

Emissions budgets under the Zero Carbon Act should cover five year periods and be set three budgets in advance. This will provide long-term certainty.

Clause

6. Should the Government be able to alter the last emissions budget (i.e. furthest into the future)?

Position

No - emissions budgets should not be able to be changed

Notes

Emissions budgets should be only be changed due to major changes in scientific understanding, not political or economic developments. The same 'no backsliding' principle should apply as for the 2050 target.

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

No, for the same reasons as in my answer to Q6.

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, I agree that they will need to consider: - scientific knowledge regarding climate change - technology relevant to climate change - 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 - 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

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 Act should set fixed deadlines, so we don't repeat the mistakes of the UK Climate Change Act 2008, which didn't include deadlines for making these plans.

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

In setting plans to meet the emissions budgets, the government should be: - making sure they're based on the best science available - ensuring that they deliver fair outcomes for Kiwis - reflecting the principle of a Just Transition for workers - honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi - being environmentally sustainable, especially for New Zealand's unique native plants and animals - maximising the impact of money spent and being cost-effective - encouraging innovation - unlocking economic opportunities for New Zealanders, such as in renewable energy - honouring our international commitments, including under the Paris Agreement - consulting people who may be economically affected, like farmers or businesses - consulting tangata whenua - consulting young people, who'll live to see more of the impact of climate change - consulting communities already facing the physical impacts of climate change

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

Yes, I do. The Commission should provide expert independent advice, but not be a decision-maker.

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 Commission should advise the government on policy around the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme.

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

I agree that members of the Climate Commission should have expertise in: - climate and environmental science including mātauranga Māori - climate change policy (including emissions trading) - te Tiriti o Waitangi, te reo me ona tikanga Māori (Māori language, culture,

and philosophy) and Māori interests - knowledge of the public and private innovation and technology development system - risk management - resource economics and impacts (including labour markets and distribution) - experience with addressing adaptation challenges like planning, insurance and local government - engineering and/or infrastructure - community engagement and communications - business competitiveness In addition, they should have expertise in: - expertise in public health - understanding of our international commitments, including under the Paris Agreement - understanding of the social impacts of climate change and/or government policy - knowledge of principles of equity and a Just Transition

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

Yes. There might need to be a separate adaptation sub-committee of the Commission, as in the UK.

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, the Zero Carbon Act should require: - a national climate change risk assessment - a national adaptation plan - regular reviews of progress towards implementing the national adaptation plan - an adaptation reporting power Care will need to be taken in managing the interaction between national and local government roles.

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. This would let the government and the public know about the risks to public and other infrastructure, and make these organisations better informed about the risks they face.

Clause

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

Notes

The Zero Carbon Act should also provide a framework for transparency and accountability around New Zealand's international climate finance. Thank you for the opportunity to submit. We cannot waste any more time on this important issue. Please act now!