

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

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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

Clause

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

Position

Net Zero Carbon Dioxide - Reducing net carbon dioxide emissions to zero by 2050

Notes

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Position

Domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)

Notes

The reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions and the meeting of New Zealand's Climate Change obligations is very much in the mind of officials and the thinking public. Many groups are looking into new chemicals, genetically modified crops and rumen bacteria, plant and animal breeding, growing more trees, etc. as a potential means of reducing or avoiding the GHG problem. Soils are the World's largest terrestrial carbon sink, containing far more carbon than the plant life on the surface. However, the carbon above and below ground is inextricably linked with plants using photosynthesis to extract CO₂ from the atmosphere and convert it to carbohydrates that flow to the roots and are exchanged for minerals from soil microbes. This underground economy fosters the growth of plants, animals and soil organisms. Their eventual decomposition results in organic matter (58% carbon) building up in the soil, improving water holding capacity and fertility. Research around the world has shown clearly that small changes in land management practices can have large effects on carbon capture and so can be natural and very cost effective means of offsetting carbon emissions. Sequestering atmospheric CO₂ into soil carbon can help NZ achieve a Net Zero-Carbon Economy and avoid the need to purchase \$14 Billion of carbon units overseas. The potential for soil carbon accumulation as a technique for mitigation of climate change is now receiving renewed interest worldwide. This was highlighted by the recent "4 per 1000 Initiative: Soils for Food Security and Climate" - an action plan under the Lima-Paris Action Agenda, which aims to demonstrate that agriculture, and agricultural soils in particular, can play a crucial role where food security and climate change are concerned. The eCOGENT turnkey farming system has now evolved to the point where it has been developed into a specialist climate change mitigation technology branded CLIMATEPOINT. This process offers enormous potential for farmers to sequester atmospheric carbon into the soil, build soil fertility and resilience, and improve the profits and satisfaction that farming families can achieve. By the New Zealand Government or a responsible organisation immediately supporting the implementation of this turnkey technology would allow the dairy industry alone, to achieve soil carbon levels of 1.5% per year in order to achieve a Net Zero Carbon by 2050. However, evidence suggests that by doubling these levels to 3% per year would allow a robust foundation for the establishment of the Climate Act and Commission and allow all pastoral farmers to produce quality food at premium prices and allow a Net Zero-Carbon economy to be achieved by 2035.

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes

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

Clause

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

Position

Yes - each incoming Government should have the option to review the third budget in the sequence

Notes**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**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**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**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 utilise farmers ability to sequester soil carbon

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**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**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

Should also include practical farmers expertise

Clause

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

Position

Yes

Notes**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

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

Clause

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

Notes

There is no doubt that a Net Zero Carbon Economy can be achieved with the use of best practice pastoral farming technology and with the building of levels of Soil Carbon, Green House Gases can be reduced and Climate Change can be mitigated. Pastoral farming, properly managed, can sequester significant amounts of atmospheric CO2 into the soil and in so doing meet its Climate Change obligations as New Zealand signed up to meet, in the 2015 Paris Agreement.