

# Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

Stacey Gasson

## Reference no: 12885

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 Emissions - Net zero emissions across all greenhouse gases by 2050

### Notes

It is important that all greenhouse gases be reduced to net zero. While methane is a short-lived gas, it has contributed most to the increase in NZ's GHG emissions since 1990 and is of particular concern as it is roughly 30 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub> as a GHG.

### Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

### Position

Domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)

### Notes

Purchasing emissions reductions from overseas is not a good option as it reduces the sense of urgency with which we need to approach climate change - i.e. the risk is that business will continue largely as usual, relying on overseas offsets. In the medium to longer term this will be an increasingly risky and expensive path as we compete with other nations and industries for these carbon units. For example, the 2016 Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) seeks to ensure that future growth in international flights will be carbon-neutral. From 2020, airlines that comply with the scheme will be required to offset any increase in their emissions. Based on historical improvements in aviation efficiency, further gains are predicted at ~1.5% p.a. over the next 20 years, but this scenario relies on continued steady efficiency gains and game-changing technological solutions. In reality, technology is thought to be reaching its technical and physical limits as annual efficiency gains fall to ~1%; gains in efficiency will be offset by growth in emissions as passenger numbers climb; and most of the proposed 'solutions' of the past 20 years have been proven unworkable, overstated, or physically impossible. The net result is predicted to be a 135% increase in global tourism emissions over the 2005 baseline by 2035. It is likely then that CORSIA will fail to curb aviation emission growth in a meaningful way and instead increase demand for carbon credits. New Zealand is currently expected to spend \$14 billion to offset current GHG emissions, but could well find themselves exposed in the face of a spike in global carbon prices.

### Clause

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

### Position

Yes

### Notes

Yes, if stronger action is found to be necessary. A hallmark of climate change is the uncertainty that surrounds it and the rate at which the science is developing, due to its complexity. Scientists are constantly making new discoveries in this area. For example, a new study says emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and methane from wetlands and thawing permafrost as the climate warms could cut the "carbon budget" for the Paris Agreement temperature limits by around five years, or 20%, if we are to meet the 1.5 or 2 degree limits (<https://www.carbonbrief.org/permafrost-wetland-emissions-could-cut-1-5c-carbon-budget-five-years>). However, if the target were to be revised because other countries have reduced their emissions by more than their 'share', I would be strongly opposed.

### 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

I strongly support this structure as a planned and staggered approach is the only way we are going to achieve the formidable task we are setting for NZ.

**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**

This will enable budgets to be adjusted as new information is available, but provides stability for businesses and policymakers to plan.

**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**

I think would be too unpredictable and perhaps open to manipulation.

**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**

However the climate should be at least as important as the economy. The economy is a subset of the environment and cannot exist without it.

**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**

Specific plans are critical to ensuring targets are met. This Act is addressing a complex and evolving set of circumstances. I also support Zero carbon Act NZ's proposals as follow: We propose two key changes from the UK Act to suit New Zealand's circumstances: The Firewall Principle The targets in the Act will apply to New Zealand's domestic emissions only. This will create a 'firewall' between domestic action and international carbon trading, to ensure our own zero carbon transition is on track. The Two Baskets Approach The Act will set separate targets and pathways for long-lived greenhouse gases (mainly carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide) and short-lived greenhouse gases (mainly methane). Long-lived gases must go to net zero by 2050 or sooner (accounting for carbon sinks). Short-lived gases must be significantly reduced to sustainable levels, but not zero.

**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**

Makes decisions itself in respect of the number of units available 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****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**