

Summary of the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill

1. The Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill is made up of four main elements
 - the establishment of a Climate Change Commission
 - updated emissions reduction targets
 - specific emissions budgets, and
 - the inclusion of a national adaptation plan.

Climate Change Commission:

2. The purpose of the Climate Change Commission is to provide independent expert advice on climate change mitigation and adaptation, and monitor and review the progress.
3. The Commission will comprise of a chairperson, a deputy chair and five other members. The Minister for Climate Change will decide on the members of this Commission. Each selected member must have a sound understanding of climate change, have had experience with central or local government, have technical expertise / skills / innovative approaches to climate change and have sound understanding of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
4. The function of the commission will consist of the following:
 - Review of the 2050 target.
 - Advise the minister on the emissions budgets and recommended changes.
 - Provide emissions advice, including the quantity of emissions banked or borrowed for budget periods and advice on mitigation reduction plans.
 - Monitor and report on progress towards targets and emissions budgets.
 - Prepare a climate change risk assessment (CCRA) and report on national adaptation implementation.
5. Emission reduction target advice given by the climate commission must be made publicly available.

Emissions Reduction Targets

6. The emissions reduction target aims to reduce all greenhouse gases (except biogenic methane) to net zero by 2050.
7. The gross emissions of biogenic methane will be reduced by 10 per cent below 2017 levels by 2030 and within the range of 24 to 47 per cent below 2017 levels by 2050.
8. The targets will be reviewed when setting new budgets and can be reviewed anytime the Minister requests.
9. The change to the targets (including timeframe) can only occur if there have been significant changes since the commencement of the bill. Areas of significant changes include:

- global action
- scientific understanding of climate change
- New Zealand's economic and fiscal circumstances
- New Zealand's obligations under international agreements
- technological development
- distributional impact
- equity implications.

Setting Emissions Budgets

10. The purpose of setting emissions budgets is to maintain and meet the 2050 target and to provide predictability for those affected. The period of the emissions budgets is five years.
11. From 31 December 2021 there must be three consecutive emissions budgets, one current and two prospective, in place at any one time.
12. The emissions budgets must be met as far as possible through domestic reductions and removals.
13. The contents of emissions budgets must include:
 - All greenhouse gases, and the amount by which each greenhouse gas must be reduced or removed
 - Total emissions for the relevant five year period (*CO₂eq.*)
 - Identification of key opportunities for emissions reduction and removals and the associated risks and opportunities.
14. After a relevant budget has been published, the Commission must prepare and publish an emission plan to reach the emissions budget. The plan must include sector specific policies, a multi-sector strategy and a strategy to mitigate the impacts of reducing emissions on workers, regions, iwi and Māori.
15. The Minister must consider the advice received from the Commission, and ensure the consultation was adequate with sector representatives, affected communities, iwi and Māori.

National Adaptation Plan

16. A national climate risk assessment must be undertaken every six years to assess risks to economy, society, environment and ecology from current and future effects for climate change and identify the most significant risks to New Zealand. The first risk assessment is to be completed one year after the Bill has passed.
17. In response to the risk assessment, the Minister must prepare a national adaptation plan within two years. The national adaptation plan must include:
 - Government objectives
 - Strategies, policies and proposals
 - Timeframe

- Measures and indicators.
18. A progress report on the adaptation plan will be produced by the Commission every two years and the Minister must respond publicly within six months.
 19. The Minister has the power to request provision of information (reporting power) from reporting organisation, which includes Local Government and Council Controlled Organisations. The Minister can request a reporting organisation to provide:
 - Assessment of the effects of climate change and their functions
 - Proposals and policies for addressing the impacts
 - Assessment of current progress
 - Timeframes.