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## **Submission to the Local Government and Environment Select Committee on the Climate Change Response Amendment Bill**

### **Introduction**

NCWNZ has a history of interest in climate change. Since 1990, policy passed at national meetings and submissions written in response to requests for public comment on proposed legislation regarding what New Zealand should do to fulfil its responsibility as a global citizen reflect the interest that New Zealand women have in mitigating the effects of human activity on climate. NCWNZ is pleased to participate in this present effort to fulfil New Zealand's part in world affairs.

Not enough time to consult widely around the membership has meant that this submission is collated from a limited number of responses from NCWNZ members. Moreover, the technical nature of the proposals regarding the mechanics of the Registry makes it difficult to comment specifically on what is proposed, and only general remarks will be made.

### **General remarks**

NCWNZ members have followed the debate about climate change since it first became apparent that human activity was changing the nature of earth's atmosphere, and have sought to remain informed as further revelations have been broadcast, and as suggestions as to how these changes can be mitigated have been put forward. NCWNZ has been fully supportive of government determination that New Zealand should play its part in limiting the changes, and supports the present bill insofar as it will promote effort to fulfil our global obligations.

Kyoto Protocol Registry – Having a registry to ensure the accurate accounting of emission units is a good idea, but it should not become too much of a bureaucracy, as bureaucracies can be inefficient.

One respondent expressed concern that complete centralisation as in the proposed Registry might lead to a bureaucratic frame of mind, and suggested that there be more entities involved in accounting for emission units.

Transference of units to businesses and individuals – it seems that there has been some disquiet amongst businesses and individuals who own forests and other potential carbon sinks that their right to own and trade units was overlooked, and this present clarification of who has the right to own and trade units will do much to allay their fears.

Landowners enabled to make better use of their land – this should have the benefits as suggested; landowners can gain some income from using for forestry establishment marginal land that presently is quite useless in an economic sense, and the land will benefit from the ecological implications of being planted in trees, rather than struggling with being unnaturally grassed.

NCWNZ would like to see landowners encouraged to use their land in ways which maximise carbon take-up, especially in agricultural practices which integrate more than one form of farming on the same





land area. For example, deer farms could be planted in trees, which would suit the deer as many species are naturally woodland dwellers; likewise pigs; and poultry and fruit trees could co-exist to their mutual benefit. New Zealand does not at present have a large nut-farming industry, but this could be promoted as many nut-producing trees are large and would absorb substantial amounts of carbon dioxide.

Compliance costs – there is a little concern that compliance costs to landowners might be greater than is suggested in the bill, and landowners should be consulted throughout the process of developing and registering agreements to ensure that they are happy with what is happening at the time and what the implications of these agreements are for the future. Estimation of costs should not be minimised.

Minister of Finance should publish directions – NCWNZ supports the proposal that the Minister should publish a copy of any direction given to the Registry on the Registry’s internet site, since it will conform with the openness of access to government actions that is to be expected in a democracy. Do not overlook that not everyone has internet access, and the information should also be published in other media.

**Conclusion**

NCWNZ hopes that the amendments to the principal Act will have the desired outcome of enabling the emission units registry to do what it has been established to do in a fair and efficient manner, and to ensure that the interests of those who own forests are not overlooked as New Zealand seeks to fulfil its obligations according to the Kyoto Protocol.

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