



National Council of Women of New Zealand

Te Kaunihera Wahine o Aotearoa

Oral submission to the Environment Select Committee on the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill Government Bill 136–1

By Beryl Anderson and Suzanne Manning on 26 August 2019

Committee:

Present:

Nathan Guy (Acting Chair, National)
Erica Stanford (National)
Angie Warren Clark (Labour)
Adrian Ruawhe (Labour)

Not present:

Duncan Webb (Chair, Labour)
Scot Simpson (Deputy – Chair, National)
Liz Craig (Labour)
Sarah Dowie (National)
Jenny Marcroft (NZ First)
Chloe Swarbrick (Green)

Good morning

My name is Beryl Anderson and I am Convenor of the Parliamentary Watch Committee of the National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ). My colleague is Suzanne Manning, a member of the same committee.

Introduction

The submission has been prepared from a background of global agreements^{1, 2}, NCWNZ policy decisions and recent consultations with members.

Human Rights and Gender Equality

Clause 8 New section 5 F Establishment of Membership of Nominating Committee; New section (5 H (1))(d) Matters Minister must have regard to before recommending appointment of member of Commission;

NCWNZ membership asserts that effective climate change policy must embed human rights and gender equality and seeks amendment accordingly. Women are

¹ <https://www.benoitmayer.com/files/Human%20rights%20in%20the%20Paris%20Agreement.pdf>

² https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CEDAW_C_GC_37_8642_E.pdf

³ Adams, A. 2017. NZ's highest rate of family violence in the developed world - Amy Adams has 'had enough'. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/90657034/nzs-highest-rate-of-family-violence-in-the-developed-world--amy-adams-has-had-enough>

<https://nzfvc.org.nz/sites/nzfvc.org.nz/files/Data-summaries-snapshot-2017.pdf>

disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Not only are women more financially vulnerable from essential transitioning and hardship brought about by decarbonising our economy, they are also more vulnerable from the crises that climate change will bring to their lives.

Human rights and gender disparity are often overlooked during hardship. Vulnerabilities from the loss of homes, infectious disease, daily tasks such as essential child rearing, access to food, clean water and health care take women's time more. With underlying stress, violence in the family is even more prevalent and women and children suffer most. It must never be overlooked that New Zealand already displays one of the highest rates of family violence in the OECD.³ There is much to learn from these significant issues that can inform the proposed legislation. This is why human rights and gender equality are essential to include in the Bill.

Clause 8 New section 5 D). Clause 8 New section 5 F; Clause 8 New section (5 H (1)

To give effect to the criticality of human rights and gender equality in an effective climate change/zero carbon policy, there are essential amendments to the proposed legislation that are requested in cl. 8 New sections 5D, 5F and 5H (paras 2.1-2.7). NCWNZ seeks additions that provide for human rights and gender equality in the appointments to the Climate Change Commission.

- i) A 50/50 gender balance on the Commission is a strategic necessity, to empower women with equality of decision-making on the Commission. (5 D)
- ii) An increase to 12 members will provide for the essential diversity of representation. (5 D)
- iii) The nominating committee of the Commission should have gender balance (5F)
- iv) The Minister must have regard to human rights and gender equality in recommending a member of the Commission. 5H (1) (d) (i)

As part of the Ministry for the Environment's recent EOI process, NCWNZ has recommended three women for appointment, who would bring essential human rights and gender equality principles and practice to the Commission.

Clause 8 New Parts 1A to 1C inserted. Part 1A Climate Change Commission. Subpart Commission's functions, duties, and powers New sections 5J; 5K; and 5 L(d)

The new sections on transparency should be amended to include *human rights and gender equality* (5J and 5L paras 3.1, 3.4). The Commission must ensure that each successive government works consistently from the agreed policy and must be founded from consultation in respect to human rights, gender, age and ethnicity, enabling all sectors to have the opportunity to voice opinions and expertise.

An amendment is also requested that Reports are forwarded to the Speaker and not to the Government to enable transparency on such a critical issue as climate change (5K para 3.3).

Beyond Business as Usual – Decarbonising our economy

NCWNZ brings a call to be bold. Research and evidence are demonstrating an ever-increasing urgency to take action to reduce the rate of global warming. New Zealand is trending against most OECD nations in household emissions, dairy farming and transport and waste sectors in particular.⁴ New Zealand needs deep reductions of methane emissions. (para 4.1, 4.4)

Targets in the General Policy Statement and Clause 8 New Section 5O

To help meet its obligations under the Paris Agreement, it is requested that the Bill be more ambitious:

- i) by amending new section 5O(1)(a) to provide for a decline by about 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 reaching net zero by around 2050 (para 4.2). And
- ii) by amending new section 5O(1)(b)(i) to reduce gross emissions of biogenic methane within an interim range of 20-25 % by 2030 rather than the meager 10% below 2017 levels. It should also set more ambitious targets and budgets to reduce household and transport emissions (including, air and shipping) (para 4.4).

It is essential that collaborative leadership in Parliament, in business and all communities of interest collaborate to create deep systemic change and a different society from today's.

Strengthening provisions of the Bill will encourage and direct the removal of carbon from our economy to build a healthier planet and society. NCWNZ membership calls for a bolder Bill.

Clause 8 New sections 5 ZD(3)(c); 5ZE (3)(a); 5ZM9(1)(a); 5ZN(2)(a); 5 ZO and in New section 5 ZQ(4)(a) National Adaptation Plan.

NCWNZ believes that the inclusion of human rights and gender equality in policy is essential.

There are a number of New Sections where *human rights* and *gender equality* should be added. These include:

Clause 8 New sections 5L(d) (para 3.4); 5ZD(3)(c) (para 4.9); 5ZN(2)(a) (para 4.14); 5ZO (para 4.15) and in New section 5ZQ(4)(a) (para 4.16) National Adaptation Plan) and including consequential changes.

Clause 8 New Section 5 ZQ (paras 4.16—4.19)

The National Adaptation Plan is supported in principle but should be underpinned by a clear climate change policy to enable the Paris Agreement targets to be reached. Our membership gave examples of important additions to bring greater cross-sectoral outcomes. It is recommended that amendments are introduced to address these.

These include:

- Project assessments that put the *environment, social and other impacts* ahead of *economic impacts*, to bring change. Amendments are required to lead this change. Clause 5 ZQ (4)
- Amendment of the Companies Act 1993 and other statutes, for consistency with the proposed Act. The proposed Act should require reporting under the Companies Act of companies' annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Carbon **reporting** is the first vital step for **companies** to make reductions in emissions. The development of company reporting guidelines is strongly supported. There is UK precedent.
- Requiring the national phase-in of low emissions forms of transport and make greater use of efficient modes such as walking, cycling, rail and public transport; include air travel and shipping in the carbon emissions profile.
- Requiring change of farming systems in nutrient management, stocking rates, and water usage. It has been shown to be possible to make significant reductions in these inputs and outputs while maintaining productivity.
- Ensuring consistency with statutes such as the Resource Management Act 1993 coupled with relevant National Policy Statements that would require land, air and water uses management to support mitigation and adaptation measures. This would provide non-government sector organisations with greater accessibility to hold government and local government to account through the court process – including the Environment Court.
- Encouraging strongly, co-operation and joint planning between Local Territorial Authorities such as Regional and City Councils to devise wide-ranging adaptations suitable for their communities.
- Requiring such authorities to report on progress a) in reducing emissions and b) in their adaptation planning and implementation, in their annual reports and plans, with targets for each year and what has been achieved.

Clause 8 Subpart 3 New section 5ZA (para 4.8)

Members are encouraged by the cross-party support evidenced for the Bill and are keen for this to continue as the most effective way to address a problem of such magnitude and that affects every citizen. NCWNZ supports strongly the requirement for government to consult other political parties.

In summary NCWNZ believes that human rights and gender equality must be embedded in the proposed legislation. This includes appointments to the Commission to ensure a 50:50 gender balance. Empowering leadership by women for women on the Commission will provide the focus of leaving no-one behind.

Bold systemic changes to decarbonize are called for to address the challenges of climate impacts.

FEEDBACK FROM SELECT COMMITTEE

Nathan Guy, acting chair, thanked us for our comprehensive submission.

Angie Warren Clark said she loved our submission because it combined her two passions – gender equality and environment. She particularly thanked us for raising the issue of the connection between environmental events and violence against women and children, noting that there was a clear increase in such violence after the Edgecombe flooding. She said this issue had not been raised by others, and she thanked us for a sound submission that showed how women are affected by climate change.