

Submission
No 1

INQUIRY INTO CLIMATE CHANGE (NET ZERO FUTURE) BILL 2023

Organisation: Citizens' Climate Lobby, Australia

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Feedback on Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Bill 2023

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Preamble: On behalf of the [Citizens' Climate Lobby, Australia](#), I acknowledge the bipartisan and inclusive efforts of the current Minister, Ms Penny Sharpe and we welcome the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed *Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Bill 2023*. Previously, we provided in depth feedback to Minister Matt Kean for the *Net Zero Plan Stage 1* back in July 2020.

Briefly, the Citizens' Climate Lobby, Australia is a non-partisan, volunteer organisation whose focus is on achieving a national carbon price for Australia, principally using the Australian Carbon Dividend method, preferably on a bipartisan basis, similar that to employed in Canada, Austria and now recently tabled before the US Congress. It is requested that NSW undertake similar action to mitigate emissions, especially if the Federal Government does not possess the political will to do so.

It is recommended that any mitigation strategy reliant on offsetting emissions will not be as effective as reducing actual emissions directly via a direct price on carbon. It is likely that offsets will simply maintain the status quo without reducing actual emissions to the levels necessary to achieve any meaningful target. The other problem with offsets is that actual emissions are immediate whereas offsets are not. There is no excuse now but for actual emissions reductions. The real danger arises when 'emitters' purchase the right to pretend not to emit from a sequestration provider which must now pretend not to be providing real sequestration. How will compliance work in this situation?

There will always be a need to balance the effect on human health and wellbeing against the economic effects. If no meaningful mitigation action is put in place than the real concern is that the latter will become irrelevant.

The feedback provided here on a by-page-identification basis is made within the context of the bill as presented in the "**First Print - Tabling copy**" provide by email from Minister Sharpe's office.

Page 2: Part 1 Preliminary

4. Objects of Act

Objective (b) Given the urgency of the problem; it is recommended this objective be modified in some way to ensure that the targets stated be open to change as the problem becomes more severe.

Objective (c) Again, given the urgency of the problem, it is recommended this objective be reworded to include the attainment as well as measure of resilience.

Objective (d) The functions of "*monitor, review and report*", given in this objective do not specify clearly that the Net Zero Commission will have the actual function to recommend actions or activities or changes in behaviour that are needed to meet the targets specified in Objective (b).

Pages 4-5: Part 1 Guiding principles, targets and objectives

8. Guiding principles

(2) This principle does not specifically include human health and wellbeing.

(4)(c) Again, human health and wellbeing need to be elevated in importance. The later provision given as (8)(g) should be incorporated into (4)(c) or as standalone principle.

(6) Does the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991* specifically include provisions concerning the adverse effects of climate change on humans so that new gas fields and coal mines can be set aside? Since it is not logical to allow such when attempting to achieve Net Zero Emissions, the act should be amended.

(8)(c)(iv) There is a need to educate both school children and adults. School curricula need to include such.

(8)(g) See response to (4)(c) – human health needs to be before economics and business.

(9) Local Governments have made great strides in limiting their operational emissions by generating targets and policies. Many are attempting to put programs in place to support Net Zero targets for the communities they serve. Given that a lot of work has already been put in place, it is recommended that this bill reflect the need to engage or work with Local Government to achieve the targets specified. Many LG's have already considered the need to adapt which is important since some considerations are specific to the urban nature of those LGA's.

9. Guiding principles

(3) **This does not make sense**, if there is an urgent need to this then an explanation is needed in this provision to explain why?

10. Objective for adaptation to changing climate

(1) Determined by whom?

Page 6 – Part 3 Net Zero Commission

Division 1 Constitution of Commission

12. Members of Commission

(3) At least one commissioner should have the ability to communicate clearly and present findings and/or recommendations clearly in an oral manner.

Page 7 – Part 3 Net Zero Commission

Division 2 Functions of Commission

14 Functions of Commission

Generally, The Commission needs an adequate budget to be able to procure research to support its work where necessary. It would also be an advantage if the Commission had regulatory compliance power to ensure targets are met other than to simply advise.

The Commissioners need to really represent/understand the science and impose a “Duty of Care” on NSW government that the Federal government does not appear to accept. There simply is no higher “Duty of Care” for any government than to provide for a safe future for our children as well as all animal and plant life, now so dependent on humans more than any other time in the modern era.

The Commissioners MUST put public interest ahead of corporate vested interests – the “Independent Planning Commission” showed utter disdain for the evidence of climate, energy, and economic experts (of national and international repute), youth and indigenous groups and directly affected communities in its approval of new and extended coal mines and gas fracking that these groups overwhelmingly opposed.

(1)(c) Again human health and wellbeing needs to be elevated in importance. It will be logical to have a medically qualified commissioner, such as Dr. Kim Loo.

(1)(d) Local Government needs to be specifically included in this function.

15 Considerations for Commission

(d) Also include the need to seek advice from Local Government.

Page 8 – Part 3 Net Zero Commission

Division 3 Reporting requirements

18 Minister may require report from Commission

(2) Need to remember, that given the urgency of the problem, speed and response is necessary.

Page 9 – Part 3 Net Zero Commission

Division 4 Other

23 Disclosure of information

(2) What is the definition of penalty units?

Page 11 – Part 4 Miscellaneous

25 Review of Act Given the urgency of the problem, it is recommended that the review period be reduced to 3 years given that first target of 2030 is not far off.