

Cycling Advocates Network (CAN) - Submission on the NEECS

Powering Our Future – The Draft New Zealand Energy Strategy to 2050 (NZES)

And

Draft New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (NZEECS)

NZEECS is a subset of the NZES. It is a 5 year strategy and action plan aimed at maximising energy efficiency and renewable energy:

1. Introduction of **carbon equivalent pricing** must begin now, and increase progressively according to climate change strategy. The price should fall on those who pollute. Carbon charges should be recycled to achieve emission reductions (eg invested in emission reduction projects) and address equity and fuel poverty.
2. Comprehensive planning for a **low energy use, high energy efficiency** future to reverse the present trend of increasing greenhouse gas emissions.
3. **Investment** in end-use efficiency, renewables and long-lived assets (such as buildings, transmission networks).
4. **The Government needs to increase its investment in energy efficiency retrofits.**
5. Serious consideration of **carbon constraints**, specifically constraints on **oil and gas supply**; the energy strategy should not leave the door wide open for coal to be used as a back up if supply does not match demand.
6. We need to focus on the price of power bills, not the price of power.
7. **Real-time price information** in both transport and stationary energy (variable pricing to better control demand and to more accurately reflect the external costs of energy production)
8. Remove barriers and create incentives to encourage investment in renewables and **“local energy”** (distributed generation, energy efficiency). Create benefits for small and/or new players as opposed to large scale projects.
9. Creation of a market for **demand reduction** through increased policy emphasis on the demand side (in both stationary energy and transport).
10. **Housing issues** including domestic emissions, home heating and insulation, supply issues, improved building codes.
11. **Urban planning and design** such as reducing urban sprawl, more sustainable transport planning, regional energy assessment and strategy, teleworking, neighbourhood trees and bush areas.
12. Promote **innovation** and join **international renewable energy and efficiency networks.**
13. We need an **independent regulator for energy** to mitigate government conflicts of interest.

Transport: The overall transport goal proposed by the NZES is a resilient, low carbon transport system – however, **neither “resilient” nor “low carbon” is defined**, and the measures proposed by the NZES and NZEECS to meet this goal are inadequate. For CAN, we would like to see **a greater focus on alternative transport as a measure to reduce energy demand**, particularly low-carbon transport. Cycling is an excellent way to achieve this, and emphasis should be placed on this mode to reflect that.

The provision of transport is not an end in itself - it is a way to provide access to services. There should be five principles to guide land transport policy, with a 1-4 hierarchy:

1. Reduce the use of motorised transport where possible
2. Where motorised transport is needed, encourage **alternatives to private road transport** where possible (also known as “mode shifting”)
3. Provide transport energy in ways which will significantly reduce our net emissions profile and the use of fossil fuels
4. Where fossil fuels are being used for transport, use them as efficiently as possible, and with the lowest possible emissions profile

Commentary:

5. Overall ensure that fossil fuel prices are kept at a level which encourages the transition to lower-emissions alternatives.
6. Unfortunately the draft NZES seems to turn this hierarchy on its head: it places most faith in achieving GHG reductions through fuel efficiencies, then with switching to biofuels; it almost ignores mode shifting and doesn't address the imperative to reduce the need to travel. Again, **cycling could be a much more significant part of the transport system in New Zealand**. This could be supported by appropriate facilities at public transport interchanges, such as cycle lockers at train stations.
7. **Urgent steps in land transport include:** Shift funding away from road building towards public transport; promote and facilitate walking, cycling, teleworking, and carpooling; electrify transport where possible, such as Auckland's Rail Network; end the barriers to expansion of rail freight; use taxation and regulation to deal with fuel-inefficient vehicles and driving practices; development of public awareness campaigns.