

Introduction

Name:

Privacy of natural persons

Email:

Privacy of natural persons

Business name or organisation (if applicable):

Position title (if applicable):

Is this an individual submission or on behalf of a group or organisation?

Individual

Please indicate which group you most identify with or are involved in?

General public

Please specify the group that you most identify with

Please indicate which type of group your submission represents

Please specify the group or organisation that your submission is on behalf of.

Vision

Do you agree or disagree with the overall vision for the minerals and petroleum sector in New Zealand?

Strongly disagree

Why?

It's past time to sever our links to the petroleum industry, no matter how hard this will be. The alternative - supporting fossil fuels - is pretty clearly a suicide pact for humans and other species. We do have to embrace clear sustainable energies - that don't amplify the already disastrous amount of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere - as quickly as we can. We owe this to present and future New Zealanders and to others around the world. As a journalist who covered environmental issues for decades I'm very aware of the sort of mendacious arguments the oil business will put forward; namely that they will "change" and, meanwhile, they're indispensable. Don't listen.

What is your vision for the minerals and petroleum sector in New Zealand?

It is one in which we have transition from fossil fuels to a sustainable alternative [and we're lucky to have options in NZ] that doesn't continue to warm our planet and which sets an example to others. As a small nation without great power that has always been our role.

How can New Zealand sustainably derive value from its petroleum and minerals resources?

We can't. It's a resource that ultimately benefits no one, although it has certainly enriched a few. Meanwhile it has stranded Kiwis, who are still locked into petrol fuelled cars etc. It will take leadership to transition. But I'm sure you're familiar with the broad scientific consensus on the climate crisis. The emphasis is on the last word in that sentence. Ultimately, the government has an ethical role in leadership. This has alas been more or less ignored by past governments on both sides of the aisle. But time has more or less run out. You need to get the oil industry out of the room as fast as possible.

Objectives for the minerals and petroleum sector

Objective for a sector that: “Responsibly delivers value for New Zealand (a) Supporting a productive, sustainable and inclusive economy (b) Supporting New Zealand's transition to a carbon neutral economy”.

Strongly disagree

Why?

See above. There is no way the fossil fuel business will support a transition to a new energy paradigm unless they already owe it. It's a little like saying vaping is a good way of curbing smoking among young people. In short, not true. Perhaps you could start by dumping subsidies to the fossil fuel sector - the subsidies they insist they don't receive - and use that taxpayer money to help our transition away from oil and gas.

Objective for a sector that: “Is productive and innovative”.

Strongly disagree

Why?

See above.

Objective for a sector that: “Is effectively regulated”.

Strongly disagree

Why?

Ditto.

Are there any other objectives for the minerals and petroleum sector that you would like us to consider in the strategy?

Perhaps they could use their expertise to help kickstart new sustainable energies as was suggested at the Just Transition Summit in May as regards to using gas pipes and infrastructure for hydrogen, a transition we were told was happening in the Netherlands. But it must be made very clear that the status quo - oil and gas as usual - is no longer acceptable.

Guiding principles

Principle: The environment, ecosystems, and biodiversity are respected now and in the long term.

Strongly agree

Why?

It's a truism but the economy is a subset of the environment not the other way around, as it has been for much of our history. Self-interest dictates a healthy sustainable [same thing really] environment.

Principle: Māori cultural interests are understood and respected.

Strongly agree

Why?

Maori have not always been the great stewards of the land that current myth suggests. But the principle of kaitiakitanga is a concept we can all learn from and be proud of. It is also obvious that we all need to cooperate and respect one another. It is hard to

build real trustworthy relationships otherwise. Right now, the government is proceeding with its Billion Tree scheme. I know there are problems - not east with an over emphasis on Pinus radiata - but the idea has Maori precedents, such as suggestions the East Coast, badly eroded and pest infested, could support Maori lead native forest regeneration.

Principle: Support the transition to a carbon neutral economy by 2050.

Strongly agree

Why?

Pretty obvious given numerous IPCC warnings about the dire consequences of not doing this. However, I believe 2050 should be a bench mark only and that we need to move this date forward. The current date is still a ways out and doesn't convey the urgency with which we need to confront this enormous challenge. We're past the time when we have the luxury of not wanting to scare the horses as it were. This is as dire a threat as a world war would be and we have shown ourselves able to rise to past challenges. It's in our DNA.

Principle: The impact on people, communities and regions are managed in a just and inclusive way.

Strongly agree

Why?

This is a democratic society where everyone is equal in the law. That is a principle we never want to lose sight of. New Zealand is also riven with serious inequalities that, left unaddressed, will always undermine the social compact. Right now I imagine one of the government's challenges is getting people on board so that they understand what NZ is up against. Poorer, more remote regions may feel threatened and left out. Is it any coincidence that some of the councils that refused to sign up to a climate change measure this year fit that category, i.e. Westland and the Coromandel?

Principle: Support a circular economy by meeting resource needs through resource efficiency, recycling and reuse.

Strongly agree

Why?

We're a consumer society that leaves a lot of waste. We can't bury or export our debris any more. This could be a job creation sector.

Principle: Actions taken within the mineral and petroleum sector should align with the strategic direction of other related sectors and Government strategies.

Agree

Why?

It's pretty obvious that any resilient functioning nation needs to agree on overall strategies. After all, successful businesses do this as a matter of course. A state isn't a business [NZ Inc etc] and businesses that operate here should align with our environmental aims. I imagine we may still perhaps need to mine some minerals - not sure which ones and mining always comes with big toxic downsides - but the petroleum sector has had its day.

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following principles for the Crown?

Principle: The Crown honours its duty towards Māori as a Treaty partner, adheres to the Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and its duty to meet settlement commitments.

Strongly agree

Why?

The treaty is meant to be one of our founding documents despite varying interpretations on sovereignty. It's here to stay.

Principle: The Crown receives a fair financial return for its minerals and petroleum.

Strongly disagree

Why?

They're part of the climate crisis problem which, unaddressed, will cost us dear.

Principle: The Crown regulates in a way that is fair, transparent, reasonable and proportionate.

Neither agree nor disagree

Why?

I hope it does. But I'm ignorant of how it operates everywhere. Certainly, there have been issues with transparency and fairness in the recent past with some agencies, such as the MSD.

Principle: The Crown honours the rights of current permit holders to continue production or exploration activities under existing permits.

Strongly disagree

Why?

Self-interest means we have to find a way out of those commitments. It's wise to remember perhaps that the state is the ultimate authority in NZ.

Principle: The Crown makes policy decisions based on the best evidence, and accounting for the foreseeable need for minerals and petroleum, both now and for future generations.

Neither agree nor disagree

Why?

I hope so. I guess it depends on how you show the petroleum industry the door.

Principle: The Crown proactively engages and consults with relevant stakeholders and decisions are communicated in a clear and transparent way.

Neither agree nor disagree

Why?

Again, I hope so.

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following principles for Industry?

Principle: Pursue continuous improvements in health and safety.

Strongly agree

Why?

A safe workplace is always best.

Principle: Strive to implement industry best practice in operations.

Neither agree nor disagree

Why?

This depends on whether industry "best practice" aligns with whatever is best practice for NZ and its citizens. They are not always compatible practices.

Principle: Seek innovative ways to improve the resource efficiency of extraction operations; and minimise the negative impacts of these operations.

Agree

Why?

Always good to reduce negative impacts. More important though to ask why we need any negative impacts from oil drilling and pollution from oil fuelled vehicles in transport and agricultural sectors.

Principle: Engage with stakeholders and implement management systems to understand and manage impacts, and realise opportunities for redress where needed.

Neither agree nor disagree

Why?

The wording sounds like the governments wants to better manage existing industries. That may apply to some but nt to oil industry which must be phased out asap.

Are there any other principles you would like us to consider in the strategy?

Action areas intro

Action Area: Modernising the Crown Minerals Act

Neither agree nor disagree

Why?

I'd want to see what this would involve.

What future actions would you like us to consider under this Action Area?

Certainly, examining in detail all cascade/downstream impacts. In the past NZ has been served very poorly in this regard. We are now left with health issues [water] and expensive clean-up costs. No matter what they might say there is never any guarantee that an offshore corporation will - or perhaps will be able to - clean up toxic and other waste.

Action Area: Securing affordable resources to meet our minerals and energy needs

Neither agree nor disagree

Why?

This is a very vague question.

What future actions would you like us to consider under this Action Area?

Action Area: Improving Treaty partnership

Strongly agree

Why?

Always a good idea. It's a two-way street between Crown and iwi.

What future actions would you like us to consider under this Action Area?

Action Area: Improving stakeholder and community engagement

Strongly agree

Why?

Communities have often been neglected. This is never a good idea if we want to encourage trust in government and our institutions. That trust is always more important than some company's bottom line.

What future actions would you like us to consider under this Action Area?

Action Area: Improving industry compliance

Strongly agree

Why?

Again, always a good idea to work with industry. However, also a very good idea to involve staff and communities. This has worked overseas and is recommended by many economists as a way of creating more sustainable employment etc. We need to get past our old adversarial industry habits.

What future actions would you like us to consider under this Action Area?

Action Area: Research and investment in better mining and resource use

Neither agree nor disagree

Why?

Yes. But depends what mining etc you're talking about. Any industry, mining or otherwise, should be held to best practice. The agriculture sector for instance. That bar should be set fairly high. Which means a lot of involvement from all stake holders, not just those out to make profit for instance.

What future actions would you like us to consider under this Action Area?

Are there any other action areas you would like us to consider as part of advancing this Strategy?

Other

Are there any other comments you would like to make about the "Minerals and Petroleum Strategy for Aotearoa New Zealand: 2019-2029"?

I really hope that you take my comments about ending our relationship with fossil fuels - the petroleum industry in this case - seriously. We are in a crisis and denial won't help us or our children.

If you wish to, attach a document to this submission.

Use and release of information

We intend to upload submissions to our website at www.mbie.govt.nz. Can we include your submission on the website?

Yes

Can we include your name?

No

Can we include your email address?

No

Can we include your business name or organisation?

No

Can we include your position title?

No

Can we include the group you most identify with (if submitting as an individual)?

Yes

Can we include the group your submission represents (if submitting on behalf of a group or organisation)?

If there are any other parts to your submission that you do not want public on the website please note them below:

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