



one point zero

Mankind's Greatest Challenge: A Good Life within our ONE Planet's Means

'Zero Carbon': Wrong Problem, Wrong 2050 Goal:

The government surely must agree?: **Climate Change** is 'merely' one *symptom* of '**The Real Problem**'?

'**The Real Problem**' is that Humanity is living well beyond the bioregenerative capacity of the Planet's Ecosystem. (>70% Beyond!) 1970 was the last time the world was in balance, and ever since then the deficit has been steadily increasing without any sign of abating! (This with all the 'amazing' 'Sustainability' work going on around the world!)

The 'Issue' is about 'real' 'Sustainable Living' and what 'that' really means for '**The World**', a '**Nation**', and right down to each, and every **individual**?

I'm sure every New Zealander would agree: '**Sustainable Living**', and being a '**Sustainable Nation**', means: *'We' as a collective, should all be living within our 'fair share' of less than One Planet's, Ecological Regenerative Biocapacity limits?*

This surely must be, "**The Ultimate Goal**" of humanity?

It's well accepted that anthropogenic Carbon Emissions are a huge contributor to '**The Real Problem**', but due to the inter-relationship between the Earth's bioregenerative resources, the solution, and particularly when looking to 2050, requires more than a simple, Carbon Emissions, or a '**Zero Carbon**' focus. (This particularly for nation's like NZ with strong and diverse Biocapacity Balance Sheets.)

At an 'enclosed system', global level, a '**Zero Carbon**' goal may have real relevance in solving '**The Real Problem**', however, given the huge demographic, and biodiversity diversity between the nations of the world, setting '**Zero Carbon**' goals at a nation level has the potential to delay, deceive, and confuse efforts to solve '**The Real Problem**'.

More specifically, '**Zero Carbon**' on its assumed, '*Territorial*' basis of accounting, in the case of NZ, unlike the UK, could well be counter to achievement of '**The Ultimate Goal**'.

This is the real danger of using another nation's inappropriate 'recipe'!

Below is an example that demonstrates the issue: (One, the Government is probably fully aware?)

NZ is a nation, (A '*Territory of the planet*') that is blessed with very high biocapacity per capita. (ranked 10th or so in the world, and some ten times that of the UK.)

In a world that is 70% short of Biocapacity, it would seem reasonable that every human being on the planet should strive to minimise their individual demand for this critically short resource? This, 'intensity of pursuit' independent of the state of their nation's own, *Biocapacity Balance Sheet*? Given the size of the **Global Biocapacity Deficit**, maybe this should / will become the obligation for every human on Earth??

In pursuing a '**Zero Carbon**' agenda, NZ will be presented with some options that conflict with that logical, and seemingly moral, imperative. However, in setting a 'National Agenda, valid questions could be:

"Should NZ share its biocapacity 'as best it can' with the rest of the world, or should it 'merely ensure' that its sovereign, 'Territorial' biocapacity is not 'over drawn' by all its inhabitant's biocapacity needs?"

Attainment of a '**Zero Carbon**' goal is possible in either of the above choices. Yet the resultant changes in 'life style, biocapacity demands, and extent of transformation required could be quite radically different. Further, in the two options, the nation's contribution at a global level to solving '**The Real Problem**' could also be significantly different.

Worse still: If the 'nine or so' countries, ranked above NZ in '*Per capita Biocapacity*', also chose a '**Zero Carbon**', goal, and chose the 'only look after themselves', '*Territorial*', option above, '**The Real Problem**' at a global level would move to be beyond solution: ie The rest of the world would in all likelihood never be unable to ever 'fit' within the remaining biocapacity on the planet. This even if it was 'full of trees' and they had done their own, very best '*Footprint shrinking*'!

Further: Taking the set of nations ranked just below NZ, which 'interestingly' include Russia, and using the same argument above, escalates the above problem into a

potentially huge 'Them and Us' divide which could result in an externally orchestrated, 'Biocapacity starvation' scenarios! This certainly would not solve our chronic, **Global Biocapacity Deficit**, yet 'we' all need its solution!

This is the frightening reality of NZ adopting a '**Zero Carbon**' Goal. Particularly the desire to make this a cast in bronze 2050 metric and goal of success. (In the case of the UK, with its chronic biocapacity deficit, the situation is totally different and some form of Zero Carbon goal could be appropriate.)

If 'we' truly are serious about wanting to solve '**The Real Problem**', those nations like NZ, with significant and 'excess Biocapacity', have a responsibility to help the world, not just themselves.

We all know: Climate Change is a Global problem. A '**Zero Carbon**' agenda enables these 'nations of biocapacity wealth, to potentially renege on this responsibility, while simultaneously marketing flawed claims of 'high ground', 'global leadership success'.

Surely NZ can't be part of ANY of this deception?! Whether, in active or passive accomplice?

Further whether NZ (or other nations) used *Carbon Trading* to achieve these goals or not, would also have materially different impact, on both these, national and global, tenets of authentic contribution to solving '**The Real Problem**'.

Beyond the above critical flaws, living a 'Sustainable Life', as defined above, and contributing to solve '**The Real Problem**', is more than 'Carbon' and being '**Zero Carbon**'.

We all know to achieve 'Success' One needs the **right Metric** and the **right Goal** (standard) of that metric, for THE specific 'Success'

In agreement with the Government's stated approach: The 2050, goal needs to be one that will become the well understood, 'primary beacon' for the *full journey*. One that the whole nation understands, buys into and can relate at a business, community and personal, moral lifestyle level.

On the surface, and from a Government perspective, the '**Zero Carbon**' approach, may seem to offer many of these tenets, but as one digs deeper, its metric and basis of accounting is something alien, and not suitable for the long tough journey to "**The Ultimate Goal**" that lies ahead.

The 2050 Vision (Goal) chosen for NZ should represent *precisely* the 'beacon' for 'Sustainable Success', that NZ will need through to 2050. One that will be optimum for NZ in the duality of responsibility of looking after its own interests, while maximising its global contribution to the solution of **'The Real Problem'**.

This quote maybe brings a spotlight on the current global 'goal confusion':

"At an IPCC level, when it when it comes to actual environmental strategies and policies, are decision-makers asking the right questions to lead us towards this goal? Over the last decades, the global sustainable development debate has been unfocused. Definitions abound, and long agendas are drawn up in international forums that lack specificity and consistency with the reality of planetary limits. This lack of clarity is surprising, since the much earlier 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm ran under the theme 'Only one Earth'."

The **'Ecological Footprint'**, 'global hectare' metric for biocapacity, is an example of a metric that would meet all this new *'Beacon of Success'*, criteria for NZ.

It provides a true and easily understandable metric of holistic Bioregenerative Sustainability. Underneath this primary metric, Carbon Emissions, and other sustainability element, goals can then be set as appropriate, in helping plot *the course* to that *'Beacon of Success'*. The key being that 'The Beacon, represents the **'Ultimate Goal'** and is the *'The What'* of Success. Carbon management, etc being *'The How'* related, sub-goals!

Using the more holistic, Biocapacity accounting for human use of bioregenerative natural resources, *most western world countries need three to four times the Biocapacity of their sovereign nations*, yet NZ is currently one of only a few of the developed world countries that today has 'Excess Biocapacity'.

Herein lies the 'time luxury' in the choosing and setting of NZ's **'Ultimate Goal'**, and then the lower level, Carbon aligned, goals. With NZ's current biocapacity credit, and high biocapacity per capita, this 'luxury time' should be used productively in plotting a morally defensible and authentic *2050 Transformation Agenda*, one that also leads the world to a new **'Ultimate Goal'** metric: One directly linked to solution of **'The Real Problem'** above: *The chronic, Global Biocapacity Deficit*.

'Zero Carbon' for NZ, fails in that test.

Short of an appropriate long-term solution, as proposed above, being adopted now, some future NZ government of the day, will then be inconveniently forced, to initiate a 'second round' search for a better metric. Not only will this bring up huge credibility issues around the current Government, but it will make it much more challenging to get 'buy in' from a then confused and disillusioned, electorate.

Further NZ would have lost it's current, 'time luxury' window, and will come under increased peer pressure, becoming 'a follower' rather than 'THE leader', it could be today.

For all the reasons in this and many of the other **One Point Zero** submissions, the 'Zero Carbon' approach is doomed as 'The Framework' and 'The Metric' for the envisaged 30 plus year journey ahead for which it's been chosen.

PS: In empathising with the 'disruption' these conclusions may cause, maybe 'Zero Carbon' is best 'sold' to the nation as an *'Interim Plan'*? A 'Stop Ga' solution for changing direction from the National Government's 'wrong course' and to be used while the task of finding and designing the *true Long-term Metric and Goals*, are made the next 12 month's priority?

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