

Nature of the issue:

The issue is the future of New Zealand's energy production and what strategies should be used to ensure we have secure energy supplies. A growing population and economy are resulting in an increasing demand for energy. However, along with these changes the amount of non-renewable resources in New Zealand is slowly decreasing (1). The draft New Zealand Energy Strategy outlines plans by the Government to resolve this issue including:

- developing resources,
- creating secure and affordable energy,
- ensuring energy is used efficiently and
- that environmental responsibility is taken in to account when producing and consuming energy.

NZ has reserves of non-renewable energy resources such as ...The government intends to continue the development and use of these resources but alternatives need to be explored. The world demand for oil and gas is high which provides NZ with economic opportunities involving oil and gas exports...

Renewable energy is energy produced from resources which will be constantly available. New Zealand has the potential for renewable energy production using solar, wind, and hydro resources. These energy sources are environmentally friendly. One of NZ's main sources of energy is hydro power generation using major river systems...

A rapidly growing source of energy is from using the wind, and wind farms have developed in several areas in both the North and South Islands...

Using renewable energy to generate electricity has the most positive impacts on the environment as they do not increase greenhouse gas emissions or create other forms of air pollution. The burning of fossil fuels is a major contributor to pollution and has been identified as major factor responsible for climate change. However the building of dams drastically changes drainage patterns... These impacts on the environment can be viewed as positive as future flooding of the river can be controlled; ...(2)

New Zealand Automobile Association

The New Zealand Automobile Association is a representative group for over 1.3million road users and vehicle owners and has strong interest in issues that may impact on their members. They are particularly concerned with use of motor vehicles, costs of motoring and policies that may affect 'personal mobility'. NZAA places a high value on the safety and rights of their members, as road users (3).

It is of a great concern to NZAA that fuel prices are continuing to rise, and as a result they are interested in more energy efficient modes of transport, developing public systems...

diversifying modes of transport will aid “New Zealand’s energy security and resilience to higher or more volatile fuel prices” (4) In order to prevent effects on their members they think that the NZ needs to ensure that future energy sources meet the ever-increasing demand. NZAA completely agrees with the Government proposal to increase quality of infrastructure and public transport systems but there should be no increase to road user charges or excise duty as motorists are already experiencing high enough living costs, especially in relation to motor vehicle use.

Proposed solution:

New Zealand should produce more renewable energy using a wider range of energy resources. Further development of renewable energy will improve New Zealand’s air quality reducing greenhouse gas emissions, make us less dependent on expensive imports and ... (5)

To investigate and improve the existing forms of renewable energy like, wind and hydro power should be the first step with research into developing tidal energy and more solar power is needed to give us a range of options and security in the future (6).

While hydro-electricity is our main form of renewable energy, there are fewer rivers that have power potential. Further development of this option is opposed by environmentalists, NZRCA and... Wind power is already widely used and there are lots of suitable sites for more wind generators... Solar power is used mostly on a very small scale and often by individuals. The government subsidized the use of solar panels on homes...

The next step is through research to enable us to fully develop other sources of renewable energy like tidal power, but this will require new technologies not currently used in NZ. This part of the solution simple means investing in our resource strengths...

Use of renewable energy will further show NZ to be a “clean green country’ which will support other industries like tourism (7)...