

New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association (NZRCA)

The NZRCA have been delegated as representatives for the New Zealand Canoe Federation on conservation issues, and consequently they have approached their submission on the Draft Energy Strategy with this focus.

NZRCA has expressed concern over extensive development of our water resources specifically hydro power and the flow on effects to the water systems throughout the country... Their primary concern is for the canoe and kayak industry that requires undamaged, free flowing rivers, which has prompted their response to the Draft Strategy (1). They feel that "strict adherence to the central tenet of the Energy Strategy (that for the foreseeable future all energy generation is renewable) may result in unacceptable pressures on our remaining free flowing rivers and a high risk of suboptimal environmental and economic outcomes" (2)...

NZRCA focuses on the high environmental and social costs of hydro schemes, specifically for white water kayakers and other enthusiast who place a high value on river environments. Because of this view on the importance of maintaining the water environments their response was to present a submission to the Ministry of Economic development, for the New Zealand Energy Strategy (3)...

This group will strongly oppose changes that 'compromise fundamental tenets of the Resource Management Act' favouring sustainable management of our resources... NZRCA feels development of alternative energy sources is hugely important as it could reduce pressure on water resources, particularly New Zealand's heavy reliance on hydro power. They argue that wind and tidal power should be developed and consider these sources of energy more truly renewable than our river environments (4)...

Proposed course of action:

My proposal for our future energy security includes extensive development of existing renewable and non-renewable energy sources, and creation of new sources (5). This decision is based on my research and the submissions of the well informed representative groups... It would appear that the most appropriate course of action for securing the future of New Zealand's energy production needs to include 3 goals: further development of resources, efficient use of existing source of energy and ensuring minimal effect on the environment (6).

... As at 2009 73% of our electricity was provided by hydro, geothermal and wind power, these are renewable energy resources and the Government needs to continue to invest in developing these resources. The further development of renewable energy will provide a diverse range of energy sources, and when teamed with the less sustainable use of oil, gas and minerals, it will significantly boost New Zealand's energy security, create jobs in the energy sector and act to boost and accommodate for economic growth (7). By using a greater proportion of renewable resources air quality in New Zealand can be expected to improve, reduce carbon and greenhouse gas emissions while reaching the renewable electricity target, that is, 90% of electricity generation from renewable sources by 2025...

There must be a balance between both renewable and non-renewable energy resources, as there is still dependency on fossil fuels in transport and other sectors. There would be a too greater short term cost in modifying these industries toward a solely renewable source. It would be more suitable to attempt to regulate use (8), for example the Government should set requirements for environmentally responsible mining practices and ensure that there will be greater benefits to society than costs...

Greater investment should be used to develop technologies and knowledge bases around the use of non-renewable energy, in an attempt to fully utilise the economic potential of these resources. There are already developments in the use of Carbon Capture and storage technology which could potentially be an effective way of utilising our natural resources, with lesser negative impacts to the environment.

The Government should also continue to focus on encouraging efficient use of our existing energy sources, through transport, workplace use, consumer knowledge and energy efficient homes. For example, the government has committed more than \$340million over four years to the 'Warm Up New Zealand: Heat Smart' programme which will assist over 186,500 homes and provide higher levels of support for low income households, which will show a response to the Public Health Association concerns of over reducing fuel poverty... As previously mentioned energy efficient homes then have flow on effects to other industry, where healthier homes lead to a healthier work force, benefitting the overall economy (9)...

An option focusing solely on the exploration and development of non-renewable resources will not provide security of energy supplies into the future. Despite their current value and NZ's potential resources this option can only be seen as short term or in a supporting role to the development of more renewable resources. The negative environmental effects are a major concern with this option (10) particularly with greenhouse gas emissions, and risk or damage to the environment through extraction... New Zealand has a 'Clean, Green' reputation amongst the global community and most feel that this image is important to maintain, not just for our image but the country's health overall... In 2007 43% of the country's total emissions were accounted for by the production and consumption of energy. Government policies to further combat this are already in place, with the Emissions Trading Scheme and increased investment in energy conservation and efficiency; continued reliance on fossil fuels would compromise these policies.

However focusing solely on large scale renewable resource developments (11) ... would possibly put unnecessary pressure on energy supply and production... The use of both renewable and non-renewable resources would ensure secure supply in a transition phase.