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**Media Release**



**Excellent Commission report shows net zero is doable and affordable**

EDS has congratulated the Climate Commission on the release of its Advice Report and first budgets and for setting out the direction of travel for our economy to meet the climate change challenge we face as a nation and globally.

“The Commission’s report is a truly historic turning point for Aotearoa New Zealand: we are shifting from talking about climate change to beginning the planned journey to a net zero economy,” said EDS CEO Gary Taylor.

“This will affect every aspect of our lives through to 2050 and beyond as we progressively reduce dependence on fossil fuels and lower methane emissions to stable and sustainable levels.

“There are three key messages that we take from the release.

“First, business as usual will not get us to our 2030 targets or to carbon zero by 2050. Aotearoa New Zealand is not even on track to meet its National Determined Contribution under the Paris Accord. Serious change is needed to the way we use energy and farm our land.

“Secondly, the path that the Commission has proposed will get us back on track to meet the required targets and make the necessary contribution to the global effort to prevent runaway climate change and to address the climate emergency our Parliament has recognized. The global context is encouraging with big emitting countries like China, Japan, the UK and now the USA moving aggressively to reduce emissions.

“Thirdly, the path set out by the Commission is achievable. We can do this if business and communities pull together and if government adopts the Commission’s recommendations and makes the policy shifts required. Yes, there are challenges and the transition to net zero has to be fair to all. But we can get there with presently available technologies and with minimal impact on GDP.

“EDS will take time to thoroughly analyse the report and its extensive appendices and provide considered response back to the Commission.

“We remain concerned about the treatment of agriculture and the way the Commission has budgeted to just meet the target range. That needs more consideration and given the stated imperatives for early action, we would like to see the review of *He waka eke noa* brought forward into this calendar year: agriculture needs to join the ETS sooner rather than later. We can’t afford to continue to shield the sector.

“We also want to do a deep dive into the modelling for forestry. Even more exotics is not good. The Commission acknowledges the superior sequestration and co-benefits of indigenous forests but still proposes several hundred thousand more hectares of new pine plantations and only a smaller area of natives. Surely we have reached peak pine in this country.

“We need a robust pricing signal that includes biodiversity benefits to encourage the land use changes required.

“Finally, we will be working co-operatively with business to plan our *Climate Change and Business Conference 2021* in October which will be an opportunity to take early stock of progress and focus on implementing change consistent with the Commission’s budgets.

“This journey is about modernizing our economy and making it fit for the future world. It’s a truly exciting plan. Overall, the Climate Commission has done a great job and we like the way it proposes to monitor and report on progress and hold government to account.

“The Climate Commission has set out Our Path and I expect the team of five million will rise to the challenge it has laid down,” Gary Taylor concluded.