

Emissions plan ignites international energy forum

Inside Government NZ, 27 May 2022



Gas NZ Chief Executive, Janet Carson

New Zealand Government’s Emission’s Reduction Plan and the nation’s shift to renewable gases took centre stage at the 2022 Australia Gas Energy Forum’s Climate Change discussion in Queensland this week.

Speaking at the Forum about how the New Zealand gas and LPG sector is responding to climate change policy challenges and opportunities in Aotearoa, Gas NZ Chief Executive, Janet Carson said the gas sector has achieved some optimistic outcomes.

She said Gas NZ has been working to ensure Government considered how renewable gases and LPG can be a meaningful part of the future rather than banning new gas connections – as was recommended in independent advice from New Zealand’s Climate Change Commission.

“We proposed that Government implement renewable gas targets. We recommended that renewable LPG should be mandated, and required from 2025, and we put in place a communications campaign – Future Sure – to engage New Zealanders in renewable gases,” Ms Carson told the Forum.

Subsequently, actions in the Government’s Emissions Reduction Plan released last week provide for the development of a Gas Transition Pathway, that will not only consider how the country shifts its reliance on conventional gas but also how renewable gases can be a part of the transition.

Bioenergy in the news

“There were many factors that contributed to where our Government landed. They considered the Climate Change Commission’s advice, they listened to New Zealanders that use gas and LPG and they listened to industry,” said Ms Carson of the plan.

“The Gas Transition Pathway announced last week is a big shift, and recognises gas is a fuel in transition.

“As I said at the Forum – ‘what the caterpillar calls the end, the rest of the world calls a butterfly’. The Emissions Reduction Plan and the Gas Transition Pathway represents a strong way forward for gas in New Zealand. It is not the end it is a new beginning.”

She says what used to be called the climate change debate was no longer a debatable topic.

At the Forum, Gas Energy Australia Chief Executive, Brett Heffernan said climate issues were on many Australians minds as they went to the Federal Election polls last weekend.

The Australian gas boss said solar, wind, batteries and hydrogen would be an increasing part of the country’s future energy mix, “but even all together they would not fill Australia’s energy gap.”

“Yes, climate change is an environmental reality, but it is also an opportunity for nations with a pragmatic approach,” he said.

“Without gas, solar panels, wind turbines and battery components simply cannot be manufactured, so we need to think again about the best way to achieve our clean energy goals. The gulf between the aspiration of some and reality for all is still vast. We all need to go in with our eyes open.”

About Gas NZ: Gas NZ represents the LPG Association of New Zealand and the Gas Association of New Zealand.

--- ends ---