We should adopt the 'easy win' way

Anthropocene began in 1965, according to signs left in the world's 'loneliest tree'

Opinion:

By Bioenergy Association chief executive Brian Cox

Government officials appear to be putting more effort into working out how to purchase international carbon credits (Carbon News 20 Feb 2018) than into reducing the country's greenhouse gas emissions.

The focus of officials' attention should be on the many "easy win" greenhouse gas emission reductions we have available for immediate adoption.

Purchasing international carbon credits should be a contingency, and not the prime activity.

It is wrong for officials to say linking the Emissions Trading Scheme to schemes in other countries, is the best way to secure the international carbon units New Zealand will need to meet its 2030 emissions reduction target.

Purchasing international credits (if they are available) will allow us to say we have met the target, but is a drain of scarce funds to other countries, and will produce no other benefit.

Brian Cox

Job creation

If we spent the same amount of money within New Zealand on projects to reduce domestic greenhouse-gas emissions, not only would we be able to possibly meet the targets, but we would assist emerging low-carbon business activities, create jobs and facilitate regional economic growth.

For example, bioenergy based on using biomass residues from forestry, wood processing and the waste sector could reduce the amount of coal used to produce heat.

Utilising residual waste to produce energy can also create new business opportunities and assist communities achieve zero organic-waste to landfills.

A number of the "easy win" greenhouse gas emission reduction opportunities are not yet fully established and need a hand up.

More effort

As we have seen from the government support of electric vehicles, the hand-up required has not been large and the benefits are already being seen.

We need officials to put more effort into exploring the existing greenhouse gas reduction opportunities so that we can avoid the need to purchase international carbon credits.

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