

Energy minister to get the word on biofuels

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ENERGY MINISTER Megan Woods today will be told how the country can use biofuels to cut its burgeoning transport emissions.

Scion is launching a Biofuels Roadmap in Wellington this afternoon, outlining how large-scale production and use of liquid biofuels could cut greenhouse gas emissions and improve energy security.

Emissions from transport increased 77.9 per cent between 1990 and 2015, largely due to the road transport sector, which is responsible for 17 per cent of New Zealand’s greenhouse gas emissions.

Scion says the new report is the result of a two-year study, and presents several options for using liquid biofuels, especially in heavy industry and transport.

More Valuable

The Bioenergy Association is welcoming the report, but says any biofuels roadmap should be part of a wider biofutures plan to revolutionise the economy.

“The production of liquid biofuels needs to be pursued in a holistic manner as the coproducts of fuel production are often more valuable than the energy products,” chief executive Brian Cox told Carbon News.

Starting with the Government’s forestry strategy, Cox says that everything, from what species are planted to what infrastructure is put in place, should be based around the type of plan adopted in Queensland, where the biofutures sector is leaping ahead.

Additional Jobs

“The Bioenergy Association is pleased to see the research that Scion has undertaken to identify an appropriate roadmap for the liquid biofuels sector,” he said.

“While electric vehicles are able to provide a low-carbon transport option for light vehicles, the long distance and heavy vehicles will be a challenge.

“Liquid biofuels produced from our own natural renewable resources should be a priority for the coalition Government, as they will produce additional jobs and regional economic growth.”

Cox says that while the options for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the heat and electricity sectors are proven and able to be implemented immediately, more research is needed on replacing fossil fuels for transport.

Economic Boost

“Government officials should be focusing on these opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions rather than just assuming that we will have to purchase international carbon credits,” he said.

With good government assistance, emissions can be reduced within New Zealand, with the revenue generated being used to boost the local economy.

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