

## Convert Marsden Point to produce bio-crude: Bioenergy Association

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**THE government is asleep at the wheel and should be pushing for the Marsden Point Refinery to be repurposed to produce bio-crude, the executive officer of the Bioenergy Association,**

Shareholders in Refining NZ are set to vote on August 6 on whether to close the country's only refinery, at Marsden Point in Northland, and switch instead to importing pre-refined fuels.

Brian Cox says the refinery has had a death wish for some time and hasn't been exploring what it could do to help transition New Zealand to a low carbon economy. He says the government needs to broaden its focus from renewable electricity and hydrogen and develop a bioenergy strategy.

Cox, who spoke to Carbon News from his home in Taranaki, said when he looks out the window, he sees farmland that could be used much more productively.

Cows are being grazed on marginal land that could be better utilised growing biomass for fuel.

"What I'm suggesting here is assistance to farmers – not subsidies – to help them best utilise their land in a way that will reduce greenhouse gases not add to them," Cox says. "How can we take the technology that is emerging around the world – including here in New Zealand – and adapt it."

Cox says the Refinery should be leading the discussion on the future of bio-crude and biodiesel in New Zealand's transition to a zero carbon economy.

He says the refinery has a skilled workforce – many of whom will be made redundant if the plant closes – who easily be retrained to produce biofuels.

"As a community should be asking why aren't we doing it? Why are we leaving all our eggs in one basket?"

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