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Media release

Government ignores heat opportunities for addressing climate change

The Bioenergy Association says it's disappointed the Government's climate change targets focus mainly on emissions reduction opportunities in agriculture and greater use of electric cars, with no mention of the potential of the heat sector.

Association Chair Rob Mallinson says the Government has already run a Wood Energy Scheme that showed the cost of carbon emission reduction from renewable heat opportunities was only around \$7 per tonne.

“Buying carbon credits offshore will only meet our obligation for one ‘commitment period’ and the long-term cost of this approach hasn't been properly assessed. We should be taking advantage of low-cost opportunities to reduce our carbon emissions here in New Zealand by increasing our use of bioenergy, particularly in the heat sector.

“The Bioenergy Association would like to see the Government explore these opportunities, as have the UK with its [Renewable Heat Incentive](#), and Australia with its \$2 billion [Emissions Reduction Fund](#).”

Mr Mallinson says the Government should see climate change targets as an opportunity for New Zealand business and the economy, not a cost.

“Bioenergy has the potential to add revenue of \$6 billion per year to the country's economy, and to create jobs and economic growth – particularly in the regions.

“In the short term, we'd like the Government to encourage the heat market to use wood fuel, farmers to process farm waste to produce bioenergy and local authorities to use organic waste for heating and transport fuel instead of dumping it in landfills.

“Such leadership would show other potential users the viability of bioenergy and support expansion of the wood fuel and biogas markets. Our bioenergy opportunities are based on well-proven technology, so don't require further research or exploration. What we need is Government support to speed up growth of the market.”

Mr Mallinson says there are many economically viable niche bioenergy opportunities. “With Government support and near zero cost, the number of opportunities could increase considerably, using New Zealand's good supply of renewable natural resources to achieve significant economic, employment and environmental benefits.”

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About the New Zealand Bioenergy Association

The Bioenergy Association helps its members to develop and grow their bioenergy businesses, raises awareness of the benefits of bioenergy and provides the latest information about the bioenergy sector, both in New Zealand and internationally.

Its Vision is for 25 percent of New Zealand's consumer energy supply to be from bioenergy, including 30 percent of the country's transport fuels, by around 2040.

For more information about the potential economic benefit of this Vision see the [BERL analysis](#) of the [New Zealand Bioenergy Strategy 2010](#).