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Media Release

New Zealand's Emission Reduction Plan centre stage at Australia Gas Forum

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

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 New Zealand gas sector has achieved some optimistic outcomes.

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," Carson told the Forum.

Subsequently, actions in the Government's Emissions Reduction Plan released last week provides 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. While very clear that the Emissions Reduction Plan energy actions were a result of many inputs, Carson says the Plan is progressive and was carefully considered.

"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.

"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."

Climate Change reality and Australia

Carson says what used to be called the climate change debate is no longer debatable, it is a reality, and this was acknowledged by forum delegates who saw this reality first-hand in the Australian elections.

Gas Energy Australia Chief Executive Brett Heffernan noted at the Forum that Climate issues were on many Australians minds as they went to the polls last weekend. Heffernan says that solar, wind, batteries and hydrogen would be an increasing part of our 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.

"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," says Heffernan.

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About Gas NZ: Gas NZ represents the LPG Association of New Zealand and the Gas Association of New Zealand. Our vision is that renewable gases are a material part of New Zealand's energy system, providing energy choices and a cleaner future for all New Zealanders. Gas NZ represents New Zealand's gas and LPG wholesalers; major LPG companies; gas distributors and appliance companies nationwide.