

14 November 2019

Interim Climate Change Committee
ICCC
PO Box 10362
Wellington 6143

Support for the Bioenergy Association of New Zealand Submission – ICCC Call for evidence on options available to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over the period 2022 to 2035

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to provide Manawātū District Council's support for the Bioenergy Association of New Zealand submission on the ICCC's call for evidence on options available to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Manawātū District Council (MDC) is planning to install a waste-to-energy facility in 2023 at the Manawātū Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to co-digest the sludge generated by the WWTP and the solid portion from local industry trade wastes.

MDC has identified several other waste streams, for example paunch grass from meat processing activities, as being suitable for co-digestion. This would allow us to utilise the energy (biogas) from the digestion of sludge to produce heat and/or power, via a cogeneration engine, and reduce treatment cost for nitrogen removal. This will make our WWTP largely self-sufficient in energy.

Our intention is to develop a two-stage anaerobic digestion process which will produce biogas for energy, and digestate which can be utilised as soil conditioner and fertiliser substitute.

Anaerobic digestion, as in the process proposed, is a proven technology elsewhere in the world, but it is not largely used in New Zealand. In our opinion, from a Local Government perspective, the biggest barriers are:

- The lack of other projects in New Zealand using co-digestion, and therefore limited knowledge transfer and promotion of anaerobic digestion. Anaerobic digestion is an inherently efficient process, with the ability to capture all the residual value of organic wastes.
- The lack of operator knowledge in managing digesters, especially with thermophilic set ups. This also limits knowledge transfer about the potential value of anaerobic digestion to the New Zealand economy.
- The lack of grants/funds to support anaerobic digestion projects and cogeneration projects. In particular anaerobic digestion has the potential to contribute to a net zero carbon economy.
- The lack of certification regulation for nutrient-rich digestate, that can be used as fertiliser. This has considerable potential for our agricultural sector.

We believe that providing support to the biogas industry, in the form of funding opportunities or grants, would highly encourage the development of anaerobic digestion and cogeneration projects. These kinds of projects would reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as biogas (mainly methane) is being captured and used, rather than released into the environment. The biogas can be used as a heat source or it can be converted to electricity, both of which can be used on site.

Manawatū District Council is keen to work together with the Bioenergy Association of New Zealand to encourage releasing the potential of waste-to-energy projects. We strongly support their submission.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Templer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Richard Templer
Chief Executive