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Sent: Thursday, 11 June 2026 9:06 am
To: Matt.Adams@mfe.govt.nz
Subject: Economic summary

Confidence: High for the broad structural and substantive differences. **Medium-High** for fine-grained wording differences, because the original PDF was available as extracted text and I compared the peer-reviewed version by directly extracting text from the uploaded PDF.

I compared the two PDFs directly. My bottom line is:

The NZIER peer-reviewed version does not appear to materially change the headline economic results. The main changes are:

- a **later date/version**,
- **more cautious and better-qualified framing**,
- **extra methodological transparency**,
- **some restructuring of sections and appendices**, and
- a **less advocacy-style conclusion**.

Here are the differences I found.

1. Version/date and length

- The **original** is dated **19 February 2026**. [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)
- The **peer-reviewed version** is dated **8 May 2026**.
- The **original is 37 pages** long, while the **peer-reviewed version is 41 pages** long.

What that suggests:

- The NZIER-reviewed version is a **later redraft**, not just a lightly marked-up copy.
- The extra pages are mainly from **added explanatory material and appendices**, not from a wholesale redesign of the economic case.

2. Headline quantified results appear to be unchanged

The main economic numbers in the original are:

- **Development phase:** NZD \$9(2)(b)(ii) investment, 9(2)(b)(ii) FTE-years, \$9(2)(b)(ii) wages, \$9(2)(b)(ii) GDP. [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)
- **Ongoing operations (2030 scale):** 9(2)(b)(ii) FTEs, \$9(2)(b)(ii) wages, \$9(2)(b)(ii) GDP, and **about \$9(2)(b)(ii) annual tax from 2030**, rising to **more than \$9(2)(b)(ii)** as revenues expand. [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)

From my comparison, the peer-reviewed version **retains those same headline figures**.

That is important. It means the NZIER review seems to have focused more on:

- **presentation**
- **qualification**
- **structure**
- **evidential framing** rather than changing the underlying economic estimates.

3. Glossary expanded

The original glossary includes terms like AR, AU/AUD, BECCS, CBC, CDR, CRUs, DACCS, DOCCS, EEZ, ERP, ERW, ETS, EU CRCF, MCFS, MRV, NDC, NIWA, OAE, SCS, and VCM. [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)

The peer-reviewed version adds several operational/economic acronyms that were not in the original glossary:

- **CAPEX**
- **COGS**
- **FTE**
- **GDP**
- **OPEX**

Why this matters:

- The revised version is more **self-contained** and easier for non-specialist readers to follow.
- It suggests the review pushed the report toward **clearer reader orientation**, especially for decision-makers unfamiliar with economic terminology.

4. Introduction and contents were restructured

In the original table of contents:

- Section 2 contains **“Context”** and **“Scope and Structure of this Document.”** [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)

In the peer-reviewed version:

- **“Context”** becomes **“Purpose”**
- **“Scope and Structure of this Document”** becomes **“Structure of this Document”**

That is a small change, but it is telling:

- **“Purpose”** is more direct and disciplined than **“Context.”**
- The wording becomes more formal and report-like.

5. One section was moved and broadened

In the original contents:

- Section 6 includes **“Wider Ongoing Employment Impacts”** as a subsection under ongoing impacts. [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)

In the peer-reviewed version:

- that material is no longer under Section 6
- instead, there is a **new Section 7.4 “Wider Employment Impacts”** under **Wider Economic Impacts**

Why this matters:

- The revised structure separates **quantified operational impacts** from **wider qualitative spillovers** more cleanly.
- That is analytically better. Employment spillovers are not the same thing as the core quantified operating impacts, so moving them out is a stronger structure.

6. Appendices were significantly changed

In the original:

- there is only **Appendix A: OPEX and COGS Impacts**. [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)

In the peer-reviewed version:

- **Appendix A** becomes “**Multiplier Derivation and Data**”
- **Appendix B** becomes “**OPEX and COGS Impacts**”

This is one of the most important changes.

What it means:

- The reviewed version adds a **dedicated methodology/data appendix**
- That strengthens transparency around **how multipliers were derived**
- It suggests NZIER likely pushed for clearer defensibility of the economic method, not just the outputs

That is exactly the sort of thing a peer reviewer would focus on.

7. Market-size framing was materially changed and made more cautious

In the original executive summary, the report says the proposal could position New Zealand as a leader in “**an emerging carbon commodity market valued at approximately \$9(2)(b)(ii).**” [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)

In the peer-reviewed version, this is reframed to something closer to:

- an emerging carbon-removal market projected to grow to **over USD \$9(2)(b)(ii) annually by 2040**

That is a **substantive framing change**.

Why it matters:

- The original \$9(2)(b)(ii) claim is a very large, attention-grabbing market value statement.
- The peer-reviewed version replaces that with a **time-bound annual market projection**, which is much more cautious and analytically grounded.
- This reduces the risk of the report being criticised for over-claiming or mixing incompatible market estimates.

If I were red-teaming this, I would say the peer-reviewed wording is **clearly more robust**.

8. Executive summary presentation is more disciplined

In the original executive summary, the structure is:

- Context
- One-time Economic Impacts
- Ongoing Economic Impacts
- Wider Economic Impacts
- Conclusion [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)

The peer-reviewed version introduces more formal summary architecture, including:

- a clearer **“Quantified Economic Impacts”** section
- a summary table earlier in the executive summary
- more explicit distinction between direct and indirect effects

That is a presentational improvement:

- it makes the argument easier to scan
- it foregrounds the actual economic numbers
- it reduces the risk that qualitative benefits overshadow the quantified results

9. Clarifications and caveats were sharpened

The original already includes caveats about gross impacts, exclusions, and assumptions. For example:

- development figures are based on full build-out to 2030 scale
- impacts are gross national impacts, excluding induced consumption and wider secondary effects [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)

The peer-reviewed version appears to make these caveats more explicit and better integrated, including:

- clearer explanation of **what is one-time vs annual**
- clearer note that **development figures are total FTE-years over the development phase**
- clearer note on **rounding**
- stronger signposting of what is **illustrative, representative, or not forecast**

That is another sign of peer review improving defensibility rather than changing the core conclusion.

10. The conclusion was softened

This is probably the most important tonal change.

The original executive-summary conclusion says:

- **“Accordingly, we support the proposal on economic grounds.”** [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)

The peer-reviewed conclusion shifts to something more like:

- the project represents a **significant economic opportunity for New Zealand**

That is a real change in posture.

Why it matters:

- The original reads like **advocacy**
- The peer-reviewed version reads more like **independent economic analysis**
- A peer reviewer would often push back on an economist appearing to endorse a proposal outright, rather than just assessing its likely economic effects

This makes the revised version more credible, especially for regulatory or quasi-judicial audiences.

11. The reviewed version appears more methodologically defensible overall

Stepping back, the pattern of changes suggests NZIER's review did **not** overturn the economic case. Instead, it appears to have done three things:

- **Reduced overstated or potentially contestable framing**
- **Improved structure and reader clarity**
- **Added methodological transparency and a more neutral tone**

That is consistent with a peer review aimed at making the report more resilient under scrutiny.

Short summary of the main differences

If you want the shortest possible list, I would say the NZIER peer-reviewed version:

1. updates the report date from **19 February 2026** to **8 May 2026**; original date shown on the cover. [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)
2. increases the report length from **37 pages** to **41 pages**
3. adds glossary terms such as **CAPEX, COGS, FTE, GDP, and OPEX**
4. changes some section labels, including **Context** → **Purpose**
5. moves **Wider Ongoing Employment Impacts** into the broader **Wider Economic Impacts** section
6. adds a new methodology appendix: **Appendix A: Multiplier Derivation and Data**
7. renames the original OPEX/COGS appendix from **Appendix A** to **Appendix B**; original had only Appendix A for OPEX/COGS. [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)
8. replaces the more expansive **\$1.2 trillion market** framing with a more cautious market-growth framing; original uses the \$1.2 trillion statement. [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)
9. keeps the **headline economic estimates broadly the same**; original headlines are 5,128 FTE-years / \$465m wages / \$818m GDP for development and 3,943 FTEs / \$ ^{9(2)(b)(ii)} wages / \$585m GDP for operations. [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)
10. softens the conclusion from explicit support for the proposal to a more neutral assessment; original says **"we support the proposal on economic grounds."** [\[Insight Ec...- 19022026 | PDF\]](#)

If you want, I can do a **second-pass comparison as a two-column table** with:

- **Original wording / structure**
- **Peer-reviewed wording / structure**
- **Why the change matters**

That would be the most useful format if you need to brief someone on what NZIER's review actually changed.

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