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NZIF's concern at lack of funding for science which is limiting our ability to unlocking Growth and Sustainability

The New Zealand Institute of Forestry (NZIF) today expresses deep apprehension over the potential redundancies of scientists at Scion, New Zealand's leading forestry research institute. The Institute highlights the imminent threat to crucial scientific expertise and the detrimental impact on the forestry sector's innovation and sustainability efforts.

As the global community grapples with pressing environmental challenges, the forestry sector stands as one sector which offers sustainable solutions to mitigate climate change and drive economic progress. At the heart of this vital industry lies science, playing a pivotal role in shaping the future of New Zealand's forests and enhancing the nation's economy.

Scion, renowned for its pioneering research in forestry, plays a pivotal role in driving advancements in sustainable forest management, biosecurity, and wood product innovation. The loss of skilled scientists due to lack of funding would not only disrupt ongoing research projects but also undermine New Zealand's ability to address pressing environmental challenges, including climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation.

"Forestry is a cornerstone of New Zealand's economy and environmental stewardship. The potential loss of scientific talent at Scion is deeply concerning," stated James Treadwell, President of the New Zealand Institute of Forestry. "These scientists are at the forefront of innovation, driving sustainable practices and solutions which benefit both our forests and society as a whole. Their expertise is irreplaceable."

New Zealand's forestry sector is a significant contributor to global markets. Through innovative scientific research, the industry continues to unlock new opportunities for growth and diversification. From pioneering sustainable harvesting techniques to developing high-value wood products, science is driving efficiencies and competitiveness, ensuring the sector remains a key driver of economic prosperity.

By leveraging scientific advancements, New Zealand's forestry practices are evolving to prioritise ecological stewardship and biodiversity conservation. Through initiatives such as precision forestry and carbon sequestration, science is helping to mitigate climate change impacts while safeguarding the nation's natural resources for future generations.

Central to the success of New Zealand's forestry sector is a culture of innovation and collaboration fostered by scientific inquiry. Research institutions, industry stakeholders, and government agencies are working together to tackle complex challenges, from pest management to wood processing technologies. By harnessing the collective expertise of scientists and industry leaders, New Zealand is pioneering novel solutions which set global benchmarks for sustainability and efficiency.

Beyond economic and environmental benefits, the forestry sector plays a crucial role in empowering rural communities across New Zealand. Through job creation, skills development, and investment in local infrastructure, forestry operations bolster regional economies and enhance social well-being. By supporting scientific research and education initiatives, the sector is cultivating a skilled workforce equipped to drive innovation and prosperity in rural areas.

As New Zealand charts a course towards a more sustainable and prosperous future, the role of science in the forestry sector will be more critical than ever. By continuing to invest in research, innovation, and collaboration, the nation can unlock the full potential of its forests, driving economic growth, safeguarding the environment, and fostering thriving communities.

The NZIF is calling for a collaborative effort among government agencies, industry partners, and the academic community to ensure the preservation of Scion's research capacity and uphold New Zealand's position as a global leader in sustainable forestry practices.

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