



27 May 2024

Hon. Todd McClay
Minister of Forestry
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160
New Zealand

Dear Minister McClay,

Addressing Public Access to Professional Forest Advice Post-Repeal of the Log Traders and Forest Advisors Act

I am writing on behalf of the New Zealand Institute of Forestry (NZIF) regarding the National Party's policy to repeal the Forest (Log Traders and Forest Advisors) Amendment Act. While we understand the reasons behind this decision, NZIF is concerned it will create a gap in public access to reliable professional forest management advice, leading to the risk of untrained or outdated practitioners providing poor guidance, as seen before the Act's implementation.

As you know, the Log Traders and Forest Advisors Act has ensured only qualified professionals provide forest advice. However, it has been poorly implemented, lacking requirements for continuing professional development, a clear complaints process, and meaningful registration criteria beyond criminal convictions. While NZIF supports changing or repealing this Act, we are concerned it will leave forest owners and stakeholders without a clearly identified source of credible, expert forestry guidance.

To mitigate this risk and ensure continuity in the quality of forest advisory services, the NZIF proposes the Government either considers incorporating the NZIF registration scheme into regulation or publicly endorses our professional body. Our NZIF Registered Forest Professionals are highly qualified and adhere to strict ethical and professional standards and ongoing professional development, ensuring forest owners receive the best possible advice.

Specifically, we request the Government either:

- 1. Integrates the NZIF Registration Scheme into Regulation:** By formalising the NZIF registration scheme within the regulatory framework, we can ensure all forest



advice remains of the highest standard, protecting both forest owners and the broader environment, or

2. Publicly Support the NZIF Registration Scheme: The Government can play a pivotal role in encouraging all individuals and entities seeking forestry advice to exclusively use NZIF Registered Forest Professionals. This endorsement would not only maintain public confidence but also promote sustainable and responsible forestry practices across New Zealand.

Currently, the NZIF registration scheme is run entirely by dedicated volunteers. Any support from the Government to help grow the scheme and improve services for our Registered Forest Professionals would be greatly appreciated. Enhanced resources would enable us to better serve the forestry community and uphold the highest standards of professional forestry advice.

The NZIF remains committed to fostering excellence in forestry and supporting New Zealand's forest sector. We believe with your support, we can continue to provide essential services and uphold the standards our forests and communities deserve.

Thank you for considering our proposals. We are keen to discuss this matter further and explore ways to collaborate for the betterment of New Zealand's forestry industry. Please feel free to contact me to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Treadwell'.

James Treadwell (*RMNZIF and Fellow*)

President

0220 434511

Advancing the Profession of Forestry in Aotearoa