

# NOTE

## WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS

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The World Forestry Congress takes place every six years. In 1985 it was held in Mexico City from 30 June to 10 July. Three New Zealand delegates attended, Alan Familton, Deputy Director-General of the N.Z. Forest Service, and Lin Stoddart and Ian Boyd, Managing Director and General Manager (Forests Division), respectively, of Tasman Forestry Limited.

The Congress was broadly divided into general and technical sessions. Papers were presented at the technical sessions where three were run simultaneously so a complete review from one person's perspective is impossible. General sessions took place at the beginning and end of the Congress. The middle weekend was taken up with field trips to cultural events and tourist attractions. As with all Congress-arranged travel within Mexico City, and further afield for the weekend activities, such events are memorable for the impressive transport logistics (buses for 2000 delegates and wives) and priority treatment (running red lights with armed escorts).

The Congress itself was of limited value from a New Zealand point of view, but educational on tropical hardwood forestry. In brief, matters emphasised were:

- (1) The overcutting of tropical forests and the need for yield planning and effective reafforestation programmes.
- (2) The need for assistance to undeveloped countries to achieve
  - (1) through forestry education, technical management and funding programmes.

Interesting points arising during the Congress included:

- A workshop on tree breeding was held during the Congress. Papers from eminent researchers outlined current progress. U.S.A. researchers have made spectacular progress during the past 12 months on aspects of genetic engineering which suggest that trees toxic to insects and "eucopines" may not be far away!

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- Concern expressed over the large investment incurred in training young people in a number of less developed countries, then this investment not being returned to the country itself because the individual will go to a developed country where the conditions and remuneration are more rewarding.
- U.S.S.R. is currently planting 1.0 million hectares per annum plus approximately the same in regeneration. They spoke of growth rates in the order of 10-12 m<sup>3</sup>/ha/year on a 40- to 45-year rotation.
- An international Tropical Timber Agreement became operational in April 1985. It is administered by the Tropical Timber Council with its main functions being market intelligence, development of processing in developing countries, reforestation and forest management. It is a unique commodity agreement as it also puts emphasis on management of the resource. The first meeting of the Council was held in Geneva in June 1985.

Overall, however, the Congress was very broad, political, and concentrated mainly on tropical forestry in developing countries. The real value was in meeting forestry people from around the world and exchanging views on subjects of mutual interest. There may be merit in suggestions voiced by many towards the end of the Congress that a management orientated congress for conifer growing countries (*e.g.*, Europe, North America, U.S.S.R., Japan, Chile, Australia, and New Zealand) would be a useful development. Perhaps there is an opportunity for New Zealand to enhance our forestry image, both domestically and internationally, if we were to organise and host the inaugural Conifer World Forestry Congress?