



## RECENT EVENTS



# Environmental administration and NZ Forest Service reorganisation — Part 2

This report updates the report on pages 2 and 3 of volume 31, No. 1.

### (a) Ministry of Forestry

It was noted in the May 1986 issue of NZ Forestry that Cabinet had agreed to keeping the forestry sectoral and regulatory activities of the NZFS together in a single agency, but that the location of the agency was not decided. The major options were a stand-alone agency of attachment to another department such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Following submissions from Forestry Sector groups and production of an officials' paper, Cabinet agreed on April 15, 1986 to the formation of a stand-alone Ministry of Forestry with the Mission of "promoting the national interest through forestry, including wood-based industries".

Officials of the NZFS were directed by Cabinet to prepare a detailed proposal showing the functions, outline organisation and legislative requirements for the new Ministry and report back by June 30, 1986.

Based on consultations with NZFS staff and input from potential client groups, a Ministry of Forestry Steering Committee, under the leadership of Alan Farnham, developed a detailed proposal for the new Ministry which was approved by Cabinet on July 15, 1986.

The Ministry will consist of three functional streams each headed by an Assistant Secretary of Forestry:

1. Research: consisting of the existing Forest Research Institute.
2. Policy and Corporate Services: providing advice on policies needed to achieve the greatest national benefit from the forestry sector and to monitor and report on trends, prospects and issues in forestry.
3. Forestry Services: protecting and enhancing the opportunities for the forestry sector to do business through the provision of protective services, information, advice and the fostering and coordination of training on a user-pays basis.

In addition to the three functional streams, the Ministry will have a regional presence of about 160 staff principally located in offices in Auckland, Rotorua, Palmerston North, Nelson, Christchurch and Dunedin. The regional staff will have the responsibility of carrying out the Ministry's statutory and other functions in the region and providing an information link to Wellington.

The Ministry is scheduled to come into operation on April 1, 1987. An establishment unit, under the leadership of Russ

Ballard, has responsibility for setting up the Ministry by this date.

Cabinet decisions on charging users for services provided by Government Departments mean that the Ministry has been set a target of recovering approximately 15% of its costs in 1986/87, rising to about 50% recovery in five years. These revenue generation targets will require the Ministry to adopt a client-oriented, commercial approach to its work.

### (b) Forestry Corporation

The Establishment Board, charged with facilitating and overseeing the introduction of a Forestry Corporation to operate as a successful business enterprise, under the chairmanship of Mr Alan Gibbs, reported to the Government on May 15, 1986.

The report is shortly to be referred, with officials' reports, to the Cabinet Policy Committee for decisions on its various recommendations.

To some degree the report has been overtaken by other wider issues discussed in the "Statement on Government Expenditure

Reform 1986", relating to Government's philosophy on State-owned enterprises generally. Work is presently underway on the enterprises, and it is anticipated this legislation will deal with many of the issues of direct concern to the Establishment Board. Until this draft legislation is available it is uncertain whether other specific legislation will be required for the proposed Corporation.

An establishment unit has meanwhile been formed for the Corporation under the leadership of Peter Berg, and this has responsibility for coordinating the formation of the Corporation for its proposed commencement on April 1, 1987. The formation of establishment units recognises amongst other things that while the reorganization is taking place the usual work of the department must also go on.

### Forestry Council

The Government has decided that the Forestry Council will be disbanded, with most of its functions being taken over by the Ministry of Forestry.

## Indigenous Forests on Private Land Workshop

This workshop held in Tauranga between June 16 and 18, 1986 was a consequence of the Commission of the Environment's Paper "Indigenous Forests of New Zealand — Environmental Issues and Options". That it only considered private land (Maori and Pakeha owned) was dictated by the refusal of State Departments to participate except in the presentation of papers. The papers will be published in a set of proceedings in the future. Important points made were:

1. The use of the Town and Country Planning Act or other bureaucratic processes to force private owners to reserve land would be unjust and unacceptable even if it were ostensibly used as a holding mechanism until a piece of land's future could be discussed.
2. Voluntary reservations, donations, covenants have been very effective in preserving pieces of private land. Owners were more likely to be conciliatory in saving native bush if they were approached to preserve on a voluntary basis. Educational programmes to explain the benefits of

reservation were seen as essential in this area.

3. It is unreasonable to assume that all private land owners will give their land to the nation freely. Many will demand and/or require compensation for their contribution to the national heritage. Various avenues were explored.
  - a. The concept of adding a levy to the stumpage charged for native logs was floated. The monies generated would be used to help pay for reservations. If native forest lands were managed under a plan such levies would be partly refundable.
  - b. The concept of Nga Whenua Rahui was put forward by the Maori groups involved. This is a type of cross leasing.
  - c. Relief of rates by local bodies.
4. The high costs associated with reservation by other than exchanges was highlighted. It was noted that the Department of Conservation may not have many areas suitable for reserve exchanges, which will be a disadvantage.
5. Protected Natural Area surveys of

private forested lands were extensively discussed with particular reference to the need for extra funding. They are designed to ensure representative samples of bush lands — as a flagship concept, i.e. "Help retain the best of what remains".

6. The session was dominated by questions of who decides and who pays.

P. Thode

## Permanent Head for Conservation Department

Mr K. W. (Ken) Piddington, formerly the Commissioner for the Environment, has been appointed Director-General of the new department and took up his new position on June 3. Mr Piddington, 52, joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1959 where he held several positions in New Zealand Missions overseas and in Wellington. In 1977 he became Director of the Planning Council and in 1980 he joined the Commission for the Environment as Commissioner. Mr Piddington holds a MA (Hons) degree from Auckland University.

Since his appointment Mr Piddington has devoted a substantial amount of his time to visiting various areas that his department will be administering.

Further organisational planning and development of the department is also proceeding, and a small establishment unit has been set up to assist Mr Piddington with this process.

Issues presently being discussed are draft legislation, regional boundaries, organisational structure and DOC's role in marine and freshwater environmental administration.

## Wood product 'failures'

Television New Zealand's 'Fair Go' programme has brought to light two 'failures' of wood products in New Zealand. The first is N.Z. Forest Products Ltd house cladding known as 'Weatherside'. This is an oil-tempered hardboard which has shown apparent glue failure under some conditions.

The second 'failure' was that of the preservative AAC (alkyl-ammonium compounds). About 3% of all timber treated by AAC (245,000 m<sup>3</sup>) between 1978 and 1985 have failed. The AAC treatment was withdrawn last year. The Minister of Forests, Mr Wetere, said in early July that the Timber Preservation Authority made an error of judgement in not fully publicising the problem.

## LETTERS

### Comments on new-look journal

*The Editor and Editorial Board wish to thank those who have commented verbally or by letter on the new journal. Two of these letters are printed below.*

Sir,

Just a short note to express my appreciation of the new format of the Journal of Forestry. Its new layout is attractive and more consistent with that offered by the Farm Forestry Association (New Zealand Tree Grower) and the Tree Crops Association (Growing Today). I consider the balance of content in this initial issue to be both interesting and informative. As recent events have proven, it is important to seek as wide a circulation as possible and I hope this objective is not overlooked.

Having subscribed for 25 years, I should also like to take this opportunity of saying "thank you" to the succession of former editors of the NZ Forestry Journal and their cultivation of critical and frank comment on current forestry issues.

Recognising that there are successive ranks of 'beginners' in the knowledge and understanding of basic forestry issues and that we have now accumulated a massive bank of information (much of it thanks to the work of FRI) can I suggest that a section of the new journal be devoted to a summing up of experience in various issues? We all need to be updated with the benefit of field experience.

Perhaps you might also give consideration to guest articles from leading politicians and Treasury spokesmen, etc.? We need to promote a better informed dialogue amongst those who are now making decisions that affect all of us.

**Jolyon Manning**  
(Member of NZ Forestry Council and Dunedin City Council)  
Dunedin

Sir,

May I congratulate you and also your publisher on the new look Forestry Journal.

For the first time for years I went through the magazine from cover to cover and actually read about half the contents.

I have long thought that with the improvement of the photocopy machine it would be better if the more abstruse papers were dealt with in outline only, leaving those people who were particularly interested to send for photo copies of the whole works.

This would save a good deal of expense in publishing data which has but a limited appeal.

The article on tawa is a case in point. Once the average reader comes to the place where diameter growth is 1.5mm a year, the volume increment about a cubic metre and the probable rotation about 200 years, he tends to read no further. Only the specialist is likely to go on.

And are the lengthy lists of references really necessary? Sure, they ought to be on record somewhere to show that the author has done his homework, to help anyone who might want to follow up the matter and maybe as ammunition to fire at the nit-picking birds and bees people and the junior intelligentsia, but is the ordinary reader that interested?

For myself, I prefer to see more of the Neil Barr approach; easy to read and absorb and good practical information. I am therefore pleased to see recognition of this included in the editorial policy.

**J. L. Harrison-Smith,**  
Tauranga

### Snow damage to kauri

Sir,

Although Tokyo is Lat. 35° 41' N it has an average of seven days with snow a year. In early 1984, snow lay for 17 days. Despite this, a young free-standing tree in the New Zealand Embassy grounds (reported to have been planted 15 years ago — and now about 7m high) thrives; it now produces cones. It has not been damaged by snow before 1986.

There were two main falls in 1986. The second was accompanied with a gusting north wind. About 30cm of snow accumulated on trees. The Embassy tree lost about six branches, but the leader was not damaged. These branches were not snapped, but broke from the trunk, leaving the usual scission scars. So far the scars look uninfected, but there has been little or no resin flow over them.

A kahikatea and a *Podocarpus nivalis* were not damaged, but they are very much smaller specimens. Japanese native hardwoods in the nearby Yoyogi Park had considerable branch snap. Native softwoods, including *Podocarpus longifolia*, were not damaged.

Though Japanese foresters abjure exotics, the numerous *Cedrus* spp in Tokyo were not damaged either.

Are there other records of snow damage to New Zealand kauri?

**R. Fenton,**  
Attache,  
New Zealand Embassy,  
Tokyo