

Westland — decisions and further debate

North Westland — Decisions

In July last year Government directed the Secretary for the Environment to form a working party to prepare a report which set out recommendations for the allocation of land north of the Cook River in Westland in such a way that a viable sawmilling industry could be maintained, a relatively small-scale sustained yield beech scheme proposed and an appropriate reserves network established. The working party, which consisted of relevant government agencies, the West Coast United Council, environmental and industry groups, were expected to take adequate account of environmental, economic, and social implications for the West Coast.

The report was considered by Cabinet in October-November 1986 and Government approved the various decisions for the future management of West Coast forests north of the Cook River as proposed by the Secretary for the Environment. Cabinet believed that for the first time in the protracted debate over West Coast forests a future management strategy had been determined which was supported by protagonists on both sides of the debate. The essential components of the agreement were:

- (a) the maintenance of jobs and community viability;
- (b) the establishment of further nature conservation reserves.

It was considered that the agreed package of decisions involved major concessions by both industry/community interests on the Secretary for the Environment's working group, in the form of agreement to additional reserves, and by environmental representatives in the form of agreement to partially waive sustained yield objectives for community viability reasons and to accept some long-term timber production activity.

A legally binding agreement has now been signed by the West Coast United Council, Joint Campaign on Native Forests, West Coast Sawmillers' Association, Westland Timber Workers' Union and the Crown. This agreement will be incorporated as part of the West Coast Regional Planning Scheme.

The components of the agreement are:

- (i) That an additional area of 139, 166 ha of State forest land be established as reserve and national park;
 - (ii) That an additional area of 44, 545 ha of State forest land be proposed for reserve and advertised for public comment;
 - (iii) That sufficient native forest be made available, subject to competitive market forces, to maintain the sawmilling industry in Karamea at its current level of allowable cut for a further eight years.
- To facilitate this option Government's policy commitment to sustained yield management in the Buller will be waived for community viability reasons until plantation forest is available in the region;



Participants in the South Westland Forum, held in Hokitika on February 16, 1987.

- (iv) That sufficient native forest be made available in Buller and North Westland to maintain the sawmilling industry in that area at its current level of cut, subject to competitive market forces, until plantation forest species established in Buller and North Westland become available;
- (v) That sufficient native forest is made available in South Westland to maintain the sawmilling industry at its current level of cut, subject to competitive market forces, until at least 1992. Thereafter, the sawmills in South Westland would have to compete for plantation grown timber available from North Westland, sus-

CONSULTANT RECOGNITION

The following have applied for recognition:

Specialist Forest Consultant in the field of
"Domestic and Export Marketing"

Mr Bruce Childs,
Bay of Plenty

Specialist Forest Consultant in the field of "Forest Engineering"

Mr Peter Farley,
Wellington

Specialist Forest Consultant in the field of
"Forestry finance, valuations and marketing".

Mr Alan J. Ogle,
Christchurch

Any member of the Institute may send objections in writing to the Registrar of Consultants, c/- N.Z.I.F., Box 12314, Wellington North. See Section 41(2) of the N.Z.I.F. constitution.

tained yield volumes from the South Westland region, and any other resources available from south of the Cook River;

- (vi) That an area of beech forest, of approximately 100,000 ha, be set aside for a beech utilization scheme which should be both commercially viable and environmentally acceptable.

South Westland — Further debate scheduled

In September 1981 the Minister of Forests and the Minister for the Environment announced the addition of South Okarito and Waikukupa State forests to the Westland National Park; the imposition of a logging moratorium on all State forests south of the Cook River (until 1990), and a decision to establish a plantation forest resource in the region. This afforestation project was seen as a means of compensating for the consequent loss of job opportunities in the native timber industry, and to provide a renewable timber resource for processing in 40 to 50 years' time.

However, in 1982 the decision to establish a substantial plantation forest was rescinded by Cabinet on economic grounds, and was replaced with a much smaller project to provide for plantings of special purpose species. Cabinet also agreed to the establishment of a Treasury-led Officials Committee to review assistance options for the South Westland region.

The resultant "Officials Committee Report on Assistance Options for South Westland" (November 1982) recommended that a study of the forests south of the Cook River commence in sufficient time to permit firm decisions to be made. In a supplementary report ("Supplementary Report of Assistance Options for South Westland" (July 1983)) the Officials Committee reiterated



Thinned second-growth beech forest at Hukawai, Westland.

ated this earlier recommendation, stating; "... that the multi-disciplinary research effort necessary to enable classification of the forests south of the Cook River presently under moratorium should be accelerated to enable decisions to be taken on at least the northernmost forests in the area in 1986".

The South Westland Management Evaluation Programme was the outcome of this recommendation. It focused on Crown-owned forested land and attempted to assess the resources and potential opportunities of the region. It was organized by the Forest Service and the Department of Lands and Survey, with assistance from other government agencies, notably the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and Wildlife Service.

During the week commencing February 16, 1987 a forum was staged in Hokitika which was attended by 80-85 people. The forum purpose was to enable researchers to present the results of their fieldwork and make some suggestions about future management prospects for the South Westland region beyond the Cook River. The forum also debated opportunities for nature conservation, mineral exploitation, timber production, further agricultural development and tourism.

Adopting the mechanism used north of the Cook River, Government has charged the Secretary for the Environment with the task of convening a further working party to pick up where the South Westland Management Evaluation Programme left off and make recommendations to Government on the future use and management of the publicly-owned forest south of the Cook. The Secretary for the Environment is due to report to Government with his recommendations later this year.

J.C. Halkett

THE 56TH ANZAAS SCIENCE CONGRESS — SCIENCE IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

The 56th ANZAAS Science Congress was a spotty affair. Doubtless there was much good science here and there but there were few solid sessions devoted to any one discipline or any one sphere of scientific activity. Sociology and geography seemed to dominate: indeed forestry was linked with geography as one of the major Congress "Interest Groups". The forestry programme, well organized by Michael Roche, was coherent and substantial and perhaps for this reason attracted good attendances. The Forestry sessions covered "Social and Economic Perspectives", "Economic Models and Modelling", "Agroforestry" and "Markets and Marketing". A full list of papers together with abstracts of some will appear in "In Our Contemporaries".

A.P.T.

A POLITICAL FIRE?

Did you know that in Canterbury:

- The Ministry of Forestry has the statutory responsibility for fire control, but no men or equipment!
 - The Department of Conservation has the central fire depot and has plenty of equipment but no men!
 - The Forestry Corporation has some equipment but few firefighters!
- If there is a fire let's hope it will burn red tape rather than trees!

(See Comment by A.N. Cooper, Vol. 31/1, May 1986).

West Coast Land Use (Indicative)

	%
Urban	0.1
Freehold (inc. private plantation forest 0.2% — Inalienated)	10.6
Temporary Crown Lease	1.9
Land Development (Landcorp)	1.4
Maori Land	0.2
Indigenous Production — Forest (Forestcorp)	5.3
Plantation Production — Forest (Forestcorp)	0.8
Protection Forest, Reserves, NPs — Inalienated Crown Land *	79.7

*This includes land south of the Cook River for which final allocations have still to be made.