

could be collected as follows:

- Latitude
- Longitude
- Description of location, e.g. one mile north of . . .
- Altitude
- Habitat, including associated species
- Soil type
- Any particular feature of the plant
- Date of collection
- Collector's number.

Such information would be used to help future researchers.

Seed could be sent directly to: Andrew Jackson, Royal Botanic Gardens, Wakehurst Place, Ardingly, West Sussex RH17 6JN, England; or to myself at 218 Otupua Road, Timaru, and I would be happy to forward it to him.

Mike Bunckenburg

Silvicultural diversity

Sir,

Your editorial in the February issue of the journal makes some interesting if not totally accurate claims about the conservative approach of foresters in the past and compares this with the more dynamic approach now being adopted by some of the new owners of forests previously controlled by the Forest Service.

You are critical of the lack of species diversity in our exotic forests with management restricted predominantly to low final stockings with pruning, and you further claim that foresters in the past have always been subject to a straight jacket of conformity. It appears that this straight jacket was strapped on by some faceless individual or individuals from "higher up" and I presume I fall into this category.

The earliest plantings of exotic production forests were characterised by intensive site definition and an attempt to match species with each site change. Parts of Conical Hill and Dusky Forests are or were good examples of this type of development. The result was a mix of hardwoods and softwoods which created all sorts of problems in management and final harvesting. At the other end of the spectrum were the plantings almost totally dominated by *P. radiata* particularly in the period from 1960 to the present day. The reason for this domination was simple. From the far north to the far south and from sea level to about 600 metres a.s.l. *radiata* gives the best return to the forest grower and can be utilised for a full range of forest products. Nothing else matches it. I guess there will always be reservations raised by the monoculture bogey but this problem may be more perceived than

real, particularly now that we have a full range of *radiata* genetic material available.

How plantation forests should be managed has of course been subject to intense scrutiny for years. I think it was generally conceded that to improve timber quality and maximise returns, pruning and thinning were essential when growing *radiata*. However, within this general prescription there was considerable variation. In fact the variation was so great that FRI was given the job of checking out *radiata* management region by region within the Forest Service. This was the genesis of the *Radiata* Task Force which then proceeded to go well beyond its original terms of reference. I recall that there were about 150 different management regimes being used at that time. In addition in some forests where the site index was low or where weeds such as gorse were a problem tending consisted of one thinning and no pruning. What you see as something new, you will probably find has already been tried and rejected or if it makes sense is still being used.

If you intended to be provocative in your editorial then I think you have succeeded but you appear to be basing your comments on personal perceptions rather than solid facts.

G.M. O'Neill

Editor's reply

Mr O'Neill misunderstands the point I was trying to make. Criticism of the old foresters (including Mr O'Neill) or the Forest Service was not my intention, and I apologise to Mr O'Neill for giving him that impression. Nor was I saying that the *radiata* pine direct sawlog regime was "wrong" and we should all jump on an alternative species bandwagon. I have no doubt that *radiata* pine, managed in its many and various ways, will continue to dominate plantation forestry for the foreseeable future. An anarchy of impractical silvicultural options, without reason, is no-one's idea of good management. Mr O'Neill's comments in this regard are not in dispute.

The "target", for want of a better word, was our decision-making process. A narrow focus on financial criteria alone, without considering a broad decision-making environment, particularly the market, is a production-driven approach that does not always provide the best solution. Different companies and individuals have different objectives and resources, and no one solution is necessarily correct – there are horses for courses. I gave the example of the farmer with the different needs to highlight that point.

On that note, I would suggest there is no universally "correct" silvicultural regime. A forester can justify any number of options by simply changing the decision-making criteria and adopted strategy. Here I take issue with Mr O'Neill. *Radiata* pine does not necessarily give the "best return to the forest grower". That depends on how you assess "return". Even on a purely financial basis it is not given; and I have yet to hear conclusive evidence that the discount rate we use to give us that answer is appropriate, nor that we can compare that answer adequately with an, on the face of it, inferior NPV for a longer rotation species such as Douglas fir. As an example of a broader decision-making approach, Tasman have recently stated an intention to review their rotation lengths to ensure log quality matches their customer requirements.

It may be my personal perception, but the increasing diversity in decision-making approaches we are beginning to see as the wood-flows increase, and the ownership base broadens, is good news, and was worth pointing out.

Editor

Forest Accord and mission statement

Sir

Council of the New Zealand Institute of Forestry is currently reviewing the mission statement, and also considering whether the Institute should adhere to the Forest Accord signal in 1991 between the NZ Forest Owners' Association and a majority of the environmental organisations. This Accord is intended to provide a mutually agreed discipline of action for environmentally-friendly treatment of New Zealand's remaining indigenous forests.

Within New Zealand, the goals of sustainability in respect of natural resources were considerably strengthened in 1991 with the adoption of the Resource Management Act. Whilst overseas, in November 1992, New Zealand became a member of the International Tropical Timber Organisation. The ITTO was set up under the United Nations in 1985. Although principally a timber trade organisation, one of its aims is to encourage moves towards the sustainable production of tropical rainforest by the year 2000. Clearly, this aim stands in stark contrast to the present reality of continuing tropical forest destruction.

As a member of the ITTO, New Zealand is now committed none the less to furthering the goal, not only in tropical timber trade and in support for sustainable