

North Afforestation Ltd near Waitahue, 20 km south of Kaitaia (see photo), and approximately 18 hectares of highly significant forest (habitat for the threatened native bird, the whitehead) at Wainake cleared under the management of Campbell and Isles, accountants, by the contractor 'Kohntrol'. Furthermore, both of these clearances were carried out with resource consents, in the first instance from the Northland Regional Council, and secondly from the Gisborne District Council.

These irresponsible investors, managers, consultants and contractors are bringing the whole industry into disrepute, and most likely in the near future into conflict with the concerned public and conservation organisations.

It would be fairly safe to say that every plantation planting above a few hectares has received some advice by a forestry consultant, adviser, or Ministry of Forestry or institution representative. It would follow then that there is some poor advice being given, where the essential need for protection of indigenous biodiversity and the commitments under the NZ Forest Accord are ignored.

Where does the Institute stand on this issue? As the Institute is regarded as a professional body with integrity and principles, it would follow that all the consultants registered under it would act responsibly and follow the intent of the Forest Accord. Greenpeace urges the Institute to either ratify or become a signatory of the Accord and ensure all its members comply. We also urge the Ministry of Forestry to actively promote the Accord to forestry consultants not registered with the Institute.

Grant Rosoman
Forests Campaigner
Greenpeace New Zealand

The Institute had insufficient time to reply to this letter in this issue of NZ Forestry. Mr Rosoman's concerns will be discussed at the next Council meeting, with the possibility of a reply in the August issue. Ed.

Craig Potton's response

Sir,
I feel somewhat honoured to have a high trinity of response to my address at the NZIF 1994 Conference from three ex-Director-Generals. However, I am somewhat bemused at their failing to pick up on the heavily ironic tone in much of my address. So much that was said tongue-in-



Approximately 200 hectares roller crushed by Far North Afforestation Ltd near Waitahue 20 km south of Kaitaia. Photo: Greenpeace NZ, November 1994.

cheek seemed to open old wounds and for that I am genuinely sorry. It was lucky the editorial didn't carry my ironic ad libs about "bi-cultural" logging, for then I might have been seriously misinterpreted and felt the wrath of some heavy-duty social planners!

I do hope the industry moves to address the issues that I put forward at the end of my comment, namely: wilding pines, pulpmill effluent, truck noise etc., because I really believe plantation forestry is one of the most appropriate forms of land use in New Zealand.

Keep planting.

Craig Potton

The plantation effect

Sir,

After reading the February copy it seems to me that both sides need to take account of some basic realities. These include the following:

- When they reach maturity, the children or grandchildren of today's adults will mostly use the produce from plantation-grown trees.
- In New Zealand, if trees are planted this year, in about 10 years' time they will produce pulpwood, while sawlogs of *Pinus radiata* will be produced in about 30 years. There is plenty of scope for planting trees immediately.
- Every year each adult demands the produce of about one green tonne of roundwood. In the rich world this demand is dominated by paper; while in the poor world demand is largely for

fuel with which to cook food. We all can imagine the look on a person's face if they are offered a plate full of an uncooked staple food!

- More and more people live in man-made surroundings, and expect scientific man to solve all problems. Ask survivors of the Kobe earthquake how man emerges when compared with an 'angry' nature?
- The conservation lobby has to judge which will receive more consideration – their values; or the requirements of increasing human populations. In about 1938 the estimated world population exceeded 2000 million for the first time; but by the end of 1989 it had exceeded 5000 million. It is now thought that the world population will level out above 12,000 million souls. It is now over 30 years since I first went to serve in the tropics as an 'Assistant Conservator of Forests'.

K.D. Marten

State management of native forests

Sir,

May I refer, with approval, to Eric Bennett's letter (NZ Forestry, February 1995). For many years the Forest Service was engaged in research into sustained yield management of native forests. Podocarp forests were being studied in Westland from the late 1920s and this research was resumed in 1953, culminating in a proposal for selection silviculture in 1959. Jack Holloway's evaluation of

silver beech in Southland in 1948 was adopted, successfully, from 1950. Research into kauri management at that time went back several decades. In 1952 Entrican tried to reduce the cut of podocarps in the North Island by 80% in five years.

"Westland's Wealth", by John Johns and myself, was published in 1959, about ten years before the public outcry by conservationists. This book made a plea for management and conservation of West Coast forests. In that same year a Regional Working Plan was written to provide for the global cut in Westland to be reduced to a sustained yield level by around 1975, but the sawmillers circumvented this by direct contact with the Government.

Yet, as Eric Bennett observes, the public was unaware of any of these efforts. Why? I think the reason is clear. The media tended to promote the status quo; that is, they backed up the sawmilling industry and were not interested in the views of mere public servants; and what the media backed up, the politicians fell into line with.

There were many foresters (including members of Council) who objected to the West Coast Beech scheme of 1971 because they saw it as principally a means of converting beech forest to exotics.

When the wrath of the conservationists eventually hit the headlines, the media

took them up with delight and enthusiasm, never making any enquiries about the background; and politicians, aided by an acquiescent and ignorant public, fell into line.

As President, I thought I could redress the balance by getting in touch with politicians, an approach which it transpired was doomed to failure.

If you have a clueless population, and ignorant media and politicians, both of whom won't or can't do their homework, then knowledge and understanding is

liable to founder by the wayside.

When the full pressure of monetarism and demand for scarce resources eventually begin to bite, conservationists could find themselves stranded and outgunned for the same reason.

It is, however, interesting to observe that the conservationists are beginning to talk about sustained yield as if they had invented it. It was a dirty phrase, unmentionable in polite society, in the 1980s!

Geoffrey Chavasse

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