

dous, but gradually foresters held sway, and today in many parts of Europe, even owners of private forest are only allowed to fell trees marked by State foresters.

The newly-established New Zealand Forest Service estimated, after survey, that the remaining native forest estate was finite, and would last for a limited time only. What would happen after that?

Introduced forest trees had been planted since the first days of European settlement. At the end of the last century State afforestation commenced. Success came, and pointed the way to go. Plans were drawn up for an expanding afforestation programme, with the long-term wood supply coming from sustainably-managed plantations. Government approved.

Kaingaroa Forest

The linchpin of this programme was Kaingaroa Forest, where planting had begun before the turn of the century. The programme accelerated on the large area of land available, and a pulp and paper industry was predicted. Managing the new forests, protecting them from pests and fire, learning how best to use the wood, all required high-quality administration and research, achieved with scant resources.

A Processing Industry Develops

By the 1950s it was considered that enough wood could be sustainably harvested from Kaingaroa to support a new pulp and paper industry. There was great public and political interest, and the most important question of all was "how to sell the wood" – the subject of intricate manoeuvring. There was strong advocacy for cutting rights, on the grounds that the new industry must be left alone to manage the forest to meet its own requirements, quietly avoiding any discussion of the needs of the land, the forest itself or its owner, the people of New Zealand.

The Minister of Forests at that time – who had the legal responsibility for the sale of the wood – had other ideas based on his experience as a Taranaki dairy farmer. There should, he believed, be an obligation to the farmer as well as to the dairy company. He also had memories of being cheated out of payments for rimu logs by the simple expedient of the buyer manipulating timber grades to his own advantage. But in the end he lost the day to other Ministers and to the Treasury, and the resultant sale with its strong odour of cutting rights has given trouble to this day. It contained conditions that recently have had to be redressed through the courts, in a decision which could not be divulged to the taxpayer who paid for the original establishment of the forest!

By the 1960s production from Kaingaroa had increased sufficiently to allow

for another step in industrial expansion. It took six months of torrid argument to persuade the Treasury that it should be sold in an orthodox manner and not just allocated as a cutting right to existing users. The upshot was a sale directed to a new industry in Hawkes Bay, with consequent and continuing plantation forest and industry development in that area.

Another consequence was a nationwide expansion of tree planting, but this time under the eye of a much wider range of people than foresters alone, with a declared objective to make New Zealand self-sufficient and to provide a resource foundation for export-oriented regional industry. All Governments of the time supported these objectives.

The Recent Past

But as the day of harvest approached, so too came the day of the purblind financier and the short-term politician. Here was an outstandingly valuable resource with which not much was being done (it was too early) and an expensive Forest Service. Kill two birds with one stone by reducing the cost of bureaucracy and paying off a slice of national debt – both popular with the electorate.

And so enabling legislation was passed, the Forest Service disestablished, a corporation set up which didn't operate, and finally, back to the beginning, the sale of cutting rights, with speed the essence

and give-away prices. In one hit the country had lost control of a large area of land for a long period of time, without control of the intentions of the holders when their rights approach termination.

New Zealand has taken a huge step backwards in state forest management. As far as the sale of cutting rights is concerned, apart from the huge initial loss, the ongoing loss can be calculated in billions of dollars a year, and in addition many of the outstanding achievements in forest management of the last 30-40 years have been stultified. We desperately need an enquiry on how best to restore the long-term stability essential to state forest management, in the face of the morass created by short-term confrontational government.

No private owner (including those involved in concocting the state forest cutting-right sales of the past few years) would dream of selling their own forests in this way. They would lose control of both their land and their forest.

The perpetrators of the sales should be impeached. Or would older penalties fit the bill better, such as the cutting off of hands, or more picturesquely perhaps, the sowing up of the culprits in fresh deer skins and feeding them to the hounds.

Negotiations are now under way to sell the cutting rights to Kaingaroa Forest. We need this forest to restart forestry in New Zealand!



RECENT EVENTS



Sustainable Management Fund proves popular

The Sustainable Management Fund, which started on July 1 this year, has proven overwhelmingly popular.

The fund provides financial assistance for environmental projects.

In the first funding round for 1995/96, a total of 199 applications were received by the Ministry for the Environment.

The Strategic Advisory Group, which was convened to consider applications, has now approved 36 projects to the value of \$2,733,887 for this financial year.

The applications came from 100 applicants and were for a total of \$28,568,069. Of this, \$13,621,924 was requested for this year with the balance over the next two years. (The total cost of the projects for which assistance was sought is \$58,488,773.)

The fund reflects the Government's

long-term environmental aims which are set out in the *Environment 2010 Strategy* consultation document. Projects considered for funding are in two categories: environmental risk assessment and management, and the development of sustainable management options. Within each category there are specific projects which will have priority. These are reviewed each year.

The 100 applicants came from the following sectors:

- 14 private sector consultants;
- 5 iwi;
- 21 local authorities;
- 13 universities and Crown research institutes;
- 47 'other', including individuals and NGOs.

While most applications were pre-

sented in a professional manner, some lacked important details such as quotes. The area of most concern, however, was that a quarter of the requests were for projects stated as not eligible for funding, such as venture capital for commercial activities, research projects already rejected by Government, and conservation works for specific sites.

Projects eligible for grants, priorities, criteria and forms for applications are contained in the Ministry's *Guide for Applicants*.

The Guide will be updated and reprinted annually, as priorities and categories are expected to change.

There are three funding rounds each financial year. Applications for the first round in the year 1995/96 closed on June 30, 1995. The second round closes on December 15, 1995.

For further information contact: Murray Bell, Project Manager, Ministry for the Environment. Phone (04) 473 4090. Fax (04) 471 0195.

Environmental indicator development receives Budget funding boost

The Government has allocated an additional \$1 million over three years to further develop an information base on the state of the environment.

The extra funding was included in this year's Budget announcements.

Environment Minister Simon Upton said the funding will allow New Zealand to develop indicators of the state of the environment that can aid decisions on the protection and sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

The Minister explained that an indicator is something that can be measured to act as a sign of a particular environmental condition.

"An indicator could be an animal or plant that is particularly sensitive to an environmental change, a chemical or a pollutant in water, soil or air, or simply a measure of the physical quantity of a resource," he said.

In developing these indicators, special emphasis will be placed on key environmental issues identified in the *Environment 2010 Strategy*, such as water quality, biodiversity, pollution and waste, Mr Upton said.

"Environmental indicators are potentially powerful tools to assess the state of the environment. They help us to synthesise and simplify information about the environment to give a credible, but simple and understandable, statement on the quality of the environment."

New DOC Director of Science and Research

The Department of Conservation has appointed a new director of its science and research division.

Mr John Holloway, of Wellington, replaces Richard Sadleir who retired in June.

The appointment was announced by Department of Conservation Director General Bill Mansfield, who said Mr Holloway was an experienced conservation manager with an impressive background of research-based work in environmental management. Prior to his new appointment, Mr Holloway was director of the department's estate protection division at head office from DOC's inception in 1987. He has 30 years' experience in conservation-related management.

"John Holloway's record of achievement is considerable with a lifetime of contribution to conservation policy," Mr Mansfield said. "He is well respected in New Zealand for his considered approach to conservation policy issues and has established a close working relationship with key groups such as research agencies, local authorities and government departments. He brings this wide experience to the development of policy and to the resolution of conflicting issues."

Mr Mansfield said Mr Holloway's experience would be invaluable as the science and research work of the department focused on improving research transfer and communication. "There are growing opportunities for expanding conservation science through research alliances and partnerships with other science providers and

John's connections in the wider community will help promote this development.

"Management of the science and research directorate in the rapidly changing climate of contract research and increasing government funding for research presents exciting challenges that I am confident John will meet very effectively."

Forestry jobs growth

The forestry industry continues to expand job opportunities in New Zealand.

The number of people employed in forestry and wood processing increased by almost 2000, or 8.2%, in the year to mid-February 1995.

"Forestry is a major employer and growing rapidly – 25,415 people this year, compared with 23,486 at the same time last year. That's good news by anybody's standards," said the Minister of Forestry, John Falloon.

With the exception of pulp, paper and paperboard, all sectors of the industry showed significant gains in employment: Forestry and logging, up 10.2% (from 8993 to 9912 people); logging haulage, up 10.7% (1197 to 1325); sawmills, up 5% (5865 to 6159); planing, preserving and seasoning timber, up 2.3% (1550 to 1585); plywood, veneer and board, up 37.2% (2016 to 2766); chipmills, up 44.4% (27 to 39); pulp, paper and paperboard, down 5.4% (3838 to 3629).

Early detection

"Monitoring indicators of the state of the environment also allows the environmental outcomes of policy to be assessed, permits the early detection of adverse environmental trends, and facilitates the integration of environmental, social and economic aspects of resource management."

The Minister said New Zealand could expect its environmental performance to come under increasing scrutiny in the years ahead.

The additional funding will develop indicators that can demonstrate both nationally and internationally New Zealand's environmental performance to allow the country to maintain its trade competitiveness using its 'clean, green' image.

The Ministry for the Environment will release a discussion paper on environmental indicators by the end of the year, project coordinator Peter Cochrane says. The paper will set out a proposed framework and timetable from which to develop a core set of environmental indicators.

The involvement of bodies such as local authorities, research institutions and other government departments will also be discussed in the paper.

For more information on environmental indicators, contact Peter Cochrane on (04) 498 7477.

Copies of the discussion paper are available from the Ministry's Public Affairs Directorate, phone (04) 498 7493.